



**DEXTER  
LAUNDRY**

**Store Owner Success Series:  
Marketing Tips & Ideas**

# Planning a Store Grand Opening

**There is no better way to draw attention to a new or newly renovated store than a Grand Opening. For decades, businesses both large and small have held Grand Openings to draw in that precious initial customer base. Here are some basic ideas for coordinating a store grand opening.**

- **Pick a date:** While a Grand Opening usually lasts several weeks, choose one day or weekend in particular to hold major festivities. Advertise this "Grand Opening Weekend" in the newspaper, on billboards or with outdoor signage.

- **Chamber ribbon cutting:** Even if you are not a chamber member most chambers of commerce will do a free ribbon cutting for new or re-opened businesses in a community. There is usually no charge or a very nominal charge (\$25-50 dollars) and the chamber will bring out a group of community leaders, have your owner cut a ribbon with the big scissors and also, usually invite the media. Decorate the store for the event with some streamers, helium balloons, etc. and be sure to offer some free food like hot dogs or cheese and crackers.

- **Radio station remote:** Radio stations are always looking for places to broadcast live from for remotes and love to grand opening events. Have the radio station correspond to the primary ethnic group of the neighborhood the laundry is in (Hispanic, African American, etc.) and while the station usually brings some giveaways like concert tickets, you'll want to give away some items too like free wash certificates or little boxes of detergent.

- **Advertise Locally:** Shopper or free weekly paper advertisements: Local weekly papers are usually dirt cheap to advertise in and always have a great readership among your store owners customer target base. This is a great place to run ads for the grand opening, coupons for a free

wash or etc. to get potential customers to come test the store out. Have your store owner ask them about the cost of inserting flyers in with paper. Usually this is very, very inexpensive and some small papers will even do it for free if they are provided with the flyers. This is a great place to insert store coupons printed on neon colored paper.

- **News tip to local publications:** It doesn't usually take a complete press release to get media coverage---it can often be done with an e-mail. Look up your local publications online and find the contact us section. Most media will have an e-mail list of editors and reporters.

- **Plan ahead.** Despite the name, a Grand Opening should usually be held AFTER the laundry has been open for business for several weeks especially if the equipment is newly installed. Imagine the chaos of a store full of customers on that first day, only to discover that a drain line wasn't installed properly and an entire bank of washers goes down. A grand opening typically should be planned at least 60 to 90 days out, and AFTER the store is opened and functioning. This allows plenty of time to plan and complete tasks, not to mention work any kinks out of the laundry.

- **Decorate and hang signage to get attention:** Hang banners announcing the grand opening, decorate with streamers and balloons or add anything else that will get attention.

- **Advertise, advertise, advertise!** In addition to print ads, consider sending

out a direct mail piece announcing the upcoming opening and the pricing specials, or pass out fliers if mailings aren't in the budget. If there are other retail businesses nearby, ask to place fliers in their windows for increased publicity. Be sure to send a press release to the local papers announcing the Grand Opening specials.

- **Get the store ready ahead to make a good impression.** Most importantly, make sure that the store is clean and in working order well ahead of time. Remember the store will host a larger crowd than normal during a Grand Opening, so don't waste all of those first impressions with floors covered in cement dust or grimy windows.

- **Be well staffed.** Schedule all of the attendants for that weekend, even if huge crowds are not expected. Instruct them to personally greet each customer and welcome him or her to the party.

- **Have plenty of giveaways.** Giveaways are a must at any Grand Opening. Hold a cookout with free hot dogs and soda. Hand out helium balloons to the kids or trinket items emblazoned with the store's name. Hold a raffle or hand out prizes to customers who fill out a card with their name and address. Use the cards to develop a preliminary mailing list for future direct mail or coupon campaigns and to track the customer base.

- **Plan some pricing specials.** Pricing specials are far and away the most

popular and effective way to draw in customers. Offer an incentive, but resist the temptation to get too generous with the pricing. If the store gives its services away, it may only draw in customers who have no intention of visiting the store after the special. It also may cost more in utilities than the store can afford to lose at this stage of the business. Offering a discount on washing or drying for a set amount of time is an excellent idea, but stick to the time allotted. Remember that the idea is to draw in customers who will come back after having a pleasant experience in the store. If the regular pricing is fair for the services offered, there is no need to be afraid to end the Grand Opening pricing specials.

