



Effectiveness of Promotional Products



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EFFECTIVENESS OF PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

Promotional products have been used in marketing since the founding of the United States and have grown in popularity ever since. Does that popularity mean they work? Well, since people in essence do vote with their wallets, one could say a resounding yes to that question based on the fact that industry sales of promotional products now exceed \$20 billion annually. However, we don't have to just rely on the growing sales figures since a number of studies have been conducted showing the effectiveness of promotional products.

Tradeshows

Tradeshows are where many promotional products are distributed in the hopes of driving traffic to booths, helping to promote a product or service, and to say thank you to clients that make an effort to seek you out at these shows.

A study of the effectiveness of promotional products at tradeshows conducted by Georgia Southern University⁽¹⁾ showed that:

- 71.6% of attendees who received a promotional product remembered the name of the company that gave them the product.
- 76.3% of attendees had a favorable attitude toward the company that gave them the product.

Expanded Recollection

Have you ever wondered what happens to these items once they leave the tradeshow floor and what sort of lasting effect they may have? Is your product, your service, your brand, and your message remembered?

A more recent study done in 2009 and fielded through MarketTools Inc. in San Francisco, California⁽²⁾ evaluated the action, reaction and relationship of promotional products and their recipients.

Of an audience consisting of the average American consumer, a little less than half (44 percent or 1,005 people) reported receiving a promotional product in the last 24 months. Those 1,005 consumers comprised the final panel for the survey. All questions were answered by the 1,005 respondents.

Recall

Consumers are inundated with advertising messages, and the challenge for businesses is to find a way to cut through the clutter to not only reach their audience, but to resonate with them. And, according to the survey respondents in this study, promotional products do just that.

Respondents were asked to think of a promotional product they'd received in the past two years and to recall the specific product, the advertiser, and the message.

A whopping 76.2% recalled all three key pieces of information.

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Staying Power

Promotional products are powerful, both as effective forms of communication and as useable, necessary tools. The following results from the same survey reveal just how seamlessly promotional products integrate into life, impacting the daily routines of the recipients.

- 91% had at least one promotional product in their kitchen
- 74% had at least one promotional product in their work area

Product Perception

The primary reason cited by consumers for keeping a promotional product was:

- 92% product is useful

Other reasons cited include product is desirable, attractive, fun or unique (think creative design and color).

Bottom line, if you want effective use of promotional products you need to choose useful products with creative designs that are well made.

**92% of consumers
keep a promotional
product because
it is useful**

How Long Promotional Products Are Kept?

Good news: More than half (58 percent) of respondents keep promotional products for one year to more than four years. Even if the recipient uses the item only once per week, that's a minimum of 52 encounters with your brand made during the course of a year.

Promotional Products can enhance the effectiveness of other types of marketing.

Direct Mail

The packaging of promotional products can evoke curiosity as well as increase direct mail response rates. A 1993 study by Baylor University⁽³⁾ found that the use of dimensional mailers can significantly improve response rates over direct mail alone.

Findings

Dimensional mailings with a promotional product get the best response rates.

- Those who received a promotional product in a dimensional package responded at a rate that was 57% higher than those who received the same promotional product in an envelope.
- Response rates for the dimensional package recipients were 75% higher than for the group who received only a sales letter.

Direct Mail Response Rates from study:

- Sales Literature Alone: 1.9%
- Sales Literature + Promotional Product in envelope: 2.1%
- Sales Literature + Promotional Product Dimensional: 3.3%

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Print and Television Ad Campaign

A study utilizing the demographic group ages 18-34 years was conducted at Louisiana State University and University of Texas at San Antonio⁽⁴⁾ found that integrating a promotional product with a TV commercial and print advertisement was more effective than the use of promotional products alone, or TV commercials and print advertisements in combination.

While studies have not been done with social media to date, there are plenty of anecdotal cases of how promotional product from t-shirts and tech products to water bottles and mugs are being used to enhance social media engagement.

Conclusion

Promotional products not only work but they work synergistically with other forms of advertising. Based on that, you can see working with a company that understands and works with all forms of advertising can be a potentially huge benefit since integrating all of your advertising into a cohesive strategy has been demonstrated to bring these superior results. Make sure your promotional company has the expertise to help you improve your marketing results across the broad spectrum of your advertising budget.

Food for Thought

- Are you taking the time to strategically work promotional products into your marketing plans?
- Are you planning far enough in advance in order to get the best possible promotional product ideas that are customized specifically to your marketing themes?

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