



Promo Industry 101: What to Do When You're New

Presented by Joan Miracle
Executive Director
ASI Corporate Accounts

March 29, 2025

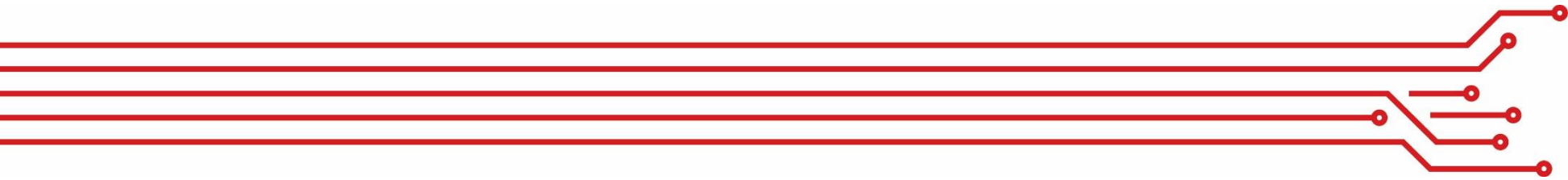
Hello!



- 14 years in the ad specialty industry
- Has helped hundreds of distributors grow their business selling promo products
- Main focus and passion is sales & sales training

Agenda

- 1. Industry Overview**
- 2. Top Markets & Products**
- 3. Best Practices**
- 4. Tools and Resources**
- 5. Questions**



Industry Overview

Industry Overview



1. What are promo products?

Any item with a name, slogan, or message

2. Who buys promo?

End-buyers – people, businesses or organizations looking to promote their brand or company

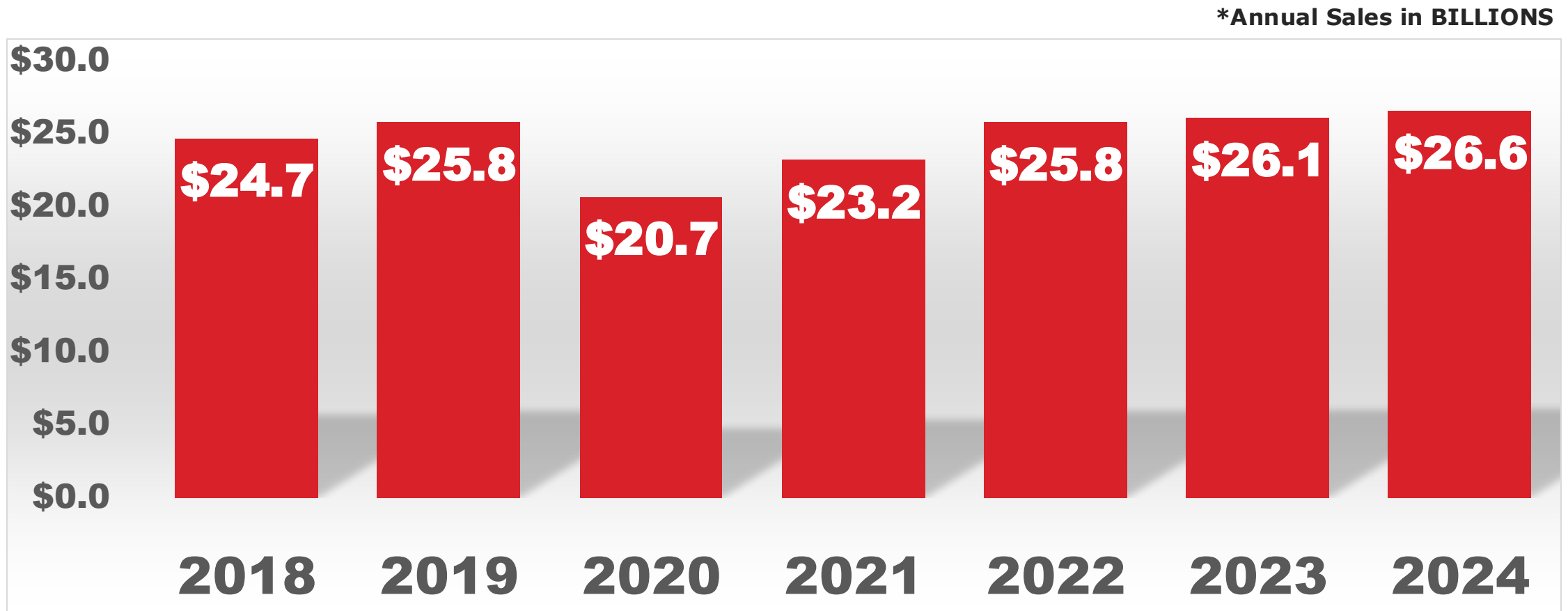
3. Why promo products?

