

Building Your Brand:

Seven Steps for Success



E-Newsletters



Marketing Collateral



Promotional Products



Events



Social Media



Fleet Advertising



Signage



Building Your Brand: Seven Steps for Success

Dear Readers,

The PSA Security Network is dedicated to empowering its owners and customers to become the most successful systems integrators in the markets they serve. In support of this mission, PSA established a free-standing Sales & Marketing Committee to share knowledge, develop resources, and establish industry best practices for navigating the competitive marketplace.

Building Your Brand: Seven Steps for Success is a starting point to help your company determine the best approach for increasing brand awareness, visibility, and memorability using available time, money, and resources.

The committee consists of highly respected professionals within the PSA Security Network who have volunteered their time to develop resources to benefit all PSA integrators. The committee continues to seek opportunities to share their expertise with the PSA community. If there is a topic of particular interest for you or your company that you would like more guidance on, please do not hesitate to contact the committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'K. Rescigno'.

Kimberly Rescigno
PSA Sales & Mktg Committee Chairman
Security Specialists | Director of Sales & Marketing

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'R. Hoertsch'.

Robert Hoertsch
PSA Sales & Mktg Committee Vice Chairman
Low Voltage Contractors, Inc. | President



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Questions? Contact
SalesMktgCommittee@psasecurity.com
Or visit buyPSA.com



E-Newsletters

INVESTMENT:

Implementation Period



The time commitment for producing an e-newsletter can be broken down into a few distinct stages. Each stage will have a varying time investment. The stages to evaluate when implementing your e-newsletter strategy include list gathering, content planning, content collection, design, frequency, and subscriber management.

- List Gathering – How your e-newsletter distribution list is compiled is important because companies who fail to abide by best practices may be reported as spammers. Lists need to be created using permission based methods. Permission based methods may seem slow to start, but there are numerous strategies you can use to gain momentum quickly:
 - Ask your business associates
 - Include an easy signup location on your website
 - Add a subscription link to your email signatures
 - Use signup sheets at trade shows and industry events
 - Cross promote with complementary e-newsletters
 - Use social media to inform about your e-newsletter and promote signups

This is an ongoing effort and how you choose to approach it can dictate your time investment. There are resources available to manage the process for you. Or if you choose to manually manage your list (generally okay for a list size under 200), plan for at least 1 hour per month to make sure information is current and accurate.

- Content Planning - Plan for what type of content you will send out regularly. In addition to content, you should also plan the appearance and personality your publication will convey. In other words, plan for how your e-newsletter will represent your brand image. Decide if your image is best conveyed with personal stories and ideas or if a different approach like industry news, tips, and how-to's are right for your business. Use articles that will generate interest and results. Every article featured in your e-newsletter should have a specific objective as part of your content plan. In a customer e-newsletter, articles might be chosen for their ability to draw-in potential customers, spur sales, encourage repeat business, improve customer confidence in your company, educate, inform, or simply entertain. A productive planning session with the right contributors can generally be completed in about 4-6 hours.
- Content Collection – The best way to break down the task of collecting content for your e-newsletter is to keep the e-newsletter in mind at all times. Then, the things you see, read or hear will trigger you to store content for use in future publications. Ideally, everyone in your organization should keep the e-newsletter in mind too. For example, when a sales rep hears the same question again and again from customers, he could suggest addressing that question in a future e-newsletter. This approach makes the task of gathering content manageable instead of trying to create content when up against a deadline.

SUMMARY:

A marketing e-newsletter is frequently used by businesses to promote a product or service, share information, and build a company brand or image through exposure and repetition. A marketing e-newsletter is typically sent to current or prospective customers free of charge. Not strictly a sales pitch, the marketing e-newsletter design and content strives to engage and inform its audience, turning prospects into customers and customers into repeat customers.



E-Newsletters

- Design – Using an e-newsletter resource like Mail Chimp or Vertical Response can help reduce the amount of time spent in design. You can use pre-made templates or create your own. These templates will take care of design, formatting and will also create mobile friendly versions of your publication.
- Frequency - Determine if your content will be news-driven (current events and industry updates) and/ or deadline-driven (event registration or application deadlines). The content will drive the frequency to some degree. If your content is time sensitive, consider sending it out daily or weekly. If your news has a longer shelf-life, consider sending biweekly, monthly, quarterly, or biannually. The frequency of your e-newsletter dictates how much time will be required to implement. Some will find it easier to send more frequently with briefer updates, while others will see a benefit for their company in sending a less frequent e-newsletter (monthly or quarterly) with more volume in each edition.

Subscriber Management

Regardless of whether you choose to self manage your list, use your CRM tool, or adopt a free or paid service, email databases require maintenance. People leave jobs, get married, switch email systems, and change positions. Keeping your database accurate will reduce the number of bounces or kickbacks received. It is also critical to manage unsubscribe requests properly and promptly. Plan time to conduct a contact clean-up about once a month. With regular maintenance, your time investment should not be considerable.

Average Cost



The best part about e-newsletters is that you can produce them with little to no cost – your cost will vary depending on the size of your distribution list. Two resources that are free at their basic level are Mail Chimp and Vertical Response. Both offer free subscriber database management, design tools, analytics, and more. When you exceed their basic level (1,000 subscribers for Vertical Response and 2,500 for Mail Chimp) paid subscriptions are available and average around \$0.01 per subscriber per month.

Another good resource, Redily (www.relidy.com), has comparable monthly subscription rates and paid resources available for design templates (specific to integrators – commercial and residential) and content creation services with unlimited revisions.

Human Capital



It can take between 1-4 people on average to successfully produce an e-newsletter for your company. The size, frequency, and content will determine exactly how much time will be required. For example, it may take more time to craft an original article than drafting an introduction or lead-in to recycled content. Just as assembling an interactive quiz may take less time to create than a featured case study.

