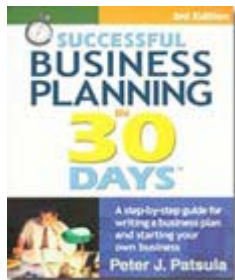


# The **ENTREPRENEUR'S** Guidebook Series™

Next  
Page

**THANKS** for selecting this guidebook! Many hours of painstaking work have gone into its creation. Send feedback or suggestions to [www.patsulamedia.com](http://www.patsulamedia.com). And check out our **highly rated planner / guide ...**

at [bp30.com](http://bp30.com)



**Highly Rated**  
Amazon.com



*It's one of the  
best of its kind.*  
- Alan Caruba  
Bookview.com

## COPYRIGHT INFO

© Copyright 2001-2007 by Patsula Media. All rights reserved. From the creators of **Smallbusnesstown™**.

No part of this guidebook may be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form, by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system now known or hereafter invented, without written permission of the copyright owner. This guidebook **may not be** resold or distributed on other web sites or in any other manner without written permission from the copyright owner.

**NOTE** The author and publisher shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to be caused, directly or indirectly by any information contained in this guide. Although this publication is designed to provide accurate information in regard to the subject matter covered, it is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional services. If **legal** advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be consulted.



384 pages \$21.95

# Successful Business Planning in **30 Days**™

*A Step-by-Step Guide for Writing a Business Plan and Starting Your Own Business, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*

Purchase this book online at [bp30.com](http://bp30.com) or by calling toll-free **1-800-247-6553** (orders only, please have credit card ready).



ISBN 0967840236

**Immersing you in the language of business to help you think like an entrepreneur!**

**INCLUDES:**

- The **30 Day Business Plan**™
- The **One Day Business Plan**™
- 150 pages of **Time-Saving Worksheets** including 100 + sample passages to get you started fast and thinking in the right direction!
- A **15 page** sample business plan.
- **200 +** motivational and fact quotes, 11 success stories, and 33 profit tips!

**Praise from Readers and Critics**

Five Star Reviews ★★★★★

*Provides an important key to writing a business plan and starting your own business.*

- **Midwest Book Review**, Oregon, WI  
Amazon.com review

*This is a must read for anyone before starting your own business.*

- **Mike Milliken**, BN.com Review.

*This book has helped me a great deal in thinking about my business*

- **Jason Myers**, TX  
Amazon.com review



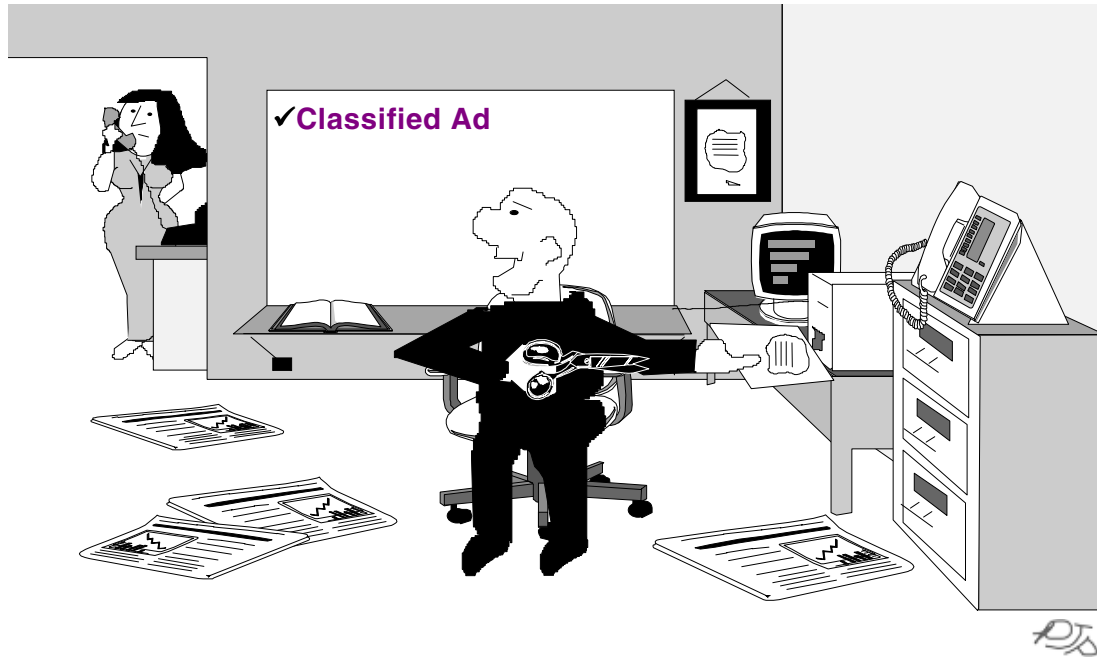
# PERSONAL PLANNING

## Guidebook #63:

<i>Creating Classified Ads, Space Ads, Brochures, &amp; Catalogs</i> .....	6
Writing a Classified Ad .....	7
Grabbing Attention with Classified Ads .....	7
Injecting Desire with Classified Ads .....	7
Promoting Action with Classified Ads .....	8
Classified Ad Writing Tips .....	9
Classified Ad Promotion Tips .....	10
Designing a Space Ad .....	15
Grabbing Attention with Space Ads .....	15
Injecting Desire with Space Ads .....	15
Promoting Action with Space Ads .....	16
Space Ad Design Tips .....	17
Space Ad Promotion Tips .....	18



<b>Designing a Brochure .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Grabbing Attention with Brochures .....	24
Injecting Desire with Brochures .....	24
Promoting Action with Brochures .....	26
Brochure Design Tips .....	27
Brochure Promotion Tips .....	29
 <b>Creating a Catalog.....</b>	 <b>31</b>
Grabbing Attention with Catalogs .....	31
Injecting Desire with Catalogs .....	32
Promoting Action with Catalogs .....	33
Catalog Design Tips .....	35
Catalog Promotion Tips .....	36



