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Promoting Cotton on a Limited Budget:

10 Quick and Easy Ways, By Richard W. Silvia

While major consumer and trade advertising is an important part of getting the cotton message out to the general public, it requires a major commitment of time, energy and a big budget. There are many less expensive opportunities to promote the benefits of cotton fiber and cotton products. The key to great promotions is to maximize your dollar commitment by tying in trade partners and getting as much publicity as possible for your efforts. Try these sure-fire approaches the next time you want to promote cotton to the industry or to your target consumer audience.

These techniques work whether or not you have a textile industry, and whether or not you have a logo.

1. Develop a Point of sale display promoting cotton products

Find a retail partner in your country an offer to promote cotton products in their store. Begin a dialog. Offer to supply counter cards, window displays and brochures promoting the benefits of cotton. If your budget allows, develop a newspaper advertising tie-in promoting this sales opportunity.

2. Develop a hangtag program for manufacturers of cotton products.

Develop a hangtag using your cotton logo or mark and offer it to manufacturers of cotton products. You can co-op (absorb a percentage of the cost of the tags) to make it more worthwhile for a manufacturer or retailer to use them. Tie in key retailers in the same market with point of sale displays promoting the hangtag programs

3. Give an award to designers, manufactures, or retailers in your country for new designs or innovations highlighting cotton and its benefits.

Run a contest within the textile or retail industries in your country and award prizes to the most innovative designs or ideas. Throw an awards party and invite the press to maximize publicity. If it is successful, make it an annual

event.

4. Do a fashion show.

Find up and coming designers and ask them to develop fashion items in cotton. Get a top retailer to promote the designers with you. And have the fashion event in their store to maximize consumer response. Invite the press to get top coverage for the designers and the cotton message.

5. Find a Textile, Design, or Fashion focused college, to work with to run a contest for students to develop unique fashions from cotton products.

Offer a scholarship to the winning designer, and a laptop computer to two runners up. Invite the press to the awards ceremony to maximize publicity.

6. Rent a billboard

Highway billboards in high traffic areas are a great way to get the cotton message out. Keep the message simple and prominently display your cotton logo for maximum tie-in effect. Or just use the word 'cotton'.

7. Develop signage at key sporting events

Major soccer, football, baseball or autos racing events offer an excellent opportunity to promote your logo and cotton message to a captive audience. This not only will promote your message to the huge audience in attendance, but also you will benefit from the television coverage that will show your logo as well.

8. Become Television Savvy

Get involved with local education television shows and use this opportunity to highlight benefits of cotton. Develop a strong public relations message. Find a local up and coming celebrity to promote your cotton message. Consumer and early morning talk shows are a perfect way to promote new apparel fashions from cotton. You should also take the opportunity to promote the comforts of cotton for the home in sheets and towels in programs catering to home decorating.

9. Become Magazine Savvy

Take your public relations message to consumer magazines. Magazines are constantly looking for the latest trends and information for their readers. Tie in your cotton message with the latest fashion information and trends. Inform consumers of the latest developments in cotton and how it they will benefit from these cotton innovations. This is a cost effective way to develop publicity, which targets your key audience- women 18-44.

10. Develop a consumer-friendly website

If your web site is strictly aimed at the cotton industry, develop another one aimed at the consuming public. Make it easy to navigate, and fill it with cotton promotion ideas, consumer tips on buying and caring for cotton garments and possibly games and contests. Spice it up with great fashion shots of cotton products and make it fun. Update the site monthly to keep them coming back. This is a great way to get the cotton message directly to the consumer

More: [Richard W. Silvia's bio](#)

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