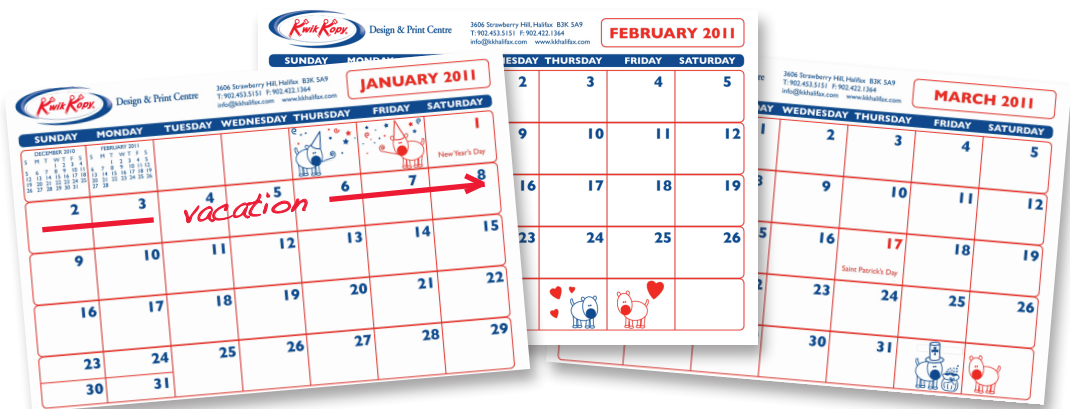


Using Promotional Items

We've all heard the saying that it is better to give than receive. This is never truer than when it comes to promoting your business. There are literally millions of products that can be logo'd to provide a giveaway opportunity that allows you to reach your customer and hopefully provide a trinket that he or she can use.

Some of the most popular products traditionally have been clothing, golf balls, pens, notepads and calendars. More recently the USB key has grown in popularity along with sunglasses holders and water bottles. The trick is to find a product that can be ordered in bulk, has wide appeal and a cost per unit that won't break your budget. If the product can be tied to, or relates to your business, that may be a great branding opportunity too. For instance, if you run a landscaping company and you provide logo'd leaf bags in the fall, you are reinforcing the product and service you provide while promoting the business. It is this type of product that creates a demand each year where people hope or expect to get more.

In our business, Kwik Kopy desk calendars have become a staple for our customer base resulting in phone calls as early as August each year requesting next year's version.



*Psst...
Call 453-5151 to get
your 2011-2012 calendars*

We produce more than 1000 per year and they remain on our clients' desks throughout the year. Our calendars contain all of our contact information but

Using Promotional Items

also conform to the clients' requests to be small while still allowing large areas to write on the days. Over the years we've modified the layout only slightly with feedback from our customers.

When it comes to ordering products, there are almost as many suppliers as there are products these days, especially for the adventurous purchaser who isn't afraid to buy online. While buying online may yield an opportunity to save some money, the inability to sample the product, the lack of local customer service and minimum quantity requirements may limit the product availability and deter buyers.

One of the most critical elements in choosing local versus online might be your logo and whether you have access to a proper artwork for the various types of products. For example, the logo you need for silk screening is different than the logo for embroidery and again for traditional printing. Many small businesses have not had professional logo design and may have only a couple of versions available, the jpeg they paste into PowerPoint and the .psd file a friend created in Photoshop.



If this is you, be very careful ordering product online as the finished result may not be what you expect.

Using Promotional Items

Kwik Promo

Kwik Promo (kwikpromo.com) is an interesting example of a Kwik Kopy franchisee that married the concepts of supplying promotional materials and maintaining the attentive and personal customer service of a neighbourhood print company. Based in Toronto and Pickering, ON, Kwik Promo offers a wide range of traditional print services along with the service of printing your company logo on just about anything under the sun.

Check out kwikpromo.com for more info on this truly full-service company.

If you work with a local manufacturer or supplier, you may be able to get a proof or sample before producing the job and generally speaking the supplier will stop production if they sense a problem especially if they recognize your logo or company.

So, promotional products, as their name implies, are a good way to promote your business within your existing customer base - a customer retention strategy, if you will. They are also a good way to support various fundraising efforts like auctions and work well as prizes for various events.

Many employers use logo'd apparel as a uniform within the workplace and owners of a small business should take advantage of apparel as a way to open a dialogue in network situations or with peer groups.

Perhaps the hardest part of using promotional items is balancing the quality of the product with the desire to distribute widely. We believe that a little of both is a good solution. You can reserve the high-end products for special occasions while having a low cost branded product for the masses.