As a baseline measure, a monthly publication with up to four pages of original content will take around 12-15 hours between content creation and publication design. Keep in mind, not all of this time is necessarily invested by one person and does not usually need to be completed in a single setting. It is usually best to divide your work into sections to be completed with small time investments throughout the course of the week or month.

In contrast, a publication with recycled or stock content (i.e. sharing an industry related article, inclusion of previously written content, etc.) can be created within 2-3 hours.



E-Newsletters

Required Resources



The resources you will need can be broken down into easily manageable categories. With all aspects of an e-newsletter, your best results come when you break these components down into smaller, more manageable commitments. Resources needed include:

- A subscription list with a plan (and a person/team) to increase the number of subscribers and manage contents with regular frequency to ensure accuracy.
- A list of content ideas that support your planned layout, image, branding and messaging.
- A method and contributors for keeping content collection top-of-mind with a centralized repository for holding your materials as you and your staff come across ideas or create original content.
- A design and distribution tool, such as Word/Publisher, Outlook, Mail Chimp, or Vertical Response. Regardless of the tool used, be sure you are familiar with the laws surrounding spamming, proper distribution, required content inclusion, and permission based marketing.
- People who are committed to contributing content, helping with design, proofing, managing your lists, and the other similar tasks required for a successful e-newsletter publication.

ANALYSIS

Once you have determined that you have the resources to invest and are ready to begin, you will want to establish benchmarks to ensure your efforts bring the rewards you expected. Below are some common metrics you can use to better understand the positive impact your efforts are having on your business.

- **Subscriber List** - Especially when starting out, set goals for subscriber list targets and commit to actively growing your list. The larger your list becomes, the more people you are reaching with your marketing message and greater exposure you are achieving for your company.
- **Subscriber Activity** – If you are using an email marketing distribution tool, it will allow you to track your subscriber activity results and benchmark those results within your industry averages. Review activity such as open rates, clicks, social interaction, forwards, bounces and un-subscribes. It will help you understand what piqued readers' attention so you know what content is important in the future. It also helps you determine if your headlines are catching people's attention, if your messaging is on point, and if your readership continues to be engaged.
- **Social Sharing** – One of the great features of an e-newsletter is the ability to include social sharing links to give your message more reach. It's a parallel measure to "pass on readership" commonly used by print publication. Give your readers the opportunity to engage on your social pages and share your content on theirs. Further, it provides readers with a path to connect with your social media pages, allowing you to interact and communicate with them between publications.
- **Lead Generation/Return on Investment** – The Direct Marketing Association put email marketing's ROI for 2011 at \$40.56 for every \$1 invested. The figure for 2012 fell to \$39.40, when email accounted for \$67.8 billion in sales. Current figures range anywhere from \$12 - \$40.56 per dollar spent in ROI. Your results will vary as you develop and adjust your strategy, messaging, and approach. If you are unsure about the results you are getting, here is a helpful and interactive ROI calculator to measure your anticipated and actual results: <http://www.emailmarketingroi.com>.



E-Newsletters

CONCLUSION

Writing an e-newsletter full of helpful, free information and tips can be a useful marketing tool. Customers who are interested in the topics you write about or the services you offer will sign-up to receive your e-newsletter. Since you know that these people are your target audience, it is a great way to advertise new products or services by providing useful, informative content.

It is important to include content that is more informative in tone than a hard sell. Your audience will appreciate the information, reviews, tips, case studies, industry updates and announcements instead of an e-newsletter that is heavy on advertising. Give your customers a good reason to open your email and read it. With so much demanding the attention of your customers and colleagues today, make your e-newsletter something that stands out and captures their attention and interest.

Another benefit of making the commitment to develop and deliver content is that as an e-newsletter author or contributing writer, you are establishing yourself as an authority on the topics on which you write. The more your readers believe that you are knowledgeable about the products or services that you offer, the stronger your business relationship will become. Establishing yourself as an authority goes a long way toward building your personal credibility in the industry.

Of course, there are many aspects to be considered as you determine whether an e-newsletter is right for your company. In general, there is overwhelming support and evidence for the benefit of regular and engaging content as an important relationship development and maintenance tool between businesses and their customers.

The thought of committing to an ongoing initiative like an e-newsletter can be overwhelming and seem unmanageable at first. With a determination about its importance in your marketing efforts, and some time invested in planning, exploring, and choosing the right resources to support your effort, you will soon start to realize the positive impact an e-newsletter will have on your business.

RESOURCES

Ideas for building your subscriber list –

- <http://www.avangate.com/avangate-resources/article/creating-e-newsletter.htm>
- <http://quickbooks.intuit.com/r/marketing/how-to-grow-your-email-subscriber-list/>
- <http://www.mixtusmedia.com/blog/how-to-significantly-grow-your-newsletter-subscriber-list?rq=subscriber%20list>
- <http://www.insightmrktg.com/2011/09/24/14-quick-tips-to-grow-newsletter-subscriber-lists>

Complying with spam laws –

- <http://business.ftc.gov/documents/bus61-can-spam-act-compliance-guide-business>
- <http://www.sba.gov/blogs/do-your-email-marketing-activities-comply-law>

Content Ideas –

- <http://www.mailonthemark.com/2012/08/what-content-should-go-in-your-e-newsletter-50-ideas/>
- <http://flyingcarstrategies.com/30-ideas-for-email-newsletter/>
- <http://writtent.com/blog?s=%20newsletter%20content%20ideas>

E-newsletter design, distribution and reporting resources –

- <http://mailchimp.com/features/>
- <http://www.verticalresponse.com/features>
- <http://search.constantcontact.com/services>
- <http://www.reliidy.com/Email.php>

*Reliidy is a resource specific to integrators and has paid services including design packages, content creation, and monthly subscription packages.

