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Basic Marketing

by Gerard R. Dodd and friends of The Maine Idea

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# BASIC MARKETING



I HOPE  
THEY'VE  
DONE  
THEIR  
HOMEWORK!



FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED

USEFUL TECHNIQUES FOR  
REACHING YOUR MARKET

**WORKBOOKS IN THIS SERIES:**

<b>VOL. I</b>	<b>The Business Review</b>
<b>VOL. II</b>	<b>The Business Plan</b>
<b>VOL. III</b>	<b>Basic Finances</b>
<b>VOL. IV</b>	<b>Basic Marketing</b>
<b>VOL. V</b>	<b>Managing Time &amp; Personnel</b>

**FRIENDS OF THE MAINE IDEA**

Among those who made an **outstanding contribution** to these workbooks are: Sheila Denton, Maria Gasbarrone, Ron Goldstein, Mindy Loveitt and Paul Nevin (The Maine Idea), Bill Burrus, Jeff Ashe and Bill Taffel (ACCION International!), Gerry Mitchell, Roland Hallee and Lynn Carlow (Royal Printing), Tim Sample (The Sample Studio), Ed Armstrong (C. P. Snowman & Co.), Lester Clark (Clark's Heating Oil), Barbara Luce (Rocky Luce Chimney Sweep), Dick Parkhurst (Oakes & Parkhurst Glass), Dick Peck (Peck's Welding), Puck Purnell (OBERON), Ron Serina (POP's Advertising), Nancy Whitman (Goose Eyed Shuttle), Carlton McGary & Joel Stevens (Key Bank), John Moulis (Bank of Maine), Les Stevens (State Development Office), Roy Taylor (Piscataquis Economic Development) and, of course, Annie Blair without whose help, encouragement and love this second edition could have never occurred.

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**MANAGEMENT WORKBOOKS FOR SELF-EMPLOYED PEOPLE, VOL. IV**

# **BASIC MARKETING**

by  
**Gerard R. Dodd  
and friends of  
The Maine Idea**

**DODD-BLAIR & ASSOCIATES, P.O. BOX 644, RANGELEY, ME. 04970**

The contents of **Management Workbooks for Self-employed People** are derived from a wide variety of sources, including direct experience with micro-businesspeople throughout Maine. The information presented is intended only for use as general management guidelines. These workbooks stress self-help, but are not a substitute for competent professional assistance. Although the material has been prepared meticulously, the publisher is not aiming to provide legal, accounting or other professional services and cannot assume responsibility for errors and omissions.

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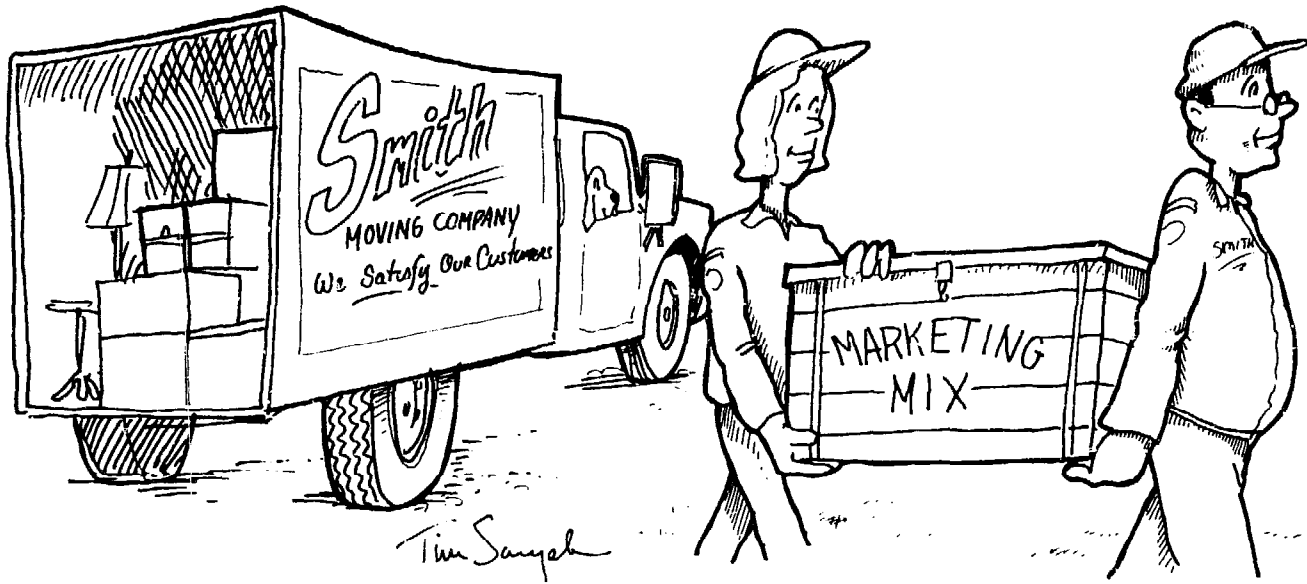
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*To the 22,000 self-employed people in the State of Maine.  
May these workbooks serve you and help you continue being  
the backbone of our community.*

**A MICRO BUSINESS...**is the smallest economic venture — usually owner-operated with few employees and less than \$200,000 annual sales. Most craftspeople, service people, small farmers, “mom and pop” shops, cooperatives, and alternative businesses are micro businesses.

The terms “self-employed person,” “small time operator” and “micro (or mini) businessperson” are used interchangeably in these workbooks.

# **MARKETING IS MOVING GOODS FROM PRODUCER TO CONSUMER**



**OR SATISFYING CUSTOMER NEEDS AT A PROFIT!**

---

Marketing is more than “pushing a product”; it is satisfying real customer needs to insure repeated sales. A primary objective of marketing is to develop a large pool of satisfied customers who will not only return to buy, but will also spread the word about your business because they trust your products and appreciate your personal attention.

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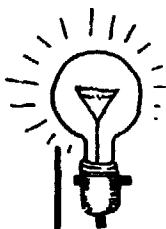


## Introduction

This workbook can help you plan and use a marketing strategy that suits your business. It explains the underlying concepts of effective marketing and provides specific information about planning and techniques. There's plenty of space to write down your ideas as you follow along!

As with other aspects of running a business, marketing is a process of trial and error. Try to identify consistent patterns and seasonal trends in your business operation. Analyze your customers' needs and try to fill them in various ways. You'll discover what your customers really want and what is most profitable to your business.

**Research and hard thinking count!** Too many "gut feelings" about the market may lead to serious trouble.



**IDEA BLOCKS** like this are for jotting down changes you want to make and new things you want to try out in your business. If you carefully use the idea blocks, they will be helpful when you start organizing your ideas into a coherent plan later on.

# STEPS TO EFFECTIVE MARKETING



## STEP I...DETERMINE YOUR CUSTOMERS' NEEDS 6

Get to know your customers. Be friendly! Talk with them about themselves, about how your products and services fill their needs, and about how you might satisfy their other needs.



## STEP II...ANALYZE YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES 8

Now find out why people buy from your competitors rather than from you. Are you doing a good enough job of filling customer needs? By studying the competition, you learn about yourself!



## STEP III...TARGET YOUR MARKET 10

Don't try to be all things to all people! Instead, focus your energy and resources on a certain income level, special interest group or geographic area. Think about who your 20% best customers are.



