

GUIDE TO APPAREL AND PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS & THEIR IMPORTANCE TO YOUR BRANDING EFFORTS

Why Use Promotional Products?

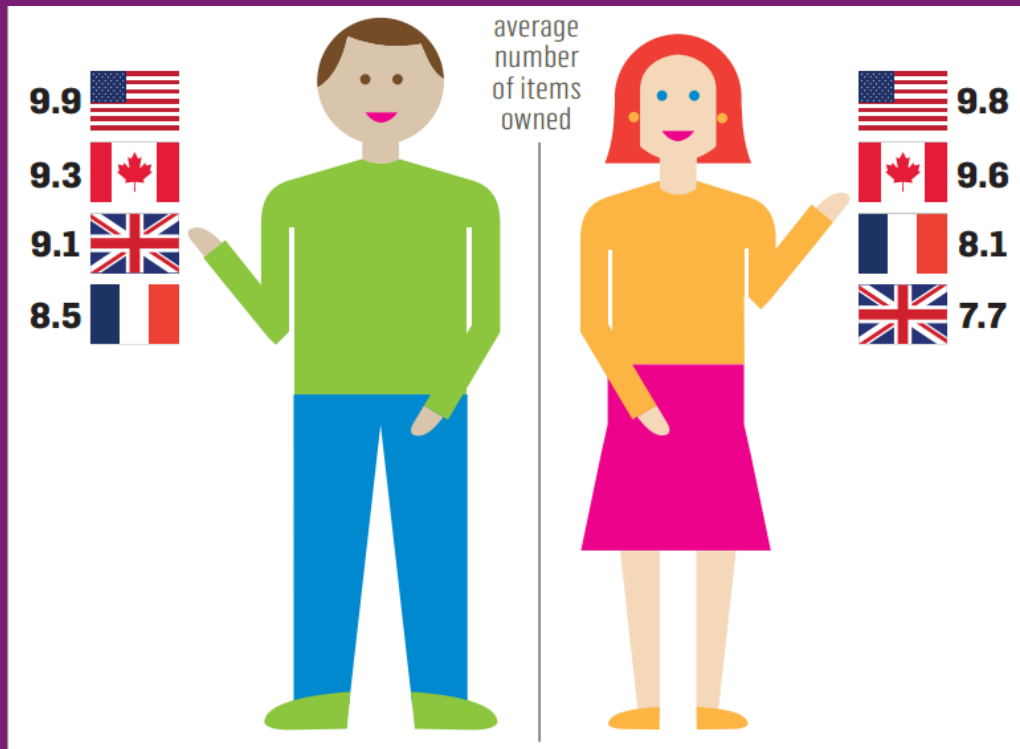


There is an entire universe of promotional items at your disposal and endless possibilities for their use. With so many options and considerations for choosing the right item, there are several things to look for, monitor, and consider before finding what's best for your organization.

Everyone knows that promotional products are everywhere in the business world, but why should you use them in your marketing efforts?



Who owns the most promotional products?



Males in the U.S. have the most promotional products, while females in Great Britain have the fewest.

Source: Advertising Specialty Institute

Promotional products are everywhere. They are in your office, on your desk, in your home, in your car, and throughout the world you live in. Many things that you see every day and don't even think about are promotional products.

In America alone, the average couple owns close to twenty promotional products combined! Imagine how many promotional products a family of three or four might own?

Promo Products Make Impressions

As I've already alluded to, promotional products make an impact, and they make impressions. Check out the infographic below.

According to Advertising Specialty Institute's [ASI] 2012 Advertising Impressions Study, bags make the most impressions in the United States. ASI estimated how many impressions based on, "how long a recipient has the product [and] how many people he comes into contact with each month while using it."

Bags are used far more frequently than other promotional products and are seen by others in public places. These factors combine to increase the impressions made by promotional bags (ASI, Inc).

Most Impressions in the U.S.



In the U.S., bags generate by far more impressions.

Source: Advertising Specialty Institute

Promo Products Stick

As a marketer or business person, I hope you're familiar with Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point*. In the book, he describes how ideas go viral and details the various factors that create a social epidemic. One of his concepts is called "The Stickiness Factor". The Stickiness Factor is a marketer's best friend; it's basic concept is creating ideas or tools that stick with consumers.

Promotional products stick, and they stick well. In fact, according to ASI, 87% of consumers remember the advertiser. This means that the promotional products that you distribute work with consumers and they stick in their minds.

87%

of consumers
remember the
advertiser.

