

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING FOR



YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

Advertising can drive traffic, sales, and awareness to your business and help convince people to consider and choose you when making a purchase. Before you start advertising, here are five things to know to help you be more successful.



1. ADVERTISING 101

Let's start with the basics. Advertising is a tool that can help you promote your goods and services, drive sales, and is part of your larger marketing plan. Because today's consumers are essentially bombarded with messaging throughout their daily lives, the ability to promote your products or services in multiple ways on multiple platforms can help your small business be competitive in a crowded landscape.

2. FIND THE RIGHT PLATFORMS

There are myriad ways to advertise your small business, ranging from free to very expensive. Many small businesses don't have the budget to invest in traditional television or even national media print ads, but that doesn't mean your advertising won't be effective.

Here are a few methods to consider:

BUSINESS CARDS: these cost relatively little to print and are easily portable. Hand them out to friends and family, while networking with other business owners, and at local events to spread the word about your business.

LOCAL LISTING SERVICES: online directories like Google Business allow you to create a free business profile, so your company shows up in maps, searches, and more.

REVIEWS: follow up with customers and ask them to leave a positive review on social media, Google, or a review aggregator like Yelp.

DIRECT MAIL: using low-cost printed postcards or flyers, target your local community with special offers, announcements, or sales events.

PAY-PER-CLICK (PPC) ADS: these are ads that appear in search engine results or as display banners on sites across the web. They are relatively low-cost, and you only pay when someone clicks your ad, helping your ad dollars to go further. Google Ads is the most prevalent PPC platform, but you can also work with Amazon, Microsoft Advertising, and more.

SOCIAL MEDIA: platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and LinkedIn offer various tools and templates to reach your audience. In fact, Facebook offers eight different ad types to choose from.

YOUTUBE: 74% of U.S. adults used it in 2020,¹ and it's considered the world's most popular video-sharing platform. Creating video content can add to your costs considerably, so this could be a more expensive way to advertise.



3. SET GOALS

No matter how you choose to advertise your small business, Synchrony experts recommend you establish benchmarks and goals as part of the planning process to help measure the value of your campaigns. Selecting a specific goal allows you to focus on the effectiveness of the ad and can help you test new ads in the future. For example, if you set a goal to bring 20 new customers into your store, you can try different ad channels, messages, and offers to get to that goal. Upon meeting your goal, you can set a new one and employ the successful advertising strategy at a larger scale or with a different audience.



4. CREATE COMPELLING ADS

Once you've set your goal, you can use it to build the messaging that you will use in your ad. Is your goal to drive traffic into your store, boost online sales, or increase downloads on your website? Craft a message using text (called copy) that encourages that specific behavior.



**BE SURE TO INCLUDE A BRIEF
CALL TO ACTION THAT CREATES
A SENSE OF URGENCY:**



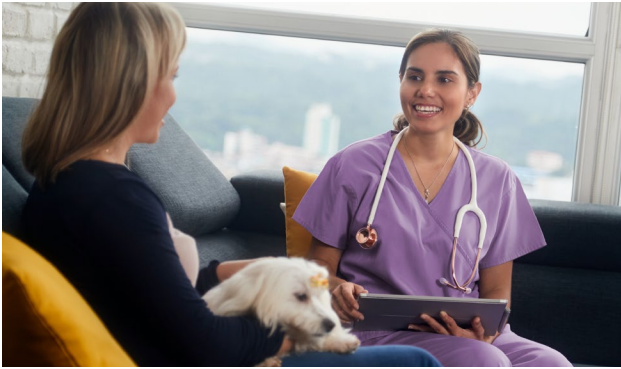
- Get started today
- Buy now
- Last chance: 25% off
- Shop these deals today

**When writing persuasive copy,
here are some things to keep in mind:**

- Your product or service meets a customer need or solves a pain point—make it clear what that is and include all relevant details and benefits (e.g., “15% off!” instead of “big sale!”).
- People are emotional beings; appealing to those emotions—through humor, fear, hope, etc.—can help get you their attention.
- Fear of missing out is a powerful emotion in advertising; you can leverage it with limited-time offers, countdowns, limited quantities, and more.

How you deliver your message is just as crucial as the message itself because, as noted earlier, consumers see a lot of ads. As much as possible, you want your ad to cut through the noise and get people's attention—or stop the scroll on social media.

One way to accomplish this is with engaging imagery or video. Not everyone has the time or budget to book a photoshoot for their campaigns. However, you can still source a variety of images, videos, illustrations, and animations using a stock photo service like Shutterstock, Freepik, or Unsplash.



5. PUT IT ALL TOGETHER AND TEST TO SEE WHAT'S WORKING

When you've crafted a message and sourced your visuals, putting your ad together is the final step before getting to your audience. There are many tools and resources available for you (or an employee) to build your own. Canva and Photoshop are two popular options for designing static image ads, although Canva is more beginner-friendly.

With a completed design, you can drop your creative into the digital tools provided with the purchase of social media or pay-per-click ads, or take it to your local print shop to make flyers, direct mail pieces, and more. Sometimes you might need a little more guidance, especially if your ad includes promotional financing offers.

As a Synchrony-enrolled merchant, you can create compelling, compliant digital and print ads with the help of Advertising Center. There, you'll find guidelines and best practices on headlines, subheadlines, and disclosures, as well as toolkits like Ad Wizard to make ad creation easier. Synchrony can even have a team of marketing and legal experts review your finished ad that includes Synchrony financing to help make it compliant and as effective as possible. When you're ready, upload your ad to digital platforms, send your email, or get ready to print.

Testing your ads, and using your findings to create even more effective ads, can help you meet or exceed the goals you set for your campaigns — and your business. Many digital ad platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and email service providers give you the ability to A/B test variables like the creative, the audience, or the placement of the ad so you can see what performs best and what to change for next time. You can do this yourself on a smaller scale as well. For example, if you want to advertise an in-store promotion using direct mail, try testing two different images, headlines, or even the offer language, sending one version of each to half of your audience.

Whichever version drives more traffic to your store will tell you which image, headline, or offer language your audience prefers.

When A/B testing your ads, it's imperative to test only one variable at a time so you can get the most accurate, helpful information to use in your next campaign.

For more information or to connect with an expert, contact us at synchronyconnect@synchrony.com.

Synchrony has over 80 years of retail heritage. Synchrony Connect is a value-added program that lets Synchrony partners tap into our expertise in areas beyond credit. It offers knowledge and tools that can help you grow, lead and operate your business.

This content is subject to change without notice and offered for informational use only. You are urged to consult with your individual business, financial, legal, tax and/or other advisors with respect to any information presented. Synchrony and any of its affiliates (collectively, "Synchrony") makes no representations or warranties regarding this content and accepts no liability for any loss or harm arising from the use of the information provided. Your receipt of this material constitutes your acceptance of these terms and conditions.

¹Mitchell, Amy & Shearer, Elisa. (2021, January 12). News Use Across Social Media Platforms in 2020. Pew Research Center.

©2022 Synchrony Bank