## STEP IV...USE YOUR MARKETING MIX TO SATISFY CUSTOMER NEEDS 12

Each business satisfies customer needs with its own unique marketing mix — a combination of products and/or services, prices, distribution system and promotional strategy. Consider what you offer. If your "mix" isn't working, CHANGE IT!

<b>PART 1...PRODUCTS &amp; SERVICES</b>	18
<b>PART 2...DISTRIBUTION</b>	20
<b>PART 3...PRICING</b>	22
<b>PART 4...PROMOTION &amp; ADVERTISING</b>	26

## STEP 1...DETERMINE YOUR CUSTOMER NEEDS



### ***FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMER'S NEEDS***

Ask your customers what they want to see in your store; talk to them informally or ask them to fill out a simple questionnaire, in return for a special discount or small gift. This kind of direct feedback from your customers is invaluable in planning your marketing strategy.

## ASK YOURSELF.....

- **WHO** are my customers? (Teenagers? Retired people? People with lots of leisure time? People with special interests?)

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- **WHERE** do they live? (Country? City? Suburbia? Nearby? Out-of-state?)

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- **WHY** do they use me instead of the competition? (Personalized service? Prices? Quality? Store hours? Availability of merchandise?)

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- **WHEN** do they come to me? (Daily? Once in a while? At unusual times?)

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- **WHAT** particular services or products are they looking for? (What are my best selling items?)

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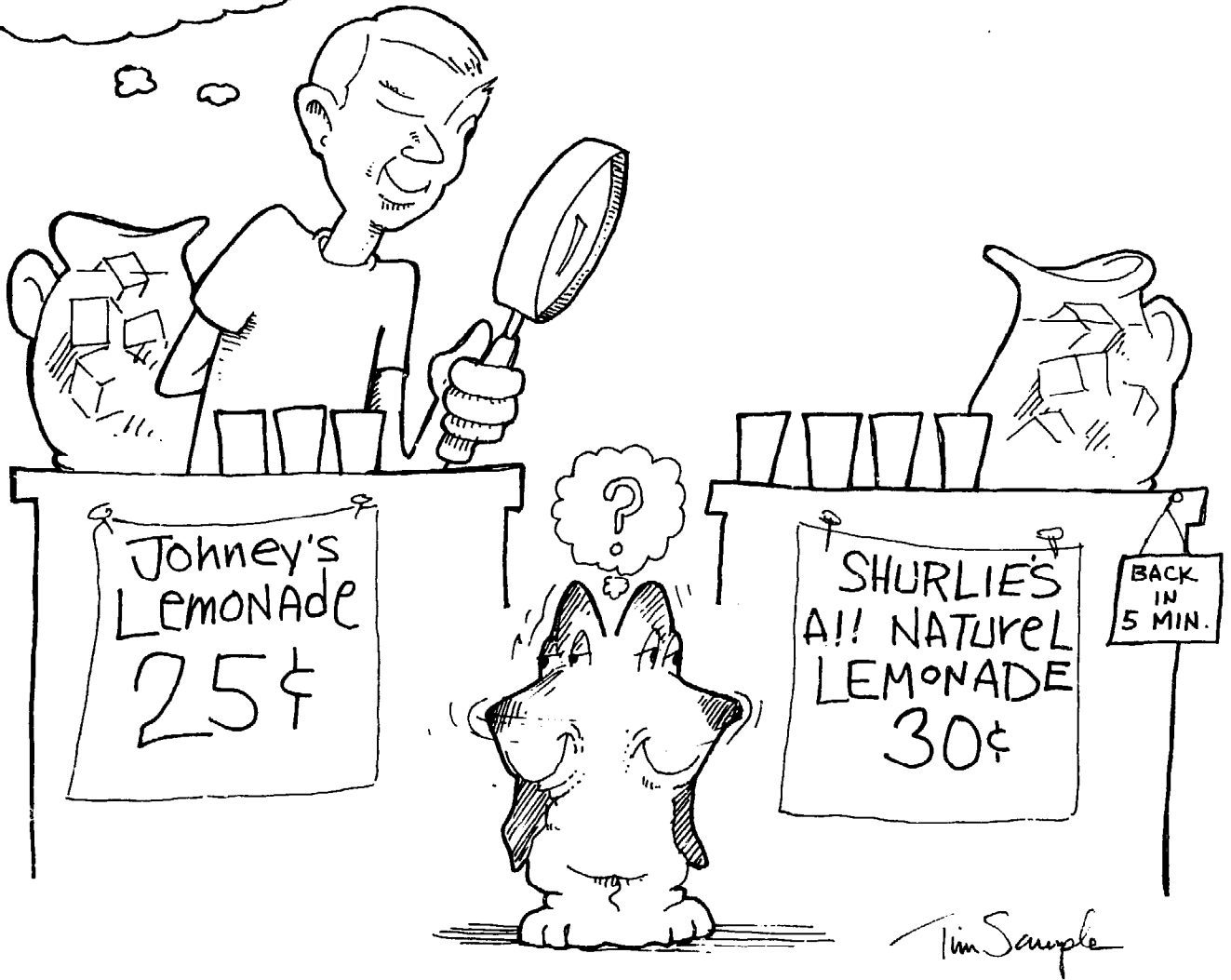
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## STEP II...ANALYZE YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

MY CUSTOMER ATTENTION SEEMS TO BE BETTER!



**QUALITY, PRICES, GUARANTEES...WHERE'S YOUR NICHE IN THE MARKETPLACE??**

# COMPETITOR CHECKLIST

Who are my major competitors? What are their strengths and weaknesses?  
 What does this tell me about my business and my marketing strategy?

/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Competitor Name

/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Competitor Name

/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Competitor Name

My situation:

	Better Equal Worse			Better Equal Worse			Better Equal Worse			Good Average Poor		
Prices												
Quality												
Product Selection												
Customer Attention												
Service/Repairs												
Reliability												
Expert Advice												
Guarantees												
Customer Credit												
Credit Cards												
Location												
Store Hours												
Store Appearance												
Advertising												

The time to analyze the competition is **all the time!** Be sure of your market position by knowing what your competitors are doing — by being informed of their products, prices, and services. Talk to them! Just because you are competitors doesn't mean you can't be friends. Being aware of what the competition offers will help you develop a marketing mix which keeps your customers happy.

## STEP III...TARGET YOUR MARKET

You must target your market because you have limited resources and can't be all things to all people. It's a question of focusing your time, energy and financial resources on those who will most benefit from your business while providing you with a fair return.

### CONSIDER THESE APPROACHES...

- ... focus on a particular geographic area (perhaps within a 25-mile radius of your shop)
- ... focus on your best selling product or service (If you have a winner, promote it!)
- ... focus on those who are most likely to patronize your business (If you sell farm equipment — farmers. If you sell blue jeans — teenagers.)

Once you've targeted your market and developed a "customer profile", you'll be in a better position to decide on marketing strategies and techniques. Think of ways of reaching your targeted customers better!