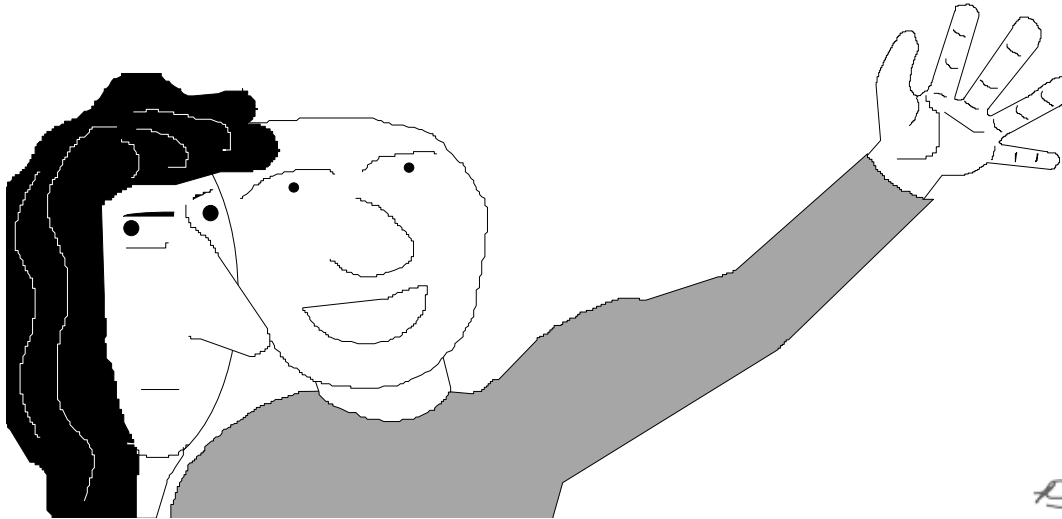
*“Quick, before Mom hangs up . . . ask her how many autographed copies she wants of my first classified ad!”*

Smallbusinesstown.com



*“Your mom says if you BUG her once more, about how many copies she wants of your new space ad, she's taking you out of her will!”*

Smallbusinessstown.com



*“How about this for my new brochure . . . UNLOCK  
the Astonishing Nurturing Power of Harry’s New  
Fortified Puppy Chow with his Revolutionary  
Electronic Puppy Chow Dispenser!!”*

Smallbusinesstown.com

## ***CREATING CLASSIFIED ADS, SPACE ADS, BROCHURES, & CATALOGS***

**CLASSIFIED ADS, space ads, brochures and catalogs offer useful solutions for the advertising and promotion needs of many small businesses. They are particular useful for mail order operations and home based businesses.**

**This guidebook identifies key elements that should be present in each of these media. It also offers numerous writing & design tips to help you grab attention, inject desire and promote action, based upon the ODaC formula (discussed in Guidebook #62).**



## WRITING A CLASSIFIED AD

---

DOLLAR for dollar, classified advertising generates more profit than any other kind of space advertising. In fact, considering that classifieds are relatively inexpensive to run and can be spread out to other newspapers - there are more than 10,000 newspapers in the U.S. alone - they should be the first choice for any mail order operator, consultant or the like looking to drum up business sales and leads.

*A classified ad that can consistently make \$50 a month in profit, if spread out across the country, can easily pull in over \$50,000 a year.*  
**SUPERTIP**

### Grabbing Attention **with** Classified Ads

**Headlines** – Keep your headline short and to the point. State the content of your ad, a major benefit, or something else the will generate reader curiosity.

**First Lines** – If a classified ad doesn't have a headline, its first line becomes its headline. To draw attention to this first line, use ALL CAPS or SMALL CAPS. Also, consider using just enough words to cover the first one or two lines exactly.

### Injecting Desire **with** Classified Ads

**Benefit Statements** – Describe what the product or service will do for the person

who buys it. Highlight its strongest selling point. Make a promise or offer no one can refuse.

## Promoting Action with Classified Ads

**Call to Action Statements** – Usually, the principal function of a classified ad is to solicit inquiries and then convert these inquiries into sales by other promotional means. A “call to action” or “preferred response” statement simply tells the customer what you would like them to do e.g., “Write for your FREE info today.”

**NOTE** Direct sales are seldom made from classified ads.

**Company Address and Telephone Numbers** – In a classified ad, your com-

pany address should be easy to remember and easy to write down. It should also be as short as possible, because in classified advertising you pay extra for every additional word. Even the addition or subtraction of one word, can cost or save you BIG money, especially if you print the same classified ad in hundreds of newspapers and magazines.

*Direct sales are seldom made from classified ads.*

If you forgo your address in favor of a toll-free telephone number, get a number that is easy to remember like 1-800-BUY1000.

**Guarantees** – If you’re selling a product through a classified ad, always include a guarantee. You must do everything you can to remove your potential customer’s fear of buying from someone they can’t see. If you don’t, many will have a ten-

dancy to envision you as a fly-by-night huckster, heading to the bank with a wheelbarrow full of their money, a Cheshire cat grin running across your face, and a first-class plane ticket to Mexico in your breast pocket.

**Price & Payment Options** – It is difficult to get people to send a direct payment through the mail in the form of a cash or check when using a classified ad (people are justifiably wary about giving strange businesses their VISA numbers). However, if you ask for ten dollars or less, you can expect a better response.

**NOTE** If you ask for ten dollars, expect to get a lot of checks. For amounts of one to a maximum of five dollars, people are more

*If you ask for ten dollars, expect to get a lot of checks. For amounts of one to a maximum of five dollars, people are more likely to send cash.*

likely to send cash.

## Classified Ad Writing Tips

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your classified ad writing techniques:

**Copy the basic structure and style of other successful classified ads.** To design a winning classified ad, look through back issues of magazines and take note of which classified ads occur repeatedly. Make a list of these ads and compare their headlines, benefit statements and asking prices or “calls to action.” Then try and write one similar.

**Keep track of headlines and first lines that attract your attention.** Write

down on an idea sheet, headlines and first-lines that seem to jump out and grab you. Modify them to express your ideas, yet at the same time keep their original appeal.

## Classified Ad Promotion Tips

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your classified ad promotions:

**Advertise in many magazines and newspapers simultaneously once you have a HOT product.** Some mail order operators run simultaneously and continuously the same classified ad in about 100 to 150 newspapers and magazines. The income potential from such methods is tremendous. Even if they receive only an average of \$20 to \$30 as net profit on

*Some mail order operators run simultaneously and continuously the same classified ad in about 100 to 150 newspapers and magazines*

every ad they run, their net profit for the month is between \$2,000 to \$4,500 dollars – and that’s just for one product. Of course, before you go out and launch such a campaign, test your ad first. If it doesn’t pull, discontinue it.

