

# Support for the DIY Marketer



Looking at magazines or watching television commercials, do you ever come across an advertisement and think, “Who came up with this stuff?” Just Google “bad commercials” or “bad print ads,” and you’ll see a plethora of talking cats, embarrassing typos and offensive stereotypes. Or take a look at a YouTube clip of Jay Leno’s “Headlines” segment—many of these marketing mishaps are the result of do-it-yourself (DIY) marketing gone wrong.

DIY is a huge lifestyle trend in many areas today in light of the economy. In hopes of saving money, people are taking ownership of many things that used to be left to experts. DIY wedding guides offer instructions to help a bride handcraft her own invitations and floral centerpieces, promising huge savings through avoiding the wedding markup that comes with many services. DIY car repair offers the satisfaction of repairing your own vehicle while avoiding the hourly labor fees of a mechanic.

This DIY strategy often works out extremely well. The floral centerpiece turns out beautifully, and the car runs smoothly, and you are eager to take credit for it. Other times, however, the arrangement turns out lopsided and the car won’t even start.

Many business owners trying to cut costs on marketing are adopting the DIY mentality, as well. And while marketing skills come naturally to some people who enjoy the process of developing and tweaking corporate communications (and are even pretty good at it), others are definitely better off avoiding the DIY route, and should hire a professional to craft corporate messages and identity.

If you belong to the former group of marketing-savvy businesspeople, you have probably already been mulling over the best ways to incorporate data from the Softened Water Benefit Study (Battelle Study) results into your communications and marketing initiatives. You may have been training your staff on the data so they can educate customers while on service calls, or you may have already released ad material with some of the facts and figures from the study as part of your advertisements.

If you would place yourself in the latter group and realize you are better off avoiding DIY marketing, which is probably most of us, you will be glad to know that the Water Quality Assn. (WQA) has released a Marketing Support Center website that offers a compromise for the hopeful DIY-ers who may need a little help. The site offers Variable Data Printing, which allows dealers to merge their own information with the WQA’s marketing material from the Battelle Study. Interactive templates allow you to customize postcards, sell sheets, ads and posters, or to order pre-made ones if you are in a hurry. Whatever format or medium you prefer for advertising, chances are these materials can be incorporated. Read more about it in our Q&A with Margit Fotre, WQA’s director of membership and marketing, on page 30.

A chance to polish the image of your business while lending some authoritative figures to your products’ claims should not be overlooked. And with your company name on the material, you can even take some of the credit.

*Rebecca Wilhelm*

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## coming up next month

- Regulations & Legislation
- Residential Water Treatment
- Testing
- Literature Guide
- Business Networking
- WQA Column
- Sales Column

We invite you to join our *Water Quality Products* LinkedIn group. Get connected with other industry professionals at [www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=1982834](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=1982834).

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