

# Advertising Agency

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Large companies might only hire large advertising agencies, but breath easy because the rest of the business world still needs someone to handle their marketing! Previously the only the realm of large firms, technology has allowed freelancers to be successful one person advertising agencies. Handling all forms of marketing from print to copyrighting there is definitely a market for small advertising firms today.

## Before The Start-Up - Let's Not Get Ahead Of Ourselves

There are numerous specialist fields within advertising; customers can quickly tell when you're not really qualified to be performing a certain service. It's essential you have prior training and experience in the respective field you plan to specialize. As with many jobs a lack of training can be compensated for by more experience. These fields include design and colour, layout, typography, copywriting and brand strategy and identity development.

## The Start-Up

Due to the specialized tasks an advertiser needs to perform the usual office setup isn't quite going to cut it. You'll need the usual; a work space, desk, computer, office stationary such as business cards, a letter head and an invoice and quote template. However you'll also require a internet connection, preferably a high speed one, specialist software for designing print media and layouts, a high resolution colour printer, scanner and digital camera finally you might need a fax machine (Should you decide to purchase a printer, scanner, copier and fax a four in one machine can often be cheaper than buying each unit individually).

Since you'll likely be giving presentations at your client's work place a laptop and projector will be great assets. If you can't afford such an equipment outlay start small and re-invest your earning till you can.

## Making It Work

As a freelancer or small firm you won't be competing with large agencies for million dollar contracts but will rather focus your attention on small firms with budgets more suited to your reasonable rates. You should focus your marketing efforts on niche industries that you are highly familiar with. This will allow you to build good personalized relationships with firms and hopefully receive excellent recommendations among firms in a specific industry.

As a one person agency you'll need to have a broad skill base so as to offer your clients the most services possible. That said, don't be afraid to out source part of your work should you feel not quite up to a task. The small amount of income lost is nothing compared to what a damaged reputation from bad work could cost you. Freelancers or small firms routinely specialize in certain field and have referral arrangements between one another. Should another firm send work your way be sure to pass on a small referral fee, they'll be sure to keep you in mind the next time they're outsourcing work!

Be careful not to undercharge or overcharge your clients; do plenty of research on the rates other freelancers and small firms offer. Most agencies charge per hour as well as a monthly retainer for ongoing work.

## Marketing

As a marketing specialist your own marketing should be a model for your clients to admire. The very nature of an ad agencies portfolio makes the internet the perfect medium to present your work. A high end, well designed fast loading website will be one of your greatest assets, so don't be stingy when dividing up your budget, done well this facet of your marketing campaign should easily pay for itself.

## **Don't Forget**

Your website is not a static object, be sure to get it build with a content management system so you can actively update your portfolio and company news. A business blog on your day to day marketing activities and challenges is also an excellent idea if you are looking to expand your online presence.

Finally don't forget about the bandwidth and ISP (Internet Service Provider) fees your website will accumulate on a monthly basis. Be sure to keep an eye of your bandwidth usage, upgrading or downgrading your account as necessary will save you money.