### USING THE 80/20 RULE...

List your BEST customers: \_\_\_\_\_

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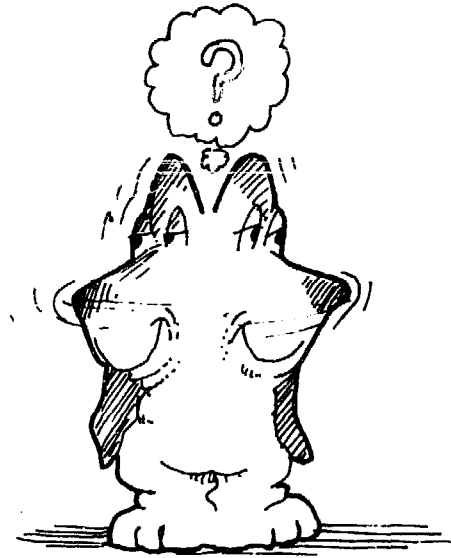
List your BEST products and services: \_\_\_\_\_

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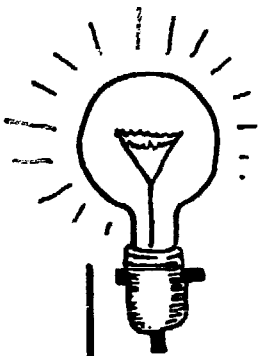
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# THE 80/20 RULE OF THUMB



80% of your PROFITS come from...  
20% of your CUSTOMERS!

80% of your SALES come from...  
20% of your NORMAL PRODUCT LINE!



Our special thanks to Common Sense Magazine for this concept. We know of many businesses that have benefited greatly from it!

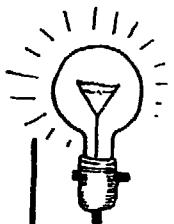


**STEP IV...USE YOUR MARKETING MIX  
TO SATISFY CUSTOMER NEEDS**



*Tim Sauph*

**YOU CAN ALWAYS CHANGE THE MIX!!!**



A large empty rectangular box for writing notes or a response.

The marketing mix is like a jigsaw puzzle with four major parts interconnecting to create the final picture. We provide a detailed description of these parts in the next section. The important thing to remember is that **every company has a different mix**. Your job is to figure out how yours goes together. You are the decision-maker. If you're unhappy with some aspect of your current operation, change it!

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## **COMPONENTS OF THE MARKETING MIX**

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### **PRODUCTS & SERVICES**

Compare your different products and services. What's unique about them? Do they fill the needs of your targeted customers? Is there too much or too little of anything? Do some sell better than others?

### **DISTRIBUTION**

Does your distribution system really fill your needs? Is it economical? Is your objective to wholesale, retail or both? What's entailed?

### **PRICING**

Are you adequately covering your costs? Are your prices fair both to you and your customers? How do they compare with your competitor's prices? Do you review your prices regularly?

### **PROMOTION & ADVERTISING**

Are you getting the most mileage from your promotional budget? Are you sure you've covered the basics well enough (name, logo, signs, etc.)? Have you gotten other people's opinions about your image and the effectiveness of your promotion?



Blank lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

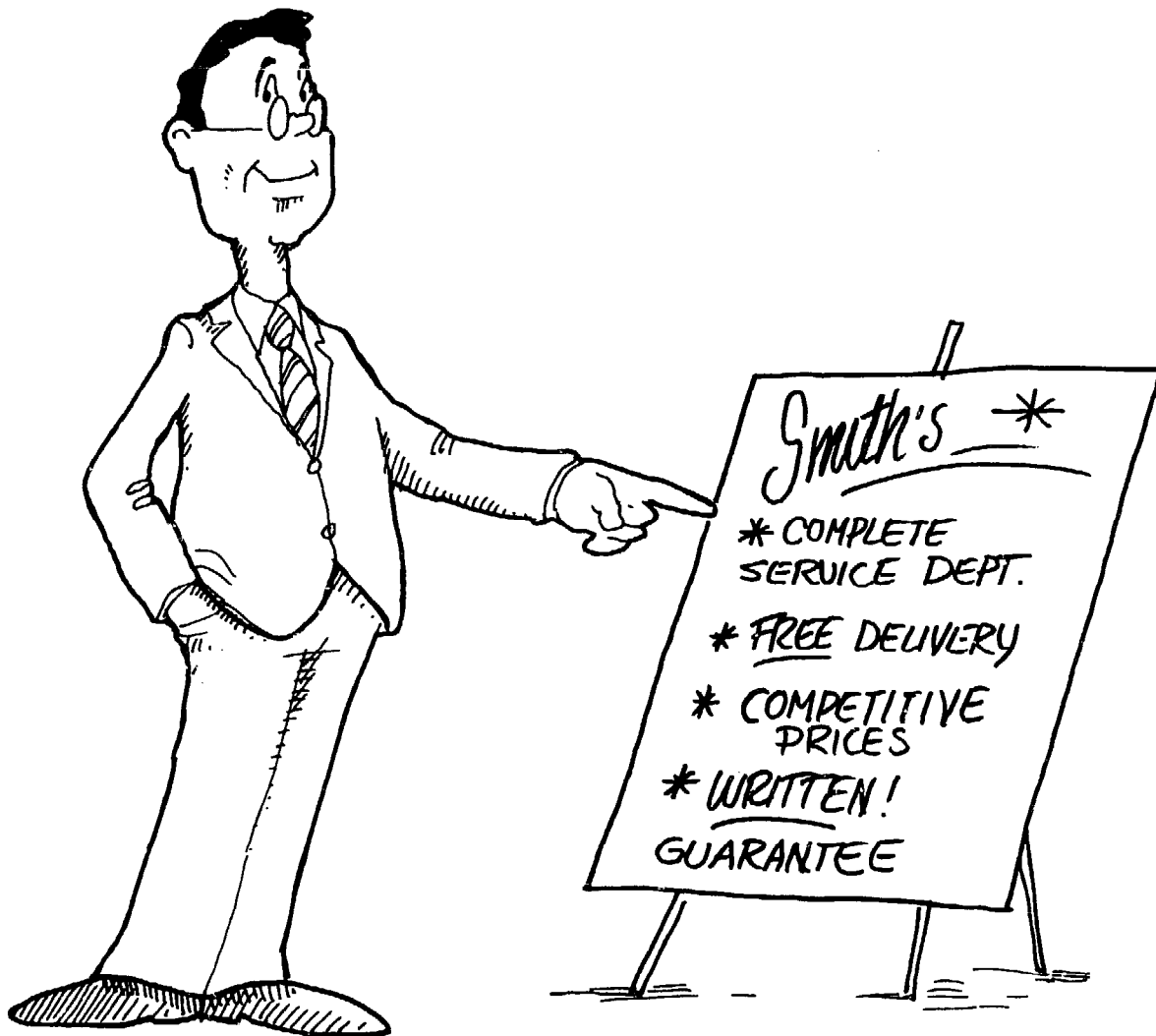
# THE MARKETING MIX IS YOUR WAY...



