



PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS PROSPECTING & SALES PLAYBOOK

MANUFACTURING

EDITION

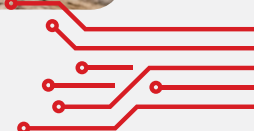
JOB SITE GEAR



PROMO IDEAS



How to **win manufacturing clients** and turn everyday orders into **repeatable revenue**.





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SAFETY GEAR



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ABOUT THIS PLAYBOOK



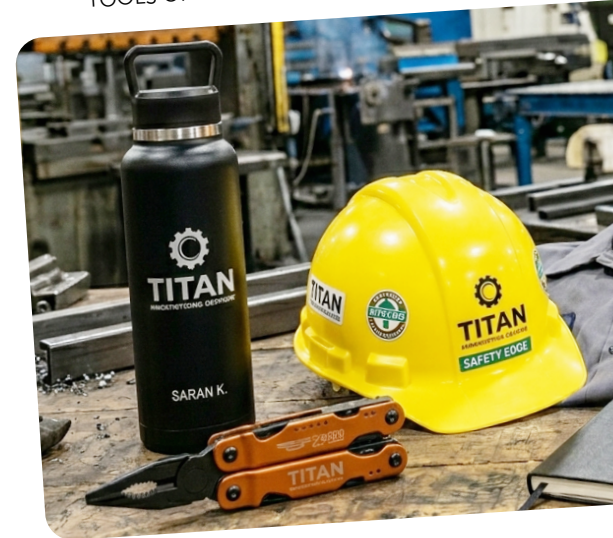
Manufacturing is one of the most consistent and operations-driven end markets in promotional products, spanning buyers from industrial manufacturers and production facilities to distributors and supply chain companies.

According to ASI® research, manufacturing represents a meaningful share of industry spend within a promotional products market that reached \$27.7 billion in total sales in 2025.

This playbook shows you how to break into the manufacturing sector, win business and turn everyday needs like safety gear, employee apparel and onboarding programs into consistent, repeat revenue.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE



SAFETY ACCESSORIES





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POSITIONING: HOW YOU WIN IN MANUFACTURING



What manufacturing buyers care about

✓ Safety and compliance on the jobsite or floor

✓ Durability and functionality of products

✓ Consistency across teams, shifts and locations

✓ Simple, repeatable ordering for ongoing needs

Your positioning statement

“

I help companies use branded products to support manufacturing, safety, hiring and customer programs – not just giveaways.

”



Manufacturing buyers don't buy promo for novelty. They buy it to support operations, safety and repeatable programs.



SAFETY GLASSES



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YOUR IDEAL MANUFACTURING PROSPECTS

BEST TARGETS



- Manufacturing plants and production facilities
- Industrial distributors
- Construction & trades companies
- Logistics & warehousing operations
- Regional B2B companies (50-500 employees)

BEST TITLES



- Operations Manager
- Plant Manager
- HR or People Operations
- Safety Manager
- Marketing (for trade shows & brand initiatives)



Rule of Thumb

If they require safety gear, hire hourly workers or participate in trade shows, they are buying promotional products continuously.





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HOW TO FIND MANUFACTURING PROSPECTS



Build a target list

Set a weekly goal to identify 25-50 manufacturing companies to prospect.



Where to find prospects

- **Google Maps** (search terms like “manufacturing,” “industrial company,” “fabrication,” “warehouse,” “distribution center”)
- **Existing manufacturing contacts** (a goldmine)
- **Trade associations and industry groups**
- **LinkedIn** (industry=manufacturing)



What to track for each account

- **Company name**
- **Type** (manufacturer, distributor, logistics, etc.)
- **Key buyer title**
- **Number of employees or locations**
- **Likely use case** (safety programs, hiring/onboarding, trade shows or events)



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STEPS TO REACH MANUFACTURING PROSPECTS



DAY 1 - EMAIL



Subject: Quick question about [plant / team / event]

Copy and paste this!

Hi [Name],

I work with manufacturing teams on safety gear, onboarding kits and branded programs that actually get used.

Quick question: Who typically handles items like [uniforms/safety incentives/hiring kits] on your team?

Best,

[You]

DAY 4 - CALL



“ I help manufacturing teams simplify safety and hiring programs with branded gear that’s easy to reorder. Who’s the best person to speak with about that?



DAY 8 - FOLLOW-UP EMAIL



Reference a relevant use case (safety, hiring or trade shows). Keep it short and tied to how similar companies are standardizing these programs.

DAY 10 - FOLLOW UP



- **Share one specific idea, not a list of products**
- **Tie it to a real operational need** (safety, onboarding, retention) (e.g., safety recognition kits, new hire packs or trade show bundles)



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DISCOVERY CALLS: WHAT TO ASK MANUFACTURING PROSPECTS



Goal

Understand how the items are used so you can standardize and repeat them.

Core questions

- 1 "What branded items do you use today?"
- 2 "When do you typically need them?" (onboarding, safety programs, events, quarterly needs)
- 3 "What's frustrating about how this works today?"
- 4 "Who else is involved in approving or ordering?"
- 5 "Would it help if approved items were always available in a simple online store?"

Key buying triggers

These are the moments when manufacturing companies are most likely to need and reorder products:

- ✓ Safety and compliance requirements
- ✓ Hiring and employee turnover
- ✓ Multi-location or multi-shift consistency
- ✓ Rush orders and last-minute needs impacting costs



Manufacturing success comes from **standardizing programs** once and making them **easy to reorder** across teams, shifts and locations.