• **Planning a grand re-opening.**

Even if you've purchased an existing laundry, there is still no reason to avoid a Grand Reopening, especially if there are improvements to the store. Installing more or larger equipment, adding drop-off services or even sprucing up a drab interior are all reasons for the existing customer base to leave a competitor's laundry for a new one. Let them know about the improvements by advertising a "Grand Reopening." Use many of the same promotions as a brand-new store, simply emphasizing the "all-new" look and feel of the laundry. Concentrate the advertising on those changes. Something as simple as hanging a banner in the window stating "Brand-New Equipment" will catch the eye of that former customer who lost his/her last dollar in one of the old toploaders. If the previous ownership was lacking in customer service, advertise the store as "Under New Management" and focus on attendant/customer relations during (and after) the Grand Opening.



# Successful Laundromat Promotional Ideas

Marketing your laundry is important to its success. While there are many tried and effective marketing ideas that have been used by laundromat owners, here are a few successful promotions. For more ideas on ways you can better your commercial laundry, consult your Dexter Authorized Distributor.

## Time of Day or Day of Week Promotions

Every laundry has slow times and every laundry owner would like to improve business during these periods. To help drive business during your slowest periods, consider offering promotions during a certain time of day (such as "happy hour") or certain day of the week (such as "Seniors Day"). By adjusting your pricing slightly during these periods and promoting this special time, you're likely to drive in increased business! For extra flare, consider social events such as a "Single Night" or "College Day" and promote the event. Decorate your store accordingly and consider offering snacks and drinks.

Be sure to advertise the special days and nights and then call the local media to let them know what the store is doing. Ask your Dexter Authorized Distributor how you can use Dexter Laundry Equipment and Easy Card to make these promotions a success!

## Grand Opening or Ribbon Cutting

There is no better way to draw attention to a new or newly renovated store than a Grand Opening. For decades, businesses both large and small have held Grand Openings to draw in that precious initial customer base. Whether you do it on your own, or partner with a local civic or chamber organization, a Grand

Opening can be a great way to tell the neighborhood that you're "Open". For more tips on hosting a grand opening, click here.

## Laundromat Signage

Outdoor advertising, including the signs on the storefront, billboards and handbills, continues to be a popular and relatively inexpensive way to tell people where the store is located and what services are offered. Make sure your store has adequate signage on the front of the business and that it can be read and recognized from the street.

## Coupons

Consider offering "Free Wash" or other



coupons to customers. These are a great way to get new customers to try your laundry for the first time, or to entice former customers to come back and try your service again. Only a portion of the coupons will be redeemed and you will generate some great attention and exposure for your laundry.

### **Conduct a Survey**

Find out what your customers like, dislike, would like to see in the future. Are they willing to spend a little more for an extra hot wash? Drop-off service? Dry-cleaning? A snack bar? Ask your customers what they would like to see at your business. This can be a great way to make sure you're meeting your customer needs and give you ideas on what other revenue sources might be successful.

### **Punch Cards**

Give customers a way to stretch their budgets by offering a discount "punch card." Customers receive a card from the attendant that is punched every time they use a washer. After a set amount of washes, the customer receives a free wash. This is a great way to encourage customer loyalty and keep them coming back to your business. Ask your Dexter Authorized Distributor how you can offer customer loyalty bonuses with Dexter's Easy Card system.

### **Remembering Existing Customers**

Consider sending a mailer to your regular customer list at least once a month. This is a "preferred customer mailing" to only the most loyal customers, offering a free wash or dry or something free once a month. It is another way to keep customers happy and coming back and to remind them about your business.

### **Sports Sponsorships and Promotions**

If there is one in your area, consider partnering with a local college, little league, professional, or minor league sports team. This is a great way to generate publicity and word of mouth

from sports fans, and to generate additional income for your drop off laundry service. These fans will appreciate your contribution to the community, and also become more aware of your business and the services you offer.

Another way to promote the laundry is to sponsor a Little League baseball team in the spring or an adult softball team. How about sponsoring a bowling team in the fall? It's a donation to a popular community function (and a potential tax write-off) and every time a member of the team wears his/her jersey out in public, it's free advertising for the laundry.

Whatever partnerships you choose, be sure to promote it to your local media, include it in your advertising and have lots of photos (and news articles if you get them!) on display in your store.

