

HOW TO SUCCEED WITH YOUR OWN MONEY MAKING AD SHEET

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Publishing and distributing a mail order ad sheet can be very profitable. They're simple and easy to produce with most quick print shops able to handle the printing at economical costs. The important thing is that you can use them to pull in advertising dollars for yourself, as a free advertising media for your own products, and as an exchange medium with which to get greater exposure for your own ads.

Before starting an ad sheet, you should plan it all out - come up with a title, decide upon a masthead, lay out your columns for size, decide whether it's to be a simple 8 1/2 by 11 single sheet of paper or an 11 by 17 sheet of paper folded in half, and you'll also need to know your production costs for the number you intend to have printed, and the postage costs to send them out.

Most ad sheets start out as single sheets of paper, 8 1/2 by 11, printed on both sides. Usually, the front side is divided into 3 equal columns about 2 1/4 inches wide with a half inch margin from the edge of the paper on both side as well as the top and bottom.

Assuming that the space occupied by your title, masthead and listing of rates for advertisers interested in placing an ad in your publication is two inches deep, this leaves you about 24 inches of advertising space to sell on this front side. Figuring a cost of \$50 for 1,000 copies of such an ad sheet, printed on both sides; a third class bulk rate postage cost of \$10.9; this means that your 24 inches of ad space will have to be sold at a price of \$6.25 each in order for you to break even on your costs. This means you've got to sell all of the ad space on the front of your ad sheet at \$6.25 per ad - and then expect to make your profits from the sale of the backside of your ad sheet. Generally speaking, it would be more feasible to charge \$7.00 per inch for the space on the front-side of your ad sheet, and carry your own full page advertisement on the backside. At any rate, don't box yourself into a "loss" situation where you can't afford to place ads of your own ad sheet.

You get ads by making up an advertising solicitation sales letter and sending it out to as many mail order dealers as you can find. You can also run ads in other people's publications inviting the readers to check with you relative to placing an ad in your publication. And of course, you'll be wanting to work out some exchange advertising deals - another publisher runs your ad in his publication and you run his in yours.

You probably won't be able to fill up all of your available ad space with paid ads until you're well established - but no problem - first you fill your ad space with paid ads, and then you fill in the empty space with ads of your own. Some beginning advertisers fill a part of their empty space with complimentary ads for other mail order operators, send them a copy of the issue in which the complimentary ad appears, and invite them to continue the ad on a "paid" basis from there. Many of them will appreciate the favor and send you a check or money order to continue running the ad.

If you undertake the publication of an ad sheet, be sure to consider the possibilities of sending out 100 to 1,000 copies of your ad sheet to other mail order operators to rubber stamp their names/addresses as co-publishers and mail out for you. Thus, if you had 50 other mail order operators sending out 100 copies each of your ad sheet, you'd be talking about a circulation of 5,000 copies plus the number of copies you mail out. If you can get this kind of program going, you'll

quickly build your reputation as well as your circulation, and at the bottom line, your profits.

Some ad sheet publishers, once they've established themselves and are putting out an impressive publication, set up distributor networks. Generally, they run ads calling for distributor/dealers and asking for a \$5 to \$10 registration fee. In reply to the registration application, they send out a letter explaining that each distributor can buy at half price, so many copies of each issue of the ad sheet, rubber stamp their own name on each copy, and send them out as their own. In return, the distributors usually get 50% of the incoming advertising orders, a half-price ad for themselves, and an opportunity to sell publications.

The bottom line relative to becoming a successful ad sheet publisher has to do with keeping your production costs - printing and mailing - as low as possible, while putting out a quality product that other people in the mail order business will want to advertise in - while at the same time using it as an advertising/selling vehicle for your own products.

My advise is that almost everyone involved in mail order selling should have some sort of ad sheet - if for no other reason than as a means to an end - an advertising vehicle for your own products, an extra income from advertising revenues, and as an exchange media with which to gain greater exposure for your own products in other people's publications. Once you've got an ad sheet, or any kind of publication set up and being seen by other mail order operators, you'll quickly gain stature and a certain amount of prestige.

As with any business, your ultimate success depends on your own feasibility studies, and your "sharp-pencil" planning completed before you order your first issue printed. Think about it, weigh the pro's and con's, then go with your decision.