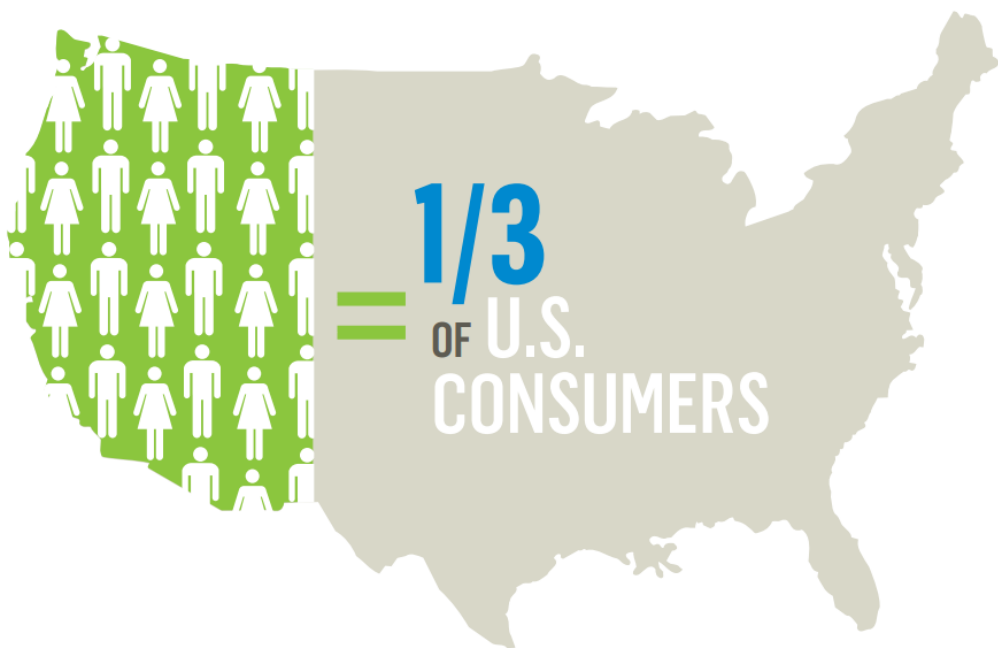


Promo Products Generate Business

If you're still skeptical about the effectiveness of promotional products, let's consider this statistic: 31% of consumers said they would be more likely to do business with an advertiser that they had never done business with previously (ASI, 2012).

Not only do promotional products stick with consumers, but they are more likely to use your company when it's time to do business. Promotional products keep you and your company in the forefront of the minds of the people you give promotional products to!

The likelihood for more business



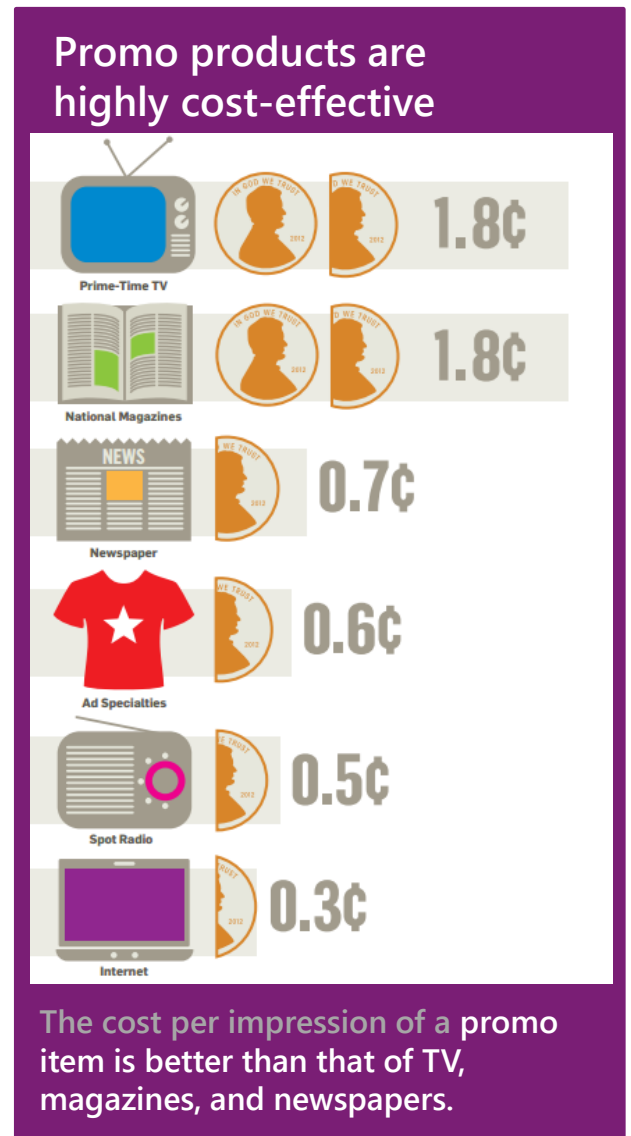
Nearly **31%** of those in the U.S. are **more likely to do business with advertisers** after receiving a promotional item from them.

