



bpma

british promotional  
merchandise association

YOUR GUIDE TO BUYING

# PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE

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## WHY MERCHANDISE?

Promotional merchandise is the perfect way to convey your brand or message in a long lasting, memorable way.

As one of the oldest forms of advertising, promotional merchandise plays an integral part in marketing communications - helping put your brand front and centre in your customer's mind. From the latest eco bottle to a hand finished notebook for a meet and greet to remember, promotional merchandise conveys your brand straight into their hands.

Buying branded items for your campaigns is a simple process and in this short guide, we take you some of the steps to follow for brilliant buying results.

## BUY FROM A BPMA MEMBER

Every BPMA member is accredited and verified by the British Promotional Merchandise Association. If you would like more advice on effective buying, please contact us on +44 (0) 1372 371184 or email [enquiries@bpma.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bpma.co.uk)

# YOUR GUIDE TO BUYING PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE

## PLANNING AHEAD: BUILDING YOUR TIMELINE

Time is often a luxury when we are considering how to execute communications across a range of media and channels. When factoring promotional merchandise into the mix, it's important to consider the key timing milestones to achieve your branded presence from the simplest printed items to more complex bespoke orders.

**Did you know branded premiums and merchandise prompt up to +96% propensity to purchase?**

There are several key questions to be answered which will help everyone from experienced buyers to those placing their first order off to a great start.

- 1** When do you need your items?  
Using the date you due to activate your next campaign or marketing communications, use this date to work backwards to allow enough time to order goods
- 2** Have you selected an expert promotional merchandise company to work with?  
Most businesses will select from 3 companies, asking them to quote or pitch for the business, dependent on your buying and procurement procedures
- 3** Are there any special considerations to take into account from the start? E.g., deadlines, activation taking place in a different country, packing requirements. Think of all the areas you may need to factor in first before you brief.

# YOUR GUIDE TO BUYING PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE

## Briefing

Providing a brilliant brief will not only ensure you get the right products for your campaign or project, you'll also provide your merchandise expert more insight into:

- Why you're looking for certain goods or items
- What type of product you are searching for or if you need ideas
- What behaviour you want to change in your target audience

## Leadtimes

Understanding how much time you have to produce an item in line with your needs is essential. Dependent on the type of goods you are looking for, you'll be advised on leadtimes and your promotional merchandise professional will always be happy to let you know how long production takes.

Most leadtimes will be quoted from the point of approved artwork and proof sign off, not the order date.

## Budgets

Whether you have a fixed budget or need a quote to determine what is possible within your overall budget, indicate where you can the budget you have available to ensure the merchandise estimates you receive meet your expectations.

Most estimates and quotes will be provided to you showing the cost of goods, any artwork or origination charges and of course deliveries.

It's important to note the UK is no longer part of the EU and deliveries to and from Europe will attract carrier and customs charges unless otherwise advised.

# YOUR GUIDE TO BUYING PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE

## CONSTRUCTING YOUR BRIEF: KEY QUESTIONS

Use these points to create your perfect brief

- What is the purpose of the promotional product? What job do you need this item to do? e.g. change behaviour, create awareness
- Who will receive the item you're going to produce? Paint a picture of the ideal target market.
- Is there a strong call to action? What do you want the recipient to do once they receive the promotional item? e.g. visit your website, book an appointment, just a reminder of your services
- Do you already know what product(s) you would like? Would you like some advice and ideas?
- Do you have artwork or designs ready? Do you need any help with creating the right type of artwork?
- Do you have specific Pantone references you need to use on your designs? Do you already know how many colours you need to print?
- Do you know how many items you need or do you need some advice on the final quantities?

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## CONSTRUCTING YOUR BRIEF: KEY QUESTIONS

Use these points to create your perfect brief

- Is the idea you have in mind best suited to a bespoke item? Lots of promotional products can be tailored to your needs or unique products created just for you.
- How do you want to present your items? Do you need packaging and should this be branded?
- Do you already have a set budget available for the items you need to order?
- When do you need the items? Work backwards from the date you need to send or hand out your products to estimate a date for delivery, allowing plenty of time.
- Do you know where the items need to go? e.g. to one UK address, multiple addresses or perhaps multiple deliveries in different markets?
- How many quotes do you need to secure before you proceed?
- A valid purchase order with agreed payment terms will be needed before you proceed; discuss with your merchandise provider what's needed to press 'go' on your order.

# YOUR GUIDE TO BUYING PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE **THE ORDER PROCESS**



Allowing enough time for your order is essential to avoid disappointments. Plan ahead and work with your merchandise expert to meet critical deadlines. These simple steps will ensure every order arrives as expected and on time.

1

Find your preferred merchandise provider and prepare your brief

2

Choose your product and sign off a sample

3

Finalise your order, leadtimes and quantities

4

Provide artwork files for production and proofing

5

Artwork proof and sales order are sent for review

6

Check and sign off proof to confirm your order

7

Products are produced and delivered

# YOUR GUIDE TO BUYING PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE

## BUILDING BRANDS

Our members have been helping thousands of brands and services through branded merchandise which works.

Are you ready to bring new effectiveness into your marketing campaigns?

## BPMA CHARTER MEMBERS

Our Charter members represent those companies who have attained and qualified for the highest industry standards, customer service and professionalism.

Find out more about our Charter members via [bpma.co.uk](http://bpma.co.uk)

## BUY FROM A BPMA MEMBER

With experts on hand to help you with your next campaign, find your promotional merchandise partner through the BPMA's Accredited member programme at [bpma.co.uk](http://bpma.co.uk)

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