



Promoting Your Business with Cartoon Maps

You've probably seen those cute, wacky maps of your city that feature caricatures and other illustrations. What you may not have considered is how this a low-cost, effective way to advertise your own business.

What's a Cartoon Map?

Cartoon maps can feature a small portion of a city, such as the downtown area, or they can illustrate a larger portion of the city. They're drawn by professional artists who have a particular knack for drawing caricatures.

Cartoon maps show real streets and real businesses in cartoon fashion. Some maps are a fun cartoon side on one side and a real city map on the other.

What Can a Cartoon Map Do For You?

Cartoon maps are generally printed once a year. Having your business on a cartoon map gives your company exposure for at least that year they'll be distributed.

Many companies hang their cartoon map on the wall to show off their own business. Guess what? Your business is on there too so people visiting that company will be able to see you on there too.

For cartoon maps that are also distributed as helpful city maps, you get the benefit of not just having one side being a novelty. The real city map side is actually helpful info that the person will use over and over.

Going In With Other Businesses

If your city doesn't seem to have a cartoon map, you can approach other businesses in your area to get the owners interested in featuring their company. For you and for them, once you find a printer and an artist who specializes in cartoon maps, all you have to do is tell the artist about your business (showing a picture of the building and giving them a brief summary of what your company does is even better) and they take care of the rest.

You don't have to come up with catchy ad copy or hire anyone outside of the artist and printer. There's minimal work involved for you at all.

Most printing companies won't require one check to cover the cost. In other words, you won't have to go around to each business and get the money. The printer will handle all of the money issues so you're

not peddling from door-to-door to get the other business owners who've agreed to be on the cartoon map to pay up.

Finding Printers and Artists

You can use the Internet to search for a company that specializes in cartoon maps. Try to localize your search down to your area. Key words like "cartoon," "map" and your city's name can help with that search.

Or you can go as far as your yellow pages. Most phone books have a section called, "Advertising-Promotional Products and Services," or a similar title.

You probably won't be as lucky to find a company named, "Cartoon Maps." But calling the companies listed in this section is a good start for finding a cartoon map company.

So What's It Going To Cost You?

Many factors decide the cost. The city you live in. How many companies will be featured on the map. How many cartoon maps will be printed. The more advertisers, the less cost it will be to you.

Depending on where you live and the number of advertisers involved, you can pay between \$100 and \$500 to be featured on a cartoon map. The cost will definitely vary based on the factors mentioned above.

The printing company will generally charge a flat fee for having the artist illustrate your company on the map. However, if you are one of a handful of advertisers, you will all pay more simply for the cost of printing. If you're one of many advertisers, you will pay the fee for the artist but you can generally get a much better deal since a larger number of advertisers will knock that printing cost down since you'll technically be splitting it between all of you.

Distributing Your Cartoon Map

Before you sign up to be on a cartoon map, find out where the map will be distributed. If you're spearheading the cartoon map project among many businesses, find out if you're local city's chamber of commerce will agree to distribute the map once it's printed. This will be a much easier sell if you have a regular city map on the other side.

You won't be charging them for the maps. You'll be giving them the opportunity to distribute free city maps at their location. Your cartoon map just happens to be on the other side promoting many businesses.

Local restaurants and other businesses, including your own, are also great places for you to give away your maps. Be sure the other business owners who are featured on the maps know this is an invaluable way for them to distribute maps as well. Handing out stacks of maps to businesses for their customers to take with them gets your map out there and gets your business seen.

An alternative is to get a sponsor for the map. Many non-profit organizations are always looking for ways to raise money.

Non-profits are a fantastic way for you to get a big name on your cartoon map. You can offer them space for their logo on the map, even contact info.

They may also want to sell the map to raise money. You've paid for advertising your business as an illustration and they benefit from distributing the maps for you to raise money for their organization.