

Tried and True B2B Promotional Strategies - White Papers

A “White Paper” – defined as “an authoritative report or guide that...addresses issues and how to solve them” -- is a remarkably effective way to position a company as a thought leader in its industry and raise its profile with potential customers. “Sponsored” by a company, a white paper should take a completely neutral approach to an issue, exploring all sides, and never directly promoting a company’s products and services in so doing. Incorporating comments from unbiased experts, including educators, scientists and government officials, is a key way to emphasize impartiality and strengthen the study’s overall credibility.

But drafting the white paper is just the first step. From there, with the help of a skilled public relations practitioner, a company can:

- Issue a press release on the paper’s availability to trade and business media, directing interested readers to download it from the company’s website (providing contact information should be a condition for receiving it to generate potential customer leads). Promoting the paper in such a way reinforces the company as a leading expert in the subject area.
- Use the overall themes of the white paper to create articles and case studies that can be offered to appropriate trade media -- with company officials receiving “byline” credit and, again, positioning the company as a thought leader. This approach can be used with the company’s own trade media as well as with vertical media its customers read.
- Position company officials as quote sources on the subject with trade and other media as they develop relevant articles
- Use the white paper as a reason to “touch” customers with direct mail campaigns, at industry trade shows and in other promotional efforts
- And more

In summary, a white paper is a relatively inexpensive way to position a company in such a way so that it stands heads and shoulders above its competitors. Developed and publicized properly, it can be a “gift that keeps on giving,” with seemingly endless promotional variations.