

# Promotional Products in Action

Find out how promotional products  
work for every kind of business.

## Promotional products are everywhere.

Look around at your next convention, charity event, or trade show. You'll notice that every business hands out promotional products—water bottles, key chains, pens, t-shirts, tote bags, and much more. **Promotional products spread brand awareness and make a positive impression on your audience.** Businesses of all types and sizes benefit from incorporating promotional products into their marketing plans.

### Why promotional products?

Promotional products are among the most effective advertising tools. They yield more brand impressions per dollar than television ads and print ads. They're ranked as highly as digital marketing and radio. They also excel when it comes to longevity. Unlike other forms of advertising, consumers tend to hang onto promotional products for several months.

The reason promotional products are so effective is that they make consumers happy. The vast majority of people love to get stuff for free, especially physical items that engage their senses and meet one or more of their daily needs. Promotional products also have the advantage of being highly shareable. The more a recipient likes a promotional product, the more he or she will use it, talk about it, and pass it on.

Promotional products feel personal. Think about it: They involve a direct, person-to-person exchange between a business and a consumer. All promotional products become physical reminders of good brand experiences. Further, many businesses use promotional products in conjunction with marketing events—grand openings, conventions, trade shows, sponsored sports tournaments, and more. Not only

do recipients enjoy the products, they also continue to enjoy memories of the event where they received it. There's no better way to create positive associations between your brand and a cause or event.

Great promotional products are brand representatives—physical representations of your company's unique style and message. Promotional product buyers have an incredible freedom of choice. With thousands of types, styles, and price points to choose from, it's possible to find the perfect product to represent your brand and appeal to specialized audiences. You can tailor your message to any occasion and reach potential customers in a personal, authentic way.



### Look at these numbers.

The numbers don't lie. According to the 2014 Global Advertising Specialties Impressions Study, promotional products continue to make a huge impact worldwide. Promotional products are among the most cost effective marketing tools, making them an affordable option for businesses of every size. They cost an average of only six cents per brand impression, and some varieties—like bags—cost even less. Compared to other forms of advertising, that's a real bargain.

In addition to being cost effective, promotional products remain popular with consumers and generate positive attitudes about brands. They also have excellent staying power, continuing to make positive brand impressions for much longer than print ads, online marketing, radio spots, and other advertising media.

- **83% of U.S. consumers report** that they enjoy receiving promotional products.
- **4 in 10 plan on doing business** with companies after receiving promotional products.
- **57% have more positive attitudes** about companies that give out promotional shirts.
- **80-95% recall the company or brand** on their promotional t-shirts.

## Promotional Products Stick Around



Number of Months Promotional Items are Kept

Advertising Specialty Institute

### Reaching different audiences.

Promotional products give business owners and marketing professionals absolute creative freedom when it comes to finding ways to appeal to consumers. Let's take a look at drinkware, a popular promotional

product category that includes a wide range of styles. See how different varieties speak to different demographics and audiences.

#### Ceramic Coffee Mug

Office workers who spend money on gourmet coffee drinks.

#### Basic Squirt Bottle

Athletes and sports fans whose primary concern is hydration.

#### Neoprene Canteen

Competitive runners and bikers who seek out the latest performance gear.

#### Large Insulated Tumbler

People with demanding physical jobs.

#### Infuser Water Bottle

Health conscious individuals who stay abreast of nutrition trends.



## The Best of the Best

Promotional products encompass an unbelievable variety of items: Apparel, drinkware, food, décor, tech gifts, fitness gear, and much more. Here are the most popular promotional products—the ones that perform the very best.

### The Most Impressions in the U.S.



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- **Pens:** 56% of U.S. consumers own logoed writing instruments.
- **Shirts:** 48% of U.S. consumers own logoed shirts.
- **Bags:** 34% own logoed bags. Bags are the best performers, generating 5,700 brand impressions each in the U.S. alone.
- **Headwear:** an average of 25% own caps and hats. These generate 3,136 impressions.
- **Desk and Office Accessories:** 22% own logoed accessories, and 61% of these accessories are kept at work. Most consumers report keeping them for over a year.
- **Drinkware:** 25% of U.S. consumers own branded drinkware
- **USB Drives:** 91% of recipients keep USB drives because they are useful.

## Every business can benefit.

Statistics are wonderful, but what about the real world? **How can YOUR business leverage promotional products to reach new customers and generate more revenue?** The truth is, any type of business can incorporate promotional products into its marketing campaigns and see real results. It doesn't matter if you're a small startup or a Fortune 100 company.

**Let's look at three very different businesses that successfully use promotional products to engage their communities and enhance their bottom lines.**

### The New Family Business

*The Old Factory Coffee Shop  
Orange City, IA*



This is the quintessential local business: a husband and wife team runs a coffee shop that serves residents and students in their small community. After purchasing Old Factory in 2014, the couple sought to breathe new life into the shop.

One of their primary goals has always been to create a comfortable, modern ambience. From the very beginning, the owners knew that they needed to incorporate promotional products into their business. They started by ordering logoed coffee mugs that fit the shop's new look. Since social media is a huge part of the coffee shop experience, they knew that these mugs—and their logo—would appear in their customers' social media feeds.

