

PROFITABLE PRINT RELATIONSHIPS

The Successful Print Sales Circle

Worksheet 6: Special offers

Step 1: Set a goal

The best special offers are planned around your actual needs. However, to be successful, they should also take into account what will attract your customers as well. There are three typical reasons for a special offer:

A quiet time of year

You may know that you have specific months when you are quieter than you would like. You can plan in an offer ahead of time. You can focus on products that may be in demand at this time of year. Or you can encourage customers to benefit by buying early. Bear in mind that this can lead to less sales in the following weeks, although this can be an advantage if a quiet time is followed by a period that is too busy! If your quiet period lasts a while, you may need to consider more than one offer. We will discuss the ideal offer length in step 2. Also, the end of the offer period is often the busiest so make sure you have a little breathing space between the end of an offer and the start of a busy period.

Equipment that is under utilised

You may have equipment that is not being used to its full capacity. What products can be produced on this equipment that should sell well to customers?

An unexpected slowdown

If you are suddenly faced with less business than you anticipated, you will have to action an offer quickly. Focus on core products that sell well.

Note that I haven't covered the launch of new products in this list. We will cover this in a future task in The Successful Print Sales Circle.

Write down the answers to these questions

What do you want/need your special offer to achieve?

When do you need the business?

What and why should a customer buy at this time?

What product/service will you promote

Step 2: Design the offer

The most effective special offers are based around product upgrades or offering extra print products. This follows the strategy outlined in the incentive referral offers (worksheet 3). Many printing companies offer reduced pricing. However, typically customers then expect this reduced pricing as standard. Make sure your offer includes the following elements:

Offer value

Always show the prospect what you would normally charge for your upgrade/extra item outside of the special offer. It is important that they understand the true value of what you are offering.

Cut-off date

Always know when you will close your offer. A closing date acts as an incentive for prospects to take action and, as we will see, is a useful marketing tool. Remember a special offer that is open for a long period does not guarantee a regular amount of work during the time that it runs. You are more likely to have uptake at the beginning and the end. For this reason, short-timed special offers can often be more effective.

Terms and conditions

Make sure you cover any instances when the offer will not apply. For instance:

- Is a minimum order required?
- Is this for new customers only?
- Are there any exclusions such as rush orders or delivery areas?

Write down the answers to these questions

What is your offer?

When is the closing dates?

What terms and conditions are you applying?

Step 3: Word the offer

Wording the offer correctly can make a huge difference to uptake. Always be in the customers shoes when you write the offer. Think about why you prospect should take up this offer and why they would benefit from it. Here are two sample scripts:

Create a free luxury experience for your prospects this month

Sometimes it can be hard to show your prospects the true value of your products and to stand out from other companies. That's why we are offering a free spot varnish on all brochures we print in the last two weeks of July. Your brochure will be immediately noticeable. Because varnish is tactile, prospects are more likely to pick up your brochure and open it. And your products will benefit from being promoted with a luxury cover. All you have to do is to make sure you send us your pdfs by [DATE] and we will include a free spot varnish on any order which does not require rush delivery. By the way, we normally charge up to [VALUE] for a varnish like this.

Avoid the Christmas rush: place your card orders now and receive free gift tags worth £45

Many companies leave their Christmas cards until December. There is typically a big rush from late November and our delivery times have to be extended at this point. But sending a last-minute card doesn't look good to your clients.

In order to encourage you to place your card orders in good time we are offering free gift tags (worth £45) with all orders placed before [DATE]. We produce them from the same design on your card, so you can create a co-ordinated card and gift experience for your best clients.

This offer will end on [DATE] so make sure you place your orders now!

Please note that this offer applies to all orders with a value of at least [VALUE] where pdfs are received by us before [DATE]

Note that you can also use the headlines as taglines when you are promoting the offer. This is especially useful on social media.

What wording will you use for your offer?

Step 4: Get the word out

You will only get a good uptake on your special offer if you promote it enough. Here is a checklist of ways to market your offer:

- Put the offer on your e-mail signature
- Add a leaflet to deliveries. Make sure you pick the right type of deliveries: we covered this on the incentive referrals task on worksheet 3. Ensure you pause incentive referrals while you do this
- E-mail your list
- Consider a direct mail campaign
- Use social media: think about where your customers hang out. Here is a list of places to consider:
 - LinkedIn
 - LinkedIn groups
 - Facebook
 - Facebook groups
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
- Market the offer at networking groups

Remember to highlight that this is a time-limited deadline and to state the closing date.

Write down what marketing channels you plan to use

Step 5: Send a reminder

One touch is often not enough to persuade prospects to take action on a special offer. Your prospects need to be reminded. The fact that the deadline is running out is often the prompt that people need to actually take action. So always send at least one reminder when time is running out. If your offer is good, you should expect to be at your busiest at the end of the offer period. Here is a reminder script you can use:

FNAME, time is running out!

Right now we are offering free spot varnish, worth up to [VALUE] on the cover of every brochure we produce. But this offer ends on [DATE]. So, if you want to improve engagement with your brochure and make it stand out from others, make sure you place your order quickly! (Please note this offer does not apply to rush delivery orders).

This is also a good time to decide your policy on orders that arrive after the cut-off date? Will you still apply the special offer? If you allow people who are a couple of days late to still benefit from the offer you can create goodwill. However, it is important to let them know that the offer period has expired but that you will make a special exception for them.

What is your late order policy?

Write your reminder script here

Step 6: Follow up new clients

Your special offer campaign may bring in some new clients. Make sure you follow these up. We will cover onboarding new clients later on in The Successful Print Sales Circle. For now, make a phone call to:

- introduce yourself
- find out more about the client
- discover if there are other ways that you can help them

It is always better to have this conversation on the phone or by video if possible. If cannot make contact this way, make sure you send a letter or e-mail.

Step 7: Share your success!

At this stage I normally suggest that you make this a regular activity. However, it is best to be cautious with special offers. If you run too many your customers will expect them. Rather than buying from you when they need, they will simply wait for the next special offer. Make sure you run special offers when you really need them rather than as part of your regular sales activity.

Make sure you fill in the table below at the end of the worksheet. You may prefer to make a copy of it or create a spreadsheet. For this exercise I have asked you to list your take up from each marketing channel. This may take more time, but it will be very worthwhile: this allows you to measure your success with each channel. It means you know where to focus your efforts when you run a similar promotion in the future. As ever, it is important to complete the spreadsheet: it is your way to check that you are on track with this exercise and are taking action.

For this task, your goal is to create a two-week offer. You should expect to receive ten orders. However, this will depend on the content of your offer and how widely you promote it.

How did you find this exercise? Please share your results with us at circle@ProfitablePrintRelationships.com If you come across any challenges you will be able to raise them on the monthly group call. If you are a gold member you can ask any questions privately on your exclusive e-mail address.

Special offer results				
	Channel	Total orders	Total value	New clients Y/N
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				