

# Marketing Your Sewing Business Through Print Advertising

Production of children's clothing, formal wear, home furnishings, or crafts forms the core of many sewing businesses. Most are operated by a single individual from her or his home. Other sewing businesses employ several people who work on site or in their homes. Sewing businesses in both categories tend to be small operations with little money to devote to marketing activities. A small sewing business needs a good marketing campaign just as much as any other business.

In the early stages of growing a business, sewing entrepreneurs may rely on the patronage of family members and friends. This gives the new business the jump-start it needs to grow. As the business expands, a more advanced marketing approach is needed to reach people outside of the small business owner's personal network.

*Marketing* is a very broad term that includes pricing, promotion, and distribution of products and services in order to satisfy company objectives and consumer needs. Marketing methods range from selling at fairs

and trade shows to sponsoring community events. According to marketing experts, print advertising is basic to any marketing campaign. Print advertising is one of the most widely used and effective marketing methods for small businesses. A small sewing business can look just as sophisticated as a large business in a print ad. Contrary to popular belief, a small marketing budget is not a handicap to effective marketing. Advertisements can be developed and distributed inexpensively by small establishments.

To be effective, an advertisement needs only to be written and placed so that it reaches the right audience with a motivating message. This publication will focus on writing and placing print ads. The pointers outlined will help small sewing businesses use print ads effectively.

## What Is Print Advertisement?

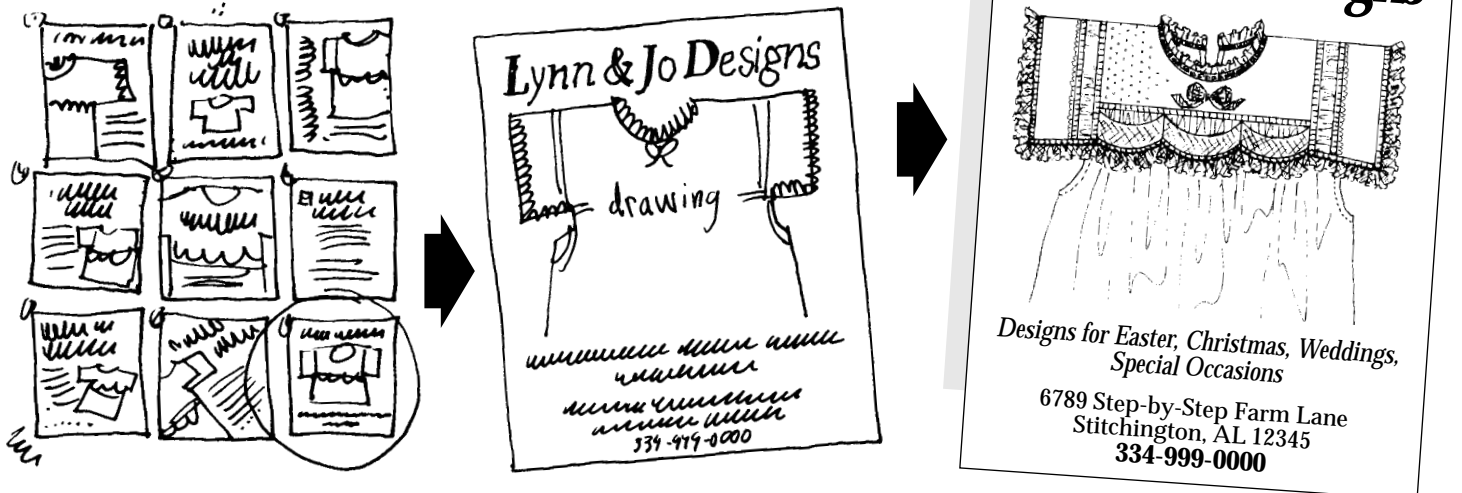
Before considering ways to develop and distribute a print advertisement, let us consider what a print ad is.

### Benefits Of Advertising:

- Change brand loyalty.
- Create a new demand.
- Educate and inform.
- Reach the undecided.
- Reinforce existing decisions.
- Heighten customer consciousness.
- Enlarge the market.

A print advertisement is a message designed to let people know what you have to sell, how they might benefit from it, and how they can do business with you. Ads are flexible and can be targeted to specific groups in a community. A well-written ad is brief, straightforward, and contains only the information most relevant for creating interest in your business. The two major types of print ads are display and classified. A third less common type is the scatter ad. Entrepreneurs can purchase space for ads in three major kinds of publications: newspapers, magazines, and directories.

### Stages of Ad Development



## Types Of Advertisements

**Display ads** include text, artwork, and a border. This type of ad not only informs but incorporates creativity. A clever heading is usually added to capture attention. Complementary artwork and borders convey your business image.