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WHAT TO SELL TO MANUFACTURING BUYERS



1 New Hire & Onboarding Kits

- Apparel, drinkware and safety items - See our suggested starter [Product Collection in ESP+](#)
- Structured as a per-employee program
- Supports onboarding, safety and company culture from day one
- High reorder rate as hiring continues
- Always available through a branded online store

2 Safety Recognition Programs

- Quarterly or milestone-based incentives
- PPE-adjacent items and appreciation products
- Reinforces safety culture and compliance
- Easy to standardize and repeat

3 Uniform & Apparel Programs

- Daily plant wear, outerwear and seasonal gear
- Focus on durability and functionality
- Consistent branding across teams and shifts
- Often expands into an online store for easy reordering

4 Trade Show & Open House Bundles

- Pre-curated kits for events and facility tours
- Includes giveaways, signage and staff apparel
- Positioned as “one less thing to manage” for busy teams
- Repeatable for every event or location

5 Customer or Dealer Kits

- Branded kits for customers, distributors or partners
- Ensures consistency across external touchpoints
- Supports sales teams and relationship building
- Easy to standardize and scale





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HOW TO PRESENT TO MANUFACTURING BUYERS



⊗ Never send a product list without context.

✓ Always frame it as a program tied to a real need.



Simple proposal format

- Program name
- Who it's for
- When it's used
- What's included
- Estimated budget range



Example

"Q2 Safety Recognition Kit

150 Employees – \$25-\$35 per kit –
Ordered through a company store"

This program-first approach makes it easier for operations teams to approve, standardize and reorder programs across teams and locations.



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HOW TO OVERCOME COMMON OBJECTIONS



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"We already have a supplier."

"Totally fine – many of my clients did too. I usually help with overflow programs or things their main supplier doesn't specialize in."

"Send me ideas."

"Happy to – before I do, can I confirm who it's for and when you need it? That way I can make sure it's actually useful."

"No budget."

"Understood. Are you more focused on cost control or reducing admin time? In a lot of cases, we can set up a simple company store so approved items are easy to order and manage, which helps control both."



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YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS IN MANUFACTURING

MONTH 1



- Focus on one vertical (manufacturing)
- Build a list of 100 target accounts
- Book 10 discovery calls

MONTH 2



- Close first program
- Create one standardized, repeatable kit
- Ask every client: "Who else should I talk to?"

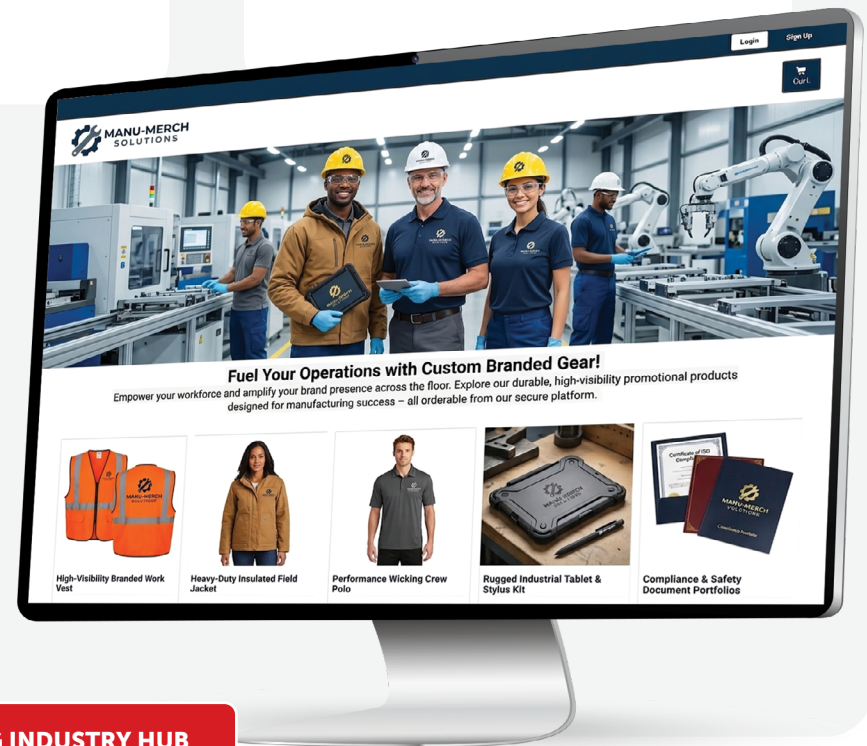
MONTH 3



- Expand into second use case (safety → onboarding)
- Introduce reorder or a company store
- Lock in recurring revenue



This is how successful distributors move from one-off orders to **standardized, repeatable programs that scale across teams and locations.**



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WHAT NOT TO DO



⊗ Don't compete on price alone.



Do

Focus on value, durability and repeatability.

⊗ Don't send catalogs cold.



Do

Lead with a specific use case or program.

⊗ Don't chase one-off \$200 orders.



Do

Look for repeat needs tied to hiring, safety or operations.

⊗ Don't try to sell every product category.



Do

Focus on core programs like apparel, safety and onboarding.

⊗ Don't make ordering harder than it needs to be.



Do

Simplify reordering with a company store.





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THE BOTTOM LINE



Manufacturing promo works when it

- Supports safety and compliance
- Is durable and functional on the job
- Is consistent across teams, shifts and locations
- Repeats through standardized, easy-to-manage programs
- Simplifies reordering through a company store



Become the distributor who makes safety, hiring and operational programs easy to manage and repeat, and manufacturing can become one of your most reliable, long-term verticals

Need more?

Bookmark our exclusive [Manufacturing Industry Hub](#) on the ASI member site.



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