**Choose the classified section you want.** There’s no reason, for instance, why you can’t advertise a clearance sale at your retail outlet, under the “Household Items for Sale” section of your local newspaper. Or, for example, a training program under the “Help Wanted” section.

**Do not try and sell general products through newspaper classified ads.**

The life expectancy of a newspaper is at the most, one day. Furthermore, as a rule,

the general public is not in the habit of looking for general products such as food and other reusable items in the classifieds.

**Once you get inquiries, answer them right away.** When your customers are hot don't let them cool off. Imagine how they feel after they take the time to mail you an inquiry. Within a week, they are anxiously checking their mail for a reply in the mail. If your reply takes longer than three weeks, by that time they are likely to have give-up on you and start searching for another solution. As a rule, inquiries for promotional materials stemming from classified or display ads should be the first mail to go out. Orders and correspondence can wait a day or two, but new business is what keeps things rolling.

*When your customers are hot don't let them cool off.*

**Start making a list of all the magazines & newspapers with good classified sections.** The magazines and newspaper listed below should be added to your list. All have good classified sections, which are excellent for testing and promoting new products.

- Forbes
- Grit
- House Beautiful
- Mechanix Illustrated
- National Examiner
- New York Post
- Popular Gardening
- Popular Mechanics
- Popular Photography
- Popular Science
- Spare Time
- Specialty Salesman
- The Globe

- The National Enquirer
- The National Observer
- The New York Times Magazine
- The Star
- The Wall Street Journal
- Writer's Digest

**NOTE** A Directory of Magazines with classified ads is available from SpecialList, 134 Manchester Road, Ballwin, MO 63011.

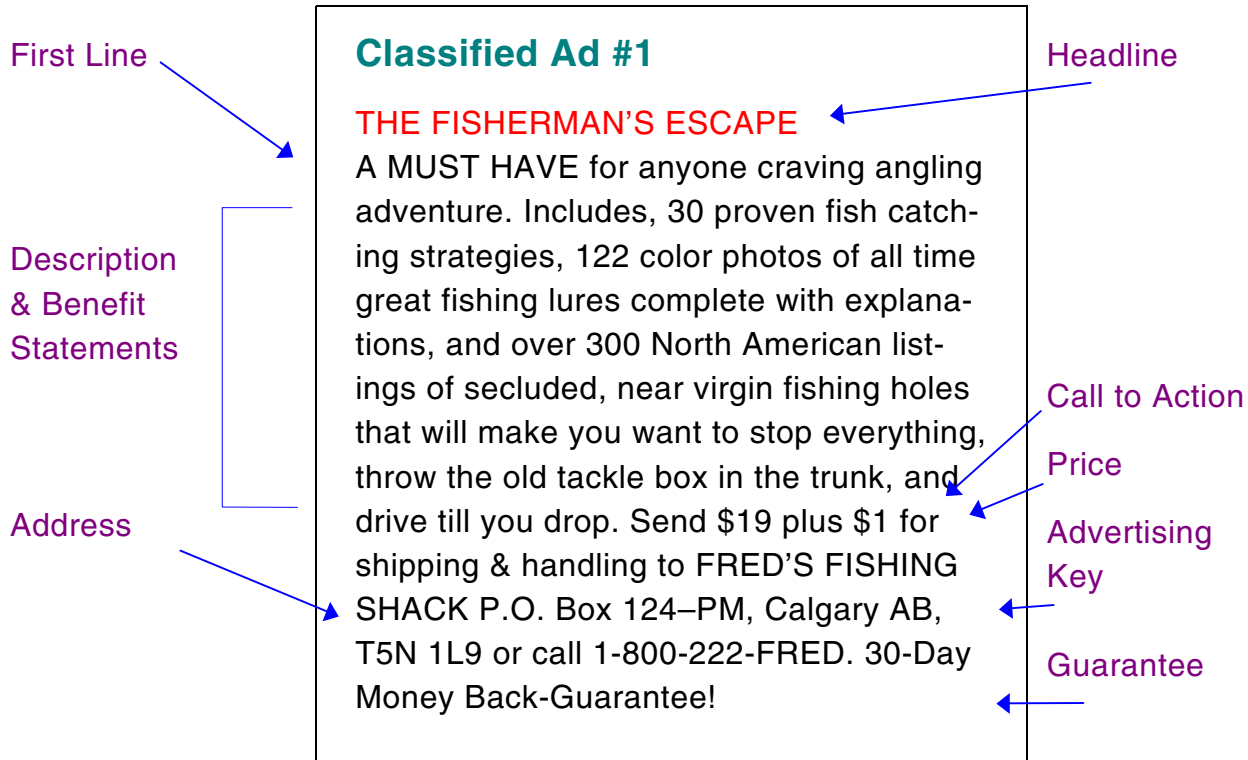
**Use an advertising key.** An advertising key is a series of number included in a company address used to keep track of responses (see Guidebook #68). All classified ads should have one.

