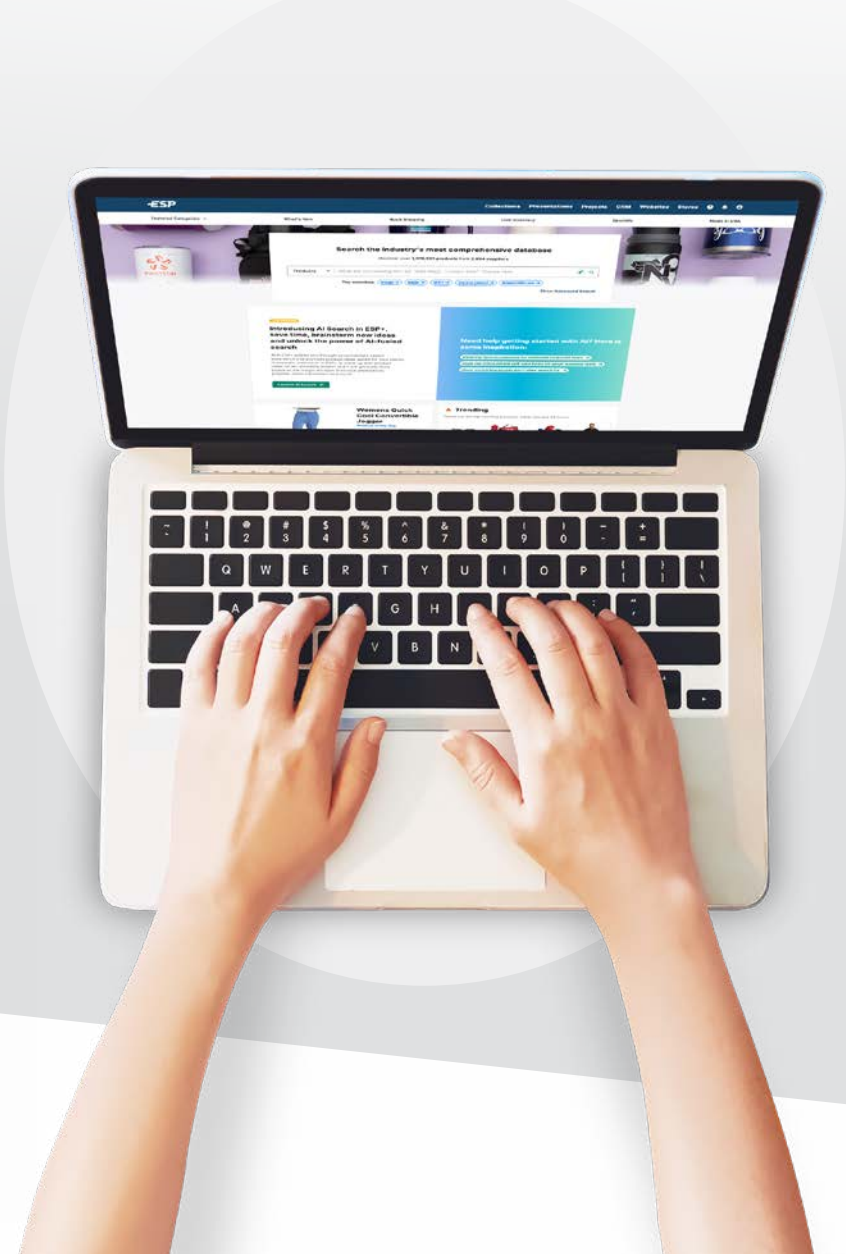




# Everything You Need To Know About **Selling Promotional Products**



## Intro

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The promotional products industry is booming and it's easy to understand why. This \$26.6 billion marketplace is ripe for opportunity for businesses of all sizes. With margins much lower than other forms of advertising and little to no overhead to get started, the growth potential is huge.

We're here to break down everything you need to know about selling promotional products, how to get started and how partnering with ASI® will be the key to your success.



