

How To Market To Government Agencies

If you have a product that you'd like to sell to government agencies, you'll need to differentiate yourself from your competitors. Government agencies get a lot of bids. You'll also need to make sure you know your stuff – about your product, the technology used in your product and your industry. Buyers for the government are sophisticated and knowledgeable and expect you to be the same.

To get government buyers' attention, you'll need to tweak your marketing strategy just a bit from what you would normally do for a commercial market. Follow the tactics listed below for a successful marketing venture with the government agency you're targeting:

Network: The best way to get in is by networking at your local government events or your state's chamber of commerce events. Get your name and face known by going to as many events as you can and hand out full color business cards while you're at the events. Color business card printing is more effective than black-and-white printing because most people aren't expecting color on a business card. This will help you stand out from the crowd.

Use telemarketing to generate leads: You should hire a professional telemarketing company to identify government managers that might be interested in your product or service. If a government buyer or manager indicates any interest, set up a meeting right away to discuss what you can do for them. Be sure to take lots of marketing materials with you that emphasize your benefits and how you can help the government.

Advertise in government publications, if possible: Some government publications don't take advertisements, but many do. Try to find local publications that do take advertising or find national magazines or newsletters that have the same target market as you. If you advertise in magazines, you'll need to run your ad at least 4–6 times per year for product/company recognition to occur.

Advertise online: Find online magazines or newsletters that cater to the government agency you're targeting. These ad rates can be much lower than traditional print ads. You might even check the local print magazines to see if they have an online version and advertise online instead of in print.

Be a sponsor at a government conference: Many agencies have conferences that bring all their employees together from across the country. You can either be a sponsor of the conference or you could even try getting a senior executive or an expert from your company to be a speaker for the conference.

Send out press releases to government publications: Send out a release any time you have a newsworthy product launch, a company success story or if you've just hired a new noteworthy individual. Invite interviews or profiles of your business.

Write a story for one of the government publications: This is another way to get in that also has the benefit of making you seem like an expert. It's a win-win situation! Another bonus is that this is free advertising, and you might even get paid for your piece! Just make sure you write a newsworthy, helpful article – you don't even have to mention your company or your product. You can reserve your company identification for the byline.

Basically, if you want to score government contracts, you need to establish some kind of relationship with the agencies. You need to be where they are and where their buyers look because they don't need to come looking for you. Make sure you're doing everything you can to establish a presence where the government agency is and let them get to know you.

About the Author

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