Promotional Products are the most highly rewarded form of advertising

4. How large is the industry?

Any Guesses?

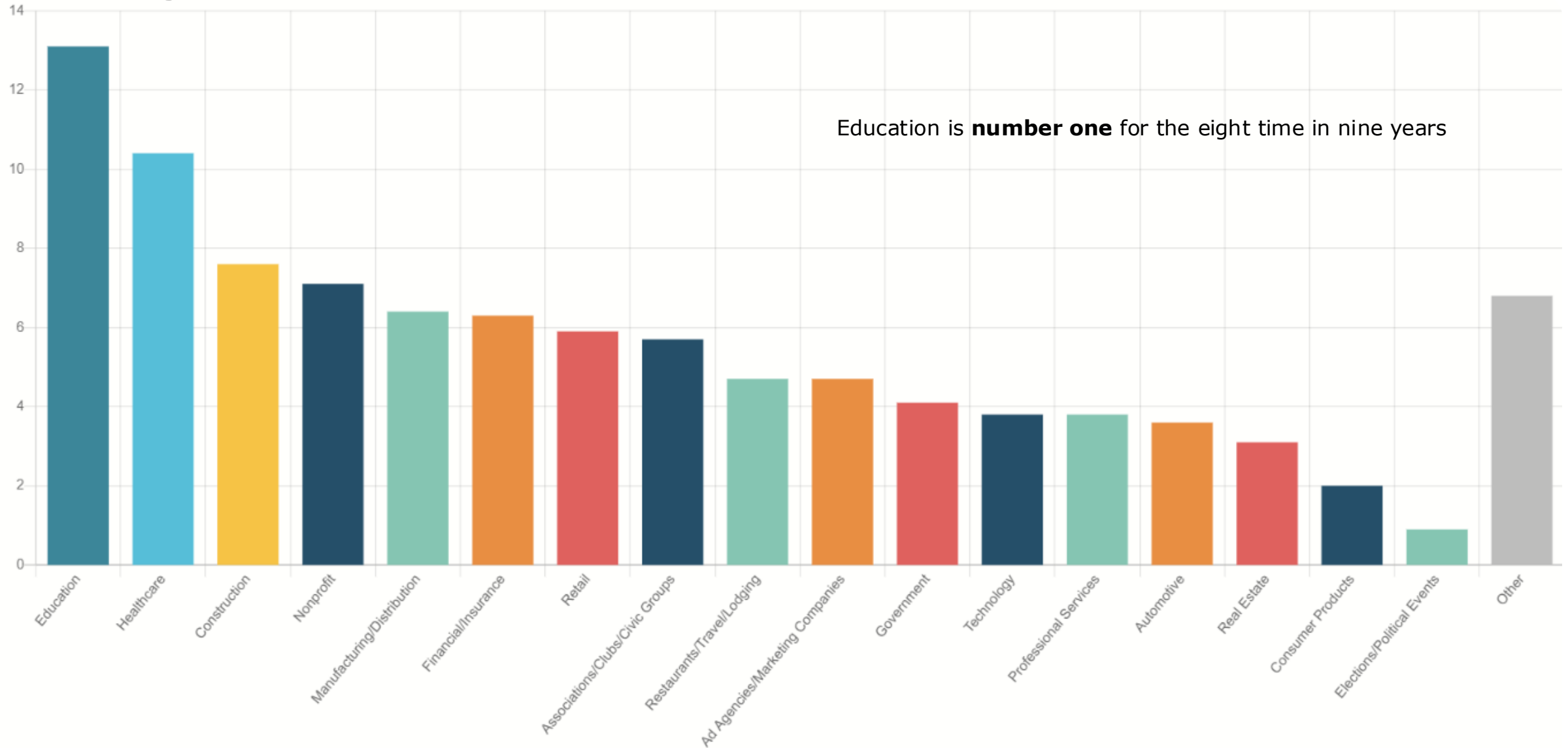
Industry Sales





Top Markets & Products

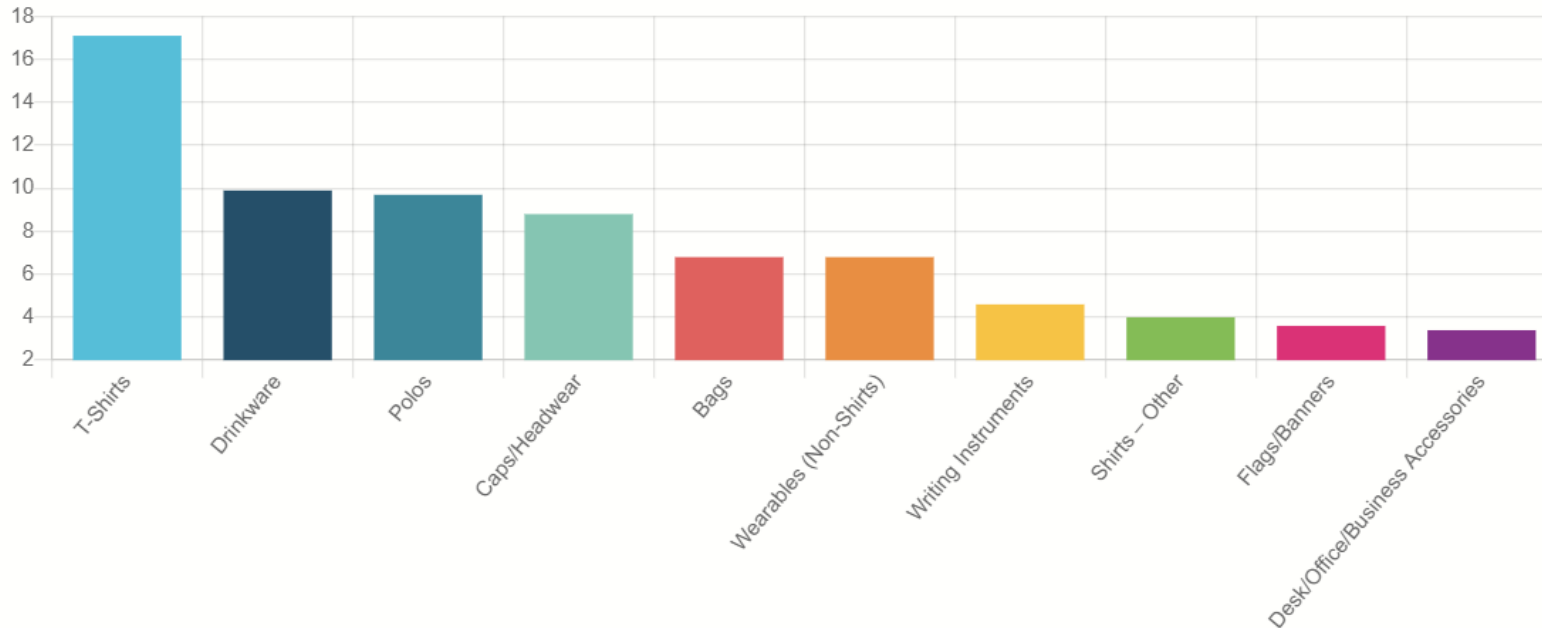
Leading Industries



Product Category - Sales

TOP 10 PRODUCT CATEGORIES

(As Percentage of Overall Promo Products Sales)