# UNDERSTANDING THE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS MARKET

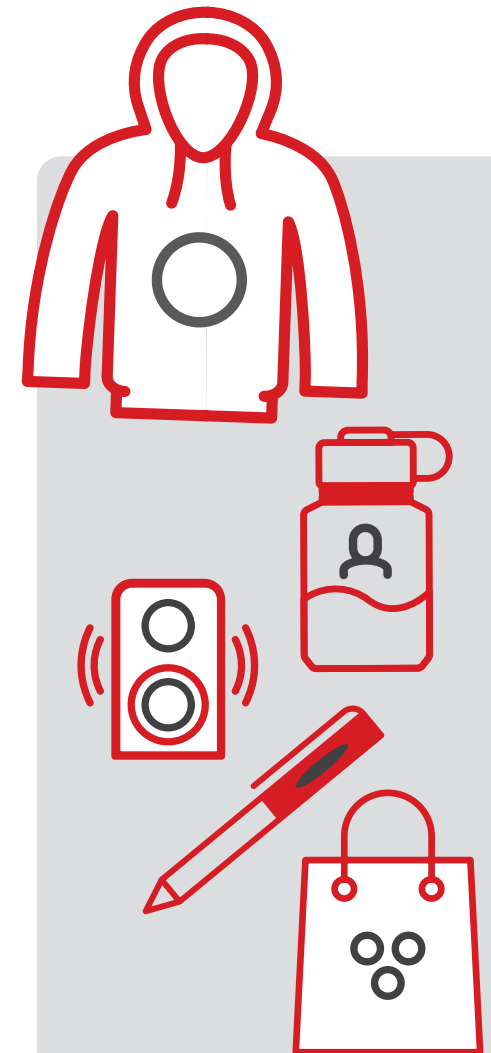
## What Are Promotional Products?

Promotional products are any item branded by a business with a logo. They have a much longer shelf life than traditional advertising, with the average user keeping promo products for more than a year. This ensures maximum brand exposure for a fraction of the cost.

## Types of Promo Products

There's no limit to what type of product your brand can promote – there are more than 1 million listed in our database – but there are a few industry staples that are relied on time and again:

- **Apparel** – T-shirts, polos, hats, jackets and other wearables
- **Drinkware** – Water bottles, mugs, pint glasses
- **Tech gadgets** – Power banks, Bluetooth speakers
- **Office supplies** – Pens, notebooks, mousepads
- **Eco-friendly items** – Reusable items (bags, drinkware) and products made from sustainable materials





## Top Promo Markets

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With a market valued at \$26.6 billion in 2024 and an average growth rate of nearly 3% per year over the past decade, the promotional products industry is thriving in many top markets, meaning there are buyers out there no matter what circles your business runs in:

- **Education:** \$3.6 billion in promo sales in 2024
- **Healthcare:** \$2.71 billion
- **Construction:** \$2.03 billion
- **Manufacturing/Distribution:** \$1.83 billion
- **Financial/Insurance:** \$1.64 billion



## Profit Potential

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The average profit margin for a promotional products order is 36%, with an average order size of \$1,289. And with no equipment or inventory needed, there's no overhead cutting into your margins, which means more money in your pocket.



## Why Promo Products Work

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Promotional products have incredibly high ROI compared to traditional advertising, giving your business more bang for your buck when it comes to your marketing spend. Consider these eye-opening stats:

- **87%** of people keep promotional products for more than a year
- **90%** of recipients can recall the brand that gave them a promo product
- **73%** of people are likely to do business with a brand that gives them a promo product

Promotional products offer a tangible and often personalized experience that can't be replicated with other forms of advertising, which leads to high recall and more brand loyalty long term.





## GETTING STARTED

### Identify Your Niche

As we've established, nearly every market has a need for promotional products, so as a distributor, it's important to narrow your focus into target markets (corporate clients, schools, nonprofits, etc.) to maximize time and resources reaching these buyers. Start small by identifying businesses in your community that have promo needs or ones you have already established relationships with.



