

Creating a Newspaper Advertisement

Display Ads for Your Retail Business

By [Shari Waters](#), About.com

As a retailer, you have so many responsibilities to manage that I suggest using a professional to create your newspaper ad. You can find freelance copywriters, graphic design students or advertising agencies to assist you in creating an ad. Fees will vary and so will talent. Be sure to review portfolios of past work and detail in writing what exactly you expect to be done by the individual or agency creating your newspaper ad.

If you decide to do it yourself, play around with a graphics or word processing program on your computer to create what you want your ad to look like and the message you want to convey. Then take your art work to the newspaper agency (or your sales rep) and work with their graphic art designers to have them create a crisp, professional looking display ad.

Elements of a Good Newspaper Ad

As with any marketing, there is no guarantee that your ad will be successful. It may take testing and revising the ad several times until your objective is met. The following are elements which you can include in your ad to increase its effectiveness.

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- Attention-grabbing headline
 - Complete and concise copy
 - Simple format
 - A great offer
 - What your customers want to know
 - Urge the customer to act

When to Run a Newspaper Ad

I believe a retail business needs to consistently run a newspaper advertisement. Even if it is a small business card type of ad, it's important to keep your brand out there in front of your customer. There are also many special events that warrant running an additional or larger display ad. Retailers don't have to wait until the store is having a sale to place an advertisement in a newspaper. Consider running an ad for the following:

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- Grand Opening
 - Relocating
 - New Product Line
 - Hiring New Staff
 - Milestones (Store Anniversary, etc.)

The more an ad is run, the more it seen. The more the advertisement is seen, the more it is remembered. In other words, you should run an ad as often as your marketing budget will

allow. It's been my experience that you should not even consider running an ad under 6 weeks, unless it is for a huge, one-time event. Take advantage of the discount prices offered by the news agency for long-term advertising.

Measuring the Effectiveness

Before you can measure the effectiveness of a newspaper ad, be sure you know what you want to accomplish with each advertisement. Your purpose may be to increase sales or it may be to simply create brand awareness. Your goal may be difficult to calculate a response but you could run a different special or promotion in each publication you advertise with. Consider using a special code in the ad to determine which ad generates the most response. Don't forget to ask your customers how they found your business.

Consider keeping a folder with all of the advertising your retail business does each year.

Attach a copy of the [ad slick](#)¹ from the newspaper, along with the invoice, to a page of notes regarding the campaign. This will document the results, the dates the ad ran, the effectiveness and the lessons learned. The next time you're ready to run a newspaper ad, take out the folder and look through prior ads to know what to do and what not to do.

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