

## Cross Promoting for Success

Cross promotions are a great example of a win-win-win situation in that both companies involved benefit by having their marketing enhanced and the customer wins by getting a bit of good from two companies, as opposed to just one. The development of a cross promotional campaign can sometimes be more complicated, as there are two sets of people seeking to simultaneously create a joint venture while maximizing their own narrow interests. Yet, the benefits often outweigh the complications, making cross promotion an attractive marketing option.

Cross promotions work when each company sees an advantage to being associated with the qualities and reputation of the partner company. The shared association that comes from a cross promotion should advance the reputation and market reach of both sides. The result is twice the energy, instead of half.

In entering a cross promotion agreement it is important to understand the potential benefits and set objectives for the advantages you seek to have the joint relationship bring to your company. Among the benefits you can consider are:

1. **Higher Quality Attention** – the attention you get on your own can always be viewed as self-serving and self-initiated. When you are involved in a cross promotion you may, on one hand, need to share the attention, but on the other hand benefit from the qualities your partner company brings to the equation. There is a validation to be gained by the idea that the partner company finds you worthy to work with, and there is also credibility to the idea that your company mirrors the fine qualities the market associates with your partner.

2. **Greater Reach** – when you think about all the customers you're in contact with and then add to it all the customers your partner is in touch with you will see that the number of people you are now gaining exposure before has grown substantially, and the increase has come at a relatively low cost.

3. **You Have More Exposure** – not only will you be reaching more people, but you'll be reaching them more often as now not only do your communications hit the market, but so do your partner's. This means that the targeted market will get a bit from you and a bit from them, and two bits equal a lot more exposure.

4. **You Have More Reasons Why Customers Should Buy** – even if your customers love your products/services and are buying at a steady rate, if you add something to your mix it will give them all the more reason to buy. By enhancing your offer with aspects of someone else's you increase the perceived value and the appeal of whatever you are selling.

With all these great reasons to launch a joint promotion the only thing you need to know now is how to best go about it. Tudog has 6 helpful hints:

1. **Make Sure You Have a Targeted Market** – you need to make sure your promotion partner and the promotion you elect to implement are compatible with the market you are targeting. You cannot (or at least should not) launch a cross promotional campaign that does not have a concrete target. It makes sense to partner with a children's entertainment center if you are targeting children or moms. It does not make sense if you

are targeting senior citizens. So make sure the partner you choose is right for the audience you want to reach and influence.

**2. Make Sure You Have Mutual Interests** – a cross promotion cannot work if you and your partner are pulling in different directions. You need to make sure from the very start that your objectives and their objectives are not only the same, but directed at the same people and within the same timeframe.

**3. Make Sure You Test Your Assumptions** – it is possible to get so excited at the prospect of a cross promotion that you throw ordinary marketing caution to the wind and you jump into the main program without first testing your assumptions. Just as with other marketing campaigns, what seems right might not be right and needs to be tested before launched in a big way. You need to make sure you test your promotion and the appeal of your partner before you go all out.

**4. Make Sure You Define the Rules Ahead of Time** - a cross promotion requires a lot of cooperation not only in how things are presented and communicated, but also where and at what time. Make sure you have a well defined agreement that covers all these aspects and make sure that your partner has accepted to undertake all the tasks you require so that the promotion works well for you. Conversely, make sure you take on the obligations you need to in order for it to be a win-win, while keeping in mind that over extending yourself could offset the balance and render the promotion costly (and therefore against your better interests).

**5. Make Sure to Celebrate the Successes** – keep in mind that many people become involved in a cross promotion and the comfort you project having with your partner makes it not only more fun for the customer, but also more genuine. For this reason, it is useful to celebrate the victories together and make an effort to take the two teams working together and give them a sense of unity and joint purpose.

**6. Make Sure to Track & Adjust** – again, you need to view the cross promotion as just another marketing tactic. Just because you have partnered with another company does not mean that the rules of the game have changed. Just as there is twice the chance of things going right, unfortunately there is also twice the chance of things going wrong. You need to make sure you are tracking performance and making adjustments to the message, channels and offer as indicated by market response.

Cross promotions are a great way to expand your reach and gain the benefit of the good reputation of another company. You need to make sure you are compatible in market, culture and appeal so that the market will view the partnership as logical. While not the topic of this article, cross promotions can also be implemented with non-profits and communal groups. While they may not have a customer base (although they have a constituency) the praise you can gain from doing a good thing could make it not only the right civic thing to do, but a good business move.

Cross promotions share the stage, but they make the audience bigger. They can be a smash production. Just make sure you and your partner are singing the same song.