

12-Month 2005 Promotional Calendar

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**The following marketing tip is one I highly recommend you use in the coming year. Sharron Senter has some outstanding ideas and resources available on her website. Her contact information is available at the end of this tip section.**

## **MARKETING TIP**

The following is my 12-month promotional marketing calendar. Keep it handy, as you'll need to refer to it throughout the coming year when forecasting your promotional messages. By no means is this list exhaustive. In fact, you should add to it based on your industry-related activities. There are many holidays throughout the year that may be a natural tie-in with your product or service, such as National Book Week in January, if you're an author or editorial-related service or American Heart Month in February, if you sell health-related services or products.

My calendar list focuses on the major holidays when most Americans have been trained to spend extra money or participate in a ceremonial activity. Generally speaking, you want to link your marketing promotions to a time of year when customers have their wallets out. Thus, you're simply positioning your product or service as the perfect gift or solution for the celebrated event.

## **Be Prepared**

You can never be too early in preparing your marketing campaigns. For example, in order for the typical small business owner to prepare for a Valentine's Day direct mail campaign, you'll need to get most of your materials printed and ready to go by the third week in January and in the mail-stream by the last week in January, certainly no later than the first week in February. I recommend you plan two months in advance.

Thus, you should start planning your Mother's Day campaign in early March. Obviously, the more involved the campaign, the more lead time. What's more, some advertising vehicles have extensive lead times, specifically magazines that need your camera-ready ad approximately 6 weeks [possibly more or less] before publication, and newspaper inserts also require a reservation approximately 6-8 weeks before publication.

## **Unique Angle**

Your promotional angle is the key to standing out from your competition. People are going to buy gifts at Christmas, without a doubt. But what makes your service or product so interesting, that shoppers should hand over their money to you instead of the myriad of other stores? Find a creative answer, and you'll grow your business.

## **JANUARY**

- New Year's Day, and the proceeding two weeks -- Launch your marketing messages the last week of December.

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day -- Although not a big gift-giving time, this is a great time to spread a non-profit message.

## **FEBRUARY**

- Valentine's Day -- Launch your marketing messages the last week in January.  
\*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\*
- President's Day

## **MARCH**

- St. Patrick's Day

## **APRIL**

- April Fools Day
- Daylight Savings Begins
- Easter \*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\*
- Secretaries Days \*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\*

## **MAY**

- Mother's Day -- Launch your marketing messages approximately 3 weeks before. \*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\*
- Memorial Day

## **JUNE**

- Father's Day \*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\* Launch your marketing messages approximately 3 weeks before.
- Graduation \*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\* Launch your marketing messages approximately 3 weeks before.

## **JULY**

- Independence Day
- Back to School -- Although not a holiday, it's certainly a popular time to find wallets open and increased spending, particularly by moms and teenagers.

## **AUGUST**

- Dog days of summer
- Back to School continued

## **SEPTEMBER**

- Back to School -- Marketing messages can continue through the first week of September.
- Labor Day
- Grandparent's Day

## **OCTOBER**

- Columbus Day
- Halloween **\*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\***
- Holiday preparation should be 1/4 completed, seriously. Launch your first holiday message immediately after Halloween. This message will generally go to your current customer base, offering them an exclusive early-bird holiday special to expire in early November.
- Daylight Savings Ends

## **NOVEMBER**

- Thanksgiving **\*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\***
- Your Holiday advertising is in full swing
- Election Day
- Veteran's Day

## **DECEMBER**

- Christmas Day **\*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\***
- Hanukkah **\*\*Popular Gift-giving Time\*\***

New Year's Eve -- Launch New Year's message late the second week in December.

### **2005 MARKETING PLAN ASSISTANCE**

If you're looking for some marketing planning assistance for 2005, then check out Sharron's report, *"I'm Open; Now What? 25 Strategies to Attract Your First Customer."* It's a great outline of low-budget marketing activities to follow if you're not quite sure what to do. What's more, the cost is only \$12.95. [Check it out now.](#)

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