**PART 1 PRODUCTS & SERVICES**

**PART 2 DISTRIBUTION**

**... OF SATISFYING CUSTOMER NEEDS**



**PART PRICING**  
**3**

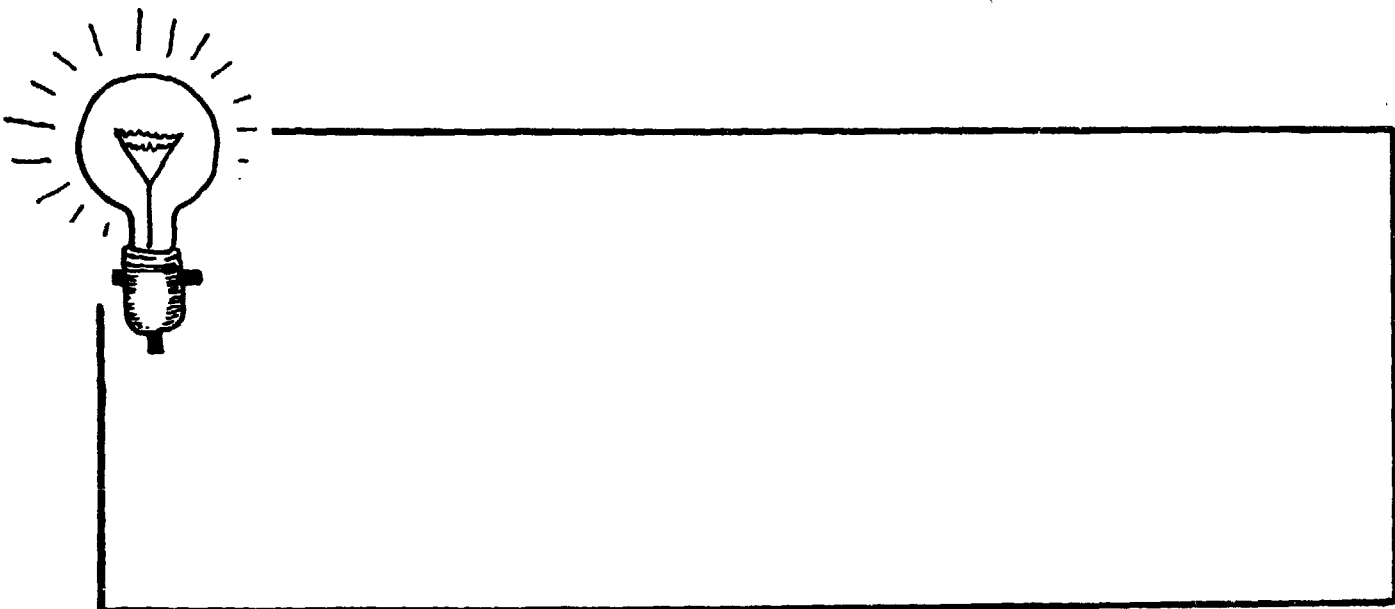
**PART PROMOTION & ADVERTISING**  
**4**

# PART 1 PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Let's face it, people want the most for their money! "The best product at the best price" is a phrase heard so often and taken so seriously. Recognizing this, micro businesses can specialize in high quality products and services. They can guarantee their customers the BEST at reasonable prices.

As a rule, always try to provide the finest product or service you can. Learn all you can about your trade; study new methods of production or the latest techniques in your field. Focus on what's special about your business and make the most of it!

Remember, whatever you offer should fill REAL customer needs. Follow sales trends, and be aware of shifts in those needs. Be flexible and make changes as the market dictates. Understand the "life cycle" of your product lines or service — a new item may sell poorly at first, pick up as its reputation grows, then eventually decline. Keep your sales moving by anticipating those ups and downs in customer demands.





**BE PROUD OF WHAT YOU DO, AND HOW YOU DO IT!**

LIST HERE THE PRODUCTS & SERVICES YOU OFFER. Do you want to make any changes in them? \_\_\_\_\_

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# PART DISTRIBUTION

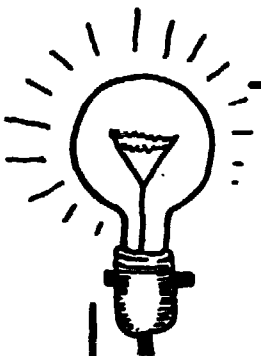
## 2

Your options for distribution are usually either direct sales to the consumer (retailing) or the use of a "middleman" (wholesaling). The type of business often dictates the system to be used. There are pros and cons to both.

Don't forget to evaluate periodically the effectiveness and efficiency of your distribution. Changes in customer buying habits, company rules, retailer's techniques, competitor's methods and other business trends could require you to make adjustments. Experiment with different methods to see what brings the best results!

**RETAILING...**is selling directly to the consumer. It gives you a higher profit margin and has the advantage that you keep control of the marketing. The disadvantages often include higher overhead and capital tied up in slow moving merchandise. It can mean you start small and stay small for longer!

**WHOLESALING...**relieves you of some marketing work, but cuts into your profits. To wholesale you have to produce more product for less money — the emphasis is on volume. This can be a problem for those who take pride in producing finely crafted one-of-a-kind items.



## **OPTIONS FOR DISTRIBUTION**

### **WHOLESALER**

This is someone who purchases large quantities of merchandise at a discount price. S/he stores, handles and sells the material, relieving you of those responsibilities. This lessens your profit but saves you time and effort.

### **MANUFACTURER'S REPRESENTATIVE**

This is someone who sells on commission as an agent for different clients with similar product lines. You still do the shipping, billing and collecting. Your profit margin will be a little higher.