### **Getting Publicity**

Unlike advertising, public relations does not involve payment for positive exposure. It is generally free. Examples of positive public relations activities are the various worthwhile fundraising drives conducted by churches and charities. For instance, by participating in a Red Cross Blood Drive and getting a mention or two in the local newspaper, your laundromat will appear to be community conscious and the free publicity will remind potential customers

where your store is located.

You may also want to consider sponsoring a charity activity for your customers like promoting "Toys For Tots" or "Coats For Kids" through your laundromat. Other ideas you may want to try include inviting the high school home economics class to use the store as a lab for a day, or wash flags free for the community's 4th of July celebrations. Consider offering your store as the site for a charitable auction or social gathering, or consider donating all the abandoned clothes collected at the store to the homeless. (Be sure to check out local law before disposing of any unclaimed items.) Offer to clean firefighters' or police officers' uniforms at no charge. Be sure to constantly be on the lookout to tie into a local community event that already is getting media coverage in your area.

Successful promotions do not require elaborate programs or expensively produced pieces. What they do require is a simple, straightforward approach to promoting business. Strive to develop promotions that show customer appreciation while at the same time reminding customers of the quality of the services they receive. For more information on ways to promote your laundromat, consult with your Dexter Authorized Distributor.



# 5 Easy Tips for Marketing Your Laundromat on a Budget

**Looking for big marketing results for your laundromat for little money? Here are a few marketing ideas for commercial laundry owners looking to market their business on a budget. For more ideas on ways you can better promote your laundry business, consult your Dexter Authorized Distributor.**

**1. Purchase unused advertising space at deep discounts.** Did you know that many newspapers and radio stations sell their unsold advertising space for deep discounts to last minute advertisers? Commonly known at radio stations' as "Run of Station" and newspapers as "Run of Paper", this means that the station or paper runs your ad whenever they have open space or time. On radio, that might mean very early in the morning or late at night. For newspapers, it might mean you don't get to choose when your ad runs or the placement. When the publication is at deadline, rather than filling an empty space with filler copy, they can place your ad there for a bargain price. Also, look for identical ads appearing twice in a publication. Sometimes a magazine or newspaper will run an ad in a second spot for free if there's an empty space at press time. Talk to your advertising representatives and see what discounts they can offer for when one of those empty spaces comes open. You might be able to save up to 50% or more by taking advantage of these last minute opportunities.

**2. Everyone does laundry, so give everyone your business card.** Be sure to keep your business cards everywhere so you're ready to hand them out anytime. Keep your cards in your wallet, organizer, briefcase, your car, your spouses' car, in the office, home office, and by the front door. Hand them out generously. Stick them in your

