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It's all about presentation

Get the right marketing tools to send your business through the roof.



Rosie, Saint Cloud, Fla.

I need a professional presentation booklet for my roofing company for sales expansion. How can I go about getting this done?



By Myrlande Davermann, Fortune Small Business contributor

Dear Rosie: The best way to approach getting the right marketing materials is to find an advertising and marketing writer who specializes in working with small businesses. Get an expert with a track record in your particular industry, too, says Robert Middleton, owner of [Action Plan Marketing](#). He stresses that the person you employ should have specific details on your company and your goals, so that they can give you a focused marketing message.

"Have a presentation that shows all the benefits of using your company. Include testimonial quotes, before and after pictures and then a little bit about your company."

Middleton says business owners often hire only a designer for their promotional materials. That's the wrong way to go about it. Create the content first, recommends the marketing coach: "Designers will make it look nice, but since they often know little about marketing, your presentation will not have the information and ideas that it needs to do the job."

Allison Nazarian, founder and president of [Get It in Writing](#), a professional copywriting service, agrees.

"You always have to remember that you are trying to sell something," she says. "The book can look beautiful, and the writing can be great, but always keep in mind that you are in the business to sell your services."

Nazarian says you should have a professional photographer take eye-catching photos of work that you have done, and use a copywriter to produce straightforward text explaining your business and why you are better than your competitors. You should also try to differentiate yourself from other businesses like yours.

Decide who you want to talk to

Before you commission marketing materials, Nazarian says, be clear who your intended audience is: "If you are marketing to a general audience as well as to those in the roofing industry then you might want to create two different manuals."

To find professional marketing writers, go to your local chamber of commerce or chapter of [SCORE](#), or online, try contacting a group such as [Elance](#), a clearinghouse for marketing professional services such as Web development, creative design and business consulting. Companies with service needs post their requirements to Elance and service providers submit proposals in the form of bids for the work.

Also, Nazarian suggests asking around for referrals: find out who did a job for your competitors and contact that person directly. Finally, you can also check out a professional association such as [The American Marketing Association](#).

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