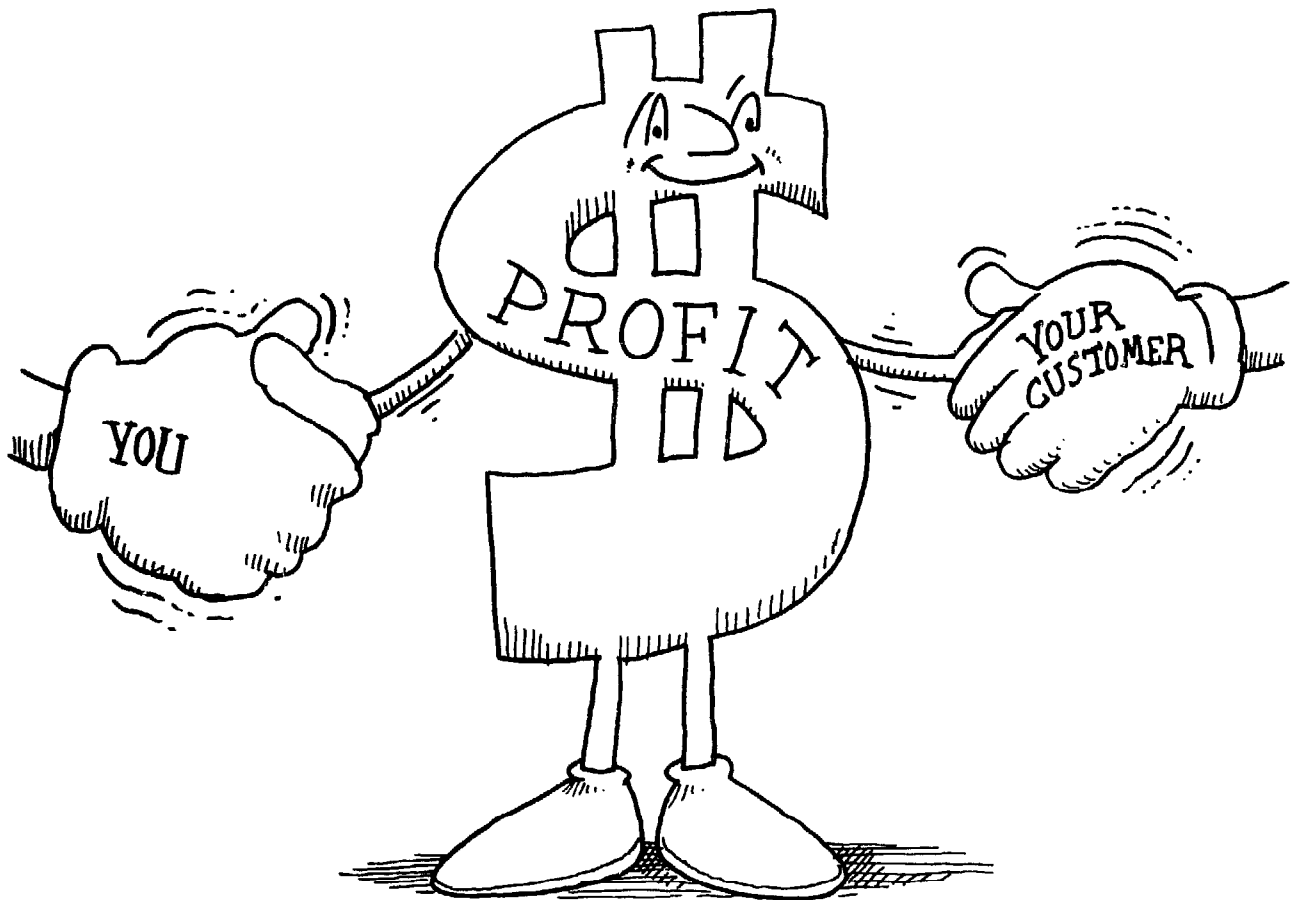
### **CONSIGNMENT**

This is selling goods through a small store or retailer for commission. In this way, you can often test customer response to a product before committing yourself to it in earnest. You do tie up some money, and to be effective, you need to find the right store(s) and have adequate display space.

Whichever system you choose, develop a friendly working relationship with your distributor. Provide dependable products and furnish advertising display material.

# PART PRICING 3

Determining fair prices can be tough! The idea is to cover costs and make a profit while attracting customers and building volume. Prices must be competitive and within the customer's reach. In setting them, consider the MINIMUM you need to take out of the business for living expenses.



**PROFIT MUST BE  
FAR TO BOTH!**

The uniqueness of what you offer is an important factor in setting prices. The more distinctive your business is and the more customer attention you give, the more flexibility you will have in pricing. For example, a store that offers guarantees, store credit and excellent personalized service, can usually charge more for its products.

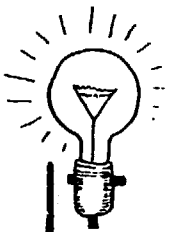
## ELEMENTS OF PRICING

**FIXED COSTS...**are the expenses of the workplace: electricity, heat, telephone, salaries, machinery, etc. They are basically the same regardless of your volume of business.

**VARIABLE COSTS...**are those which fluctuate according to how much business you do: materials, machinery maintenance, unexpected breakdowns, markdowns or defective goods.

**PROFIT...**is a planned, integral part of your price. Without it, your business cannot survive or grow!

Be willing to experiment! Try different pricing schemes and compare your system with those of your competitors. Ask your customers how they feel about your prices and seek their constructive advice!



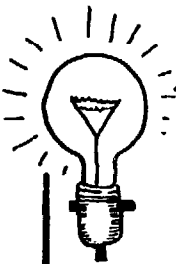
**PART**  
**4**

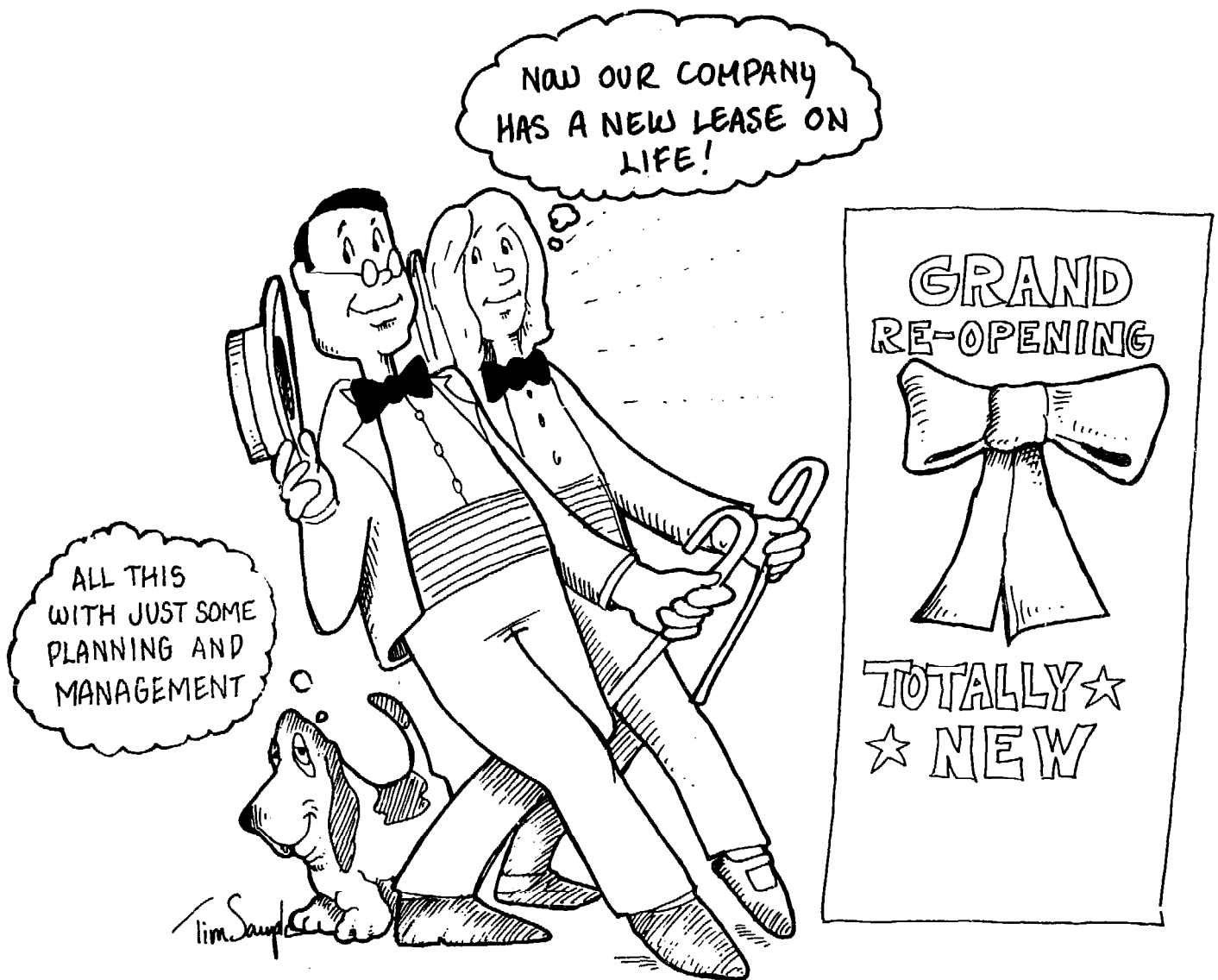
**PROMOTION & ADVERTISING**

These two work together to build awareness of your product or service, to stimulate sales, and to establish a favorable image of your company. By carefully emphasizing your business strengths, you can build a promotional effort of lasting value.