AND THE REST

Health & Safety **3.3%**

Buttons/Badges/Ribbons/Stickers/Decals/Emblems/
Lanyards **2.9%**

Electronics/USBs/Computer-Related Products (Non-
Mobile Tech) **2.6%**

Blankets/Towels **2.4%**

Recognition Awards/Trophies/Jewelry **2.2%**

Mobile Tech Accessories **2.2%**

Housewares/Tools **2.1%**

Calendars **2.0%**

Books/Cards/Postcards/Stationery/Giftwrap **2.0%**

Magnets **1.5%**

Food Gifts & Bottles of Water **1.2%**

Other **0.9%**

Industry Profile: #1 Education



Buyers

- Colleges
- Universities
- Private Schools
- Public High Schools
- Elementary schools

Targeting Education



Apparel

Sweatshirts

T-shirts

Hats



Office Supplies

Pens

Highlighters

Notebooks

Rulers

Calendars



Sports

Uniforms

Water Bottles

Pom Poms

Rally Towels



Awards

Paper Certificates
with Seals

Tenure Plaques

Trophies

Industry Profile: #2 Healthcare



Buyers

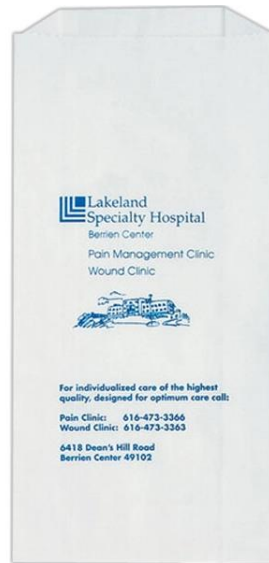
- Hospitals
- Nursing Homes
- Physical Therapists
- Dentists
- Pharmacies
- Urgent Care

Healthcare Industry Product Ideas



Dentists

Toothbrushes
Floss
Stickers for kids
Dental care travel kit



Pharmacies

Business card holder
Prescription bags
Calendars
Drinkware



Nursing Homes

Mini pill cutter
Pens
Tote bags
Pill box



Physical Therapists

Hot and cold packs
Massage balls
Back brace
Stress reliever

Industry Profile: #3 Construction



Buyers

- Home Builders
- General Contractors
- Corporate Builders

Construction Industry Product Ideas



Safety & Health Programs

Completion certificates
Awards
Corporate gifts



Customer Appreciation

Food promos
Branded blankets
Kitchen essentials



Apparel and Headwear

New hire T-shirts & uniforms
Logoed headwear



Sales Incentives

High-end promo
TV's
Watches
iPads

Member Tips for Construction Industry Targeting



1. Reach out in the off season
2. Best Value, quality product & quick turnaround
3. They love centralized purchasing
4. Think long term with these clients

Industry Profile: #4 Manufacturing



Buyers

- Toys
- Auto
- Food
- Electronics
- Wholesalers

Manufacturing Industry Product Ideas



Uniforms

Industrial shirts/pants
High visibility clothing
Jackets, Hats, Gloves
Corporate Office
apparel



Recruitment

T-Shirts
Hats
Writing instruments
Magnets



Signs & Displays

Front door mats
Feather flags
Signage



Safety Gear

Face shields
Hard hats
Safety glasses



Incentives

Performance
apparel
Trophies & awards
Corporate gifts &
incentives

Industry Profile: #5 Retail



Buyers

- Retail stores
- Supermarkets
- Clothing stores
- Department stores
- Convenience stores
- Superstores

Retail Industry Product Ideas



Wearables

Hats

Aprons

Name tags

Lanyards

T-shirts & Polos



Signage

Store signage

Banners

Sale signs

Stores displays

Floor stickers



Bags

Reusable

Paper

Recycled

Cotton Tote



Best Practices

Pay Attention to Trending Products



Stanley Quencher



Self Promos

Promotional products you give away to promote your own business



Self Promos

ASI Best Distributor Self Promo 2023



WHOOPLA's (asi/522701) tiki bar summer swag kit includes a bottled infusion kit (101457-000) now carried by Gemline (asi/56070), an engraved bamboo straw (20-6721) from Totally Bamboo (asi/91565), a Lewis bag, an engraved wooden mallet, custom hibiscus syrup and drink accessories, all in a self-sealing box from CompanyBox.

