

Title:

Web Coach Tip: How To Tap Local Markets Using The Yellow Pages In Addition To Your Website.

Word Count:

910

Summary:

12 Tips how to use the yellow pages to increase your profits by creating a stellar ad sure to have your phone ringing off the hook.

Keywords:

web design, web coaching, web marketing, yellow pages, advertising, marketing

Article Body:

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This week I'm adding the final touches to my Yellow Pages (YP) ad. Let me share my experience in this process with 12 tips for you to use.

#1 DON'T follow the advice of the YP sales rep about what to put in your ad. The sales rep is NOT a sales copywriter! Their main commission-based objective is selling you the ad space, not your bottom line. In the beginning my rep said "all the other web development companies have these features listed in their ad, you should too." I'm sure my clients in the South Pacific heard my mouth hit the floor! One of the most important aspects of YP advertising is being able to STAND OUT from your competition. So I politely thanked him for his suggestion: but I'm writing my own ad mister!

#2 Buy the LARGEST ad space you can afford. Size Matters! All of the web folks in my YP directory have purchased the 1 X 1 inch block with one color for \$79 a month. BORING! I can tell immediately that these web folks have very little marketing sense. This is fine by me because my dollar-bill-sized ad is 6 times larger, and only \$207 a month. Be sure to ask about ad specials; that's what I did and got a huge ad. (mine WAS a \$500 ad, but thru incentives I was able to get it down to \$207) The advantage of a larger ad is placement on the page. The largest ad usually gets placed on the top outer corner of the page, not stuck near the crease or middle of the book where statistics have proven a lower response rate.

#3 The Headline. This is CRUCIAL! Your Headline must be EXTRAORDINARY. People

scan the YP just like a newspaper so your headline had better be a good one. Remember folks scan ads asking themselves, "What's in it for me?" Remember; BENEFITS not features of your services and your Unique Selling Position. 5 elements of a USP are: Price, Product, Process, Service, and Marketing. Yours has to be different, better, and more appealing than all the others.

#4 Always, Always, Always have a GUARANTEE. A general guarantee is ok, but a PERSONAL guarantee means a lot more. Ie. If your not satisfied for any reason, we'll re-do our work and if you STILL aren't satisfied - I'll refund 100% of their money back.

#5 TESTIMONIALS, hello? A seriously under-used piece of marketing. Nothing sells your services better than a testimonial from a happy customer.

#6 The OFFER! Kill'em with kindness! Being kind or 'nice' softens the hard-sell aspect of your ad. My ad has two offers: one after my phone number that says "Free Friendly Advice". And the other is a valuable item for my niche market... "Free download - QuickStart Web Workbook". These two offers cover folks who don't have internet access and those who do, so folks can reach me easily.

#7 Always have a LOCAL phone number. Studies have shown that people are more drawn to the local phone number than a toll-free listing. If you want to get high-tech you can also have a toll free number to a special recorded "information line". This does two things. Weeds out the wrong type of customer and gives prospects you WANT to do business with more info about your services. This conveniently helps shorten your sales cycle. By listening to the recorded call, the customer is ready to hire you by the time they finally speak with you. (get really crafty in the beginning of the message and say "stay tuned for a special offer at the end of this message" this ensures they listen to the entire message and you can offer, say \$20 off or whatever.)

#8 Photos and graphics. Studies show that ads with photos do better than those that don't. Just make sure the photo you use is relevant to your service. Or, use YOUR photo next to your guarantee.

#9 CALL-TO-ACTION! Tell people exactly what to do. "Call now to schedule an appointment", "Call now for a complimentary coaching session", "Call today and we'll clean your carpet tomorrow"

#10. Build VALUE and CREDIBILITY. The overall message of your ad should evoke a direct response from the reader. Building value and credibility will almost always guarantee a response.

#11 DO NOT list your fees. Whatever you do, DO NOT list your price or fees in

the ad and makes you look cheap. Why? Because it discounts the value of your service. Then you get calls from folks who don't understand the true value of what you do asking "What do you charge?" By reading your ad value ridden ad, folks are more willing to pay what you're worth. Not to mention folks who DON'T WANT the cheapest guy out there and are willing to pay premium prices for quality. (Quick story: I was very pregnant - in the summer- my central air conditioning went out - I called the best looking ad in the yellow pages at 7pm - the guy fixed my air within 2 hours and only charged me \$67. I would have GLADLY paid \$567 - I wanted quality service - RIGHT NOW - and didn't care what it cost!)

#12 DO NOT put your name or logo at the top of your ad. Nor should they be larger in size than the headline. If your headline commands attention, the reader will grab a magnifying glass to find your business name and contact info if they have to.