### Setting Up Your Business

Adding promotional products to your existing business is easier than you think. The barrier of entry into this industry is low – no inventory or storefront is necessary. Suppliers handle all the inventory, product and shipping, so there's no overhead and upfront costs are minimal.

You don't even need prior marketing or sales experience to get started – just an internet connection and access to a reliable supplier network.



## How To Win Clients

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The first step for landing new clients is understanding their needs. Asking the right questions about the kinds of the products they're looking for and their budget will help you formulate a quick, effective pitch that positions your company as the right solution for them.

When pitching new customers, always put their needs first and identify how promotional products will help them achieve their marketing goals while boosting their brand recognition. Focus on the high ROI promo offers, be prepared with persuasive stats mentioned earlier and offer creative campaign ideas (swag bag for events, corporate gifts for employees, branded giveaways for trade shows, etc.).

# ROI



## Build Supplier Relationships

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One of the biggest keys to long-term success in this industry is establishing strong, reliable connections with suppliers built on mutual respect. Here are five tips for asserting yourself as a trustworthy partner that suppliers can rely on:



**1. Open communication:** Maintain clear, honest communication with your partners and check in regularly to ensure both parties have everything they need.



**2. Collaboration:** Be open to other ideas and work together to innovate and craft solutions unique to your business partnership.



**3. Consistency:** Always meet your deadlines, think many steps ahead and keep everyone involved looped into your decision making.



**4. Transparency:** Things don't always go to plan, so it's important to be open and honest about roadblock and challenges. This builds trust and allows for collaborative problem solving.



**5. Recognition:** Acknowledge and appreciate your suppliers' contributions.



## MARKETING & PROMOTION

### Pricing Your Promo

The price of your promotional products will depend on many factors, including the cost of the raw materials, manufacturing and labor, the distribution/shipping and much more. To ensure a profit, distributors mark up the cost a certain percentage based on product type and market demand.

Distributors typically employ bulk pricing/tier pricing strategies to incentivize buyers to secure more products at a lower cost per product, which locks them into a longer commitment and rewards your company with more business over a longer period of time. There are plenty of other creative ways to deploy limited-time pricing changes for marketing purposes, such as buy one get one free (BOGO), seasonal discounts and bundling deals.



buy 1  
get 1  
**50%**  
**off\***

## Digital Marketing Strategies

If you want your business to have a wider reach with measurable results, employing a digital marketing strategy is a must. Whether you're looking to establish yourself in your community or aspire to grow nationally or internationally, increasing your brand awareness with cost-effective digital marketing will help establish your credibility and improve brand recognition.

Consider any or all of the following to create a digital marketing effort that best fits your business:

- **Websites and e-commerce solutions**
- **Social media marketing**
- **Email marketing**
- **Content marketing**

ASI has all the digital marketing solutions you need to thrive.  
***(More on that later!)***

## Networking Opportunities

While digital marketing efforts are essential for succeeding in this industry, those efforts will fall flat without a complementary strategy to put a face to your brand name at in-person events. Whether it's to connect with partners in your community or make new connections, attending industry trade shows and other events will help further establish yourself as a brand to trust.



## Common Challenges

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Promotional products is a thriving industry, but it's also a crowded one. End-buyers can turn to any of the thousands of promotional products distributors, so if you're unable to stand out from the competition, you won't get very far.

Luckily, there are a few solutions that will give you a leg up from the start. The things you need to do to stand out are also the easiest – handle all of your administrative duties in a timely manner, hit all of your deadlines and keep lines of communication open. It may sound overly simplistic, but neglecting small tasks here and there add up to big problems down the road, which will cause your company to lose credibility quickly. No one wants to do business with unreliable and unorganized distributors, so always make sure your ducks are in a row.

Similar principles can be applied to handling customer satisfaction. Different clients have different needs and expectations, and managing them all is an art form that won't go unnoticed. No matter what other challenges arise along the way, providing top-notch customer service is always in your control.