Self Promos

ASI Best Distributor Self Promo 2024



"You can't throw a bunch of random stuff in a box. When you can tie everything together, it makes for a much better experience."

John Vo, WHOOPLA

- Campaign Cost \$4,000 for 85 kits sent to VIP clients and prospects who had been unresponsive
- WHOOPLA gained 3 new clients that spent \$33,000 on initial projects
- Over \$20,000 in additional kitting projects came in that can be attributed to the campaign
- Overall the summer swag kit brought in over 1,225% ROI

Self Promos

2022 ASI Promo Campaign Award: Best Distributor Self Promotion

“We wanted to show a targeted audience what they could do with their brand.”

Heather Comerford, 1338Tryon

- Targeted Males 40-60
- Mailed 30 boxes out to male dominated industries like trucking and technology
- Sent to customers and prospects



Self Promos

2022 ASI Promo Campaign Award: Best Distributor Self Promotion



Sent out just over 30 boxes



3 prospects became customers



One client wanted to use the same 5 products with their own branding



Another prospect set up an online store



A C-Suite-Level client set up the same box for their sales team in 2022

Best Practices for Selling Promo



1. Understand the type and quality of promotional products to meet your clients' needs
2. Show samples
3. Look for repeat orders
4. Look for upsell opportunities

Power of Referrals



1. Asking for referrals is an easy form of lead generation
2. Best place for referrals is from your current customers
3. Add a line to POs, invoices, email signatures
4. Offer a discount or free gift as a thank you
5. Remember: timing is key! Make sure to ask for referrals after checking in and the customer is happy with the order they received

Important to Note:

“Once you have a contact within the organization, such as a safety manager, you can ask for referrals to other departments such as human resources”
–ASI Distributor



Be Proactive



1. You won't sell what you don't pitch
2. Pick 3 products to pitch to every customer and prospect every month
3. Look for prospects, practice cold calling
4. Set goals, run contests

Upsell When Possible

Be prepared to pitch other related items

Always think about where the promo is being used



Suggest kitting

Consider future business items for other events

Kitting and Custom Packaging

ASI Media Selects Packaging As Its 2022 “Product Of The Year”

Packaging delivers a surefire “wow” factor, making it an essential first step in the branding experience



Diversifying Your Client Base



- Look at your customer base and identify at least 5-10 markets where your business comes from
- Consider targeted emails or postcards with promo product suggestions to help branch out
- **Add clients in more vertical markets that have significant sales potential**

