

Since 1984, Skin Two has carried the advertising of businesses serving the BDSM/fetish market worldwide. Our readers use Skin Two to find goods and services they want to buy. We have seen a lot of fetish business come and go – and some of them survive and flourish. So it might be useful for you if we share a few things that we've picked up along the way...

Many fetish businesses are set up without any proper planning. So long as you are aware that you are doing it just for pleasure, no problem - a hobby business can be a lot of fun. But, if you want to it be a serious business, please, first of all, have a proper business plan and cashflow.

Secondly, consider your marketing carefully. In other words, make sure that you are offering goods and services that the customers wants to buy at a price they are prepared to pay. You may think that your electrified bondage bed with neon lights and hi-fi sound is the best thing ever - but do the customers really want it and will they pay your price? Do your research. Check the competition.

Third, plan your promotion. Good publicity is essential, so organise professional press releases and really stylish photographs. Make sure your web site looks good and works well. Don't skimp on this - if your product looks crummy in your publicity material, who's going to want it?

Finally, plan your advertising long term. Get your ads professionally written and designed, using the best possible photography. Don't expect to place one or two ads and get prompt results - you need to advertise steadily year after year to build up a presence in the market and get your company known and trusted.

Notice that many of the advertisers in Skin Two have been running ads regularly for many years. These are the well established businesses in the market, doing steady business, with customers coming back to them time and again. They must be doing something right!

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When you take stands at fetish shows and events, don't necessarily expect to make a big profit from sales on the day – budget for this as part of your annual promotional campaign. Let buyers see your show stand and your magazine ads and even chat with you. Then – if your product and pricing are right – they are more likely to buy from you than from your competitors. Sales will come in over time.

Don't make the classic mistake of thinking that anything to do with sex will make loads of profit. Customers in the BDSM/fetish market tend to be intelligent and discerning – they won't buy your goods unless they are convinced that the quality, service, design and price are all to a high standard.

Imagine that you are going to see a very sceptical banker, to ask for money for your business. They will want fully convincing answers to all these points. Make sure you have thought everything through and can answer the most searching questions. If there's a gap in your preparation, however small, fix it!

We are here to help you.

For advertising on our web site, contact our Webmistress, Rachel May, on rachel@skintwo.com

To books ads in our printed publications and to reserve your stand at the Skin Two Expo, contact our Sales Manager, Mark Rodgers, on mark@skintwo.com

For general help or advice, contact our CEO, Tim Woodward, on tim@skintwo.com