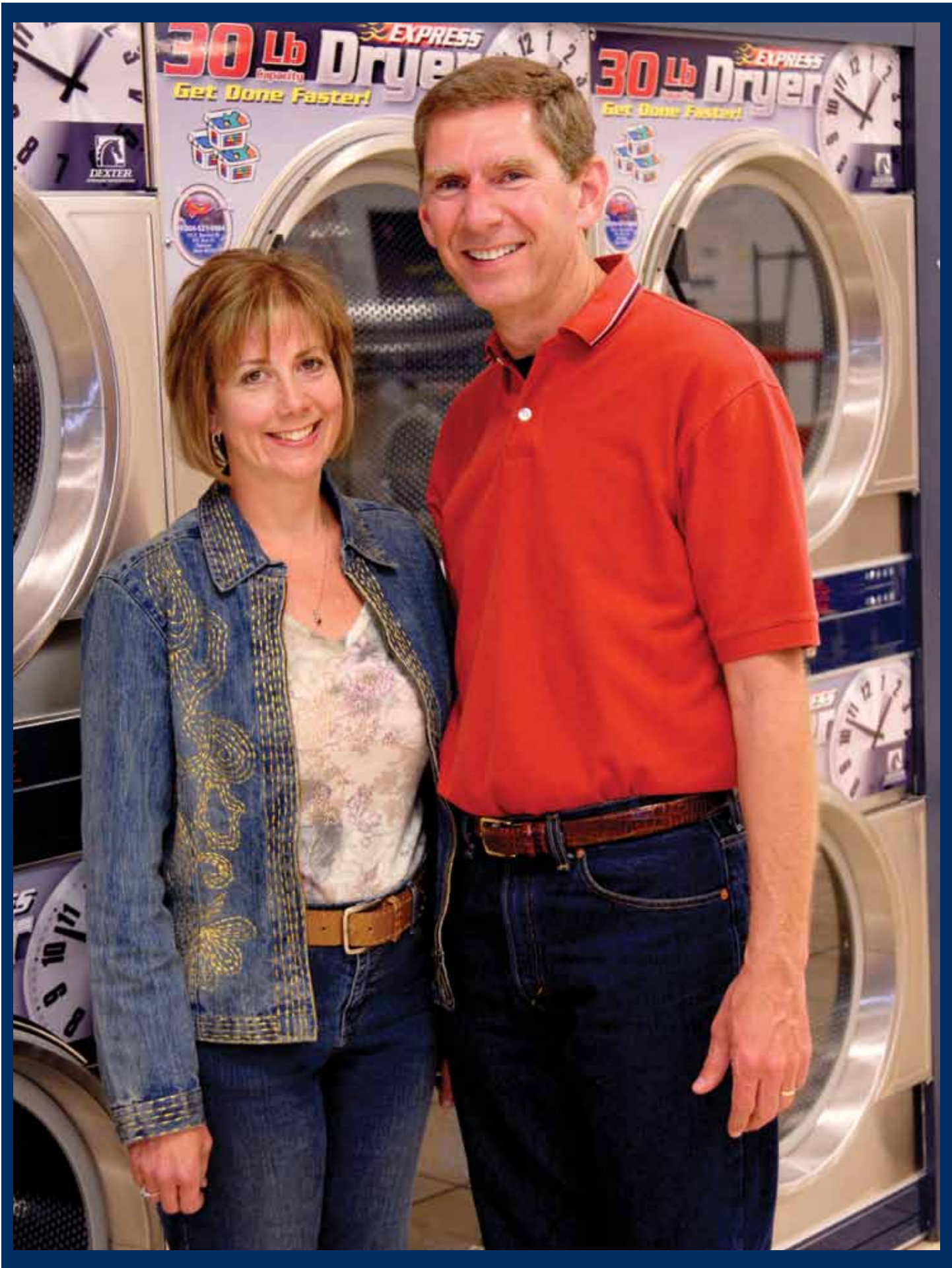
paid bills, give them to waitresses, taxi drivers, etc. Post your business card wherever you go...grocery store bulletin boards, apartment buildings, college campus boards, etc. You can even stick them on peoples windshields. For best results put your contact information on one side of the card and a mini-advertisement or coupon for your laundromat on the other side. You never know what kind of opportunities might come of it!

**3. Advertise through your voice mail message.** Make your phone message or voice mail says something about your commercial laundry business and the services you provide. When people call your laundromat during closed hours or busy times, this may be your only opportunity to tell them about your products or services. Take advantage of this chance to tell them about your business.

**4. Non-traditional advertising can yield extra ordinary results.** Don't limit your advertising to newspaper, yellow pages, TV and radio, especially when you're on a budget. It takes a little bit of time, but be sure to check for some of the overlooked (and not to mention) cheaply priced bargain advertising opportunities in your area. Consider advertising in church, college and high school newspapers and yearbooks, online classified ad websites such as Craigs List, local entertainment and tourist magazines, bulletin boards

and more. Also, if you're a member of your chamber of commerce or other association, be sure to check out what advertising opportunities and/or mailing lists are available. Many of these opportunities are available for free or for a very small charge.

**5. Grow your business by giving back.** Did you know that giving to your favorite charity can also be a great way to grow your business? Consider asking non-profit organizations and clubs in your area to advertise for your laundromat in exchange for raising money for them. In exchange, you could donate to the non-profit organization by giving them a cut of the business they bring into your store(s). For example, if they encourage individuals to come into your laundry on a particular day, you could donate 20% of your sales that day to their cause. They could then advertise to their members and to the community to get prospects into your store that day, which will increase their chances to get more money---which means more business for your laundry and a tax write-off! Ask your Dexter Authorized Distributor about how Dexter's Easy Card System can help you create custom promotions including those for charitable organizations.



# Give Them a Sign! Six Ways to Promote Laundromats Using Signage

**Signs are so widespread we hardly notice them. That is until we're looking for one and then we only note that in passing. We don't realize their effect on us, which is one reason why they're so effective.**

However, it is precisely because signs are so commonplace that many laundromat and washateria owners take them for granted. Obviously, most laundry owners know they need a sign but they think of them as merely as something to identify their business. Yes, a sign can tell your customers who you are and what you do --- but it can also market your business!