Target a Specific Client

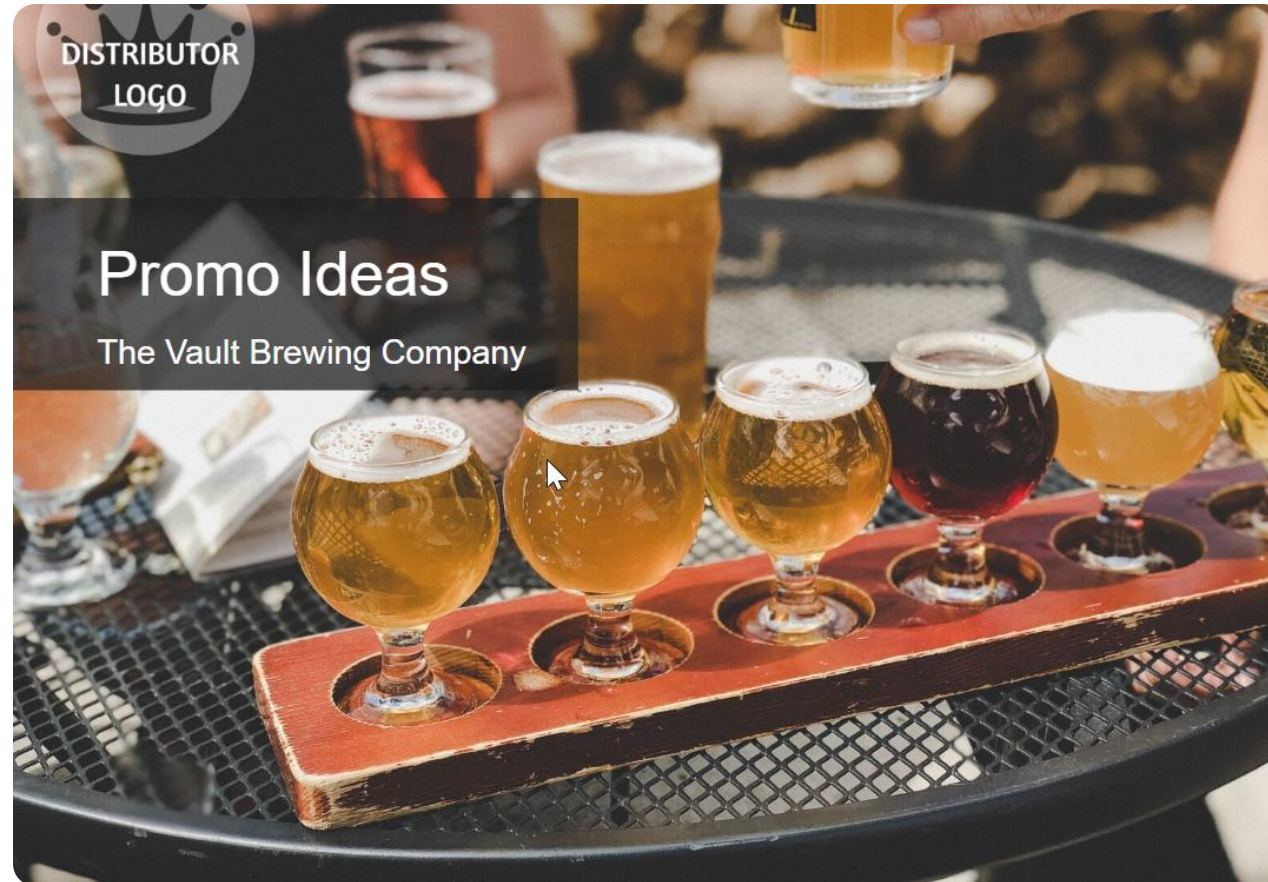
“If a customer of Jason’s likes the branding they see in his shop, they’re more likely to support the promo company that he