Promo Products are Cost Effective

If you're looking for the most bang for your buck, look no further. Promotional products are highly cost effective and make impacts on your customers for pennies on the dollar.

Perhaps the best selling point for promotional products is that they become part of your consumer's life. ASI cites that promotional products are used by your consumer to achieve a goal such as drinking coffee, writing notes, or wearing a shirt. As you can see by the image to the right, promotional items are highly competitive with other advertising mediums with regards to cost (ASI, Inc).

What does all of this mean to you? Promotional products are a viable and effective advertising option for budgets of all shapes and sizes.



Promotional Products Help Boost Your Bottom Line



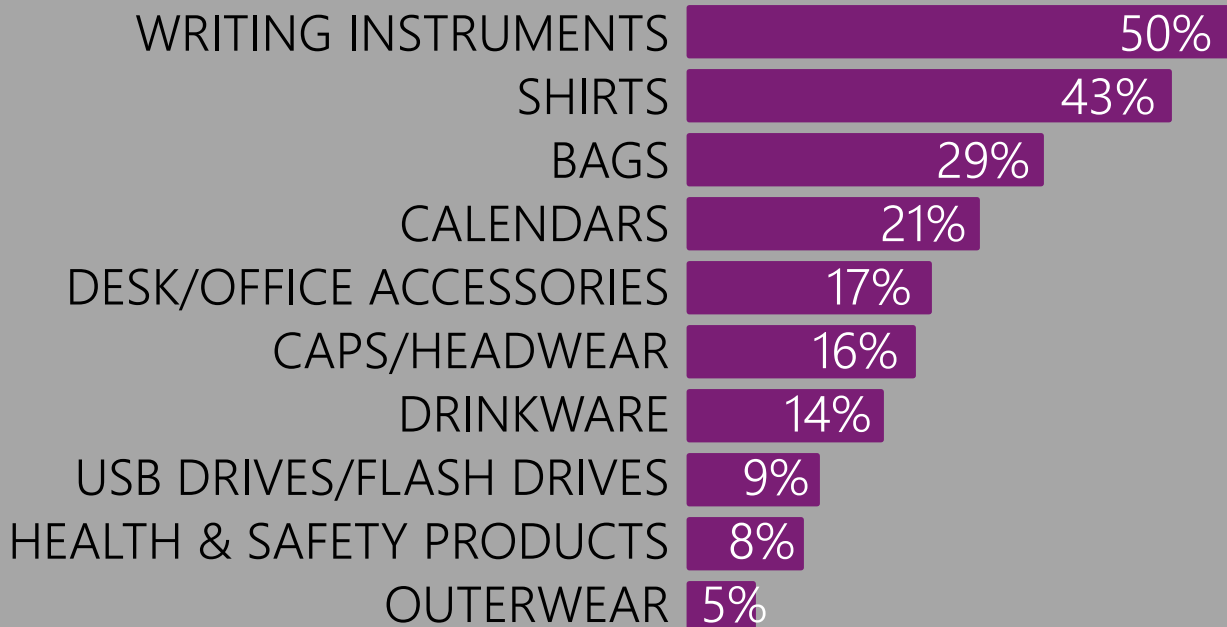
Get promotional products in your clients' hands and get sales!"

Promotional products help boost your brand without question. In fact, they take on a life of their own when used appropriately. The top promotional products are usually inexpensive, portable, and effective. The best part about using promotional items is that they do a phenomenal job of acting as a functional business card for your company, and once they go viral you'll see results through ROI.

The most important thing to keep in mind about promotional products once you have them is to get them to the people that will bring you business. Get promotional products in your clients' hands and get sales!

Top 10 Promotional Products

Most Popular Promotional Products in the U.S.



The image above may surprise you or it may not. What promotional products did you think would be in the top 10? Which ones do you think could have been left off of the list?

We'll dive a little deeper into the top 10 promotional products and look at each product more in depth while identifying why each product can benefit your business.