The benefits of an e-newsletter –

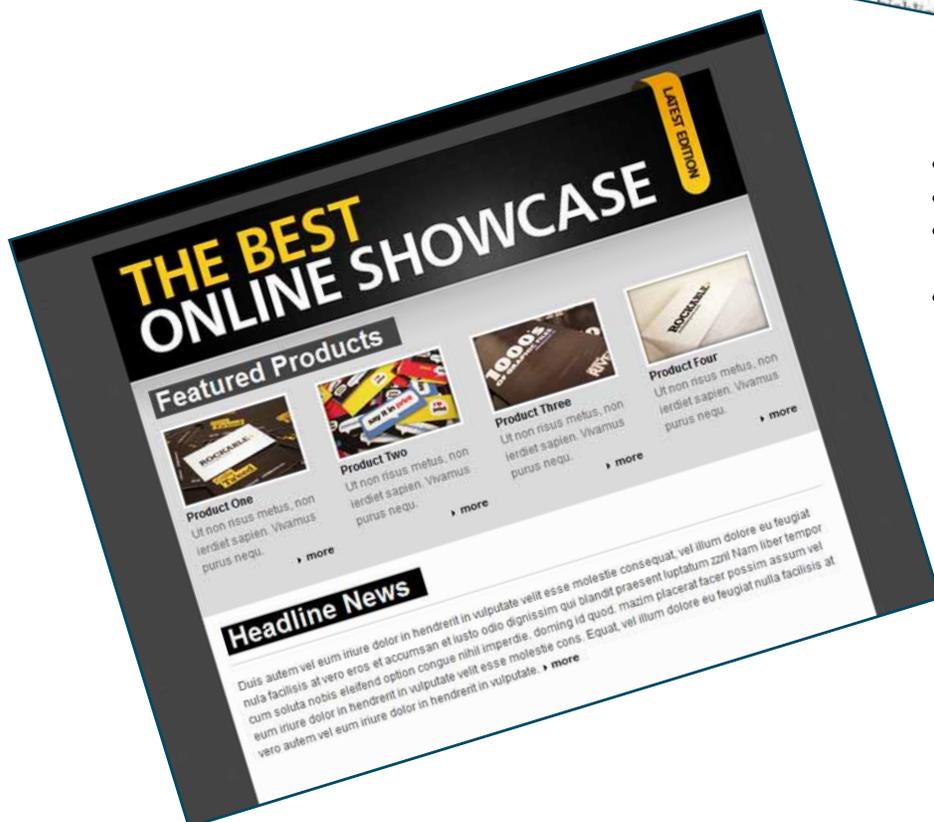
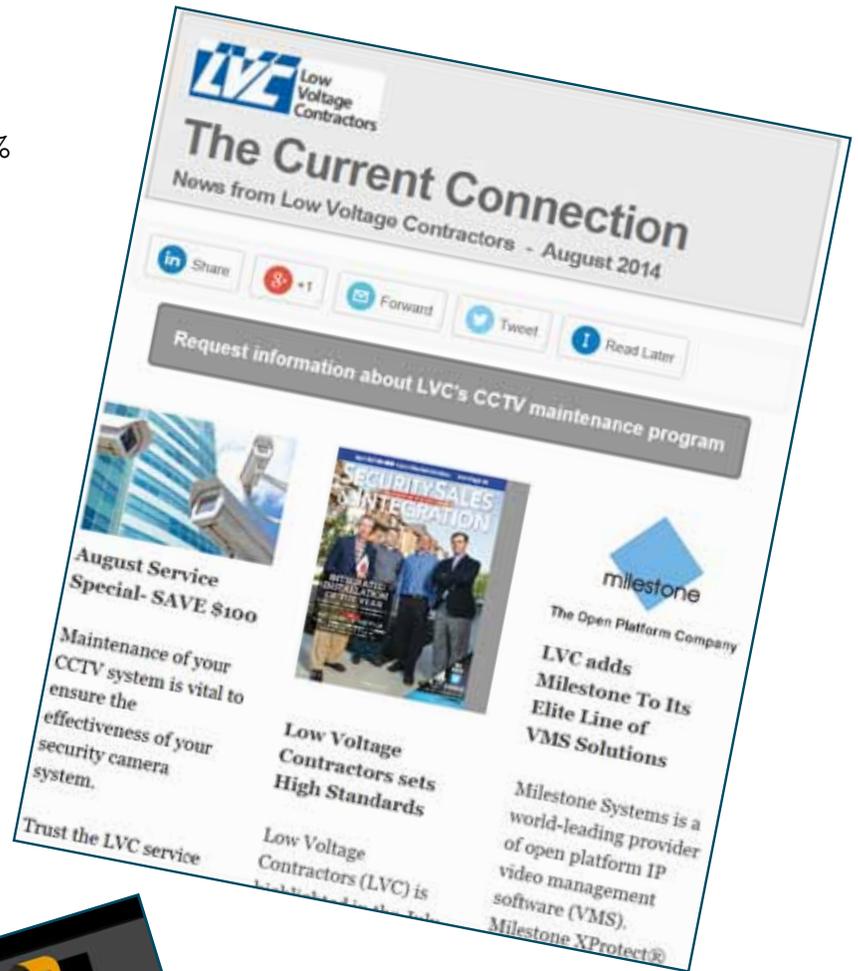
- <http://emailcritic.com/2012/04/email-newsletter-marketing/>
- <http://www.sigvekommedal.com/10-great-benefits-of-company-e-newsletters/>
- <http://contentdevelopmentpros.com/blog/benefits-of-newsletters-for-businesses/>



E-Newsletters

Examples

- Published monthly
- Social sharing links
- Content is 66% informational and 34% sales messaging
- Prominent call-to-action



- Specific focus on products
- Space dedicated to interesting images
- A brief highlight of each product with interactive links to learn more
- Space dedicated for a feature/informational story



Marketing Collateral

INVESTMENT:

Implementation Period



When approached globally, marketing collateral is an ongoing process that is defined by the goals, objectives, and desired outcomes of your organization. It can also be affected by the resources and capabilities present in your organization. The implementation period can range drastically. For example, to create a single piece of collateral to be used for a specific purpose can take as little as a few days. A larger scale campaign involving multiple pieces and mediums can take many months. Regardless of scope, the key to the successful implementation of well-produced and highly effective collateral requires clarity of outcome, messaging, approach, and use of resources.