But perhaps the most effective way to rise to the top of a crowded marketplace is by offering unique, high-quality products. We can help with that ...



## WHY CHOOSE ASI?

### Industry Leader

ASI is the most advanced online marketplace in the promotional products industry, allowing buyers and sellers of promo to connect, commerce and grow.

As a promo products distributor, you'll use ASI to source and buy bulk promotional products from suppliers, enabling you to provide a wide range of items to your customer base.

### Exclusive Tools & Resources

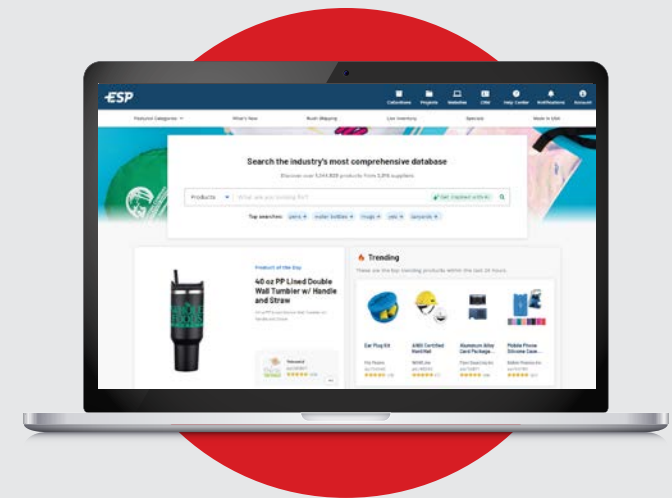
In addition to access to our online marketplace, you'll also become a member of our promotional product ecosystem, which includes marketing services, sales tools, free education, networking events and much more.



Here's a snapshot of the exclusive tools and resources at your fingertips as an ASI member.

## ■ ESP+

- The #1 business platform in the industry
- Simplified, data-driven, all-in-one platform that empowers distributors to sell more branded products
- Comprehensive suite of tools designed to revolutionize your business operations: Product search, Client Portal, Presentations, Order Management, CRM, Collections
- Supercharge sales with AI assistance



## ■ ESP+ Websites

- Easily updatable e-commerce solution that proudly hosts 1 million items
- 24/7 access to a wide array of promo
- Modern, intuitive interface with unmatched navigation speed
- SEO friendly
- Streamlines workflow and expedites order fulfillment



## ■ ESP+ Stores

- Designed to connect everything from sourcing to fulfillment in one cohesive, efficient system
- Customizable and easy-to-manage stores integrated with ESP+ for efficient order processing
- Modern, branded shopping experience that enhances client satisfaction and loyalty
- Automated order aggregation and fulfillment reduces manual work, saves time and minimizes errors
- End-to-end connection that bridges the gap between distributors, customers, employees and partners



## ■ Support & Education

- Around-the-clock access to a dedicated Customer Success Manager
- FREE training programs and webinars
- Breaking news and exclusive stats from ASI's award-winning editorial and research team
- Access to a network of experienced professionals





## ■ Events

- FREE access to ASI's premier industry events, as well as exclusive hosted-buyer opportunities to meet elite suppliers face to face.



## ■ Business Savings Program

- Leverage our valuable partnerships with top brands like UPS, ADP, Lenovo, Avis, Hotel Engine and more to save on business and personal needs.



## Distributor Testimonials

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Don't just take our word for it. Here's what some of our satisfied distributors have to say about how ASI has helped them succeed:

***// A year after joining ASI, my promo sales increased by 199%. //***

– Don Dare,  
Dare2Marketing  
asi/175419

***// As a 23-year-old with just over \$10,000, I was able to, three years later, have a million dollars in sales. 11 years on, I have 50 employees in a \$16 million business. //***

– Joseph Sommer,  
Whitestone  
asi/359741

## The Next Steps

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Adding promotional products to your business is an easy, low-risk opportunity to add to your bottom line, and ASI is here to help you every step of the way.

**Join ASI today or book a demo to learn more  
about the power of ESP+.**