Writing Instruments

Promotional writing instruments are among the most inexpensive, yet effective, promotional products on the market today.

Approximately 50% of consumers in the United States own logoed writing instruments. This is proof that promotional writing instruments work, but you have to get them into the hands of your consumers.

If half of American consumers use promotional writing instruments, shouldn't you be using them in your promotional products arsenal?

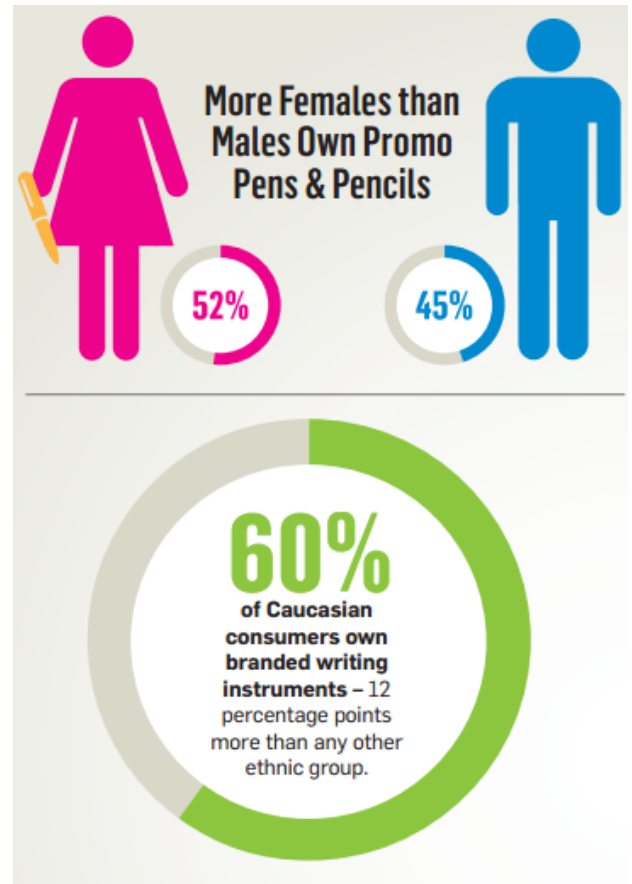


Promotional writing instruments are among the most inexpensive, yet effective, promotional products in the market today."

Choosing Writing Instruments

There are several different types of writing instruments to choose from, but choosing the right one can be difficult. Different demographics and buyer personas are more likely to own writing instruments versus other promotional products.

There are a few things you need to keep in mind when you are researching the right writing instruments. Look below for a few things to consider when choosing the right writing instruments for your business.



Considerations for Writing Instruments

- ✓ Quality of the instruments
- ✓ Cost of the instruments
- ✓ What quantity do you want?
- ✓ Who will receive the instruments?
- ✓ How useful are the instruments?
- ✓ What demographic or buyer persona will be using your writing instrument?

Shirts & Apparel

Shirts are the second most popular promotional product behind writing instruments and for good reason. Every needs and loves a free shirt.

Promotional shirts, not unlike other promo items, are more effective towards certain buyer personas and demographics. Still, nearly half of everyone owns a promotional shirt, and they make the 5th most impressions among all promotional products.

Shirts are a great promotional tool; however, you need to be careful. Promotional shirts can get expensive if you aren't aware of where those costs come from.

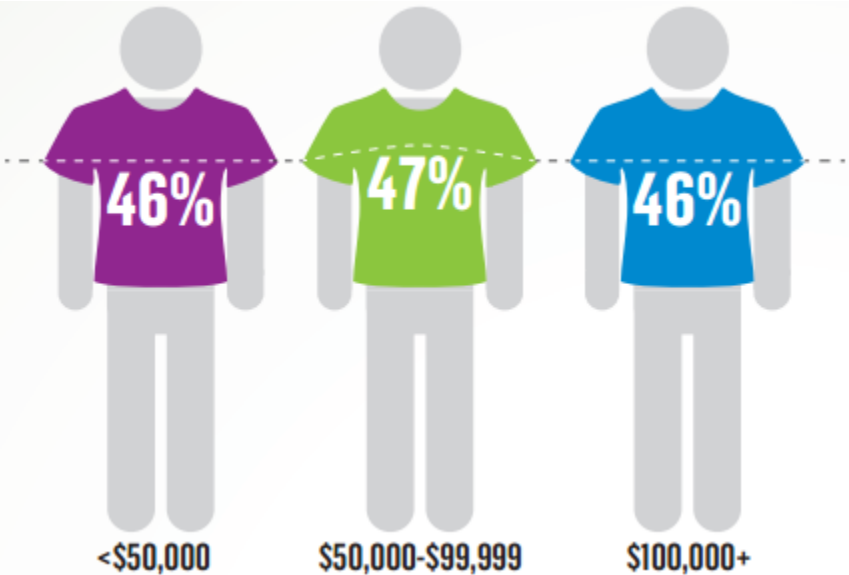
43%
of U.S.
consumers
own a
promotional
shirt.