Average Cost



Well done collateral has cost associated with design time, content creation, management time to review and provide input, and printing. For something like a pamphlet or brochure, the cost can range from \$5-20 each depending on the nature of the collateral (colors, cardstock, quantity). Costs can vary greatly, so be sure to establish a budget first and then define your scope of work.

Human Capital



The functions of marketing collateral that require human resources primarily include the need to create messaging/content and piece design. This can be the function of an individual employed in your organization or can be outsourced to a third party. When handled internally, you will need to determine if content can be created by an individual or will be the result of collaboration from a team. When outsourced, input regarding messaging intent and key data is required. The cost for outsourcing a content writer will depend on project scope and technical expertise.

Required Resources



In addition to human resources to facilitate the process of creating marketing collateral, there are monetary resources required and vary widely based on use of internal vs. external resources. All resources required to concept, create, and implement marketing collateral will need to be applied in the following phases of implementation:

- Content creation
- Design
- Editing and proofing
- Printing/production
- Training and implementation
- Periodic review and evaluation

SUMMARY:

Marketing collateral is a tangible sales communication piece given to prospects and customers. It contains value added information for end-users to help them understand the integrator function and the specific value your company provides. Often this includes brochures, flyers, product sell sheets, case studies, white papers, data sheets, or even informational DVDs. Most importantly, marketing collateral creates an impression of the integrator's capability, professionalism, and credibility.



Marketing Collateral

ANALYSIS

There are several different types of marketing collateral, including business cards, flyers/pamphlets, event notices, technology information brochures, and case studies. Business cards top the list in importance, as they generate an instant impression. Flyers that contain information about the business and its unique services offer valuable talking points for sales consistency and takeaways for prospects.

Your marketing collateral needs will change along with your business, so routinely evaluate existing marketing collateral for relevance, accuracy, and messaging. Keeping marketing collateral current is a vital part of the process and requires a human resource to do so.

Management, sales, engineering, and even operations can be instrumental in content development. When determining content, carefully consider the question, "What are the key objectives of this communication piece, and what do we want the customer to take away from it?"

The design is an evolutionary process and should help further communicate your key objectives. Staying current means that marketing collateral cannot be designed just once – it must evolve as well.

A variety of online resources offer template designs that simply require image and content input for creation, resulting in less time for the design process. Designing marketing collateral internally and from scratch (using a program like InDesign) generally takes more time on the front end. The benefit to doing projects with an in-house designer is the ability to customize and create a unique design. When using online resources for design, costs can range from free (included as part of printing costs) to purchasing pre-made templates or template packages, which can range from \$500/piece to \$4,000/package depending on the type(s) of collateral.

The impressions created by a marketing collateral piece are very important, and the things which affect those impressions include:

- Layout
- Use of white space
- Easy to read information
- Graphics and pictures

All of these things can have an affect on customers, so significant effort should be given to maximize the value of the impressions created.

CONCLUSION

Return on investment (ROI) measures for marketing collateral are challenging, but can include:

- Inquiries or responses obtained (if using a hotline or email inquiry address in the collateral piece)
- Tracking of new business leads
- Surveys on what affected customer decisions, their sources of information, and the communication value and effectiveness of marketing pieces

Start with an objective. For example, sell at least one \$10,000 business opportunity which starts with a piece of collateral. If the collateral costs \$10/piece, and 200 were printed, hopefully you realize a short-term ROI of about 25% $(.025 \times 10,000 - 2,000)/2,000$ assuming 25% margin) in addition to the lifetime value of the customer and references.

Regardless of the latest marketing trends, marketing collateral continually plays a significant role in increasing a company's brand visibility, awareness, and memorability. Support your sales teams, inform your customers, and increase your bottom line.



Marketing Collateral

RESOURCES

Content Creation

- Hubspot - www.hubspot.com
 - Free Content Planning Worksheet (requires sign up and download) <http://offers.hubspot.com/content-planning-template>
 - Building a Killer Content Strategy (requires sign up and download) <http://offers.hubspot.com/a-practical-guide-to-building-a-killer-content-strategy>

Design Assistance

- Design and Print
 - Vistaprint – <http://www.vistaprint.com>
 - Staples - <http://print.staples.com/>
 - FedEx - http://www.fedex.com/us/office/free-design-templates.html?lid=flyerimage_designservices_templates
- Content, Design and Print
 - Relidy - <http://www.relidy.com>

EXAMPLES

Business Cards

In addition to the logical stuff (name, company, contact info), use the back of your card to share important branding messages to make it memorable. It's valuable real estate!



Sales Brochures

This is a great way to share important messaging about your company or even a specific division or function of your company. This should give company representatives a tool with great talking points to walk potential customers through the highlights of your company, the benefits of working with you, what sets you apart, and testimonials to support that messaging. Good use of colors and pictures is important to create a great looking brochure.





Promotional Products

INVESTMENT

Implementation Period



The implementation period will generally depend on the purpose and use of a promotional product. For example, an item chosen for a trade show or other specific event has a shorter implementation period (determined by the event itself), while

promotional products used to introduce a new company, product, or service may have an implementation period that spans many months.

In a different context, the implementation period to select, order, proof, produce, and deliver a promotional product takes some time. Plan for at least 6-8 weeks in advance to ensure accuracy of your order, successful shipment, and room for any changes if, on the rare occasion, you are unhappy with the item you receive. With enough early planning, most promotional companies will provide a sample product in advance of placing your actual order.

Average Cost



The average cost of promotional items vary greatly depending on the size, quality and quantity of item you intend to use. For example, in the context of ordering items to be distributed at a trade show event, you most likely will be considering an item that can be ordered in high quantities with a lower price point. Decent quality items in this category can range anywhere from \$1-\$4 per unit. Common items in this category might include lip balm, mini flashlights, key chains, stress toys, can koozies, ice scrapers, silicone wristbands, sticky pads, and pens.