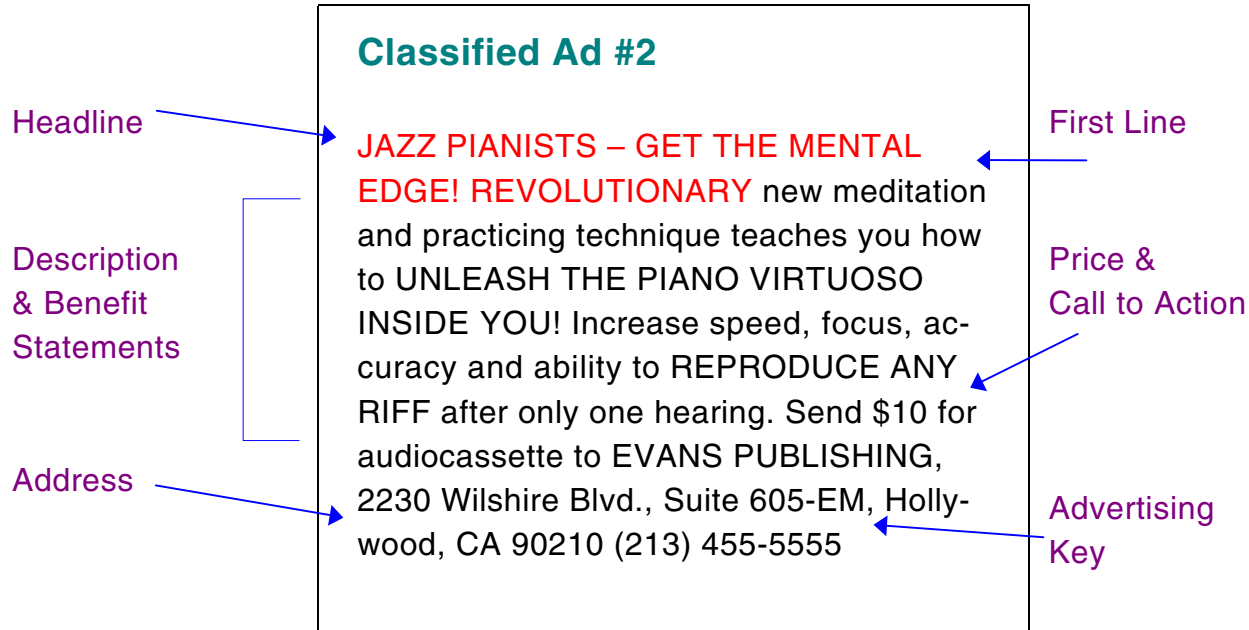
**You can't create a big business with classifieds alone.** Promoting your product through the classifieds can get you

started, but you can't generate large volume and create a truly big business using the classified columns alone. The fact is the number of places in which you can run a profitable classified ad is small in comparison to other promotional methods available to you.

*Promoting your product through the classifieds can get you started, but you can't generate large volume and create a truly big business using the classified columns alone.*









## DESIGNING A SPACE AD

SPACE ads, also frequently called display ads, can be used to sell products, services, create customer lists or promote good public relations and image building.

Usually, the visual is the dominant part of the ad. However many space ads are designed around their headline and made almost entirely out of words.

### Grabbing Attention **with** Space Ads

**Callouts & Lead-ins** – “Callouts” and “lead-ins” are big, bold and energetic words that try to encourage the reader to read the headline. They are usually placed at the top of the space ad before the head-

*Space ads are miniaturized posters for the masses.*  
**POWERPOINT**

line. Examples of words often used to function in this manner are: new, now, how to, start, avoid, improve, special, award-winning, fantastic, savings, and sale.

**Headlines** – With a good lead-in and a good illustration, the name of the product itself often makes a good headline.

**Visuals** – Your visual, either a photo or illustration or both, must arrest the eyes of your readers and make them want to read your entire proposition.

### Injecting Desire **with** Space Ads

**Juicy Body Copy** – Your body copy should tell:

- tell what’s new, different, and attractive

about your product

- tell how your product or service will make the prospective customer's life a little more pleasant or easier
- describe and prove why the reader can't live without it

In general, this means describing the benefits of your product or service and backing them with details, testimonials and proof. Use colorful descriptive language.

**NOTE** Many of today's slick space ads tend to consist of short sentences and sentence fragments that are almost conversational in tone, yet at the same time fast paced and reserved.

*With a coupon in your ad you get 70% of your orders by coupon and 30% by phone. It's the reverse with a telephone ad.*

### **FUNFACT**

## Promoting Action **with** Space Ads

**Call to Action Statements** – Write your “call to action” statement so that your readers ask themselves which one, rather than should I or shouldn't I. One way to do this is to offer your readers a chance to trade up to a “deluxe” model and/or the opportunity to purchase accessory merchandise. Also, let them know that supplies are limited and prices are about to rise.

**Coupons** – A coupon or mini-order form, placed at the bottom of a space ad, makes it easier for the customer to send away for a product being promoted. A coupon can also be used to augment your space ad campaign by:

- giving you an address of a new prospect to be approached by an experienced salesperson
- giving you the opportunity to ask questions and find out specific information about the reader who wrote in including age, business, income, family size and so on
- helping you distribute booklets about your products or product line or distribute free samples of a new product

*Don't forget to play up your guarantee in a space ad.*

**NOTE** Instead of a coupon, you can write brief instructions e.g., “Send for a free catalog today.”

### **Company Address & Telephone**

**Numbers** – In a space ad, just like in a classified ad, your company address and

telephone number should be easy to remember and write down. If you would prefer people to call in their orders, make sure your telephone number is BIG.

**Guarantees** – Don't forget to play up your guarantee in a space ad.

**Slogans** – Consider making the company slogan the dominant part of the ad e.g., “Nobody does Christmas better.”

### **Space Ad Design Tips**

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your basic space ad designing techniques:

**Copy the basic structure and style of other successful space ads, flyers and posters.** When you want to design an ad in a hurry, follow the basic structure

of a competitor's ad or ad for another product similar to yours. Save your creative efforts for innovating and redesigning the ad to more specifically suit your needs, instead of starting from scratch.

**NOTE** It is a good habit to regularly collect space ads from your favorite magazines, clip them out and put them in a scrap book to study at your convenience.

**Give your space ad breathing room.** Don't crowd your display ad with too many details. You may think you're getting more bang for your advertising dollar, but if no one bothers to read your ad because it hurts their eyes, then who's saving what?

*Don't crowd your display ad with too many details.*

## Space Ad Promotion Tips

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your space ad promotions:

**Don't get carried away and lose focus on the basics.** In general, the success of a space ad promotion will depend more upon:

- how well your copy promotes the merchandise you sell (how persuasive it is)
- the attractiveness of your proposition or offer
- how good your price is
- the convenience and fairness of your return policies
- whether you are perceived to be an expert

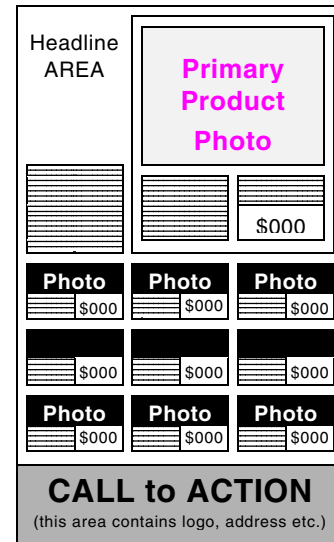
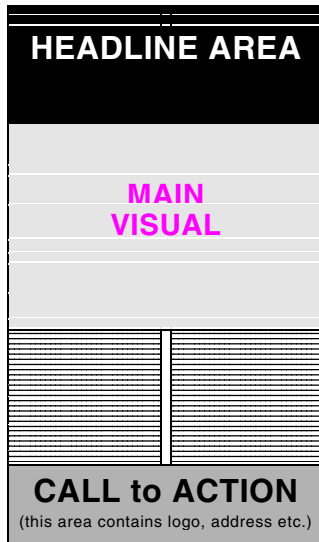
- whether you are perceived to be some one who cares or promotes quality
- how good your guarantee and bonus or discount is

rather than, how glitzy it is.