partners with. It’s a natural referral system.”

Jessica Joyce, Fully Promoted Towson

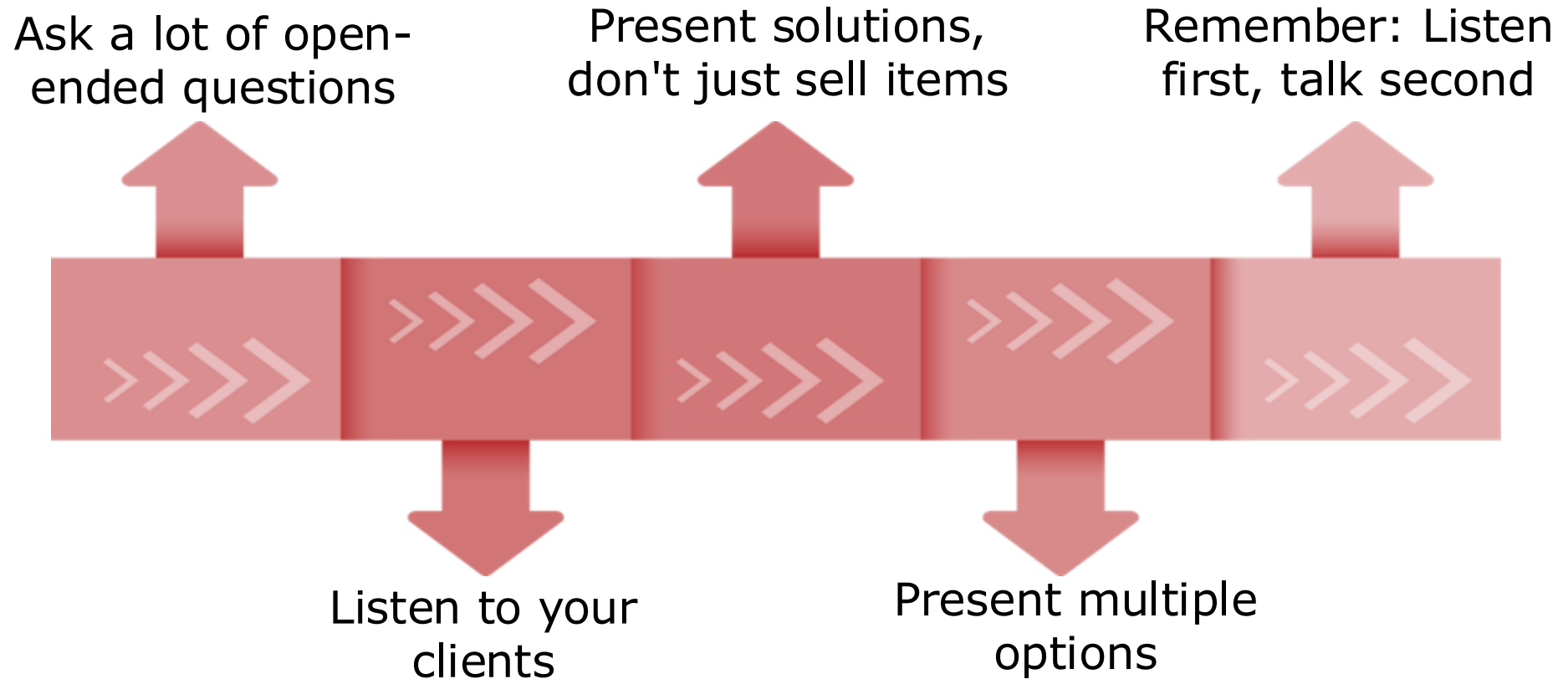
- Spec samples branded for them
- Be creative
- Be strategic