Considerations for Shirts

Everyone Loves A Free T-Shirt!

Across all income levels, the percentage of consumers who own a promotional T-shirt remains about the same.



Yes, everyone loves a free shirt, but do your consumers *need* a shirt? If you decide that promotional shirts are the way to go for your business, look at the checklist below to make sure you're on the right track. Keep in mind that complexity in design costs more money and diffuses your ROI.

Questions to Consider for Promotional Shirts

- ✓ Who will wear them?
- ✓ Are they relevant to your business or campaign?
- ✓ How many do you need?
- ✓ What colors are best?
- ✓ How much are you willing to spend?
- ✓ Do you have a designer?
- ✓ What are you looking to accomplish by advertising with shirts?

Bags

In Chapter 1, we saw how effective bags are in making impressions with customers. Promotional bags are extremely useful to the recipient, have a long lifecycle, and are seen by more people in public places than any other promotional item.

Bags are typically inexpensive and can be used as effective giveaways. (Imagine filling your promotional bags full of other promo goodies and enhancing your impressions and reach!)

Keep in mind that bags make impressions, but is that the goal of your advertising campaign? Promotional items that make the fewest impressions are those that are intended for one person; however, bags are seen by *many* people therefore increasing their effectiveness in promoting your brand.



In the U.S., bags make more impressions than any other promo item.



A Few Takeaways for Bags

Nearly twice as many women own promotional tote bags as men, who prefer backpacks

52% of consumers feel more favorably about a business that gives them a promo bag. (52% is the average for all promo items.)

Promotional bags, on average, are kept for 6.3 months. (The average for all promo items is 5.8 months.)

Bags allow businesses to bundle several promo items together to make a greater impact on their target customers.

29%

of U.S.
consumers
own & use
promo bags.



Calendars

Calendars are a very useful promotional tool. People need to be organized and when looking at a calendar every day to update their agenda, they are always seeing your brand!

Desk and wall calendars are especially impactful because they are usually put in a conspicuous place by the recipient. Here are a few tips to buying promo calendars:



Tips for Purchasing Promotional Calendars

✓ Buy Early

Buy your promotional calendars for next year during the summer or early fall. Manufacturers often award early bird buyers with discounts and guaranteed delivery in time for you to use and distribute them.

✓ Consider Who Will Get Them

Who will receive your calendars? Are they executives, buyers, resellers, or office managers? Once you know who will get them, consider which type of calendar will benefit them the most.

✓ Get a Custom-Designed Calendar

A customized calendar with your own graphics and images highlighting your year and the year to come may generate more business from your clients.

Desk and Office Accessories

Desk and office accessories should be a staple in your promotional products arsenal for a number of reasons. They are inexpensive, they promote your brand, and they build momentum within your office. Although desk and office accessories are meant for the office office, you can be guaranteed that they will be used outside of it and will boost your brand image.

17% OF U.S. CONSUMERS OWN A LOGOED DESK ACCESSORY

Inspector Gadget

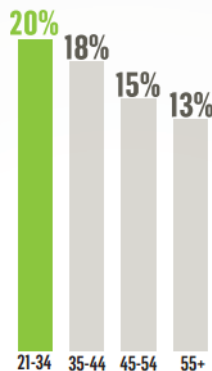
Women are more likely to own a promo desk accessory in their offices than men, by a margin of

20% to **14%**



Office Toys to the Young

Younger consumers are more likely to have a branded item on their desks.



Go Low

The lowest-income earners tend to be the most likely group by financial breakdown to own a logoed desk accessory.

22%
of consumers making less than \$50k per year own one.

What Desk and Office Accessories Are Right for Your Business?

Scratch Pads

These office essentials are great to have at meetings, the workplace, conferences, and more. Don't leave home without them. They're inexpensive and have the propensity to generate real sales and boost your brand!