Then there are items that have a more targeted audience that will be purchased at a higher price point. Types of events that may require a more specific giveaway include a customer lunch, new product demo, customer visit, and/or recognition. On these occasions, a higher quality item can generally range from \$10-\$30 per unit. Items in this general category might include golf accessories, high end travel coffee mugs, custom desk accessories, technology products, and the like.

Of course there are always items that can be found at just about any price point. Your imagination and budget are really the only limitations.

Keep in mind that in addition to per unit costs (which should be lower with higher quantities ordered), you will have additional fees to consider like set up fees, design fees, excessive design fees if you require a lot of proofs and revisions, shipping fees, and other overages.

SUMMARY:

Of all the marketing activities that help to promote brand visibility, awareness, and memorability, promotional products are probably one of the most widely used and recognized tools. There are a variety of reasons companies will use promotional products, but generally, they are most useful when there is an identified target audience and products chosen are kept and used voluntarily on a repeated basis.



Promotional Products

Human Capital



One of the nice aspects of promotional products is that it does not require a great deal of human capital to select an item, place an order, review and approve a proof, and wait for delivery. Provided your event and target audience are well defined, and you have a good idea on what kind of item you are looking for, it can be managed with little company investment.

Companies that produce promotional items are abundant which makes for a relatively competitive market. As a result, with a few general questions to understand your purpose and goals, most promotional product companies will be able to provide a variety of recommendations that meet your objectives and budgetary needs.

Required Resources



Required resources are pretty minimal and relatively self-explanatory. You will need a well-defined goal (whether event or purpose), a vendor, financial resources to pay for your items, a person responsible for sourcing, selecting, proofing, and receiving your items, and a place to store your items – either on a short or long term basis. It is recommended that you have a general inventory system to account for products that come in and go out, ensuring what you order is serving its intended purpose.

ANALYSIS

Promotional products can have a variety of benefits including creating loyalty, improving recall, spreading goodwill, showing appreciation, recognizing performance, and generating awareness. Promotional products can fall into a wide spectrum of goods. In general terms, think of anything that can carry a logo.

A creative approach to promotional items can make you stand out amongst your competition. For example, a shoe shine kit with the slogan, “our cameras always shine,” or an eye glass cloth with your logo and tagline, “Open your eyes to IP Cameras with Acme Co,” is a small item that may be carried around or left on a desk as a daily reminder of your company.

Exhibiting at a security show helps make your brand visible, but the “give-away” products that attendees take, reminds them of who you are and what you provide. The setting will decide which promotional products are the most effective. Market to your audience. Be realistic in what you bring.

CONCLUSION

Return on investment (ROI) can be extremely difficult, if not impossible to measure. Often promotional products play a supporting role to other marketing activities (like a sales call, trade show, customer event, community event, and other brand building activities). In many cases, they are an alternative to a tray of cookies, tin of popcorn, or other supporting items.

This is definitely an area that has extremely opposing viewpoints. Some see immense value in the visibility and longevity of a branded message created using promotional products. Others will find it difficult to tie direct ROI to a handout item. Yet, some still find its value best assessed when blended as part of an entire event or activity expense.



Events

INVESTMENT

Implementation Period



Regardless of type or size, no event can be organized at the last minute. Adequate planning and preparation is required to ensure that your company captures as much visibility and return on investment as possible. Private events generally take the same amount of time typically devoted to preparing for any sales encounter. Larger, public events can take months of planning and involve multiple people.

Average Cost



The costs vary depending on the event, location, promotion, and your budget. Community service, open houses, lunch-and-learns, and end-user training sessions can be customized and planned to fit your budget whereas trade shows costs are typically more expensive, ranging from hundreds to thousands.

Human Capital



Marketing, sales, management, and administrative personnel can be involved in the event planning process. The event itself may require additional staff. While this can take away from production and other work responsibilities, it is imperative that you have the right personnel to promote your company, your key differentiators, products, technologies, and services.

Required Resources



The venue and marketing message determine the extent of resources required for an event. Promotional materials can include products, booths, training or conference rooms, flyers or other collateral pieces, banners, company shirts, prize giveaways, and more.

Summary:

Event promotion is a communication tool used by companies in order to reach a target in a given market. There are several events that can really make a difference in a company's visibility, and all are an opportunity to increase brand awareness and memorability:

- Lunch & Learns
- Trade Shows
- Community Service
- Open Houses & Showrooms
- End-User Training Sessions



Events

ANALYSIS

Educational Training

Providing education and training on your systems, products, and applications not only strengthens your client relationships, it can also serve significant return on investment (ROI) from a service standpoint. By showing end-users how to resolve simple issues, you can reduce the amount of time your technicians spend on site visits. In addition, acting as an educator through lunch-and-learn events or other training sessions shows the end-user you care about them and their systems.

Some items required:

- Training Room - The session could be hosted within your office, meeting room, or hotel conference room.
- Supporting Materials - Provide all audio, visual, training manuals, new product information, and other marketing pieces. You can always record sessions and share a copy with attendees after the event.
- Invitation or Registration Process - Identify who you want to attend and consider extending a personal invitation by phone or email.

Trade Shows

From large industry events to small local venues, trade shows deliver maximum exposure through concentrated target audiences. As noted above, costs can vary significantly, especially when taking all necessary resources into consideration (i.e. transportation, shipping, marketing materials, hotel, food). It is important to do your research and attend the shows within your industry, vertical markets, budget, and target audience that offer greater booth visibility.

A few tips:

- Your booth should be eye-catching, as it is the first impression attendees have of you and your company.
- Offer marketing collateral and promotional products as a bonus to make your booth more memorable and drive traffic.
- Promotion for a trade show is usually done by the facilitator, but your company will need to inform existing and potential customers about the event and your booth location.
- Schedule meetings with customers and prospects in advance.
- Collect visitors' business cards or scan ID badges so that you can follow up with them after the show.