**PROMOTION...**deals with the generalities of "popularizing" your business operation as a whole. It helps you establish an overall image for your enterprise and informs the public of what products and services are available.

**ADVERTISING...**(according to the dictionary) "proclaims the qualities or advantages of a product." Its purpose is to sell a particular product or service.





## ***ALWAYS, PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD!***

Be sure to measure the effectiveness of your promotion and advertising. Ask your customers how they found out about you. Try coupons. Advertise different specials at different times, in different areas and in different ways — and compare results!!!

## OVERALL PROMOTION TO BUILD AN IMAGE

The specifics of how you build an image will depend upon your overall goals and directions. A sheep farmer who specializes in producing lambs for an Easter market will project one image, whereas another who produces lambs but also markets fleeces, spins wool and knits clothing will want to project a different image.

There are many ways of building an image. Your name and logo are very important. Your store appearance, the type of people working for you, the way the telephone is answered, and the way your printed materials are presented are also considerations. Get into the habit of doing things well! This will reinforce the word-of-mouth as it spreads about you.



**KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR IMAGE!**

Be active in the community. Simple things go a long way! If you're a serviceperson, you might give educational talks related to your field. If you are a small manufacturer, you might sponsor a town softball team. If you're a craftsman, you might give demonstrations in schools or at the annual town fair. There are innumerable possibilities, but well-planned promotional techniques help you build credibility and gain respect.

WHAT'S MY IMAGE?		Yes	No
Does my business fit into the surrounding area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is my location visible and accessible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is my sign simple and appealing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are the premises orderly and inviting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the merchandise well presented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are my salespeople friendly and knowledgeable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do my customers remember my business favorably?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## A WORD ABOUT CUSTOMER ATTENTION...

Personalized customer service is one of the micro-businessperson's greatest strengths. Develop a friendly, helpful relationship with your customers and try to learn their names as a courtesy. Have your salespeople do the same — in the shop, on the road and over the phone. This creates the right atmosphere and gets the word-of-mouth circulating in a positive way. These details can create a lasting impression in the customer's mind.

***FIXED, CONSISTENT BUSINESS HOURS ARE ESSENTIAL TO A SERIOUS BUSINESS!***

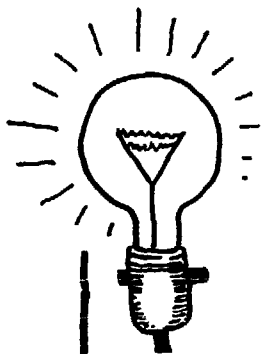




## HOW COMPLETE IS YOUR IDEA?

When it comes to putting together a coherent promotional plan, we find it's especially important to have a clear idea of your business directions — your goals, expectations and limitations. Do your business ideas fit together in a logical way or are they scattered and inconsistent? Think about the central activities of your business. Why are you involved in this particular business? What do you hope to get out of it in the short, medium and long term? Then consider the image you and your business actually present. Should you make any changes? Do your business name and logo convey a fairly complete idea of what you do?

### *GOING IN TOO MANY DIRECTIONS AT ONCE?*



## YOUR NAME & LOGO

Look around at the great ideas people have for business names and logos! Consider yours carefully! Does it convey the image you want?

If you're picking a name for the first time or changing names, put together a long list of ideas from which to choose. Test the ideas on your friends and acquaintances. Take enough time to make the right choice!

Consider getting a graphic artist to help you design the logo. It's worth the investment for an eye catching, appropriate design.



The illustrator of these books, Tim Sample, helped The Maine Idea develop its name and logo. Yours doesn't have to be as elaborate, but it should be tasteful and convey an image relevant to your complete idea.

"The Maine Idea" name and by-line evolved from a long list of options. Tim used the workbook characters to develop the logo. Altogether, it says a lot to the self-employed Maine person for whom it was intended!

## YOUR LOCATION

The accessibility and visibility of your location are major considerations. The best location will strike a balance between business possibilities and personal considerations (e.g. being close to home). Cost may be a key factor in determining where you locate. What are the pros and cons of your location? Is the business potential really there? If you're in an out-of-the-way place, can you compensate for it in some way?

GREAT MARKETING MIX MARATHON



**TO STUDY THE  
COMPETITION IS TO  
LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF**

...tim Sample

## YOUR STORE OR SHOP IMAGE

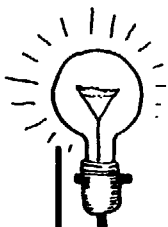
Customers are impressed by a clean, well-organized look — a professional appearance reflects pride and quality! It says a lot about you and your business!

**SIGNS...** create a first impression of your business and strengthen your company's image in the minds of satisfied customers — inviting them to return. Give careful thought to your sign. Keep it simple, but distinctive. Display it prominently! Your investment will be well worth it in the long run.

**WINDOW DISPLAYS...** can add a lot of interest to your business and its products. They are an inexpensive way of introducing new merchandise and of advertising special promotions or sales. Develop "themes" for your windows with colorful displays. Get ideas from your friends and employees.

**OUTSIDE SPACE...** should be neat and accessible. Your surroundings contribute to the attractiveness of what you sell. Shopping at your business should be as easy and comfortable as possible.

**INSIDE SPACE...** when it's neat and conveniently organized, encourages your customers to look at everything you are offering. Well prepared displays highlight your products. Advertise with bright colors, easy-to-read signs, and lights.



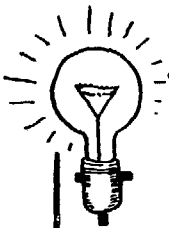
## YOUR OUT-OF-SHOP IMAGE

**BUSINESS CARDS...** are a convenient way of helping people remember your name and location. Design a card that stands out! Use a picture or logo, and various colors. Fold-over business cards have the advantage of giving you more space for your message. Cards are an inexpensive way to promote when posted throughout your marketing area (on bulletin boards, cash registers, etc.) Be generous in their use!

**BROCHURES...** can explain the uniqueness of your business and products. For certain types of businesses, they are particularly valuable because there is space to highlight important aspects of your operation. A brochure can enhance your estimate or price quote.

**VEHICLE ADVERTISING...** is a reasonable way of keeping your name in front of the public. A nicely painted and lettered truck is always helpful imagewise. (Magnetic signs are removeable). Consider the case of Acme Plumbing — “Where a flush always beats a full house.” If you do service work, also consider using a sandwich board outside the job site — “Chimney cleaning by Rocky, The Chimney Sweep.” People will take notice and remember your name!

**TRADE SHOWS AND FAIRS...** are often a good chance to display your wares and reach potential customers. Carefully pick events which are appropriate to your business and offer maximum customer exposure.





## ***DO THE SIMPLE, INEXPENSIVE THINGS FIRST!***

**NEWSPAPER ARTICLES...** are extremely valuable ways of promoting your business. Local newspapers are often interested in stories about local folks, new businesses in town, unusual occupations and the like. Suggest to a reporter that s/he do a story about you! To help the reporter get the basic facts straight, write a news release which stresses the unique features of your business. Provide a black and white photo or two (35mm) to accompany the story.

