

## 5 PRINT AD ESSENTIALS!

Writing an effective print ad, particularly a classified advertisement, requires that you remember five essential points. Failure to implement these points correctly can cost you much in the way of time lost and a sale missed.

You've just cleaned out the attic and straightened up the garage. You've identified items you no longer need, but they certainly have a cash value to them. You could really use the money, but you don't want to post the information on eBay. What to do? You create a classified ad!

Unlike in times past, the classified advertisement you run with your local paper will more than likely have exposure beyond the printed copy. Smart newspaper publishers, knowing the inroads that the internet has had on their businesses, now allow advertisers to have a copy of their advertisement appear online. This is important as newspaper readership is dropping rapidly as internet usage continues to climb sharply. Still, a printed copy is smart especially if the classified ad section of your local paper is popular.

When designing your ad, you need to come up with an eye grabbing title. The title you choose will help the reader decide whether they want to read more or continue scanning their eyes toward other ads.

List the item you are offering for sale predominately within the name of the title. If you have several items to sell, consider a catchy title such as, "30 Year Contents of Attic" which will indicate to readers that you probably have antiques. If you state, "Assorted Sporting Goods" you will attract people who are looking for a bowling ball, fishing equipment, children's toys, etc. The key is attracting the reader and encouraging them to read your ad.

Beyond the title, the following five points will help you in your campaign:

- 1. Be descriptive** The clearer you present what you have to offer for sale, the better your responses will be.
- 2. Do not abbreviate** Not everyone understands what an abbreviation means. Spell it out and erase all doubt!
- 3. Specify the price** Particularly if you are selling just one item, list the amount you want for that item.
- 4. Highlights** I like ads that stand out. If the newspaper offers decorative symbols, characters, or fonts use them to draw the reader's eyes to your listing.
- 5. Ad campaign** One day listings only work for popular items. Do you believe your item will sell if you list it for just one day? If you list it longer, you can always cancel the ad. Remember to find out what the newspaper's policy is about online ads too. Your buyer may only see the ad online.

Some newspapers will design the ad for you, if you find writing ad copy to be a difficult task. Not everyone is gifted in writing clear, concise copy. If they want your business, they should be happy to provide this service.