Target a Specific Industry or Business Type



Use a Consultative Approach



Good Questions to Ask Your Customers

- Do you have any employee incentive/recognition/wellness programs?
- How do you get new customers, leads, social media followers?
- What do you do to retain your current customers?
- Do you have any new products or services coming out this year?
- How do you thank customers for a referral?
- Are you involved in sponsoring/participating in any charity events? (i.e., golf outings/non-profit walks or runs)?
- How do you increase donations and sponsorships?
- How do you thank employees and customers around the holidays?
- Do you buy promotional products today to help market your business? If we were able to offer this to you, would you look for us to provide these products?
- How do you market your business?
- Do you do tradeshow?
- Who else in your organization uses ad specialties?

Best Practice Sales Approach



Williams & Associates

asi/360450

Bert & Anne Williams.
Counselor Magazine Family
Business of the Year 2016

Best Practice Sales Approach



6 Points to a Good Promotion

1. Goal/Objective

2. Target Audience

3. Theme

4. Distribution Method

5. Budget

6. Program/Promotion/Item

Never Stop Prospecting



PR Visits

Tip:

Going back to prospects that might say no to print, could say yes to promo



Sales Calls

Tip:

That last call of the day could be the one to make your sales goal



Follow-up

Tip:

Create a repeat order plan to help increase sales



Business Planning

Making a Business Plan

Have a plan

There's one thing every successful business has in common – they have a plan.

Know your target audience

The sooner you know your target market, the easier it will be to maximize your marketing dollars

Consider your products

Make sure to include popular items, like pens, mugs and tumblers. More niche products will limit your reach



Analyze your current business

Take inventory of what's working and what needs improving.

Grow your social presence

Show your personality through images and video and make sure to engage with your followers.

Put plans into action

Build a day-to-day structure that works best for your business. Use a marketing calendar to help keep you organized.



Tools and Resources

Member Tip: Consider ESP+ Stores



What

A company store is an online store you can set up to manage orders for a specific client, market or event.



Why

Consistent and increased sales
Easier to track orders, order aggregation
Automatic payments
Enhanced client relations



How

Employee stores: Branded merch, Uniforms
Employee Incentive Programs
Pop-up stores
Consistent branded signage

ESP+ STORES

Build & launch branded
client stores with ease.



Employee
Recognition

Team
Gear

Company
Apparel

Fundraising
Shop

Healthcare
Industry

Visit the **ESP+ Stores Booth #1334.**



Scan to learn more.