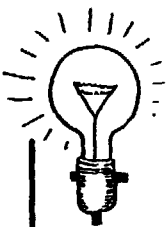
Many micro businesspeople DO have interesting stories about how they produce their products and their plans for expansion. The wire service picked up a local article about a friend of ours who makes soapstone bed warmers. They published it nationwide and he started getting orders from everywhere!

# ADVERTISING & SPECIAL PROMOTIONS

The objective is to move as much merchandise (services) as possible as inexpensively as possible.

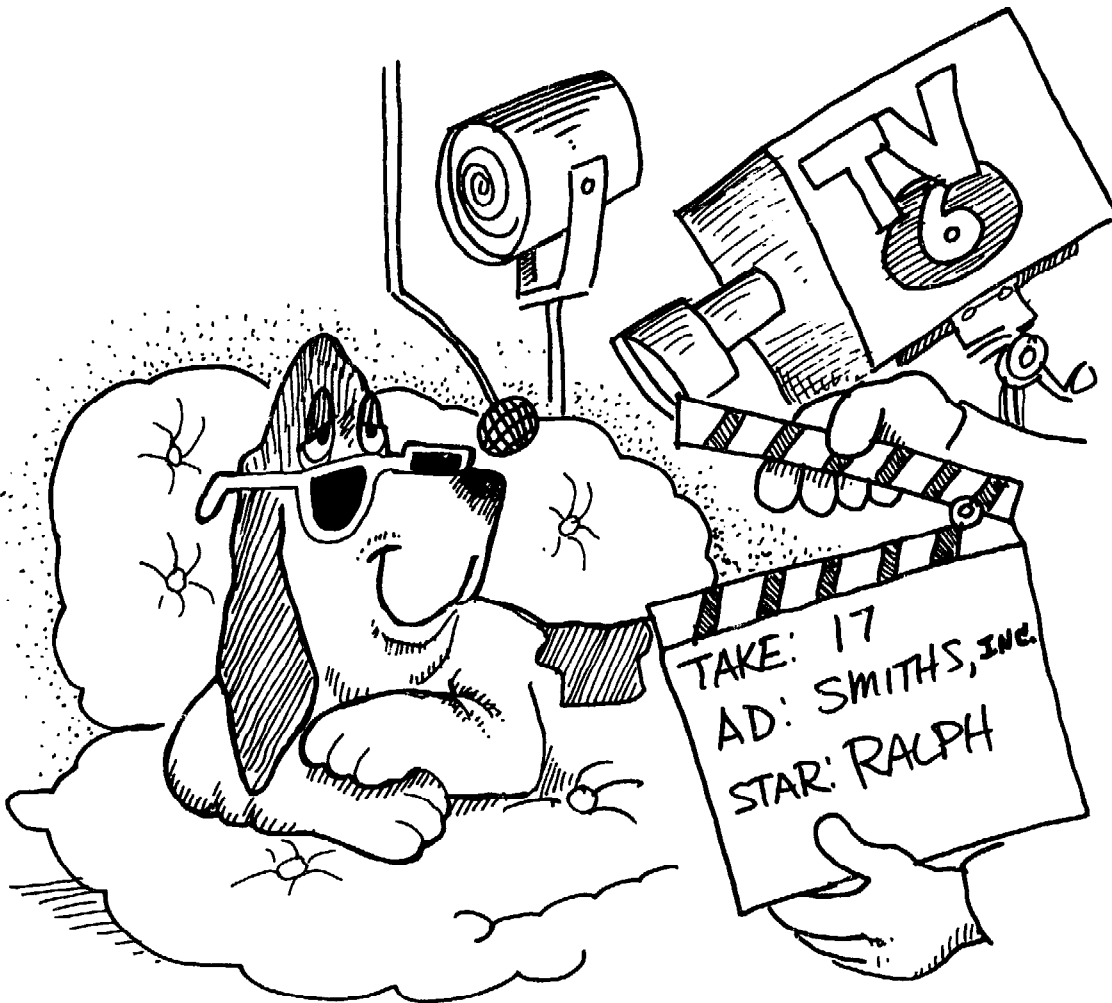
## SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES

- Establish a **fixed** advertising budget proportionate to the size of your business. Consider using a percentage (we suggest 2-3%) of either your estimated or last year's gross sales.
- Use simple, inexpensive promotional techniques first; then work progressively into more complex, expensive projects.
- Capture the fullest possible share of the market **when the market is there**. As a rule, advertise at peak sales times, not when you're in a slump.
- Always advertise your **best** products, not the slow movers! Analyze the 80/20 rule to determine which products are most likely to move and bring the desired return.
- When something works, stick with it! Compare cost with results!
- Know your customers! Remember whom you're targeting. It will help you decide where and how to advertise.
- Shop around for your best advertising dollar!



## HOW TO GET STARTED!!!

- 1st** Carefully select the products or services to be offered and determine the real customer benefits to be stressed.
- 2nd** Set **realistic** goals and sales projections in order to measure the success of your efforts.
- 3rd** Develop an overall plan of action and timetable which includes all the various types of advertising to be used.
- 4th** Prepare a tight budget and watch it closely.



***BE CAREFUL TO USE LIMITED RESOURCES WISELY!!!***



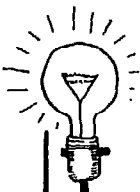
## SOME ADVERTISING OPTIONS

**THRIFTY ADVERTISING...** such as swap guides, "shoppers" (give-away fliers), church bulletins, etc. are often effective and inexpensive. Be inventive in finding ways of getting the word out about your business! Be sure thrifty advertising achieves your overall purposes and is consistent with the image you are trying to project.

**SPECIAL MAILINGS...** can be particularly effective with your best customers and "hot" prospects. Carefully develop your mailing list. Keep a sign up sheet near the cash register — "If you give us your name and address, we'll be glad to let you know of special sales." Put a jar of beans on the counter and offer a prize to the person who comes closest to guessing the right number (you have to put your name, address and your guess in a box to participate!)

Anyone with whom you've had direct contact is a "hot" prospect. Since the rate of return on "cold" prospects is very low, we suggest targeting your mailings only to your very best customers. If you can, add a personal touch like a hand written note.

**YELLOW PAGES...** according to most people we work with, can be a very helpful form of advertising in the first year or two of operations. Thereafter, you may just want your name listed in **BOLD** print under the appropriate categories.

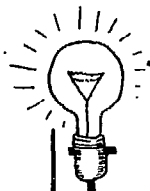


**NEWSPAPERS...** both dailies and weeklies, are commonly used by micro businesses to advertise. Local newspapers provide good exposure for those servicing a limited area. A small ad **repeated often** is usually more effective than a larger one run infrequently. Many newspapers give their regular advertisers special discount prices. Check with your suppliers about coop advertising.

**MAGAZINES...** particularly if they have wide circulations, have very expensive advertising rates. Many people squander limited resources trying to "make it big." Smaller, more local publications may be better for micro businesses — try your specialty trade or business association publication.

**RADIO...** can be very effective for certain types of advertising, but the cost mounts up rapidly. Know your targeted customers well before you try it. Frequency and timing are important — many package deals are for off hours which may not meet your needs. Consider recording your own ad to give your customers a chance to hear your voice. Also, since people seldom have something to write a telephone number, you might word your ad to give them a visual association — "Next to the post office!" — "Right downtown on Main St." — "Check the yellow pages under plumbers!"

