



# Topak's Response

Topak Marketing, Inc.

Specialists in direct marketing.

## How To Develop Effective Advertising Materials – Part 1

Here are some tips on how to develop a comprehensive marketing plan. This article is devoted to developing effective advertising materials AFTER you've developed your marketing plan.

*To get the most effective advertising materials possible, you need to be very detailed when you make the assignment.*

### Definition

The advertising materials used to sell your product should be a direct reflection of the information and objectives contained in your marketing plan.

### Impact On End Result

Obviously, effective advertising materials are critical to the success of your program and meeting goals outlined in your marketing plan.

### Advance Preparation

To get effective advertising materials, you need to be very detailed when you make the assignment. For example, you will need to supply as much background information as possible to the creative team, including but not necessarily limited to:

- A sample of your control kit if the new creative is to be tested against it.
- Samples of previous materials (both those sent to this audience and those used for this product).
- A sample of the policy fulfillment kit.
- Your competitive analysis (product and/or target market).
- Samples of the competition's advertising.
- Any market studies or research findings you have.
- Housefile profile(s), including any facts you have about your buyer profile.
- A copy of the record layout for your audience's database.

### Action Required

- Identify potential sources for providing creative services.
- Request proposals.
- Select your creative agency.
- Make the assignment.
- Review the concepts presented.
- Select the concept which is to be developed.
- Review the copy and layout.

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### How to Identify Potential Sources for Creative Services

- Has the vendor worked with your product before?
- If so, for what company(ies)?
  - Request Samples.
- Does the vendor have experience with your target or a similar market?
- If so, for what company(ies)?
  - Ask to see samples.
- How many people on the vendor's staff will be involved with your project?
- What are their individual qualifications?
- Request references from the vendor's other clients if you've never before worked with the vendor.

*Laying out the groundwork for your project helps you achieve the desired results quickly, economically and painlessly.*

### How To Select A Creative Agency

To select an agency for a specific project, consider the following:

- Does the agency understand your business?
- Does the agency understand your product?
- Does the agency know your target market?
- Does the agency know who your competition is?
- Does the agency have hands-on experience with the type of direct response services you need?
- Does the agency have sufficient staff to cover your needs?
- Is the agency willing to work on the first project with you without any strings or long-term requirements attached?

### What To Request In A Proposal For Creative Services

In order to request a proposal from a vendor, you must first provide all essential information. This should include a copy of your marketing plan. (Withhold any confidential information that may be included in that plan.)

- Spell out what services you want – the number of concepts and how they are to be presented ... the format you want for manuscript copy ... the type of comprehensive layout ... typesetting and electronic files ... production services, etc.
- Tell the vendor what you do NOT want.
- Ask for a written proposal that includes:
  - A reiteration of the assignment.
  - A brief outline as to how the creative will be developed.
  - A list of all services to be provided.
  - The estimated costs for all services.
  - A detailed timetable.

### How To Make The Assignment

After you select your creative agency, request a comprehensive concept presentation, including:

- A project overview and reiteration of the objectives and assignment.
- Any recommendations or special considerations.
- For each kit presented:
  - a general rationale of kit format and copy platform.
  - explanation of each kit component.
  - explanation of colors and graphics to be used.
  - a full size dummy of each component in each concept.
  - headlines and lead-in copy for key components.
  - visual depiction of the concept that indicates color and the overall feel of the package.
  - basic production specifications.
  - a statement as to whether the concept meets your objectives and budget considerations ■