**Include your company logo.** In all your display ads, your company logo should be clearly visible. Over the long run, this will help build company recognition.

**Turn your space ad into a flyer or**

### Three Popular Types of Space Ad Formats



**poster.** A well-designed space ad can be a good starting point for designing a flyer or poster. For flyers, more copy can be added to further explain benefits. For posters, the visual should be enlarged to become the most dominant part of the ad. In fact, many posters will have very little wording, perhaps only a headline, slogan, or identifying symbol.

**Use a coupon, unless you have a toll free number.** A coupon is a mini-order form usually found in mail order ads. One of its immediate advantages is that it signals to the reader's brain right away that you want them to order. Some experts advocate that it is crucial for every mail order ad that is big enough to contain one and should only be omitted only if the advertiser

*One disadvantage of using a coupon is once it is cut out, no one else can see your advertising, including your company address.*

wants customers to order by phone or hopes to qualify prospects by making it more difficult for them to order.

To decide whether you want to use a coupon, look in the newspaper or magazine you want to advertise in. See what other advertisers are doing. If the majority are using coupons, then follow suit. However, if most of them have toll free numbers than maybe you should consider this option instead.

**NOTE** One disadvantage of using a coupon is once it is cut out, no one else can see your advertising, including your company address. If you don't use a coupon, more than one person can order from the same ad.

**Use a toll-free number if you want to avoid using a coupon.** An ad without a coupon has a tendency to look a little more elegant, and a little less mail orderly. In fact, companies that sell expensive items tend to avoid using coupons altogether. This gives them more room for persuasive ad copy. It also isn't quite as vital that your ad appear on a right hand page (so the coupon can be easily cut out).

**NOTE** Having a toll-free number is no picnic if you don't have the staff to handle the calls. In this case, if it is more economical to get your orders by mail rather than by phone, stick to using a coupon and don't list your phone number.

*Having a toll-free number is no picnic if you don't have the staff to handle the calls.*



## Space Ad Example

**Call Out & Headline**

**Visual**

**Body Copy**

**Call to Action**

**Guarantee**

**Phone Number**

**Price**

**I WANT YOU ...**

TO HAVE THIS  
MAGNIFICENT  
BICENTENNIAL  
COMMEMORATIVE  
LINCOLN HAT!

**FOR only \$20!**  
(plus \$3 for shipping)

YES FOLKS! This beautifully decorated leather hat will be the envy of everyone. When you display it on your distinguished head, your friends and neighbors will be drooling as they examine its finely crafted monogrammed brim. A perfect gift for Father's Day, birthdays, and even Valentines Day. An amazing piece of hand crafted leather, never before offered to anyone at any price. ACT NOW while quantities last. Iron clad 30-day Money Back Guarantee.

**CALL 1-800-444-HATS**



## DESIGNING A BROCHURE

EVERY company should invest in a brochure. As a sales tool it, performs double duty:

**FIRST**, it helps identify and introduce your product or service by visually showing what it looks like, and by providing a list of benefits, features and technical specifications to inform and inspire potential customers. It also displays basic company identifying information and may include some advertising copy to tease readers.

**SECOND**, it helps imbue your organization with an aura of authority and professionalism. Brochures are also handy to have

*Brochures are meant to summarize and inform. They are the fundamental sales and marketing tool.*  
**POWERPOINT**

around. They can be placed as enclosures in direct mail packages, passed out as handy information guides in offices, or even distributed door to door. They are one of the most important parts of any marketing package. And best of all, they are relatively cheap and easy to make.

**NOTE** A three-fold brochure is made up of six 1/3rd of a page size panels. The three inside panels, panels 2, 3, and 4 often combine together to form a single graphic or large space like ad, or poster image. Panel 1 is the cover, panel 6 the backside, and panel 5 the panel seen when you first open the brochure (see diagram on **page 25**).

## Grabbing Attention **with** Brochures

**Callouts** – Your callout, if you use one, can be placed on panel 1 or panel 5. The callout could be a company slogan or a word that jumps out like *new*, *amazing* or *revolutionary*.

**Headlines** – A headline that pushes the benefits of your product or service, should be placed on the first panel, above, below or superimposed over the main front panel visual.

### Primary and Secondary Visuals

– Since one of the chief functions of a brochure is to visually show your product or service in action, brochures often have photos on almost every panel. At a minimum, a brochure should have two photos:

one small one for the first panel, and a larger one for panels 2, 3 and 4. Remember, show your product being used, or in its most beneficial state. Also, consider including illustrations of photos that show parts included.

*The purpose of a brochure is to inform and educate your potential clients about your services and products.*  
**POWERPOINT**

**NOTE** The back panel is sometimes blank but also can have a small photo as well.

## Injecting Desire **with** Brochures

**Informative Body Copy** – Brochure body copy should tell what is new, different, and attractive about your product service. It should also combine your features and benefit statements seamlessly. Furthermore, it should unfold strategically in persuasive, full-bodied prose and be broken up into easily man-