The ROI for these events are typically measured by how many visits you have at your booth and how many follow-up sales are made.

Local Community Service

Get involved and get noticed! Participating in community service events is a simple way to build awareness of your company and develop connections with potential new customers, all while supporting a worthy cause.

- Contact the city or county for upcoming service opportunities.
- Select newsworthy events that align with your company's core values and your desired level of time commitment and involvement.
- Allocate internal resources to coordinate, promote, and participate in the service project.
- Increase on-site exposure by wearing company shirts or order your own event specific t-shirts.
- Introduce yourself to officials and business owners in attendance and tell them about your company.
- Take pictures or videos for after-event promotion via e-newsletters, press-releases, and social media postings.

While the greatest ROI is your contribution to improving the community, you can also measure the amount of exposure received through event participation through audience, news coverage, and connections



Events

Virtual Showrooms

Given the technology available to integrators today, sometimes articulating the features and benefits of systems can be inadequate to fully engage the imagination of buyers. A virtual showroom event serves to go beyond the limitations of a sales script; allowing a customer to experience how specific technology provides solutions they seek. A customer's environment can be recreated with a variety of technology solutions and outcomes to be explored.

To get started, you'll need:

- A dedicated space to create the virtual environment. There may be other considerations to be included in the space like shelving, storage, office furniture, monitors, screens, smart boards, projectors, and the like.
- Technology (and supporting infrastructure) you intend to showcase must be functioning in the room. In some cases, manufacturers may send demo hardware and/or software to support this need.
- Employee (technician) time to install, test, and maintain your showcase systems.
- For actual events, your resources may include the time of sales reps and technicians as appropriate.
- Consider hosting food and beverage of some nature as part of your entertainment.
- Additional expenses could include items to supplement the virtual showroom environment, such as marketing collateral and promotional or give away items.

In addition to direct exposure for new, potential, and existing clients, virtual showroom events tell a great story and can be great sources for press releases, testimonials, case studies, white papers, and other forms of reusable marketing content. ROI can be measured in many ways with this kind of event including the value of exposure, the value of reputation, and the value of the sales generated as a result of a virtual showroom experience.

CONCLUSION

Try to do at least two events every year, especially community service, as it serves a dual purpose for your company and employees. The more events you have, the better your exposure is across a widespan of potential new customers. In addition, you are supporting your existing customer base by keeping them informed, educated, and current on your company and your technology.



Events

EXAMPLES

Lunch & Learn | PACS software rollout



Resources: Hotel meeting room with classroom seating for 50 people, lunch and snacks
 Cost: \$500 for the room, \$750 for food
 Time: 2 Hours
 Exposure: New opportunities for existing systems
 ROI: Customer purchasing system additions

Tradeshow | Local vendor tradeshow held at a county school



Resources: Booth (\$675 for two days)
 Time: 16 hours
 Exposure: Principals, assistant principals, resource officers from the school and surrounding schools
 ROI: Showcasing Securadyne Systems' experience in K-12 school security requirements and proving solutions.

Showrooms | Low Voltage Contractors Virtual Showroom



Resources: An underutilized storage area was repurposed (paint, carpet, drywall, etc.) and a few employees assisted with customer demos.
 Time: Transforming the storage room to show room facility (drywall, paint, cable infrastructure, installing technology) was approximately 500 hours. Average time for a customer demo is 4 hours (testing shown, customizing presentations, general cleanup).
 Exposure: New, prospective, and existing clients
 ROI: Attracting new customers in a way that competitors cannot, established presence as a leader and innovator, sales generated as a result of a virtual showroom experience.

Community Service Event | City of Pensacola's Community Orchard Program

Resources: 25 Securadyne Systems employees volunteered to plant trees
 Time: 4 hours
 Exposure: Pensacola News Journal, WEAR TV3 broadcast, pictures with the Mayor
 ROI: Visibility on the city's website for two months and an article in the news journal with the Mayor that reached over 150,000 readers





Social Media

INVESTMENT

Average Cost



Costs to use social media are surprising affordable, ranging from free, such as Facebook and Twitter, to upgraded LinkedIn premium accounts for a nominal \$50.00 per month.

While these costs are very manageable, it is important to not discount all the soft costs, costs

that are associated with either your time to be engaged with social media or hiring a part-time person or outside agency to manage your social media. Someone will need to be assigned the duties of setting up accounts, keeping accounts current, and providing content and messaging that is consistent and engaging for audiences.

New costs are cropping up as these social media sites begin to take advantage of their mass appeal, offering advertising and direct feeds to visitors based on visitors' profiles or search histories. Utilizing these avenues will cost you as these sites continue to get more fans, followers, and "likes." Companies are also available that specialize in placing content where it is most likely to be uncovered. In a vast and wide net, these types of specialists (Outbrain, Crushpath, Taboola), help more companies find yours.

Expect the use of these sites to be like investing in the money market; take an approach towards long term investing in order to ensure growth. Plan on spending a few hundred dollars each month and decide whether one of these specialists is enough or whether you'll want to use a couple.

Human Capital

If you decide to delegate the duties of social media marketing to in-house personnel, ensure that the first thing you have in place is a "Social Media Policy." This is important to ensure that your team members are clear on how you want the company portrayed (see sample below).



Look to your staff and recognize anyone who may have social media experience. Interview

them as if you were looking to hire an outside resource to see what talents they may have in this space. You may find that there are hidden gems on staff. It is beneficial to have someone who understands not only how to use the social media tools, but how to track their success. Ultimately, you will want to know what is working and why. Look at staff members that are committed to your brand, to your companies' philosophies and success. Find those highly detail oriented team members who will pay attention to strategy, message, and results.

