



John Roberts

PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

Discovering the Role of Promotional Products in Marketing Strategies



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Overview

When considering the next big move in your promotional marketing strategy, it's best you have all the facts. Given this, before establishing your next brilliant marketing campaign, let's take a better look at how promotional products can play a major role in upping your marketing game. So what exactly is the definition of a promotional product?

Great question! I'm so glad you asked! A promotional product is any item or product that is given to promote a business. Typically these products carry the tagline, logo, name, or contact info of the company distributing the items to its current or prospective clients.

Let's Start with the Basics: What is a Promotional Product?

According to good'ole Webster, "Promotional products, promotional items, promotional merchandise, promotional gifts, or advertising gifts such as a pen, mug, bag, t-shirt, coaster, calendar, cap, clock, diary, etc., given away to current or prospective customers. These items usually carry the organization logo, name and address of a company, as well as the information on the products and services, and serve as reminders. Also called advertising novelty or advertising specialty."

Phew! That was a bit lengthy and winded, but you get the point. Take an object that your clientele will hopefully find entertaining or useful, add your company logo or info on there, and you've got yourself a super cool promo product.

In a time, long long ago....

First and foremost, our generation is not the one that came up with the phenomenal idea of using company swag for marketing and branding purposes. In fact, not even the modern age in general can take credit for that one.

In actuality, the first promotional products appeared during the very brink of civilization, just as the first men started trading. In order to gain the upper hand over their competition, a merchant would give a taste sample of their merchandise to prospective customers. (Think of the Free Sample Lady at Costco... only in the rustic glory of the merchant bygone days). With this, our civilization began developing marketing strategies and started to evolve.



The decisive moment in that evolution was in 1789, when commemorative buttons were first given to George Washington's supporters while campaigning for the upcoming election. Since this time, the popularity of promotional products only kept growing. In fact, during the 19th century, there were advertising rulers, as well as calendars, book bags, card cases, aprons, and even horse hats!

And folks, the rest is history.

Promotional Products vs. Advertising: How do they differ?

While promotional products and advertisements may seem similar, they are most definitely not the same. Why, you ask? Well, firstly, advertising is substantially more expensive than a promotion, and is used when you want to achieve long term product or service awareness.

Examples of advertising include ads in newspapers, magazines, direct mail, and on social media platforms. In contrast, promotional products typically serve to prompt a fast response. (However, I feel it's only fair to point out the use of the word "typically" in the previous sentence. Good promotional products, given within a well done marketing campaign, can certainly have long term effects as well.)

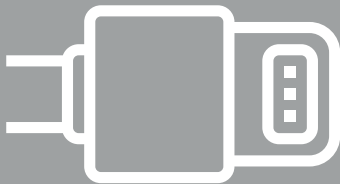
Ok, so what can be used as promotional products? Essentially, any and every little thing that you feel your clients will use on a regular basis. For real, no jokes, not oversimplifying, it can be anything. In fact, according to research, over 750,000 different products are currently being used as promotional merchandise.

WHAT PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS DO PEOPLE USE MOST?

The arsenal of items you can use to promote your company is endless. For the best results, marketers use branded promotional products that will last for many months and help keep consumers engaged with a brand long after an initial promotion has ended.



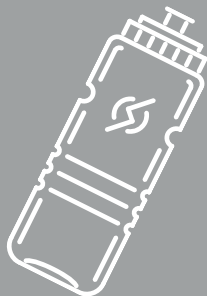
PPE PRODUCTS



USB DRIVES & CHARGERS



APPAREL & OUTERWEAR



CUPS & DRINKWARE

AND A FEW MORE

A one time distribution might not be enough when thinking about engaging potential new customers; so don't do a one and done.



WRITING INSTRUMENTS



BAGS & TOTES



CALENDARS



STRESS BUSTERS



WHY ADD PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS TO YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY?

