

Promo Strategies

Add Value to Your Basic Business Card

Lanise Dee believes in the cliché “a gift that keeps on giving.” Her gift? A business card that features year-round discounts for local restaurants and shops.

About four years ago, while meeting with a promotions company, Dee, a salesperson with RE/MAX 200 Realty in Winter Park, learned about the Valued Customer Card, a business card that, on the back, features discounts to local businesses. The beauty of the card is that users hold on to it to use the discounts at their favorite restaurants and stores.

“The card is a way to continuously keep my name appearing in front of the faces of buyers and prospects,” says Dee. “And, it’s working.”

After tracking her year-end numbers, Dee finds that her sales have increased by 8 percent since she started using the Valued Customer Card.

“Last year, I got a call from a buyer who received our card from a friend. She held onto the card for a while and when she was ready to purchase a home, her search for a Realtor was effortless. She reached into her pocket and pulled out my card. A short while later, she purchased a home from me,” says Dee.

The key is to create a business card that won’t be thrown away or stuffed into a drawer. “The cards are not only putting money back into buyers’ pockets, but they are helping me fill mine too,” says Dee.

Here’s how Dee put together her card:

1. Getting Started

“Advertising with the Valued Customer Card is a simple process,” says Dee.

First, look in the phone book or search the Web for a promotional company that offers the Valued Customer Card.

Most companies have a master list of participating vendors in that area along with the discount offered by each one.

Participating companies may include restaurants, hair and nail salons, dry cleaners, etc. The discount offered is previously chosen by the

vendor and varies for each individual business. According to Dee, be sure to feature vendors on your card that match your client base.

2. Make it Simple

Once the vendors are decided, Dee worked with a graphic artist to design the layout of her card, including the logo and contact information. Don’t forget, it’s important to put your face in the minds of potential buyers, so include a color photograph of yourself on the front of the card, just as you would a regular business card.

3. Prepare a Budget

Prices vary according to company and quantity. At the beginning of the year, Dee orders 1,000 cards at a set cost of \$295. However, when you order a larger quantity of cards, the cost may be reduced. Vendor discounts

are good for 12 months from the date they are purchased, so Dee orders a bulk amount at one time to save on costs and to take advantage of a “big-bang” marketing campaign.

According to Dee, the cost of the cards is minimal compared to the amount of business she receives from them. “Our customers love the Valued Customer Card discounts. In fact, I received a call from someone interested in buying a home who had gotten my card from a co-worker. She thanked me for helping her save money and repaid the favor by purchasing a home from me a few weeks later,” says Dee. Every year, as her mailing list increases, she orders more cards. “I encourage everyone who receives a card to pass them out to their friends, neighbors and co-workers,” says Dee.

At the end of the year, Dee knows the phone will be ringing when people call to ask for new cards. “It’s great to have buyers calling,” says Dee. “It gives me a chance to reconnect with past buyers and develop future business with new people who are looking to buy or sell.”

Although the cards are small enough to fit in your pocket, the reward from them is huge. “These cards are the best form of advertising I have ever done; they are definitely making me money,” says Dee.



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