Summary:

An exciting, informative, and unique website is useless if you don't drive traffic to it. Search engines are good, but you, as well as your competition, are all striving to be on top of Google, Bing, Yahoo, and Internet Explorer searches. Today's social media options like LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Four Square, and Twitter all offer ways to help drive your prospective and current customers to your website. Your clients all use online resources to do research and connect with people and groups who have similar interests or questions about security, vendors, and products. By taking a well thought out approach to using social media, you can ensure a common message or marketing scheme is reaching a targeted audience of end-users who you want to do business with and who want to do business with you.



Social Media

ANALYSIS

The process of creating website landing pages and pulling in visitor traffic with email and other marketing campaigns, affects the probability that your company will appear in internet searches for security products and services. The more active you are, the more visible you become. It is a big part of any SEO strategy

Using social media is a great way to kick start increasing your online visibility. However, be consistent from one network to the other. Do not bounce around hoping to find that magic bullet. Instead, you should:

- Use branding elements such as your company logo, tag line, branded colors, and themes.
- Make sure your username on all sites is the same and easy to understand (if you use your image use the same one on all sites).
- Stick with common industry language that your clients and prospects will recognize and relate to.
- Be careful not to use obscure anagrams or initials, as others may not know their meaning.

Social media can often pave the way for a warmer sales lead as well. Start with LinkedIn's premium service and take advantage of the site's "Get Introduced" function. This is a nice way to get an introduction before cold calling.

Similarly, Facebook can offer a feel-good place for your customers to get to know about your company. Create a company Facebook page and use this site to post pictures and descriptions for ongoing or recently completed projects or dovetail on your primary manufacturer's promotions.

Create an email signature that is used by everyone in your company, make it common, and use it to let all your customers and prospective customers know you are social media savvy. Use links in your email signature to your Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and of course, your website. Just as you would include phone numbers on this signature, so too should you include social media links. After all, it's time to broaden your reach.

CONCLUSION

Remember that social media is not about heavy, deep content. When it comes to using social media, simplicity is the best fact. Try not to overload your initial messages with too much or confusing content. Be direct, be concise, be sharp, and be there!

Doing nothing today with social media is equivalent to not being listed in the Yellow Pages or phone book years ago. It is the de facto source your clients are using to find out about you. Make sure you are there to be found. Take the time to customize your message and the look and feel of all your sites. Do not use default backgrounds, take the time to plan and implement common elements, such as backgrounds, logos, and colors. Fill out the profiles that these sites have; leaving them blank or incomplete can result in lost prospects.

EXAMPLES

- www.linkedin.com
- www.facebook.com
- www.twitter.com
- www.crushpath.com
- www.outbrain.com
- www.taboola.com
- [Social Media Policy example pdf \(courtesy of Securitronics\)](#)



Fleet Advertising

INVESTMENT

Implementation Period



The time and effort for developing your design, artwork, and message will vary widely. Allow adequate time to accomplish this objective, along with multiple opportunities for review.

Average Cost



A budget for a van wrap is approximately \$1,400-\$2,200 per vehicle depending on type, size, or any special requirements. Plan to have the vehicle out of service for at least two days for the printing and application process.

Human Capital



An internal or external marketing team, including a graphics designer, is a great place to start developing your approach and message.

Required Resources



Depending upon complexity, an external marketing support resource may be required to develop an appropriate style and message consistent with other marketing initiatives. This should be considered in developing an overall budget for this project. Vehicle vendor support is generally limited to layout only.

Summary:

With the advancement of printing technologies, vehicle advertising has progressed from traditional vehicle lettering to complete vinyl vehicle wraps. These wraps are quickly becoming the standard; allowing companies to incorporate their name, logo and other critical information in conjunction with marketing messages, themes, and images. A sharp, professional vehicle wrap draws attention, whether on the road or parked at a customer site. It is an economical way to increase brand visibility and awareness.



Fleet Advertising

ANALYSIS

Vinyl vehicles wraps provide unlimited options for colors, backgrounds, details, wording, images, and fading. All vehicle artwork is loaded and printed on large vinyl rolls, cut and attached to the vehicle.

As referenced above, the most difficult part of the process is fine tuning the message and artwork as there are an endless number of options available. When negotiating pricing, make sure that you have discussed the level and amount of design support built into your contract or fee arrangement. Try to avoid extra fees for additional design services. When making this type of investment, make sure all details are to your satisfaction, even if perceived to be time consuming for the vendor.

A blank vehicle image template provides an easy way to start laying out vehicle design and artwork options. These templates can be obtained from a vendor, a Google search, or any other online-image source. More importantly, the templates save you time and money on design fees and reduce the frustration of working with third party companies unfamiliar with your business and marketing strategies.

If planning to do several vehicle wraps, complete one vehicle first before moving on to the next. The size of lettering, colors, and images may look different in life-size than what appeared on paper. Adjustments can be made as needed if the first vehicle did not turn out as imagined.

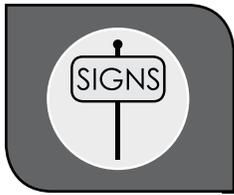
CONCLUSION

For approximately less than \$40 per month, vehicle fleet wraps are an effective way to promote an organization's image and services over an extended period of time. Vehicle wraps look sharp 3-4 years after installation and require no special maintenance or care. Since this is a marketing asset designed to last for many years, it is important that the initial deployment includes enough effort and planning in order to maximize the value. There are likely multiple vendors in each city that provide this type of service, thus it is important to perform due diligence and select the right vendor.

EXAMPLES

- AV Installation and Service Vehicle
- Intrusion Service Vehicle
- Light Commercial / Residential Installation Vehicle





Signage

INVESTMENT

Implementation Period



Temporary signage can be produced relatively quickly whereas as long-term, permanent signage can take much longer to design, produce, and install. Develop a one-year plan and continually evaluate effectiveness.

Average Cost



The cost for signage depends on the type of sign (temporary vs long-term), quantity, square footage, colors, and material. For example, banners average about \$5/square foot whereas a permanent monument sign can cost thousands.

