

IDEAS TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

by Lee Howard

"It is fatal to enter any war without the will to win."

This quote from General Douglas MacArthur can be paraphrased and applied to the mail order business. "It is fatal to start any business without the will to succeed." Just as soldiers do not enter into battle unprepared, you must prepare yourself to start a mail order business. Read and study books and articles by successful mail order business owners. Take time to learn what goes on behind the scenes. Here are some ideas to help you prepare for success in mail order.

Keep Your Costs Low

Don't rush out to rent expensive office space. That spare bedroom or basement will do. When your business becomes profitable you can move out and up. Every time you think that you need something NEW, think again. Do you really need it NOW, or is it something you will need in the future?

Find the Right Suppliers.

Take the time to locate suppliers that offer you a good profit margin. Retail stores can operate profitably on a 40% profit margin—mail order businesses can't. The advantage of selling by mail is that your rent, phone, etc. costs are low, but you will have to spend money on advertising and sales literature. Look for suppliers who have been in business for several years and who offer quality products at affordable prices.

Purchase Quality Sales Literature.

Your sales literature must be neat, sharp and clear. Some products need to be illustrated so that the customer can see what he is getting, but if you are selling books, illustrations are not needed. Start with individual circulars or simple brochures.

Use Post Cards

Using post cards is inexpensive and great for making inquiries. Post cards can also be used for acknowledging orders if the shipments may be delayed.

The above ideas help you plan your sales effort in your mail order business. Your planning efforts will prepare you for success.

This article was prepared by Lee Howard, nationally known mail order consultant. He prepares advertising, sales literature and Initial Market Surveys for mail order sellers. He may be reached at Box 1140, Clearwater, FL 34617.