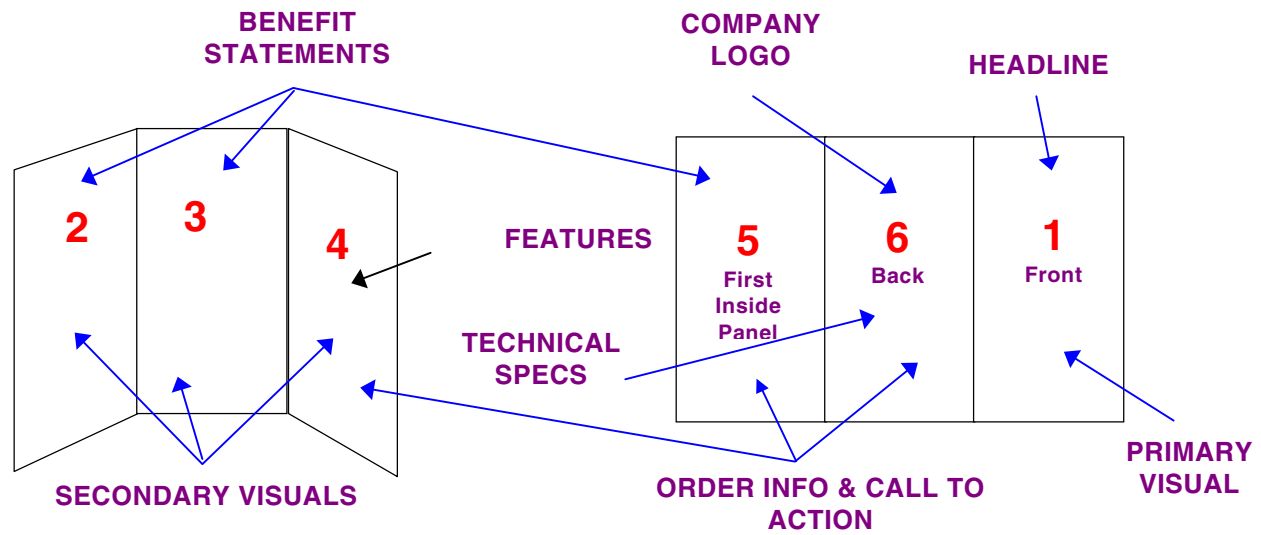
aged units with catchy subheadings. However, keep in mind that extensive body copy on a brochure is usually not of prime importance. The brochure sells mainly with its visuals, feature and benefit statements,

not with its body copy.

**Product & Service Benefit Statements**

– A list of benefit statements is usually provided on panels 2, 3, 4, or 5 but almost never on 1 or 6.

**Brochure Panels**



## Product and Service Features –

Whether you list your features first or your benefit statements first, on panels 2 or 3, depends upon your overall design strategy. However, usually it is more effective to list benefit statements first, as benefits are ultimately more important than features.

**NOTE** Outstanding product features can be highlighted with bullets (prominent dots before each point) or other visual attention-getters.

## Product Technical Specifications –

Technical specifications are precise facts about your features e.g., weight, size, power consumption, individual component ratings etc. They belong on the back of your brochure, panel.

*Technical specifications belong on the back of your brochure, panel.*

## Promoting Action **with** Brochures

**Call to Action Statements** – “Call to action” statements can be placed anywhere in your brochure. However, most often they are placed on panels 4, 5 and 6.

## Coupons, Order Forms and Ordering

**Section** – The ideal brochure order

form is a separate return-response card – a one third page insert that fits perfectly in a standard size envelope – but a clip-out coupon or order form will do the job if you want to cut costs. This clip-out coupon or order form can be placed on panels 4 or 5 along with any ordering information. That way if cut out, panels 1, 2, 3 and 6, still remain intact.

**NOTE** Consider perforating the edges to simplify removal.

## Easily Visible Contacting Information

– Company address and telephone numbers are usually listed along with basic ordering information on panels 4 or 5 or on the back of the brochure on panel 6. However, if your ordering section on panels 4 or 5 is designed to be removed along with your company address, make sure you also write your address on panel 6.

**NOTE** Make sure you clearly state your company address, phone and Fax number at least twice.

**Guarantees** – Guarantee statements are usually placed on panels 4, 5 or 6 near your ordering information. Panel 5 (the first page your customer sees when they open your brochure) is one of the best

*Guarantee statements are usually placed on panels 4, 5 or 6 near your ordering information.*

places to affirm your commitment to your customer's satisfaction.

**Price & Payment Options** – Depending on the purpose of your brochure, whether it's to inform, persuade, or sell, you may or may not include prices.

**Slogans & Logos** – Slogans are usually placed on panels 4, 5 or 6. Your company logo belongs on panel 1, 6 and near ordering information.

## Brochure Design Tips

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your basic brochure designing techniques:

**Copy the basic structure and style of competitors' successful brochures.**

Brochures are easy to design if you collect

as many three-fold designs as you can from other companies and competitors. Almost invariably, they will exhibit similar parts and design characteristics that will greatly simplify your design process.

### **Design panels 2 and 5 to blend well.**

When you open the first fold of a brochure, panels 2 and 5 should blend well. If possible, have the resulting image and copy combine in a way that makes the reader think, “Wow that’s cool.” This can be accomplished by having copy or benefit statements on the 5th panel and a graphic with a headline on the 2nd panel.

**Design panels 2, 3, 4 and 5, 6, 1 to blend well.** In other words, coordinate how the brochure will look when com-

*When you open the first fold of a brochure, panels 2 and 5 should blend well.*

pletely unfolded. Do you want to create unity? Contrast? Balance?

**Use 8.5” by 11” glossy paper folded three times, unless you have a specific design purpose.** Most brochures

are designed on 8.5” by 11” glossy paper and folded three times. This design fits easily in envelopes, allows many creative approaches, and can easily be stuffed into a handbag in a hurry. The three-fold design is fairly universal (like the 2” by 3.5” business card format) and should be followed unless you have a very specific reason not to.

**NOTE** Being different in this case, is not necessarily being better.

## Brochure Promotion Tips

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your brochure promotions:

**Don't get carried away and lose focus on the basics.** In general, the success of your brochure will depend more upon:

- how well your six panels are integrated
- how well the visuals flow from panel to panel
- how well the copy, subheadings and headlines complement each other

rather than, how much information and specifications you can cram in.

*The design and production values of your brochure say as much, if not more, about your business's self-image and standing amount competitors than what's written inside.*

Your campaign's overall effectiveness will also be determined by the attractiveness of your proposition or offer, how good your prices or discounts are, whether you are perceived to be an expert, whether you are perceived to be some one who cares or promotes quality, and how good your guarantee is.

### **Focus on your order section.**

The brochures' mission is usually to provide enough information to take the reader to the next step in the buying process. Consequently, a great deal of your time should be spent designing a coupon or order form that is easy to use and encourages the reader to send in an order.