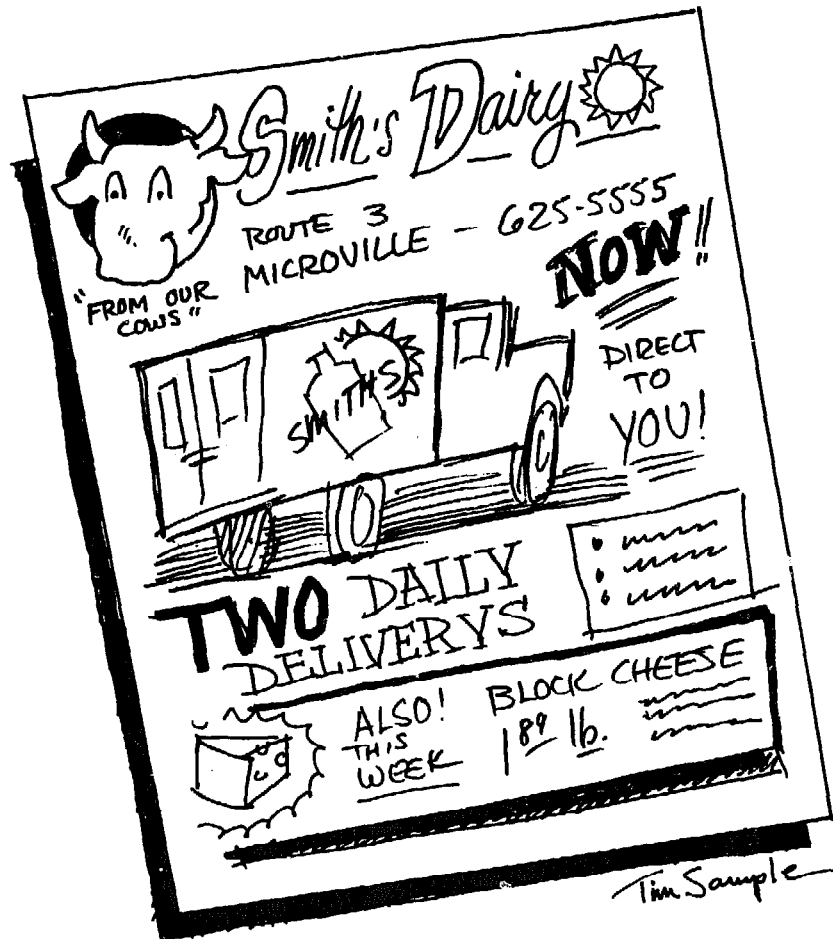
**TELEVISION...** is too costly for most of the "micro" businesses. Sometimes cooperative advertising packages make it possible. We get mixed responses about its effectiveness from those who have tried it.







## A FEW GUIDELINES FOR ADS



### **A GOOD AD DEMONSTRATES THE CUSTOMER BENEFIT!**

Creating an advertisement involves writing the copy, selecting the illustration, preparing the layout and making arrangements with the selected media. The copy is all the written or spoken material. Illustrations should be selected for the interest they create and their appropriateness. The layout is the way the various elements are arranged and is important in guiding the reader's eye in an orderly fashion.

Carefully design your ads to attract attention and develop public interest. Common sense, good taste and, above all, **honesty** should prevail in their design and content.

### **BASIC PRINCIPLES OF AD DESIGN**

- Show how the customer benefits in buying from you.
- Emphasize **ONLY** a few important points.
- Feature certain items, and give a price or price range.
- Keep the wording short and simple.
- Use humor sparingly, if at all.
- Clearly state your name, address and phone number.
- Pick a straightforward layout with an illustration.

### **PUTTING YOUR AD TOGETHER...**

- 1st** Decide what you really want to say. Get right to the point! People don't have time for long messages.
- 2nd** Write your ad in rough to see how it reads. Then eliminate what you can without cutting the important points.
- 3rd** Select a few options for illustrations. Pictures or graphics add interest and enhance your image!
- 4th** Put all the pieces together in a few different layouts. What does the reader "see"? How does the ad flow?
- 5th** Test the layouts on friends and acquaintances, and pick the best one!

If you're unsure about putting your ad together or are concerned with the graphics, get help! The media people you'll have to deal with are usually happy to make suggestions. Your suppliers may also have some good ideas.



**OPEN HERE FOR MARKETING WORKSHEET**



**PROJECT AN IMAGE BASED ON YOUR STRENGTHS**



We hope this workbook has helped you consider and improve your marketing efforts. Remember, your goal is to build a large pool of satisfied customers who have confidence in your company and will come back again and again. These people can be your best advertising — make sure you're really meeting their needs and giving them the customer attention they deserve. This is one of the key things that distinguishes the smaller, individually owned business from the giant chain stores.

To sum up, when you plan your efforts to increase sales, begin with simple things such as a new sign or a general clean up effort and then move on to more elaborate projects. Marketing does not have to be an expensive proposition, but it does require organization. Whatever course of action you pursue, make sure it's part of an overall strategy in which the results are carefully measured. Study the results, decide which are the best marketing techniques for your business, and use those methods to your fullest advantage!



# SIX MONTH PROMOTIONAL PLAN

(TO BE REVISED & REPROJECTED EVERY THREE MONTHS)

BUSINESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD COVERED: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

GOALS & OBJECTIVES <small>(Be as specific as possible!)</small>	SPECIFIC PROMOTIONAL & MARKETING ACTIVITIES				✓	FINAL RESULTS <small>(...and observations)</small>
	MONTH OF:	MONTH OF:	MONTH OF:	FOLLOWING 3 MONTHS OF:		

*HAVE YOU PRECISELY DETERMINED YOUR CUSTOMERS' NEEDS, YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES, YOUR TARGETED MARKET AND YOUR MARKETING MIX???*

## DODD-BLAIR & ASSOCIATES

Dear Self-employed Friends,

In our work with self-employed people throughout Maine, we find great pride and integrity in the high quality of the products and services they produce. We, too, are proud of our work and know you'll appreciate our publications!

These workbooks fill the need for practical, down-to-earth information which can be easily applied to daily business operations. The focus is on **BASICS** — the general principles behind effective, profitable management. Since all business situations are different, you can apply the material as best suits your needs. Let us know what you think of them. We guarantee your satisfaction!

**Basic Marketing** is filled with practical information for planning and implementing a marketing strategy. It encourages you to analyze your strengths in the marketplace in order to fill real customer needs. Specific promotional techniques are discussed with worksheets to help you decide on appropriate activities for your business.

Use **Basic Marketing** to do your marketing homework and develop a plan of action. Rather than trying to create a market for your product or service, make sure there already is one! We urge you to carefully build a company image through customer attention and inexpensive promotion before trying more costly advertising.

In addition to the workbooks, we've developed a variety of management services including workshops and one-to-one consulting. We stress practical, self-help information designed especially for the small operator. Our business is based in Rangeley, a beautiful micro business community in the western mountains. For further information, please write P.O. Box 644, Rangeley, ME 04970 or call (207) 864-5195.

Best wishes,

*Gerry + Annie*

\$18.00 (set of five)

0-930205-00-6 (5 volume set)  
0-930205-04-9 (Basic Marketing)