



Chapter

# 15

## Beyond Media

So far just about everything described in the book has been applied to measured media. However, a big part of the marketing communication spectrum includes tools that are difficult to measure. They're even hard to define. So many of them blend together that you can't put them in nice neat categories.

### Sales Promotion

---

*Promotion* is one of the Four Ps of marketing. In its strictest definition, all marketing communication is a form of promotion. However, in this text we'll call it *sales promotion* and define it as an activity that stimulates purchases by adding a *short-term additional value* to a product or service. In other words, the advertiser is bribing you to buy something quickly. That bribe may be as basic as a discount or as lofty as a donation to a worthy charity. Too many students think of promotion as nothing more than a boring discount coupon, two-for-one sales, and free merchandise when you buy something. But when you explore all the facets of promotion, you'll understand why it's one of the hottest fields in marketing, and when marketers cut traditional advertising in tough times, their dollars often shift to sales promotions.

Most (but not all) sales promotions have specific short-term goals. They are designed to produce results quickly. Once the promotion is over, sales can slip, sometimes prompting an unending chain of new sales promotions.

In some professions, sales promotions are still rare—you probably won't see a plastic surgeon advertising a free tummy tuck with every nose job. However, the use of sales promotion is increasing, even in the service sector. Many marketers have seen diminishing returns from their traditional advertising efforts. Sales promotions, for both trade and consumer, give their sales that extra boost. This is especially common in the cutthroat world of package goods, where the only perceived differences between products are in their promotions. Traditionally, three fourths of the total marketing communication budget for package goods goes to trade and consumer promotion, while the rest goes to traditional advertising.<sup>1</sup>

Sales promotion is actually more of a product than an advertising medium. To be successful, promotions must be promoted, usually by traditional media, such as television, magazines, and newspapers, as well as by Web sites and other so-called nontraditional media.

### Words of Wisdom

*"Most clients are corporate people protecting their own mortgages. They mistakenly see ideas as a risk rather than advancement in their careers."*<sup>10</sup>

—Paul Arden