



**“Here, YOU throw this away.”**

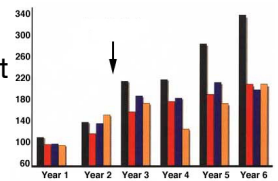
*Late Comedian Mitch Hedberg said that handing out flyers is like saying, “Here, YOU throw this away.”*

There is a better way. Give ‘em the goods, the promotional goods.

Used properly, promotional gifts and branded promotional products can have a lasting positive effect on customer service and keep the name of your business out-front in your community.

Pens, magnets, calendars, and other items are often shared, viewed by others, and are used consistently, giving your business viral exposure.

A study by the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI) shows that the ability of customers to recall the name of an advertiser on a promotional product they received (76 percent) was much better than their ability to recall the name of an advertiser from a print publication they had read in the past week (53.5 percent).



As opposed to a flyer or a mailing, potential customers are much less likely to throw away a useful item such as a mug, pen, mouse pad, or T-shirt. If they keep your item around, they are more likely to call you when the need arises.



According to PPAI, T-shirts are the most popular promotional items because they get high exposure. People wear them at the gym and on weekends. “Wearables,” as they are called in the promotional products industry, can cost a few dollars a piece, so you want to order a universal size, such as a men’s large, and tailor your order based on volume. Often, the price decreases as the quantity of items ordered goes up, so if you think your contact info will remain the same, it’s a good idea to order in bulk.

A much less expensive item is a pen, printed with your business name and contact information. Pens on special pricing can run as low as 15 cents, so they can be placed in envelopes for mass mailings or easily given out when customers are writing a check for your services. Statistics also show that a pen will have at least 8 owners in its lifetime of use, which can lead to increased business and name exposure.



Reusable shopping bags are also becoming an effective advertising and promotional option. Bags can be used for lunches, carryalls, and groceries. Indeed, according to the Advertising Specialty Institute (ASI), bags deliver the most impressions per month (1,038 on average) and, because they are useful products, they will be unlikely to be discarded. And, in this era of eco-friendliness, promoting a reusable bag shows that your business is environmentally consciousness – something more and more consumers are looking out for.

Calendars, magnets, and mouse pads are also effective items because, in addition to being inexpensive, they are usually placed in highly accessible locations, such as the center of the home (kitchens, offices) or at their place of work, so they are constantly visible to the customer. It is from these locations that customers will often make a call for a service provider, and your number will be the first that they see.

Another tactic is to distribute a promotional product that fits your niche of service. Battery testers, measuring tapes, multi-tool pocket knives, and flashlights can all be produced with your company's logo and can reinforce your brand identity.

While promotional products have many benefits, it's easy to get carried away and overspend. For example, if you are going to send out a product, mailing costs should be considered.—a magnet or small pen can fit into a standard envelope, but sending something larger may not be sensible or cost-effective. Larger gifts, such as t-shirts or mouse pads may need to be presented to customers in person.

Additionally, you want to make your spending proportionate to your expected return on investment. One effective option is to present a small item to potential customers who request an estimate. This way, your information will remain visible as the homeowner is making a decision. But if you have steady, solid client base that provides you with a significant amount of referrals, you may want to present these people with something more substantial, such as a wearable item or a coffee mug. Whatever item you decide to use should have your full contact information on it, especially your website and phone number.



So now that you realize the value of promotional items, where do you find them? Use a distributor you trust, call Chuck Muhl at FCM MARKETING.

## **PROMOTIONAL** Ideas And Case Studies

To view additional ideas, branded promotional products, sports apparel and marketing materials please visit us at [www.fcmmktg.com](http://www.fcmmktg.com). FCM can help you develop and design customer retention programs. Thank you.