When planning signage for your laundry, be sure to keep in mind that signs can not only identify your business, and mark its location, and convey the right image of your company. Signs should also communicate what you are selling, attract new customers and help you create and build impulse sales.

**Here are six ways to use signage to help market your commercial laundry business.**

**1 Brand your business around your sign.** When your laundromat is the first one that comes to mind for customers when they need your services, you have achieved what is called "top-of-mind awareness." Top-of-mind awareness is built and reinforced through repetition.

Did you know that 85% of your customers live or work within a five-mile radius of your business? When driving to and from work, school and shopping, they pass your location some 50 to 60 times a month. Your sign should be designed so that it commands their attention every time they pass.

That's how signs help build top-of-mind awareness and brand your business. To further this effort, make sure your sign is included as part of your overall marketing strategy. For example, one marketing

savvy commercial laundry owner always includes in its radio ads its address, followed by the phrase "under the big blue Coin Laundry sign." When people see the big blue Coin Laundry sign they remember the commercial. You'll also want to make sure your other marketing materials including the name of your business, your logo, company colors, catch phrase, etc., should be consistent on your sign, your letterhead, business cards and print ads. All these coordinated efforts build recall and recognition and help brand your business in the mind of the consumer.

**2 Use other signs to direct towards your laundry.** Take a look at marketing signage opportunities in addition to your regular street signage. Is there any place outside your business location that you can do advertising? Can you get affordable signage down the street? While billboards in metro areas like Los Angeles are



typically out of the question for small businesses, there are opportunities to advertise on bus benches, phone booths, shopping carts, car washes, and neighboring buildings. Get out in your local community and take notes on the places you find are displaying small business advertising. Use this signage to continue to build the brand of your laundry – not to mention drive more customers to your business!

**3 Put signs at customer level with sidewalk signage.** While you will need to check ahead of time with your landlord and local ordinances to see if they are allowed, sandwich boards and other types of sidewalk signs can be a bright colorful way to draw attention to your business and to promote any specials such as ½ Price Senior Day, 20% off Fluff and Fold or other promotions. There are many different formats and styles available. Look for the style that works for your laundry and gives you the best ability to market your business.

Another method is to put up signs in like those real estate agents use for open houses, on the sidewalk or road in front of your business. You could also place them on street corners around your block to direct people to your business. Just make sure to get permission from your landlord or neighboring business owners before putting them up.

**4 Use your car or delivery vehicle to advertise your business.** Did you know that you can promote your laundromat wherever you park your car or drive around town? Consider posting banners on your vehicle and park it in a conspicuous location or put magnetic signs on your car doors. You could even create a message on cardboard big enough for your windshield and use the sign as a sunshade. When marketing with your vehicle keep your message big, bold and brief so that

drivers will look up and have time to read your banner.

It is a bit more costly, but some laundry owners have also had their vehicles painted or “wrapped” with promotional ads for their laundries, turning the car or van into a permanent moving billboard. This is a great way to get regular ongoing promotion for your business and may even make your vehicle tax deductible as marketing expense---talk to your tax adviser for more details.

**5 Put up YES signs.** To help promote your business internally and to grow your customer loyalty and satisfaction consider turning normally negative standard business signs like “No Refund or Exchange,” or “No checks accepted,” into more positive signs that say “Yes, we do take checks. Yes, refunds are given within 90 days of purchase. Yes, your satisfaction is guaranteed.” It will make a

big difference in how your customers view your laundry!

**6 Promote your business with internal signage.** Be sure to market your ancillary services to customers while they are in your store doing their laundry. Have signage that promotes your extra services such as Wash/Dry/Fold, tanning, vending, commercial accounts, etc. The hard work of marketing is already done (since they’re already in your business) now tell these customers what else you can offer them.

Finally, don’t be afraid to make an investment in quality signage. Chances are you’ll see returns many times your investment. One business owner who invested \$3,000 in a well designed, colorful pole sign discovered that in the first year that the new sign produced a 15% increase in their business, translating into additional profits that equaled several times the cost of the sign!



# Direct Mail Marketing

Here are some useful tips to improve your direct mail marketing.