Human Capital



Internal or external design source, and installation crew (depending on sign type).

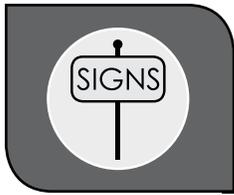
Required Resources



Designated budget, a sign company, and company logo.

Summary:

A creative, attractive sign can help your business stand apart from the competition. Signs serve as a silent salesperson for your company and are an important first impression of your business. How you choose to project your business image can be the most important and effective business decision you make. By having effective signage, you will increase your brand visibility, awareness and overall memorability.



Signage

ANALYSIS

Signage is not only cost effective, but throughout the marketing industry, is widely known for having minimal financial impacts on the company in the form of investment costs while yielding effective returns.

According to the New York State Small Business Development Center, there are four measures to assess your marketing expenditures for signage campaigns:

Reach - This measurement addresses the types of consumers exposed to the advertiser's message

Readership - Determining readership is a way of learning whether or not a sign is successfully branding its intended message in the mind of consumers. Can someone who sees your sign recall its message hours or days after having seen it? When viewed, is there recognition of your product or service in the mind of that person?

Frequency- This measurement calculates the number of times a viewer, reader or listener is exposed to the advertiser's message. Frequency measures are hard to determine for sign owners – particularly those who own on-premise signs. Many drivers pass by your site. Some see your sign only once, while others – who might live or work nearby – see your sign regularly. Traffic counts identify the number of vehicles that travel a particular stretch of road; these should be factored into your calculations.

Cost per thousand exposure s- This measurement refers to the cost for an advertiser to send a message (or "exposures") to 1,000 receivers. The measure is calculated by dividing the amount of money spent for a given advertisement by the number of people exposed to it over a given period of time. Calculating comparable costs per 1,000 exposures for advertising media relies on frequency measure. Once a frequency figure is obtained, then the total out-of-pocket cost for the medium – in our case, the sign – is divided by the number of exposures occurring during a defined time period. Based on this measure, signs are usually considered to be the least expensive form of advertising."

New York State Business Center's Cost Per Thousand Calculator

1. Sign Cost / Estimated Sign Lifespan (months)
2. Number of Cars Passing Sign Per Day X 30 days = Number of Cars Per Month
3. Monthly Number of Cars / 1,000 = Gross Impressions in Thousands
4. Cost Per Month / Gross Impressions in Thousands = Cost Per Thousand Exposures

Design Elements:

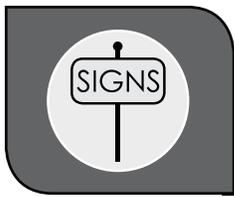
A unique design makes the sign more noticeable and attracts the attention of more viewers. A high color contrast factor will improve legibility. The best ranked legibility from a distance is black on yellow or white on black. Weak color contrasts can be strengthened with an outline or drop shadow. In addition, a minimum of three inches of letter height will have the best impact at a distance of less than 30 feet

Include the following information on sign:

- Company name with logo
- Address
- Contact number
- A form of tracking (dedicated 800 #, QR Code, ask client how they learned about you)

A few important items to consider:

- Obtain the client's permission (suggested to have a signed agreement) before posting any signs on the premises. Explain benefit of the sign being a deterrent from potential intruders, etc.
- Check with local town ordinances to confirm permitting and restrictions for signage on both commercial and residential sites.
- Make sure your logo is trademarked. Refer to citation below to learn more about trademarking your logo.



Signage

CONCLUSION

Signage is one of the most cost effective ways of marketing. Customers are already prequalified by having a security need and taking interest in your signage. These clients are your target audience and by contacting you, you already have a higher likelihood of closing the opportunity.

It is important to have an established budget for marketing. Utilizing that budget and making it stretch to achieve the desired result is key to a successful marketing plan. Some information to keep in mind when implementing signage to your business plan:

- Trademark your logo.
- Research your sign vendor and make sure you have someone who is reputable (ask for references, examples, and multiple price points, shop their competition).
- Keep your content limited to relevant information; such as, logo, brief description, location and contact method.
- Make sure you have proper sign distance for optimal visibility (see chart to right).
- Have a unique and high color contrast.
- Make sure you check with local town ordinances for permit and signage location restrictions.
- Track your sign. Have a dedicated phone number, website, QR code or procedure in place that documents how the client learned about you.
- Know the impact of signage on your profitability.

Impact on signage may not be immediate but, research shows that overtime this will yield a high return on investment (ROI). Commit yourself to a marketing initiative and then focus your efforts on establishing a marketing plan. Use the key components listed above to formulate an effective strategy and then take action. This is proven to result in positive growth.

Letter Height (Inches)	Distance For Best Impact (feet)	Maximum Readable Distance (feet)
3"	30'	100'
4"	40'	150'
6"	60'	200'
8"	80'	350'
9"	90'	400'
10"	100'	450'
12"	120'	525'
15"	150'	630'
18"	180'	750'
24"	240'	1000'
30"	300'	1250'
36"	360'	1500'
42"	420'	1750'
48"	480'	2000'
54"	540'	2250'
60"	600'	2500'

EXAMPLES

- Fast Signs – www.fastsigns.com
- International Sign Association – www.signs.org
- Small Business Cost Helper - <http://smallbusiness.costhelper.com/>
- <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/basics/howtofile.jsp>
- <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/basics/index.jsp>
- <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/basics/next.jsp>
- <http://www.logodesignworks.com/blog/how-to-trademark-a-logo-design>
- <http://www.signsnow.com/learning-center>
- <http://www.uspto.gov/products/library/ptdl/services/tmsearch.jsp>
- <http://justcreative.com/2011/01/17/how-to-trademark-a-logo/>
- 5 Factors of Sign Visibility: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvYB3Z8C5VU&feature=player_embedded
- Measuring Sign Area: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwVhEWdzFM&feature=player_embedded
- Sign Height: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VQB5NPZYXY&feature=player_embedded