CHAPTER

02

The legion of benefits gained simply by adding promotional products to your marketing approach are countless. But let's point out a few of the big ones:

- Because the items are kept and used often, providing repeat and sustained exposure of your brand and/or message.
- Because who doesn't like free stuff? People tend to like companies that give them free stuff.
- Because you are targeting only those who are likely to be interested in what you're selling.
- Because promotional items, like direct mail, are one of the only forms of advertising that allows companies to interact with consumers on a physical level.

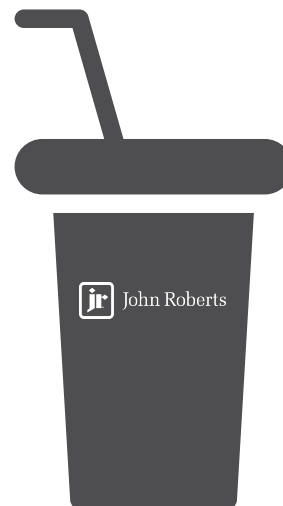
74%

OF ADVERTISERS
STATE THAT
PROMOTIONAL
ITEMS HAVE
MOST CERTAINLY
CONTRIBUTED TO
THEIR SUCCESS.



- Because 74% of advertisers state that promotional items have most certainly contributed to their success.
- Because they broaden your reach. Every time a consumer uses your promotional product it's the equivalent to advertising exposure. Considering the fact that 55% of people keep promotional items for more than a year, that's a lot of repeated exposure.

55%
of people keep
promotional items for
more than a year



AN INSIDERS LOOK AT PROMO PRODUCTS &

Consumer Behavior



39%

of people own a face mask
that's printed with a logo



58%

own a promotional
USB drive or charger



70%

on average, of people
own logo apparel



14 MONTHS

is the average amount of time that
promotional umbrellas are kept by
the recipient

53%

of consumers hold onto
promotional calendars
because they are useful



HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO HEALTHCARE?

As with all businesses, hospitals and healthcare systems (Yes, I know we're not supposed to say that - but healthcare is indeed a business) are always searching for strategic ways to improve the patient experience, boost scores and strengthen their overall brand. Healthcare promotional items can play a vital role in helping healthcare providers do just that.

There are a plethora of opportunities to use promotional products in healthcare such as job fairs, employee recognition ceremonies, events, and fundraisers to promote your brand and make a direct impact on your patients.

When broken down, there are 5 major underlying applications for promotional products in healthcare:

PATIENT EXPERIENCE: I believe the Beryl Institute provides us with the best definition of what “patient experience” truly is and why it is important. Patient experience is defined as “the sum of all interactions, shaped by an organization's culture, that influence patient perceptions across the continuum of care.”

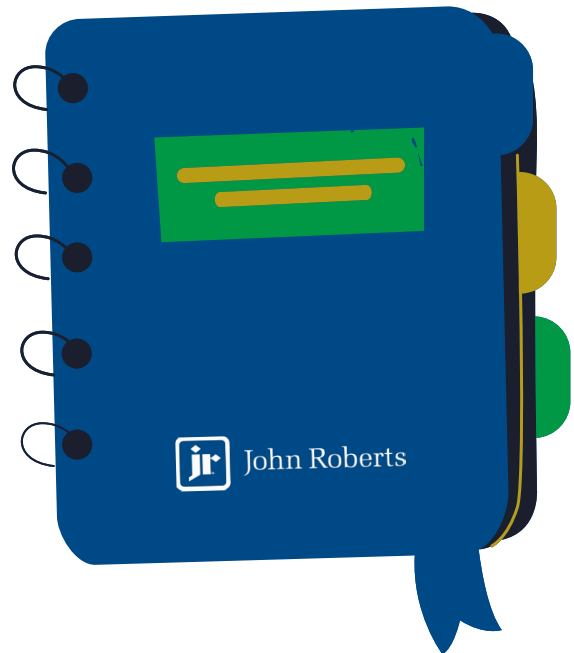
Designing specific patient experience products and kits to enhance each patient interaction will undoubtedly resonate with clients and give a lasting impression of your brand. Consider what can be offered to promote a positive user experience, as well as your company:

- Patient Amenity Kits
- Sleep Kits
- Info and Welcome Gifts
- Patient Comfort Sets
- Patient Belongings Tote