- Direct mail advertising is used successfully by many in the laundry industry and it ranks right up there with Yellow Pages, trade magazines and flyers as a successful resource for laundry owners.
- Direct mail is selective and makes it easy to target the individual market or area that you want to promote to. You can control the promotion, the quantity mailed, dates, etc. and adjust them as needed.
- For best results include a "call to action" that encourages customers to call today. Offer a special promotion or a free wash for one load of laundry to give them a reason to come in.
- Consider postcards instead of normal business envelopes. Many consumers will not even open an envelope from a business they do not recognize considering it "junk". To get past the trash and force customers to look at your images and

message, consider using postcards instead.

- If you do use normal business envelopes, consider addressing the envelopes by hand or use regular postage stamps instead of a meter. These personal touches can help dramatically improve response rate.
- Follow up. While a direct mail campaign may generate a 3 or 4% response rate by itself, by having your reps follow up with the prospects after the mailer goes out. Try to follow up on your mailers at least within 2 weeks of the drop date of the mailing.
- Wondering where to get mailing lists? There are lots of different sources available! Start internally with your customer database. Yes, these are folks that are already familiar with your business --- but you still need to keep your name in front of them on a regular basis. You can also purchase mailing lists from various providers from the internet or a local mailing list. When purchasing a list,

be sure to check the usage rights and see if you can only use the list one time or for an unlimited number of uses. Whenever possible be sure to get phone numbers, contact names and e-mail addresses. There is sometimes a small additional charge for these additional categories, but the extra information will help you better target and help make following up on your campaign much easier!

- Don't forget to make direct mail a component of your regular advertising and every event that you that you do. After all, how can your guests know to attend if you don't send them an invitation?
- If sending out your mailing through a mail house, ask them about ways you can save money on postage. The USPS has special postage rates in place for mail that meets certain criteria. Things such as barcodes, presorting, standardized addresses, and CASS certification. By merely allowing them to sort your list differently, or using a special postage indicia, you might be able to cut your postage costs by as much as 50%.
- Plan ahead. Whether you're doing it yourself, or using a local graphic designer, be sure to allow plenty of time for creating your piece including copywriting and graphic design. Don't expect production overnight, and instead allow several weeks in advance to get your mailer produced.
- Be sure to include all your contact information including address, phone number, web site, etc. This may seem over basic, but these important details are often forgotten and leave your customers without a way to contact you!



# How to Write a Press Release

Writing an attention-getting press release is essential to getting media coverage for your laundry. Here are some basic tips to consider:

- **Keep the press release short and**

**simple.** A long-winded press release has very little chance of being published. Keep the press release to one or two typewritten pages and word it as simply as possible.

- **Include a snappy headline, centered and underscored on the page.**

At the end of the release, type and center either "-0-" or "####" after the copy. That tells the editor that the press release has ended.

- **E-mail distribution is best. In this digital age, few publications will even consider a paper news release.**

Get e-mail addresses for your publication editors and send it digitally instead. You'll have much better results!

- **Write the most important facts about the events first.**

The five questions to answer early in the press release are: who, what, where, why and how. Make sure your contact name and number are included. For samples of press releases, view the "Current News" section of [www.dexterlaundry.com](http://www.dexterlaundry.com).

- **Make the press release interesting to the reader.**

Write the release with the widest appeal possible.

- **Check and recheck the press release for spelling and/or factual errors.**

The more professional it appears, the more likely the release will be published. If the press release requires major revisions to make it printable, it is unlikely to be used by the publication.

- **The press release must be current.**

The event should have just happened or is about to happen. Don't wait more than a couple of weeks to send out a wrap-up of the event ... the editor simply will choose to publish information on a more current event.

- **The press release should be about a special event or happening that will interest the public.**

Don't send the publication an opinion-oriented press release about a store being the best laundry in town. More appropriate press release topics include new hires, promotions, open house or service school announcement, and event follow up press releases with pictures and details of your event and including prize winners if applicable.

- **When writing a press release, list the most important facts of the story first and then less important information.**

That way, if the editor needs to shorten the release, the most important information is almost sure to be included in the article.

- **Always include an image!**

Whether it is a digital photo or merely a jpg file of your company logo, always make sure to include a graphic with your press release. This is free advertising for your business and helps your press release (and the related news articles it generates) more exposure. When sending a photograph, be sure to include a caption to accompany the release that identifies what the photo is of

and any individuals that might be shown in the picture. Whenever possible, be sure to include your company signage, or Dexter equipment in the photo for additional exposure!