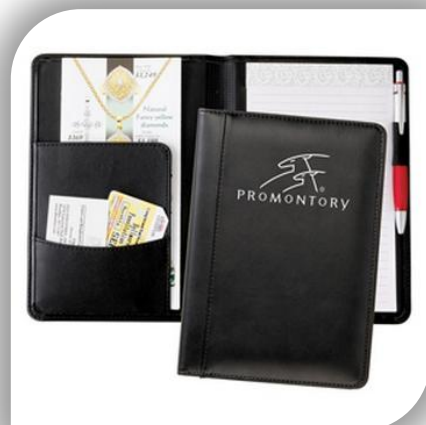
Mouse Pads

Prominent, affordable, and useful. Mouse pads are perfect to package together with other desk and office accessories as gifts or giveaways to clients, customers, or employees. Get people in your office on board with mouse pads.



Portfolios & Journals

Make sure your staff and clients have the gear they need for their next big meeting. Portfolios and journals are moderately priced, make great gifts and awards, and allows your brand "to go places."



Caps and Headwear

Caps and headwear find themselves further down on the list of popular promotional products; however, we must not forget their usefulness in advertising. Promotional headwear, as we have already seen, makes impressions among customers in the United States. According to ASI, promotional caps and headwear make the second most impressions of all promotional products in this country.



Takeaways for Promotional Headwear

✓ Headwear is Inexpensive

Embroidered promotional headwear can cost as little as \$8.00-\$10.00 per unit, and can typically be ordered in smaller quantities. This is a small price to pay per impression.

✓ Headwear Fosters Positive Feelings

56% of promotional headwear recipients feel favorably towards the advertiser; however, this is only 4 percentage points above the average of 52%. Shirts and outerwear outpace headwear in positive feelings

✓ Limited Staying Power

Although headwear makes impressions, they often are not kept as long as other promotional items. Headwear is kept by the recipient for an average of 5.6 months. The average is 5.8 months, and headwear ranks 9th out of 11 categories.

Drinkware

Drinkware, specifically logoed coffee mugs, are a popular promotional item for the office. Don't limit yourself to simply coffee mugs. Consider tumblers, laser etched glassware, and shot glasses to give away to clients as gifts or to simply say "thank you".

Glassware is a great way to tell your customers how much you appreciate your business at the end of the year. Your clients can use glassware, and it is an elegant alternative to common gifts.

Best of all, promotional drinkware is the third best kept promotional item of all. On average, promotional drinkware is kept for 7.1 months by the recipient. Staying power is king when it comes to selecting the right promotional items, and drinkware does the trick!



Drinkware at a Glance



Tumblers

Great gifts across the board. Especially if you have clients in warm climates. Inexpensive and effective, people always love having something to keep their drinks cold (or hot)! Keep these in mind for special events.

Travel Mugs

Useful at home and on the road. You can't go wrong giving away promotional travel mugs. Most likely, they'll go everywhere with your client. From the house to the office and beyond, your brand will get seen!



Sport Bottles

Are you in the business of keeping people healthy or are you genuinely concerned about your customers' wellbeing? Sport bottles are popular, always in demand, and never go out of style.

USB Drives and Flash Drives

USB drives and flash drives may be one of the best promotional items to give away at conferences or industry trade shows.

In a day where computers have become commonplace for our daily work lives, a flash drive may be exactly what your company needs to get recognized by your consumers or clients. If you are in the technology industry or serve a tech-savvy consumer, USB drives are a no-brainer for giveaways and promotions.

USB drives are reasonably inexpensive, have decent staying power with consumers, and promote your brand elegantly. Overall, the prices of flash drives remain constant throughout the industry, and most USBs perform equally the same.



USB drives are reasonably inexpensive, have decent staying power with consumers, and promote your brand elegantly.



Tips for Choosing Flash Drives

- ✓ **Know your budget.** Flash drives typically cost between \$7 and \$10 per unit. If that doesn't fit your price range, consider more economical promo items.
- ✓ **Understand the market.** Flash drives are a silicon valley product. As such, they are subject to fluctuation in prices of precious metals and the volatility of the computer memory industry.
- ✓ **Choose your capacity.** USB drives vary in capacity from 512 KB upwards of 8 GB or more. Understand you get what you pay for. More memory = more money!
- ✓ **Be brand aware.** If you want your brand or logo displayed in Times Square, USB drives probably aren't right for you. If you want to get your brand into hands, go for it!



Health & Safety Products

If you're in health, pharmaceutical, or medical fields, health & safety products can get your brand into consumers' hands. The list of these promotional items is long. Anything from pill bottles, hand sanitizer, and wipes to first aid kits and bandages are fair game. Use your imagination for this broad category of swag. Below are some tidbits to keep in mind.