**Strive for “quality” rather than “quantity.”**

The design and production values of your brochure say as much, if not more, about your business’s self-image and standing amount competitors, than what’s written inside. If you produce 10,000 brochures cheaply in and effort to reach as many people as possible, and you only get two calls, you might as well have produced 1,000 beautiful pieces, made a excellent impression and gotten 20 calls. Use your good looks to be one up on the competition.

**Use a service bureau or copy center.** Computer typesetting and laser printing have reduced the cost of producing a brochure. Free layout help is often available at many copy centers.



*The design and production values of your brochure say as much, if not more, about your business’s self-image and standing amount competitors, than what’s written inside.*



## CREATING A CATALOG

FOR any mail order, retail or wholesale operation, a catalog can quickly become the heart of your business. However, before you go out and spend thousands of dollars hiring someone to design one for you, why not try and design one yourself. All you need is a desktop publishing program like *Pagemaker* or *QuarkXpress*, a photo manipulation program like *PhotoShop*, a computer, a camera (better yet a digital camera) and perhaps a scanner.

**NOTE** If you encounter a little frustration trying to reach your objective, remember, it is knowledge and experience that will allow you to recognize the talents of others

*While the main function of a brochure is to attract and educate, a catalog is more practical and functions primarily to extract and expedite orders.*

**SUPERTIP**

whom you may need help from in the future for more ambitious undertakings.

### Grabbing Attention **with** Catalogs

**Catalog Titles** – Your catalog title will usually include the name of your company and possibly the season or theme of the catalog e.g., *Wally's Winter Wipeout Catalog*.

**Headlines and Callouts** – Catalog headlines or callouts act as subheadings to your catalog title. Their purpose is to build excitement and curiosity and quite often are emphasized more than the title e.g., “Great Gift Ideas and Prices to Keep You Jolly!”; “Nobody Does Christmas Better than We Do.”

**Table of Contents or Index** – Most catalogs put their table of contents or index on the first or last page. Keep in mind that there's no point in having a table of contents, if it can't be found easily.

## Injecting Desire with Catalogs

**Catalog Copy** – Other than product descriptions, catalogs normally contain very little copy. In fact, generally speaking, a catalog is NOT the place to espouse company philosophy or history unless you have a worthwhile objective e.g., you are a new company and need to build your image.

**Descriptive Visuals** – Illustrations or photos should arrest your reader's eye and draw them in to read each of your product

descriptions. Select those that graphically tell your story and demonstrate unique characteristics of your product. Keep product descriptions as close as possible to the visuals.

*Catalog copy is often written in a clipped telegram-like style, with sentence fragments that convey a great deal of information in the fewest possible words.*

**Product Descriptions** – Product descriptions that accompany visuals must fill readers with the desire to own the product being described. However, because each item in a catalog is given limited space, catalog descriptions must also be kept brief, crisp, and to the point – the reader must be given instant access to key facts. Catalog copy is thus often written in a clipped telegram-like

style, with sentence fragments that convey a great deal of information in the fewest possible words (i.e., stick to the facts and avoid *puffery*).

Nevertheless, try and make your product descriptions interesting to read. Highlight your product's strongest selling point or benefit. Remember to answer the question "what's in it for me," for each product. The more you can do this, the more likely you will get a cash response.

It is also a good idea to lead off your entries with powerful adjectives and verbs. Avoid beginning with a flat "this product B is beautifully. . ."

*To keep catalog copy fresh, and give each product a distinct personality, as soon as you receive a new product, write down a description of it on an idea sheet and put it away in a folder or filing cabinet. Then, when you need to create a new catalog, you already have hundreds of fresh descriptions. Imagine how boring your catalog copy would get if you had to write 250 product descriptions over a weekend.*

**SUPERTIP**

## Promoting Action **with** Catalogs

**Call to Action Statements** – For catalogs, "call to action" statements should tell your customers how they can order, what you want them to do to place an order, or where you want them to go to buy direct.

### **Company Names, Logos, Production Symbols and Other Insignias or Identifying Symbols**

**Symbols** – Your Company name and logo should be clearly marked on the back and front of your catalog as well as on your ordering

form. It is important that your company be easily recognized by your customers.

Other insignias you may consider including are visa and master charge card logos as well as recyclable logos. A production symbol might state: *Printed in Canada* or *Made with Recycled Paper*.

**Guarantees** – State your guarantee and company purchasing policies clearly on the 3rd page of your catalog. Repeat guarantee on your order form.

**Location Information** – Include a diagram of how to get to your retail location. If you have retail locations across the city or country, list these as well.

### Message from the Company

**President** – An upbeat introductory message from the company president can give

your catalog a more personal touch as well as boost your credibility. Imagine the impact of including a photo of yourself or

your company president looking the customer straight in the eye (put this photo close to your guarantee). This functions to reinforce your commitment to your customer's satisfaction.

**Order Form** – Bind an order form (maybe two) in the back of your catalog. If you bind one in the middle, remember that this is the page most people will open the catalog, so put your best promotion on the adjacent page.

### Price & Payment Options –

Specify how long your prices will be in effect, whether cash, check, credit cards, or

*According to the Direct Marketing Association catalog sales for 1995 will come in around \$62.6 billion and will likely top \$85 billion by the end of the decade.*

### **FUNFACT**

purchase orders are acceptable, and whether any special discounts are being offered.

**Toll-Free Telephone Numbers** – If you wish to only receive telephone orders you may decide to forgo your address in favor of a toll-free number printed in large type.

### Catalog Design Tips

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your basic catalog design:

#### **Copy the basic structure and style of competitor's catalogs.**

Research catalogs of your competition and other catalogs in general, to get a feel for the fantastic range of design possibilities. Collect catalogs that have designs and

*Higher paper-costs have forced many catalog-based businesses to re-think their marketing strategies.*

#### **POWERPOINT**

layouts that interest you. When you want to develop your own ideas, use their basic structure as a guideline.

**Give your catalog a theme.** Have a catalog based on energy conversation or making the world a better place to live in. Don't be afraid to distinguish yourself from your competitors. Just don't go overboard and start lecturing customers.

**Include an order form.** Your order form should be bound in, easy to understand, and easily detached. It is usually placed at the end of your catalog.

**Organize products effectively.** Products can be grouped by category, price range, or any of a number of other sys-

tems. The only rule about grouping is to be consistent throughout.