**Classified ads** consist of a few well-written lines of text. Classified ads are designed to be brief and to the point. Most contain a few concise statements and no artwork. Some words may be abbreviated to save space and money.

**Scatter ads** look like display ads but are much smaller. Scatter ads are only one-twelfth or one-sixth of a page in size, while a single display ad can be large enough to cover an entire page. A scatter ad includes artwork and text. Scatter ads generate an immediate reaction. One type of scatter ad begins by stating a problem and goes on to tell where to get help. For example, an ad might say "Haven't a thing to wear?" or "Problems fitting pants?" A scatter ad can be used instead of a display ad.

### Where To Place Advertisements:

Daily newspapers.  
Weekly newspapers.  
Monthly newspapers.  
Quarterly newspapers.  
Shopping and entertainment guides.  
School papers.  
Trade journals.  
Ethnic and neighborhood papers.  
Circulars.  
Hand bills.  
Bulletin boards.  
Yellow Pages.  
Business directories.  
Industry magazines and journals.

**Make It With Your Own Loving Hands**

Custom needlework is more than special; it's precious when made by your own loving hands. Learn to make exquisite needlework projects from experienced instructors.

**Classes Available:**

- Embroidery (including silk ribbon)
- English smocking
- French handsewing

**All Classes include:**

- Experienced instructor
- Easy-to-use patterns
- Illustrated instructions
- Fine fabrics, laces, thread

**Call today to register**

Loving Hands Needlework, 7777 Spool Street, Sewsmart, AL 70701  
Telephone (334) 055-1177

Display ad

**NOT HAPPY WITH YOUR WARDROBE ?**  
Fashion Consulting and Sewing can fix that.  
**UNIQUE SERVICES** for the woman who wants a coordinated wardrobe **MADE JUST FOR HER.**  
Your choice of pattern, fabric, and trimmings.  
**CUSTOM FIT -- SUPERB CRAFTSMANSHIP.**  
For appointment call Ann Doe (107) 555-7011.  
Weekdays 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Located 717 Stitches Ave.,  
Freedom, AL 71110.

Classified ad

### Display Ads Versus Classified Ads

#### Display ads

- are more expensive than classified ads.
- work especially well for products or services associated with easily recognizable names.

#### Classified ads

- work best for specialty, professional, and educational services.
- are more basic in appearance than display ads.
- are read by people who have already identified a need. As a result, classified ads produce a more immediate response.
- are cheaper and less commercial than display ads. When trying to reach the general public, use a classified ad before trying a display ad.

## Types Of Publications

Newspapers, magazines, and directories offer opportunities to publish advertisements. Each type of publication serves a different purpose. Consider pros and cons of placing an ad.

**Newspapers** may be distributed throughout a community or circulated to a small segment of the community. This gives you the advantage of targeting certain groups with advertising. However, newspapers have a short life-span. Readers are likely to see the ad only once before getting rid of the paper, and this can be a disadvantage. An ad can be seen more frequently if it's placed in daily or weekly newspapers.

**Magazines** are particularly beneficial if color and texture are important selling features. For example, magazine photographs can show the true color and texture of fabrics. The life-span of a magazine is longer than that of a newspaper. People tend to keep magazines for several months and spend a lot of time reading the ad section. Special interest magazines, designed for people involved in a particular hobby or pastime, like knitting, craft-making, or French handsewing, enable you to target advertising. Industrial magazines reach people employed in particular industries such as needletrades or interior decorating. Industrial magazines provide timely information about suppliers of equipment and other resources.

**Directories** may be general or industry specific. The Yellow Pages represent a general directory, containing ads from a variety of businesses organized by category. Yellow Pages are targeted to the general public within a specific geographical area. Industry-specific business direc-

tories are designed for suppliers and producers in a particular industry. Ads are organized by geographical area, product or service type, or some other category. Most of the people who see ads in the Yellow Pages or a business directory will be seeking to fulfill a certain need. The general public is not likely to see ads in industrial directories.

## Setting Goals For Your Business

Never advertise just to keep the name of your business before the public. Advertise only if it helps to achieve your business goals. To set goals, think through your current situation:

- What is your current position in the marketplace?
- Where is the potential growth in the marketplace?
- What is the best approach to protecting or expanding your market share?
- Who are the customers you want to reach?

Based on your current situation, identify your most immediate goal. For most new businesses an immediate goal is to cover monthly expenses. Consider the number of customers you will need to bring in to meet the goal. What amount do you need in sales to achieve the goal? Concentrate your efforts on immediate needs first.

Once immediate needs are satisfied, turn your attention to more long-term goals. A long-term goal would be to break even for the year. To reach this goal, select methods that allow you to reach a segment of the market you have not reached before. Other long-term goals might be to gain a certain percentage of market share, build your business image, or establish your reputation as an expert. Choose marketing methods that are consistent with your goals, product or service, target market, and budget.