Takeaways for Health and Safety Products

- ✓ 10% of women and 6% of men own health and safety promotional items
- ✓ 8% of all consumers in the U.S. own health and safety products
- ✓ African Americans own the most logoed health and safety products of all ethnic groups, 10%
- ✓ 55% of recipients of these products feel favorably towards their advertiser
- ✓ Health and safety products have the 2nd lowest staying power of the top 10. These items are only kept, on average, for 5.2 months.
- ✓ 45-54 year old consumers are the most likely age group to own health and safety products.
- ✓ Bonus Fact: Dallas and Montreal are the most likely cities to own health and promotional products at 11%!

Final Considerations



We've taken an in depth look at why you should use promotional products and what promotional items are popular in the market today.

Let's finish off by looking at some usability statistics and way to make promotional products an *effective* advertising tool for your business.

Demographic Factors

As with any product or service in any industry, you must remember who the end user of your promotional items will be. Think about your customer buyer personas. Who are the people you are selling to? What do they look like? What do they do for fun and recreation? What are their political views? These are all things to keep in mind when you are selecting promotional products. What works on some customers may not work, or may not work as effectively, as others.

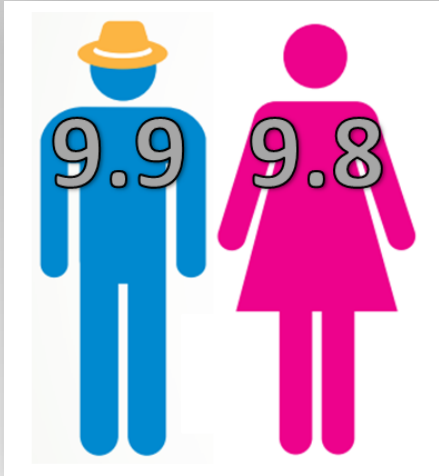
Demographics have more to do with promotional products than you probably realize. In fact, using the wrong promotional products can erase the products' overall effectiveness, reach, and cost you money.

Below is a snapshot of things to keep in mind when purchasing promotional items for your business.

Demographic Considerations for Promos

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| ✓ Gender | ✓ Country |
| ✓ Age | ✓ Political Views |
| ✓ Ethnicity | ✓ City |

Demographics at a Glance

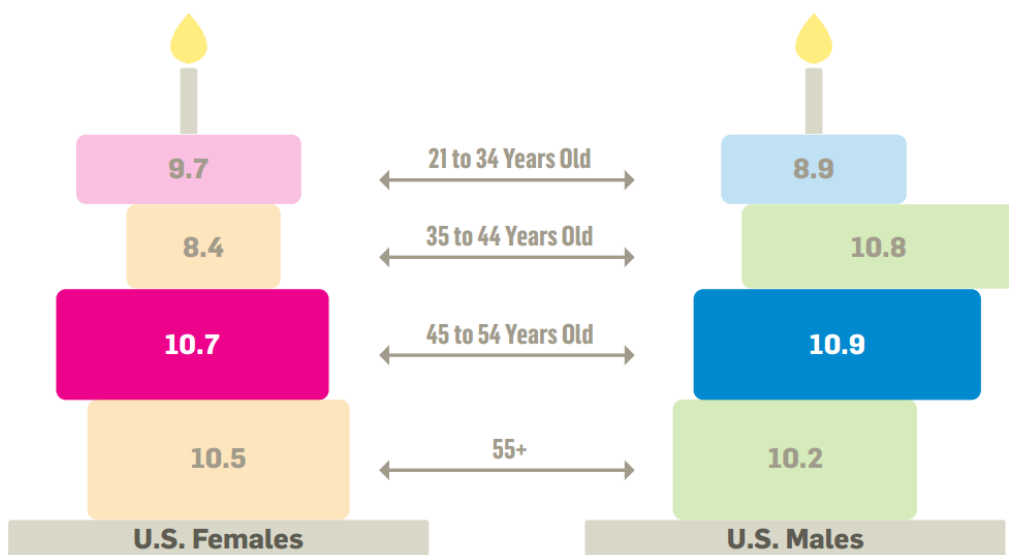


Gender

American **males** own **more promo products** than any other group surveyed by ASI. On average, an American male owns 9.9 promotional items, while American females own 9.8 promos.

