



It's All In The Envelope

November 1, 1999 | Anonymous

"This has been the most successful promotion we've ever done," explains **Stan Evenson**, Evenson Design Group (Culver City, Calif), of the case study promos his firm has mailed out in recent months. "People that I've attempted to get in to see are actually calling me after receiving these mailings," he adds. The primary reason for the positive response is clear literally. The plastic sleeve allows recipients to see the case study featured inside before they even open it.

Peggy Woo, designer of the piece notes, At first we were going to send out a series of postcards featuring several of our projects, but then I got to thinking about it. Everybody throws away postcards, and they aren't very noticeable when they come in with the rest of the mail." So, instead, she latched onto the concept of creating official-looking case study folders and enclosing them in clear envelopes.

"Peggy asked me what I thought of using a plastic sleeve, and I thought it would be wonderful because it will be laying on someone's desk and get their attention instantly," Evenson recalls.

Each case study was designated with an official case number, and a challenge was posed on the folder with a simple question for its recipients: "What would you do?" The format for all the case studies states the assignment, the solution, and the results of the project in simple terms.

According to Evenson, it's important to post results when you are promoting your work. "So many designers don't talk about results because they are sometimes hard to track. We really spend a lot of time talking to our clients trying to find out what the results are, and it gives us an opportunity to share them - and that's something business people really relate to," he says.

The colors for each case study were determined by the colors used in the project, and bright stickers with clever phrases, such as "Contents are heavy," are used to seal the envelopes. "We were inspired by Publishers Clearinghouse," admits Woo. "We thought that was sort of tongue-in-cheek and fun, so our in-house writers took off with the concept."

A total of eight case studies were mailed out over a threemonth period, so clients and prospective clients received a hit about every week and a half Evenson had i,Soo of each mailer produced and sent out which cost \$1.2o apiece. To help warm up cold calls and turn prospects into clients, Morgan Shorey, owner and president of The List, a new business leads contact firm, offers these guidelines to creatives.

ESTABLISH A "LIGHTS OUT" NEW BUSINESS SYSTEM

Implement a system that works on autopilot and will continue to operate even when business is at its busiest. To do so, create a well-defined message that says who you are and what you do. Most importantly, Shorey recommends having on hand six to 12 months of material ready for mailing.

"Creatives need to remember that selfpromotion is like a machine that should continue to run even when business is good, and especially when they may not have the time to personally oversee its operation, says Shorey Anything that slows or stops the machine in the busy times, means having to regain lost momentum when business plateaus."

DON'T STOP COMMUNICATING

Shorey stresses frequency. "Objections are not rejections," she says. "Eighty percent of the time you'll hear, 'I have no need at this time' or 'I'm happy with my current arrangement! Frequency is being there on a regular basis so that eventually when the prospect develops a need, or his or her number one supplier leaves, they will think of you."

UNDERSTAND THE SALES CYCLE

Why do most self-promotions fail? According to Shorey, many new business efforts fail because those in the creative industry are not sales people and consequently, they often overlook the importance of the sales cycle. A pitch doesn't begin with the cold call. It begins with information gathering, followed by mailings that warm up the cold call." After the call, Shorey stresses follow-up and followthrough as the primary differences between being a pest and a professional sales person. "In the call, creatives need to get agreement on when to follow-up next. When they do that and set a date for the next contact, they won't be considered a pest."

FIGURE ON MONTHLY CONTACT

Finally, Shorey advises patience, citing that it takes six to twelve months to turn a corporate prospect into a client. During that time, she recommends a minimum of eight to twelve contacts, including a mailer, a call, an in-person meeting, another mailer, and so on. "Too often people get discouraged after just four or five contacts, or worse, they run out of stuff to send.

"On the bright side, once you put in the effort and turn a prospect into a paying client, the chances are great that they will remain your client for an average of two to four years," adds Shorey.

For more information, call 404/814-9969 or go to www.morganshorey.com.