On of the business owners explains:

“ We wanted engagement with our shop to be thoughtful and easy; we wanted to have instant recognition. And we wanted every photo and angle to produce a feeling of well thought out design. ”

The business owners are always on the lookout for opportunities to promote. They decided to launch a social marketing campaign around a new coffee drink on their menu—the Double Dutch.

#### *The Strategy.*

The business owner coordinated their promotion with a community festival that brought a lot of foot traffic by their shop. They served up Double Dutch coffee drinks and handed out bright orange branded sunglasses to every patron. In addition, they created a hashtag (#igotdoubledutched) to encourage customers to share their pictures on social media.

#### *The Results.*

In addition to selling many, many Double Dutches, the Old Factory Coffee Shop cemented itself as a destination within its community. The business owner saw a huge bump in their social media networks

as customers began to post pictures of themselves enjoying Double Dutches out of branded mugs and sporting their new sunglasses. These sunglasses continue to generate brand impressions months after the promotion.

### The Mature Regional Business

*Main Electric Supply Co.  
Southern California*



Main Electric Supply Co. is a utility company that provides electricity to several major metropolitan areas in Southern California. Established in 1946, Main Electric has a strong foothold in the region and has a lot of influence over the residents it serves. It's a pillar of the community, which is why it's so important to take a proactive role in organizing events for promotion and outreach.

For the past seven years, Main Electric has

hosted an annual golf invitational to raise money for a good cause and give back to the community. The popular event brings local businesses together to engage the public with fun activities and giveaways. It also strengthens the utility company's public image and boosts brand awareness with plenty of positive PR.

### *The Strategy.*

Main Electric Supply Co. strives to organize a luxurious, fun event that rewards participants on every level. It takes place at one of the most scenic golf courses in the area, and each hole has some sort of prize or reward—from big ticket items like Mac-Book Pros to delicious refreshments and golf-themed giveaways. The entire course was customized with creative promotional products that featured the largest sponsor's logo in addition to Main Electric's. There were branded bags, balls, literature, backdrops, signage for holes, and ball cleaning kits with tees and towels.

This year, Main Electric's golf invitational had a different cause marketing twist: a fun "golf ball drop" to raise donations for the Wounded Warrior Project. Participants bought numbered golf balls—branded ones of course—which were loaded into a helicopter and scattered over the course. Those whose golf balls landed closest to the holes received special prizes. Everyone got to keep their Main Electric golf balls and promotional items.

### *The Results.*

There was plenty of media coverage of the event, which ensured that Main Electric got the press it deserves. Proceeds from the Main Electric golf ball drop raised \$1400 for the Wounded Warrior Project. Main Electric strengthened its reputation as a well-re-

spected business known for its generosity. Its customers feel overwhelmingly positive about doing business with a company that uses its considerable influence to help others.

By supporting other vendors who sponsored the event, Main Electric forged lasting relationships with other companies and benefitted the entire community.

## **The Large Corporation**

### *A major U.S. insurance provider*

What about the big players? What about the national (and international) corporations that dominate their chosen industries and serve millions of consumers? Even the biggest, most influential businesses use promotional products to kick off new initiatives and create positive brand experiences. As large corporations, they must meet increasing market demands and reach out to new customers. Just like small and mid-sized businesses, they must also stay relevant to their audiences and reinvest in the communities they serve.

Large insurance companies are especially adept at using promotional products in their marketing campaigns. They frequently use branded gifts and giveaways to reach out to health care providers and patients. Look around next time you visit your doctor. Odds are, the office is full of promotional products like pens, clipboards, business card holders, and more.

In the last few years, wellness initiatives have become extremely popular with insurance providers. Not only do they lower health care costs, but they also provide unique opportunities to help consumers live healthier, happier lives. Wellness initiatives are great PR, too. They generate brand awareness and increase customer

satisfaction. Promotional products are a key component of any wellness initiative.

### *The Strategy.*

The best way to encourage healthy habits is to focus on the positive. Instead of asking patients to restrict certain foods, insurance companies offer healthy alternatives—usually in the form of upbeat, informative literature and supplementary promotional products. For example, to encourage customers to drink more water instead of sugary drinks, a company will pass out branded water bottles that make it easy to stay hydrated without visiting the vending machine. The same goes for encouraging regular physical activity. Some insurance companies reward their customers with financial incentives if they meet certain fitness goals, like taking 15,000 steps per day. Promotional products like branded pedometers and workout gear support meeting these goals.

### *The Results.*

Employers that implement wellness initiatives at work see much lower insurance premiums, and these savings are often passed down to employees. Insurance companies who organize such initiatives also see financial benefits because their customers embrace healthy habits that prevent many costly illnesses.

Promotional products work in conjunction with helpful information and rewards to encourage customers to make their wellness a priority. Useful and stylish, these branded products give recipients incentives to eat better, drink more water, and stay active. Each time these items are used in public, the insurance company's brand is associated with healthy living, fitness, and fun.

## **Are you ready to add promotional products to your successful business strategy?**

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