



## Advertising

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Most art institutions use advertising to draw the public's attention to a certain project. Before doing this yourself, you should think carefully about why, where and for whom you are advertising. Choose the medium on the basis of its likely effect, not on your own reading habits. For example, think about monthly or weekly magazines, radio/television guides, professional or trade journals, free local papers, programmes, festival guides, the internet or social media.

Advertising is only effective if it is done methodically and is based on an advertising policy. Developing a policy like this will also allow you to respond better to the often aggressive buying methods used by publications. You can increase your budget by selling advertising space in your own literature or on your website.

An advertisement should stand out from its surroundings because of its position, illustration, layout or text. It should convey the right information and achieve the results you want. Always remember that advertising is only a means and not an end in itself.

### Placing your advert

#### **Printed matter**

You can advertise on an advertising page or next to text (on an editorial page). An advert adjacent to text or on the front page is more expensive than one on a page full of advertisements. You can inquire about the rates or look them up yourself on the website of the newspaper, magazine etc..

It is important to think about the kind of reading habits associated with a particular type of page. Don't feel embarrassed to use phrases like 'extra offer' or 'huge discounts' if your advertisement is in between the local butcher's and baker's – it works. Some tips:

- Consider placing your ad in a classified section. Such sections are generally well read and are cheap to advertise in. With only a little flair you can achieve quite good results.
- The smaller newspapers and magazines are more likely to place your advert on a page where the subject or specific product is also getting editorial coverage. This will enhance the value of the advert considerably.
- If the message, the *selling point* of the product, is not strictly cultural, look for advertising opportunities that are not directly associated with art; for instance, if you are trying to advertise a theatre performance about travelling then place it in the travel section of a newspaper.

#### **Internet**

The Internet offers many advertising possibilities, with links, banners and buttons added, but also, for example, tickertape (a kind of online LED display) and videos. Theatrical companies, for instance, are increasingly using the internet to put sneak previews on websites such as YouTube.

A simple way of getting more hits for your own website is by registering it with search engines, by exchanging links with other artists or by using social media as Facebook or Twitter. Some websites offer free advertising space for artists on online notice (or bulletin) boards. Other companies specialise in developing online advertising campaigns, which is an option if your budget is strong enough.

#### **Social Media**

You can also advertise on social media. You can advertise on Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube commercials or use Google Adwords to attract visitors to your website. Twitter is also working to expand the possibilities for advertising. Advertising through social media is much cheaper than in traditional media. Moreover, you can reach your target audience more specific. On Facebook for example you can indicate how old your target audience should be, where they live and what they should be interested in. Another advantage of advertising through social media is that you indicate in advance the amount of money you want to spend on advertising. Often you can choose between paying per click on the ad or per 1000 impressions. By advertising through social media you can



reach more people than through standard printed material because theoretically everyone can share your advertisement. Therefore it is important to make your ad interesting to share. You can advertise in social media yourself or use one of the many companies that specialize in doing it for you.

## **Design**

Apply a consistent visual style (house style) as much as you can, and be aware of the medium's technical possibilities and its limitations. Make sure to think about authors rights of images. Often, in 'art ads', what one sees is a much smaller picture with little remaining of the original image but a black blotch and some vague contours. If you don't know what's going to be left of an illustration in your advert, then copy it and reduce it a couple of times. In the printing technique used by newspapers, the resolution is usually less than that of a photocopier. Always ask yourself if the advert's message is obvious at first sight to someone who knows nothing about the product.

## **Layout**

Don't load an advertisement with information, but choose carefully and decide what information is most important in each individual case. Build your advert around it. You can always refer to your website for further information.

If you want your advertisement to be in reverse print (white text on a black background), bear in mind that this is less readable – so the lettering should be bigger. You could commission a professional designer, or the DTP department of the paper or magazine which you are advertising in, to design your ad. If you are designing it yourself, first ask how you need to supply it; ask about the quality (resolution, dpi) and the file format.

An internet advert offers you much more scope for creativity. It doesn't have to contain much information, but must be eye-catching and arouse interest. All it has to do is tempt the public to click, or to share via social media. Once they have linked to your website, you can give any other information you wish.

## **Text**

Use a clear and consistent message in all your marketing communications. You could design a motto or a slogan yourself, but don't forget that copywriting is a skill in its own right. Be critical and keep the uninitiated reader in mind. If you use review articles, dare to use the unfavourable ones too. Don't change your text too soon because, when it becomes boring to you, it may just be beginning to have an effect in the market.

## **More information**

See the articles on *marketing* and *doing business* on [BeroepKunstenaar.nl](http://BeroepKunstenaar.nl).