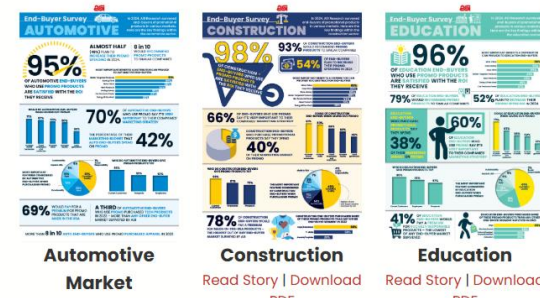
Additional Resources



State of the Industry

<https://members.asicentral.com/news/strategy/july-2024/2024-state-of-the-industry/>

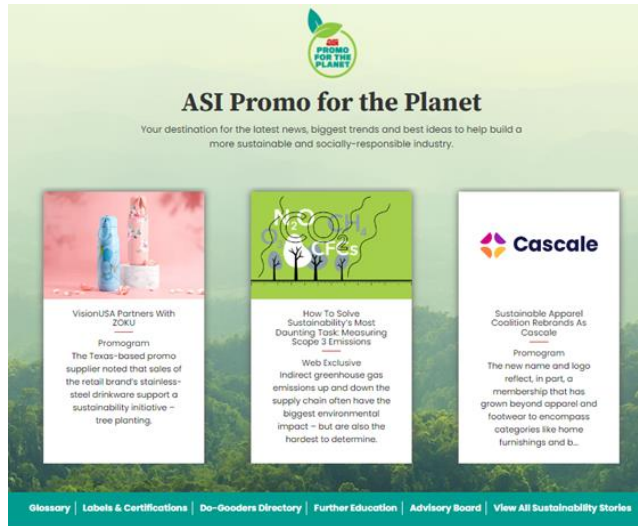
ASI's exclusive research reveals client buying habits in eight markets and across multiple demographics.



End-Buyer Research Series

<https://members.asicentral.com/research/end-buyer-research-series/>

Additional Resources



Promo for the Planet

<https://members.asicentral.com/promofortheplanet>



Product Hub

<https://members.asicentral.com/news/product-hub/>



ASI News

<https://members.asicentral.com/news>

LATEST NEWS

The Bright Side: Koozie Group's First Sponsored Service Dog Graduates Training

The 2025 Trade Show Planning Guide

The Exit Strategy Blueprint: 9 Steps To A Successful Sale

A Strategic Guide To Buying DTG Equipment

This Week's New Suppliers: Get New Promo Now

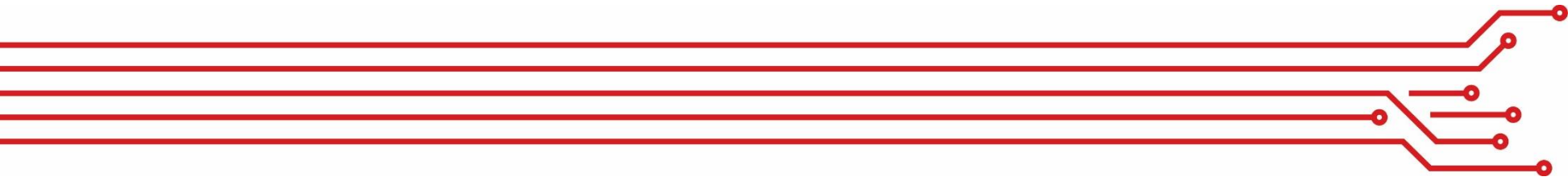
The Bright Side: Kaeser & Blair Raises \$10,000 For Employee Family In Need

TOP STORIES

Top 10 of 2024: Trends & Analysis

ASI Media readers were invested in politics, unique brand collaborations and keeping up with color trends this year.

Promo Lessons From the Weirdest Brand Collaborations of 2024



Questions?

Need More Help/Support?

Contact Customer Service to Speak with
your Customer Success Manger

1-800-546-1350 option 1

customerservice@asicentral.com

Download Recording of this session



VISIT US AT **ASI BOOTH #719**
TO LEARN MORE.





**Share your feedback
on the session with us!**



March 29, 2025