**NOTE** It's generally a good idea to display products related to each other, on a single page or spread; that way you'll encourage multiple purchases.

**Organize visuals effectively.** When organizing your catalog visuals you can run every item like a mini space ad or group items and take one picture. Numbers or letters of the alphabet are then added to the pictures to create a key (see diagram on **page 41**).

*I recall and advertising tycoon, Bruce Barton, saying in the late 1940s, when we were in a dither about the Russians: "What we ought to do is to send up a flight of a thousand B-29s and drop a million Sears, Roebuck catalogs all over Russia.*

**ALISTAIR COOKE**  
*British Journalist*

## Catalog Promotion Tips

Use the following strategies to improve and refine your catalog promotions.

**Build a mailing list of satisfied customers.** As you build your business, try and keep track of the people you have served. Mail your first catalog to these customers, as they will likely give you the best response. If this first catalog proves successful, consider renting or buying rights to a national mailing list directed towards your target market. Gaining the use of such a mailing list will require a fee, but it

means you will be sending your catalog out to people who, presumably, will have an interest in your merchandise.

**Don't get carried away and lose focus on the basics.** In general, the success of your catalog will depend more upon:

- how well you match your mailing list or customer needs to your merchandise or the other way around
- how broad of a selection you are able to offer including odd sizes
- how easy your products are to explain with visuals and copy
- how well your catalog items complement and relate to each other

*For mail order companies, it is important that the majority of your catalog items are novel and difficult to find in retail stores.*

**SUPERTIP**

rather than, how beautiful and glossy your catalog looks.

**Forget about color if you have a small budget.** If your budget is limited

and especially if you have a good sales angle (e.g., your business is environmentally friendly), you may be able to get away printing a black and white catalog on recycled paper. Also, consider using three colors like black on yellow, and red for highlighting discount prices.

**Have a contest.** A contest can help increase your order response rate. One way to help pay for the contest is to get a sponsor, such as a travel agency, to give you a reduced rate in exchange for giving them a chance to advertise.

**If you are operating a mail order business, start a catalog once you have 25,000 customers.** Otherwise stick to classified and space ads until you build up your customer list.

**Keep close track of your catalogs performance.** Remove items from your catalog if they fail to perform. To help you in this task, use Forms #34 “Gross Catalog Analysis Sheet” and #35 “Catalog Item Sales Analysis Sheet” as explained in Guidebook #68.

**Keep your catalogs small.** Catalogs sizes can range from one page mailers that showcase only a few items, to one pound 200 page monsters the display several thousand items. However, a good size to start with is one of

*Catalogs with fewer pages, and perhaps half an inch or so smaller are being produced in an effort to reduce costs. Quality over quantity.*

**POWERPOINT**

about one hundred to two hundred items contained within 24 or 32 pages – a mini catalog. Overall, these smaller catalogs are more up-to-date, better able to respond to seasonal changes and more price conscious, rather than full-blown catalogs. In fact, large 400 page catalogs are not appropriate any more, as they require risky large runs to lower costs and help make them profitable.

**NOTE** Assuming items are of similar appeal, you will always get a higher response rate from a 32-page catalog than you will from a 24-page catalog.

**Mail or distribute your catalogs on time.** Christmas catalogs should be mailed in late September or early October, while



Spring and Summer Catalogs should be mailed in early May or late April.

**Once you are established, print two to four catalogs per year.** Every business must have a catalog for Christmas. People are looking for gift ideas then. The three other important times of the year are Spring, Summer and Fall, with Fall being a distant fourth.

**For a mail order catalog, take extra care when picking your products.** The success of an individual product in a mail order catalog will depend on whether it:

- closely matches the theme of your catalog
- doesn't cause apprehensions about size or color

*Spring and Summer catalogs can often combined into one.*

- doesn't vary much in price or quality from the other products in the catalog
- has universality of appeal
- includes everything (people don't like future obligations when they purchase something, like buying batteries)
  - is exactly as pictured or described
  - is imported from an exotic location
  - is in the early stages of a fad not the latter stages
- is not oversold (don't promise what the product doesn't live up to)
- is not widely available at retail
- is perceived to be hard to find

- promises heavy utilization
- won't fall part and become worthless shortly after being purchased

### **Place your big selling items at the**

**front.** You will get far more new catalog customers if you put your proven winners in the front pages of your catalog.

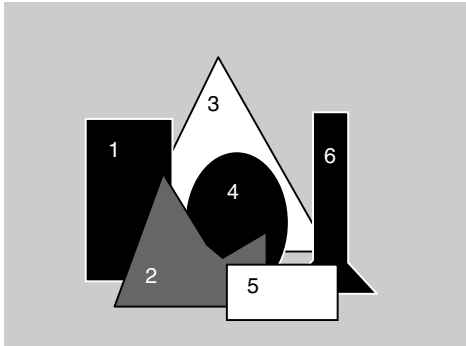
**Try to avoid using models.** To keep the pre-production costs of your catalog within budget, avoid using models.



*You will get far more new catalog customers if you put your proven winners in the front pages of your catalog.*

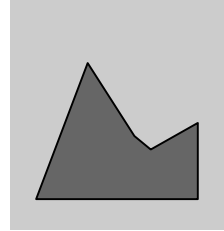
## Types of Catalog Displays

### A: Group Listings

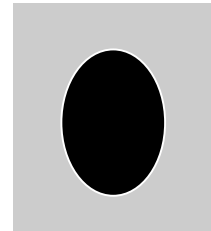


- 1** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.
- 2** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.
- 3** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.
- 4** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.
- 5** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.
- 6** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.

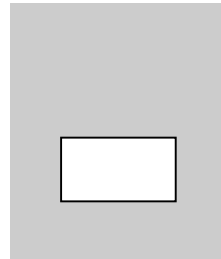
### B: Single Listings



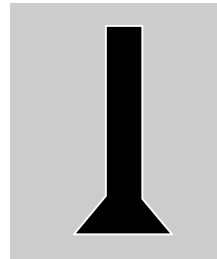
- 1** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.



- 2** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.



- 3** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.



- 4** This product is one of a kind. Never before offered to anyone at any price. Comes in passion red, sky blue and dusty gray.

← **Descriptive Visuals**

← **Product Descriptions**