- **Another important aspect of writing press releases is to write them on a regular basis.**

The more often a business sends a press release, the more likely one of them will be printed.

- **Don't become discouraged if the press release doesn't make the next issue.**

Because editorial content for publications is often prepared weeks and sometimes months in advance, it can often take a couple issues before your article will appear. This is why it is important to plan ahead --- especially when sending out press releases announcing upcoming events. These need to be sent out a minimum of 2-3 months in advance to guarantee they will run in time for your promotion.

Press releases and media exposure does take time and effort but can generate huge exposure for any business when done regularly. For more ideas and assistance on using press releases to promote your laundry and Dexter equipment, ask your Dexter Authorized Distributor.

# Print Advertising and Yellow Pages

Looking to make your print marketing more successful? Here are some useful tips for planning and preparing your print advertising and yellow pages.

- **Plan ahead.** Many print publications and yellow pages may require artwork weeks and occasionally months ahead of time. Be sure you inquire about due dates prior to committing to make sure you have enough time to prepare your materials. Yellow pages require even further advance planning, with renewals happening only annually and usually only having a very narrow window to update your artwork.

- **Yellow Pages are now more than just the phone book.** In this digital age, less people are using the yellow pages less and less themselves and are going online for phone numbers and product listings. Be sure to talk to your yellow pages provider about having your ad included online. Usually this is only a small additional charge (10% or less of your total yellow pages expense) but it can have VERY big results.

- **Pick a powerful image.** When it comes to print ads, readers spend 65% of their time concentrating on images—photos and illustrations, while the remaining 35% is spent browsing your text. In order to grab attention, make sure that you pick a powerful image that “jumps” off the page. Dexter does have professional product photography of all of our products available. For more information on how to get these, ask your Dexter Authorized Distributor. You can also download images of Dexter laundry equipment at [www.dexterlaundry.com/](http://www.dexterlaundry.com/) artwork.

- **Create an attention getting headline**

- **that is NOT your company name.**

While you know your company name and are proud of it, chances are that many potential customers in your area don't have the slightest idea who you are. This means, using your company name as a headline has absolutely no impact, since they don't know you, or what products you offer. Instead, pick a strong headline that promotes your products and services ---that's what the readers are really looking for. They'll learn your company name once they read your ad and give you a call.

- **Encourage readers to call or e-mail and include the info for them to do it!**

One of the most important concepts in advertising is called the “call to action” which basically means asking the reader to act now and contact you today. Many business owners just automatically assume someone will call, just because they ran an ad. That's not true! You need to give the readers a REASON to contact you. Point these potential customers in the right direction by including in your ad to “Call today for fluff and fold pricing.” Or perhaps—“Stop by today.” Customers are much more likely to pick up the phone or come in if they know where to begin. If you make it easy for them by including this call to action, they will get moving right away.

This point is especially important for new customers---people who may not have ever interacted with your business before. These new customers are especially vulnerable to indecision because they are

entering uncharted waters. That's why you need to tell them why and how to contact you.

And don't forget to include your phone number and/or e-mail in your ad. This may seem over obvious, but many business professionals can often forget this basic info. After all, how can your customers contact you if you don't give them the info on how to reach you??

- **Ask for the agency discount.**

When placing advertising, ask your rep if you can get what is called the “agency discount”. This is a standard 10% - 15% discount that is typically given only to advertising agencies, however more and more publications are giving this directly to the consumers who ask for them. The publication may say no, but it doesn't hurt to ask and it may save you money!

- **Negotiate placement.** Many rookie advertisers aren't aware, but usually you can negotiate for where your ad is placed. Sometimes premier placements (such as the back cover) have a small additional cost, other times all you have to do is ask. Whether it is placement of a full page ad in a magazine, or even just a small yellow pages ad's position on a page, ask your sales rep what premium placement options are available. Even if there is an additional charge, the increased results will usually pay off in the long run!

- **If you have to make cuts to your budget, cut color and not ads or size.**

While color ads are definitely more flashy,

they are also much more costly. If you're on a tight marketing budget, instead of cutting ad placements or size. Color ads typically do not increase results over black and white ads, so consider saving dollars by cutting the color.