BRAND MANAGEMENT

Brand Management is so much more than apparel and employee uniforms. Promotional items can engage patients and staff, while also assisting in differentiating your brand from the competition. Consider these types of items to promote your brand:

- Uniforms and Scrubs
- Personalized Planners
- Badge Reels
- Water Bottles
- Tote Bags
- Lobby Signage
- Elevator Wraps
- Ceiling Tiles or Floor Graphics
- Personal Care items
- First Aid Kits
- Refrigerator Magnets



NUTRITION & WELLNESS

Finding fun ways to promote wellness and nutrition is important for healthcare organizations. You want your patients to remain healthy long after they leave an appointment or hospital stay. Give them a gift that will help them manage their overall wellness, and will remind them of your brand and that you care about them on a personal level. Examples of these types of promotional products may include:

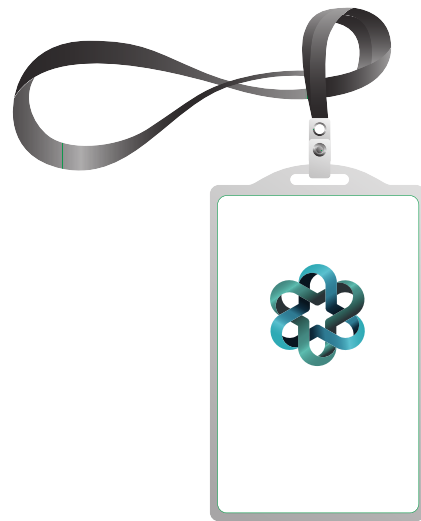
- Cookbooks
- Healthy Eating Calendars or Journals
- Portion Plates
- Exercise Equipment or Accessories



NURSE AND PHYSICIAN RECRUITMENT

To be a well respected hospital or health system, you have to offer a best in class team of doctors and nurses. One way to recruit and retain these vital members of your organization is through the use of promotional products. Consider giving a prospective nurse a company stationery set, or a new doctor a branded lab coat. Promotional products can be a great asset in recruiting and retaining the individuals that keep your organization running. Additional examples may include:

- Physician Lab Coats
- Pens or Stationery
- Coffee Mugs or Tumblers
- Branded Name Plates and Office Signs
- Stethoscope Clips
- Lanyards
- Pocket Planners
- New Hire Welcome Kits



COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

An important part of the financial driving force of a healthcare organization is their successful fundraising efforts. Raising money for specific initiatives such as a new wing opening or raising awareness around a particular disease can be challenging. By utilizing the right promotional products, you can raise money and promote your brand within the community. In fundraising, branding is even more essential when you consider that giving is often prompted by an emotional connection to the cause, triggering an even stronger brand recognition and recall. Examples of promotional items to aid in support efforts include:

- Awareness Color Bracelets
- T-Shirts and Other Apparel
- Pop up Tents

HEALTHCARE: THE UTOPIA OF PROMOTIONAL PRODUCT MARKETING

Most companies have to work hard and put in countless hours, during endless strategy sessions to devise the perfect marketing plans that incorporate the lasting power of promotional products, but not healthcare facilities.

Promotional products are found to be extremely useful when integrated into products that patients already need/want to use. According to the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI), healthcare is actually among the top 10 industries that use promotional products and their patients are among the most receptive.

In another study, PPAI reported that 58% of patients keep a promotional healthcare product anywhere from one to four years, or more!

Ok, so let's look at that little tidbit again. It's more than just another stat, this is really useful info!

Think of it this way, 58% of patients keep their promo item for at least a year. If that patient uses that particular promotional item even just once a week over the course of that year, that's a minimum of 52 times your healthcare brand is in front of that customer.

Imprinted items are the gifts that keep on giving; literally. One little promotional item could keep your brand top of mind for months or even years!

CONCLUSION

Promotional products for healthcare marketing can not only stretch your advertising budget, it can also make a significant impact on developing your company brand and to build name recognition. Implementing a thoughtful and strategic promotional product plan, into your marketing practice, will undoubtedly produce positive and consistent results for many years to come.

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