## Does Your Business Sell Services Or Products

To determine where to put your print advertising efforts, consider whether your business sells products or services.

Sewing businesses that sell services such as dressmaking, alterations, or window treatments depend on a pool of local customers. These and other service businesses require direct contact between seller and buyer. Newspapers, regional magazines, and the Yellow Pages reach people who live in the area surrounding your business.

Sewing businesses that sell products like patterns, books, fabrics, and sewing notions do not require direct contact between seller and buyer; therefore, potential customers who live in neighboring states or across the country can be targeted effectively. Nationally distributed consumer and special interest magazines allow you to reach potential customers over a wide geographical area. Industrial magazines and business directories are used by wholesale buyers in a specific industry.

## Who Is Your Target Group?

Before placing an ad, identify your target market and determine how to reach them. Service-oriented businesses sell directly to the person who will use the service. Some product-oriented businesses also sell directly to consumers who will use the product. However, these businesses may also sell to wholesale buyers who will resell the product to consumers.

A marketing campaign must be designed with the target group in mind. To reach consumers directly, advertise services and products in a variety of local newspapers, circulars, consumer magazines, the Yellow Pages, or appropriate business directories. To reach wholesale buyers place ads in the Yellow Pages and in relevant industry newspapers, business directories, and industrial magazines.

## Service-Oriented Businesses Versus Product-Oriented Businesses

### Service-oriented Businesses

- sell directly to consumers who will use the service.
- advertise in local newspapers, consumer magazines, special interest magazines, and the Yellow Pages.

### Product-oriented businesses

- sell to consumers who will use the product.
- sell to wholesale buyers who will resell the product.
- reach wholesale buyers with ads in industrial magazines, business directories, and industry newspapers.

## Choose A Publication For Your Ad

When deciding whether to use newspapers, magazines, or directories for your ad, find out where your competition advertises and do the same. Chances are if businesses similar to yours advertise in a particular publication, it will work well for you too. Look at a variety of different publications in the chosen category. Take note of how the ads look and what they say. Notice what attracts your attention and what type of ad provokes a response. Include the best elements in your ad.

Talk with other sewing entrepreneurs at meetings, conventions, and other events. You can learn which publications pay off for small sewing businesses and which ones do not.

Before investing in advertising, request a reader's profile from the publication's advertising office. You want to reach prospects, not just people. Prospects are people who want or need your product or service. To avoid wasting advertising dollars, place ads in publications that target your specific prospects. Do not try to reach everyone but concentrate on those most likely to purchase your service or product. Examine articles and advertisements in the publication to get a feel for the audience that it reaches. Design an ad that will be attractive to that particular audience.

Test to find out which type of publication is most effective. Place coded ads in several publications. A code will allow you to trace inquiries back to a particular ad. For example, include your full name in one ad but

use an initial or your first name only in another. For example, Ann Doe, A. Doe, or Ann. By tracking which ad results in the most inquiries, you will know which is doing the best job of attracting customers.

## Design Your Ad

As a business owner, you will want an ad that is designed to show your business in the best light. Many newspaper or magazine companies will have a technical writer or artist on staff to assist you in preparing the ad. But remember, no one knows your business and its products or services better than you. Only you know what message or image you want to convey to readers. Allow newspaper staff to help you design an ad, but maintain control yourself.

Start by reading ads in the publication you are considering. You will want to create an ad that is similar in size but stands out from competitors with its own distinct message and style. Here are some pointers to help you make wise choices, whether designing an ad yourself or with the help of a writing professional.



## Designing Display Ads

Advertising copy for display ads should be simple and easy to understand. Write from the orientation of the reader in a newsy fashion.

Include three parts in the copy:

- A headline that gets attention.
- Artwork that is complementary to the headline.

- Text that is informative.

Text should include:

- Product/service benefits.
- Business address—street or PO box.
- Telephone number and fax number.

• Special product or service features: superior product, on-time delivery, volume discounts, reliable service, unique style, convenience, friendly service, personal attention, reasonable prices.

When writing text:

- Use short headlines.
- Leave some white space.
- Use regular talk. Try not to sound fancy or like a commercial.
- Include bare-bones facts.
- Try to create word pictures.
- Use a few adjectives to motivate.
- Take a “you” approach rather than a “me” or “we” approach.

The location of a newspaper ad influences the number of people who see it. Ask to have your ad located:

- On the right-hand page.
- On the top half of the page.
- In the main news section of the newspaper.
- In the Sunday, Monday, or Saturday paper. Avoid Wednesday and Thursday because of sale ads.
- In the newspapers where your competitors advertise.
- In the section where products and services similar to yours are advertised.