• **People prefer pictures of people.** While Dexter laundry equipment is definitely some of the most attractive on the market, photos of the machines by themselves still appear static and even sometimes "boxy" when appearing by themselves. Marketing research has shown that people respond more to pictures of people. Consider including pictures of your laundry with your customers. You'll reward your customers for their loyalty and increase your ad results at the same time!

• **Negotiate volume discounts.** When running several ads with an individual publication during a calendar year, find out what discounts are available. Often, discounts are given to advertisers who advertise a certain number of times a year. This is a great way to get your name and info in front of customers on a regular basis and to save some dollars doing it.



# Marketing Your Laundromat to College Students

**Is your laundromat located close to a college or university? College students can be a loyal and very profitable customer base for many coin laundries. If you have a school in your area, here are just a few ideas on how to market your commercial laundry to students.**

Tour the dorm halls and slip coupons for your laundromat underneath the doors or place them on door handles.

Post flyers on bulletin boards around campus and the dorms. Be sure to hit the campus laundry rooms (if there are any).

Offer free wireless internet and promote it in your advertising for students who would like to do their homework while waiting for their laundry.

If you offer wash/dry/fold and have a delivery vehicle available, consider offering special rates for pick up and delivery at the various dorms and housing on campus. Be sure to promote it as an "exclusive" offer

for students of that university. Consider offering a special discount to university students to keep them coming in. Ask your Dexter Authorized Distributor how you can offer various discounts to students and other groups through Dexter's Easy Card System. With Easy Card, you could even sell pre-paid cards at the university bookstore for students and parents to purchase.

If you're close to campus, consider making the décor of your laundry tied to the university. Paint or decorate your laundry in university colors, and hang university sports posters, banners and memorabilia. If you sell laundry related items such as laundry boxes or bags, consider imprinting

them with the schools colors and/or logo (if you can get permission) as well as your own logo. These items can become very valuable among college students.

Offer special events to drive in business such as free food, live music, "Happy Hour", a "Single's Night" or more. Your Dexter Authorized Distributor can help you out with many ideas to help promote certain times of day, days of the week or more. Ask them for more details!

Drive students to your website by including helpful laundry how-to tips, as well as coupons. You can also post on line your promotions (such as free dry Fridays), your hours of operation and other



helpful details.

Tape flyers for your laundromat on the inside of bathroom stalls in dorms and other campus buildings.

See if you can partner with the local pizza parlor to put coupons for your laundry with the pizzas they deliver. You might even be able to work out a trade by allowing them to sell slices or whole pizzas at your laundry.

Advertise your laundromat in the college newspaper, sports programs and yearbooks. These are usually very affordable and have very high readership in your neighborhood.

Work with fraternity and sorority leadership to offer their members a special discount. Ask your Dexter Authorized Distributor for ideas.

Exhibit in the university union at the beginning of the semester or during the college's open house.

Partner with the university bookstore to distribute coupons inside their books at the register counter.

Check with the university's student union for advertising opportunities for your laundry.

Host "How to do laundry" seminars for students and offer a free wash for all who attend. It's a great way to get new customers in the door and to keep them coming back.

Check into sponsoring campus events. It's a great way to get your name in front of this valuable customer base.

Promote to new students: Some colleges prepare packets of information and

freebies for the incoming freshman class that include flyers from local businesses. See if your local university offers this, and if so consider offering flyers and or coupons to promote to this new incoming audience.

Do cooperative marketing with other businesses that attract students, such as copy shops, inexpensive restaurants (taquerias, sandwich shops), coffee houses, bars, night clubs, and video stores.

Offer vending, a snack bar or other concessions. College students love their caffeine and snacks. This is a great service to offer customers and helps your laundry make more profits with these ancillary sales!



Through the continued support and expertise of our Dexter Authorized Distributors, there are now thousands of Dexter Laundries worldwide. These successful store owners have shared some of their experience & success with us, so that we can give other laundromat owners some resources to use in your own laundries.

This guide is just one of several resources we've gathered to assist current and potential laundry owners in their pursuit of the commercial laundry industry.

For more information on running a successful laundromat, contact your Dexter Authorized Distributor. They are a valuable resource, assisting with the planning, purchase, installation and long term support of your laundry project and will be able to assist with all of your laundry needs



**DEXTER**  
**LAUNDRY**

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