Age

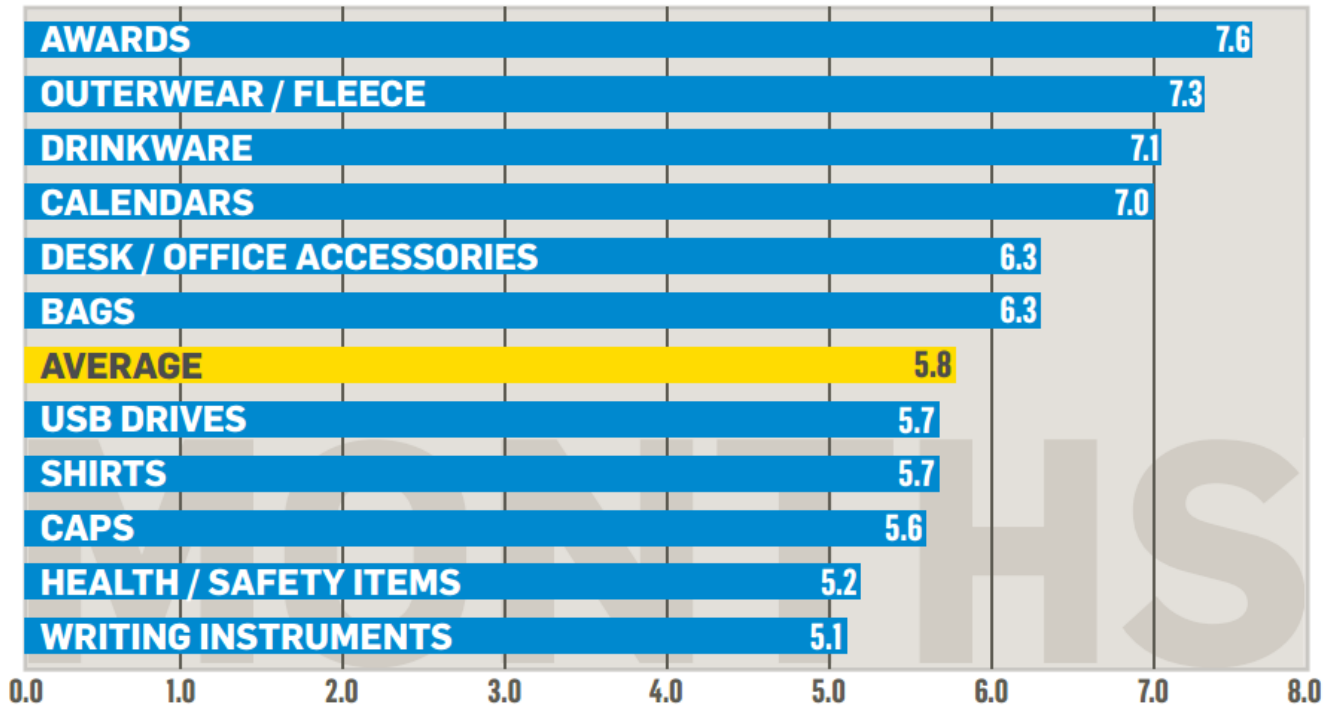
Those aged **45-54** own the most promotional products among both **male and females**. Females aged 55 and over and older males are also highly likely to own promo products.



Those aged **45-54** own the greatest number of promo items.

Staying Power

Number of Months Promotional Items are Kept



On average, respondents have an item for 5.8 months. Awards are typically held the longest at 7.6 months, while writing instruments are the shortest at 5.1 months.

Most promotional items have a longer lifespan than other forms of advertising and make just as many, if not more, impressions. Look at the graph above. Use this as a guide to select products that will (a) live for a long time and (b) will be seen. These two factors combine to create impressions.

Usefulness

As you shop around for promotional products, look for those that have a use for the end user. Usefulness is quite possibly the most important factor that a promotional product recipient will weigh when deciding to keep the item or not.

The more useful the item, the more likely it is to stay out of the trash.



81%

of recipients indicated that an item's usefulness is the primary reason to keep it.

Conclusion

No matter what line of business you're in or who your target market is, promotional products are right for you. Just keep in mind who you are trying to reach, the usefulness of promotional products, and the budget you are willing devote to these advertising specialties.

The most important takeaway for promotional products is that they last, they work, and they will make impressions. Be selective with your choices of swag to make sure that you are choosing the appropriate ones to promote your business. If you're looking to get your brand or name out there, consider less impressionable promos that can be purchased in large quantities. On the other hand if you need to make a long term impression, consider apparel, bags, and drinkware.