## Designing Classified Ads

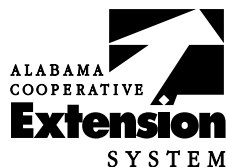
Though it will cost more, do not skimp on words when writing a classified ad. Give the reader enough details to make a decision. Give specifics. Rather than saying, "Better fit" say, "Made to fit your body's dimensions."

Emphasize benefits to the customer instead of features and characteristics. Describe benefits from the point of view of the customer. Identify specific needs, desires, or problems that the product or service can help solve. If you can satisfy a desire for one-of-a-kind clothing, say so. If your specialty is making draperies to fit odd-shaped windows, let readers know. If your products are made for people who have trouble finding quality handcrafted gifts, do not keep it a secret. These are benefits that potential customers will want to know about.

Use words that make an impact: *new, proven, free, save, convenient, improved, best, dependable, complete, time-saving, guaranteed, effective.*

## The Cost Of Advertising

As a business owner, you will want to know the true cost of placing an ad before making a commitment.



### HE-732

**Carol B. Centrallo**, *Extension Apparel and Textile Management Specialist*, Assistant Professor, Consumer Affairs

Business names used in this publication are fictitious and used **only** to provide examples. Any resemblance to actual businesses is coincidental and not the responsibility of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

**For more information**, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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UPS, 5M12, New 2:96, HE-732

## Cost Of Display Ads

The standard used to determine the cost of placing a display ad in a newspaper or magazine is *cost per thousand* or CPM. CPM tells you what it will cost to have 1,000 subscribers see your ad. To calculate CPM, divide the newspaper's or magazine's circulation by 1,000. Circulation refers to the number of people who subscribe to or purchase a publication. The following examples show how to calculate CPM.

### Example #1:

Newspaper circulation is 50,000, and the ad costs \$500.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{CPM} &= \frac{\text{Cost of ad}}{\text{Number of thousands circulation}} \\ &= \frac{\$500}{50} \\ &= \$10 \end{aligned}$$

It will cost \$10 for 1,000 subscribers to see your ad.

### Example #2:

Magazine circulation is 100,000, and ad costs \$900 (cost of full-page black and white magazine ad).

$$\begin{aligned} \text{CPM} &= \frac{\text{Cost of ad}}{\text{Number of thousands circulation}} \\ &= \frac{\$900}{100} \\ &= \$9 \end{aligned}$$

It will cost \$9 for 1,000 subscribers to see your ad.

In the examples, the magazine ad has a higher cost, but its CPM is lower. Reaching 1,000 subscribers with the magazine ad costs only \$9 compared to \$10 with the newspaper ad.

Use CPM to compare the cost of different advertising sources. But don't let cost be the only factor in your decision about where to place your ad. Place your ad where it will reach the greatest number of people who want or need your product or service.

## Cost Of Classified Ads

If you decide to purchase a classified ad, the actual cost will be based on the number of words, lines, or

inches required. When trying to save money, avoid the temptation to skimp on words. Use as many words as necessary to communicate clearly.

Save money on a classified ad by taking advantage of frequency discounts. A frequency discount allows you to run an ad several times at a lower rate. The more often the ad is run, the lower the cost. For example, the cost to run an ad once might be \$12, the cost of three insertions might be \$10 each, and the cost of five insertions might be \$8 each. A small business should start with a community newspaper which is cheaper than a regional newspaper. Use a successful ad over and over again to get the most out of it.

## Cost Of Directory Ads

To determine the cost of ads in the Yellow Pages and business directories, obtain an advertising rate card from the publisher. Compare the circulation, advertising fee, and anticipated life of the publication.

## What To Expect

Marketing experts caution that marketing involves trial and error. No one can predict how successful an ad will be. Here are a few suggestions to improve your chances of success:

- Start small. Place several small ads in different publications rather than one large expensive one. You will make mistakes in the beginning. Everyone does. Make sure that your mistakes are not expensive ones.
- Give an ad time to work. An ad usually needs to be seen more than once.
- When an ad pays for itself, repeat or enlarge it.
- If the ad gets only a minimal response, rewrite the copy to highlight a different benefit. Experiment with rewriting until an ad brings in at least three times its cost.
- Do not continue to run ads that do not work. Change the ad or place it in another publication or type of publication.
- You will grow more comfortable with each success.

## Conclusion

Print advertising is more than letting people know where your sewing business is located. Use print advertising to provoke an immediate response from real prospects. Select publications that will help you achieve this goal. Then carefully design an ad for your service or product.

## References

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## sample ads

Introducing  
Some Old  
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Mary Roberts is delighted to introduce you to more of her quilting designs. These designs date back to a simpler time and have been gleaned from some of the most beautiful quilts in her collection. You can obtain these designs by calling 1-800-777-0000 or visiting Mary in her Mountain Ridge, Alabama, shop.

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