

Advertising

While networking can be a particularly effective way to get business for your event planning company, you may also be able to attract some clients through **advertising**.

Yellow Pages

You have probably used the Yellow Pages many times. But before you buy an ad for your own business, you should carefully **investigate the costs** compared to the

potential return. Many new business owners find a Yellow Pages ad does not make the phone ring off the hook with buyers. If someone does respond to your ad, they may be

“shopping around,” so you must be prepared to invest time as well as advertising dollars if you use this method of advertising.

To minimize your risk, you might want to consider starting with a small display ad, such as a **1/8 page** ad. If you can get your hands on a previous year's edition of your local Yellow Pages compare the ads for event planners from year to year. If you notice others have increased or decreased the size of their ads, this can give you an indication

of what might work for you. Also, if you are doing information interviews, you can ask event planners how well their Yellow Pages ads are working for them.

You can either **design the ad yourself**, have the Yellow Pages design it for you, or hire a designer. Take a look at the ads in the events category of your current Yellow Pages for ideas. If you are interested in advertising, contact your local Yellow Pages to speak with a sales rep. check the print version of your phone book for contact information.

Yellow Pages <http://www.yellowpages.com>

Canadian Yellow Pages <http://www.yellowpages.ca>

Some localities also have “pages” or “books” of other types. In the Mid-Atlantic States, the community Yellow Pages are alternatives. These are limited to smaller geographic areas than, for example, a whole state or city. Check into that possibility, as well, especially if you don't want to travel great distances to find clients.

Magazines

Magazine advertising can be expensive, and may not generate the results you want unless you do it repeatedly. (It has been estimated that many people need to see an advertisement **three to seven times** before they buy.)

If you choose to buy advertising, it will probably be most cost-effective to place ads in small **local magazines** or **newspapers**. The publications you advertise in will usually design your ad for an additional cost, and give you a copy of the ad to run in other publications. Here are some tips for effective advertising:



- **Make your ad about your customers.** Explain how they can benefit from your services rather than just listing the services you provide. (Saying “Your event will be the talk of the town” is better than saying “I can help you plan your next event.”)
- **Make them an offer they can’t refuse.** Your ad should describe a service or special promotion that makes you stand out from your competition. It should also include a call to action (e.g., saying “Call today” or including a coupon that expires by a certain date).
- **Make sure you’re available** for people who respond to your ad. If someone wants to talk to you but keeps getting your voice mail, they may give up.
- **Make long-term plans** for your advertising program. Chances are that running an ad once won’t give you as much business as you would hope. Develop a long-term advertising strategy and stick with it.

However, you will get much better results if you can get free publicity.