

Advertising 101

Get the most from your Yellow Pages advertisement with creative ideas that work

When consumers are looking for a place to eat they often let their fingers do the walking in the Yellow Pages. That's one reason why placing a well-designed ad in the Yellow Pages has proven to be one of the most effective ways of attracting new business. As a result, the restaurant section of the Yellow Pages is now one of the largest categories. But with the increased competition, operators must be careful that their ad doesn't get lost in the crowd. To create a unique and innovative ad that stands out from the competition, follow these simple guidelines:

Consider the Cost — Although Yellow Page ads can be very expensive, and may often take up a large chunk of your advertising budget, if done correctly they can produce outstanding results. Remember that because the Yellow Pages are distributed regionally and can communicate your company's message to each individual, a large ad will command a higher price tag. On the other hand, larger ads also command more attention, meaning the potential for new customers often outweighs the cost.

Study the Competition — Research the competition by searching the Yellow Pages for ads which catch your eye. These are the ones that your ad will have to stand out against. Try photocopying each ad to compare them and determine what makes them effective. Whether it's the use of colour or a catchy headline, each ad has already proven itself to be effective simply by the fact that you took notice of it.

Your Ad is Your Image — When it comes to advertising, nothing counts more than the first impression. So whether you add a logo or use colour,

make sure your ad convinces potential customers to read it.

Offer the Right Information — One of the biggest mistakes operators make when creating a Yellow Page ad is

assuming consumers will call for information that is not in the ad. More than half the people reading the ad will assume that if you don't list it, you don't do it. For example, don't assume customers will call to see if you do catering unless you tell them you do. Consumers will also want to know the basics, such as your location (including directions or a map), hours of operation and menu or pricing information. Also include vital information such as the

restaurant name and telephone number, services such as delivery, parking, catering or meeting facilities, and whether there is a dress code or reservations are required.

Track Your Response — Judge the effectiveness of your ad in generating new business by tracking consumer response. Start by asking patrons who call where they heard about your business. Another way to track response is by putting a coupon in your advertisement. Each time you receive a response, record it in your log book to determine if your ad is actually attracting the business. ☎



Diane Chiasson, FCSI, president of Toronto-based Chiasson Consultants Inc., is a foodservice and retail merchandising and marketing specialist who has worked with high-profile restaurants, major hotel and restaurant chains for the past 20 years. Contact her at (416) 926-1338 or (888) 926-6655; fax (416) 921-6994; or e-mail chiasson@interlog.com. Her website address is: <http://www.chiassonconsultants.com>

EFFECTIVE DESIGN TIPS

- **Keep it Simple** — Instead of cluttering up your ad with excess copy and graphics, keep enough open space to direct the eye. Also avoid reverse type or use it only sparingly as people find it hard to read.
- **Use Copy to your Advantage** — Ad copy should be concise, impactful and direct. Keep it simple and easy to read.
- **Check your Fonts** — Instead of using an overly stylistic font choose one that is classic and clean. If people have difficulty reading the text they usually don't bother. People also find headlines in all capital letters difficult to read.
- **Size Matters** — Larger ads tend to attract more attention.
- **Check the Design** — Follow the basic principles of reading to create design which leads the eye around the ad.
- **Use Pictures** — A picture can attract attention to your advertisement.
- **Make it Colourful** — While adding colour is costly, it's worth the extra expense because of the attention it commands.