

Pens with a Purpose



A special situation requires a special promotional pen. Here are nine unique pens to use in nine different situations.

(BY DENIS JENSEN)

Traditional ballpoint pens work well for traditional promotions (having a boxful on hand at the bank, perhaps), but sometimes the situation calls for something a bit more special. If you've got a sales call with a client who previously hadn't returned your phone calls, for example, it's time to pull out the big guns (or in this case, pens). Here are the perfect pens to pull out in nine different business situations.



SCENARIO #1

An impossible-to-reach client agrees to meet with you.

After six months of calls, you finally land a 10-minute meeting with an extremely hard-to-get client. Your objective is to leave a lasting impression – quickly. Silly or cheap pens won't work here. You need something that won't get thrown into a client's desk drawer. To accomplish this you want a pen that will not only be remembered but cherished. That's why you should select a fountain pen – a really nice one with an attractive finish and sparkling accents – instead of a ballpoint. As you begin your meeting, simply place the fountain pen on the far corner of your customer's desk and leave it there for her to admire (and hopefully wonder, "Is that for me?"). Your prospective client's curiosity will get the best of them and by the time you're ready to hand over the pen you'll already have made a lasting impression.

Our top pick - The Cross name says quality and this midnight black fountain pen with radiant silver accents is no exception. It comes packaged in an attractive chocolate colored box and it's the pen that will turn any meeting into a special event. [Available from asi/47520](#)



SCENARIO #2

You're pitching to a style-conscious woman.

If you're in the fashion or cosmetics industry – or any other industry where you're likely to encounter a number of style-conscious women, you can attract attention by offering a pen to match their stylish sensibilities.

Whether you are sending the pen in advance of a sales call or as a follow-up to a good meeting, let this woman know that you appreciate her savviness by choosing a fashion-forward pen. Almost as important as the pen itself is how you package it. Don't just hand her the pen or, worse yet, stick it in a plain envelope. Play up the gift and its coolness by packaging it in a sleek silver box with a bow, or wrapped up in a silk pouch or other trendy fabric. Don't forget to attach a note thanking her for her time.

Our top pick - This sleek and stylish pen looks like designer lipstick until you slip the top off to reveal a ballpoint pen. Your clients can use it to write on almost anything and unlike actual lipstick, it won't smear. [Available from asi/44347](#)



SCENARIO #3

You want to wow a group of golfers.

You've already given out every conceivable type of promotional gear to your golf-playing clients including monogrammed shirts, golf balls, tees, towels, sighting scopes and bag tags. Heavy duty golfers need a special parting gift, and another golf towel just isn't going to do the trick. Here's our alternative: After hitting the links, wait until drinks are served and be ready to hand out golf-themed pens as either celebratory gifts or consolation prizes. And when they pick them up, they'll think of you, their partner in golf as well as in business. It's difficult to find pens that accomplish all of these goals, but when you do, you'll score a hole in one.

Our top pick - This is the ultimate golf gift; a colorful miniature golf bag pen set featuring a trio of tiny silver clubs. Slip off the club heads and you'll find three tiny ballpoint pens in different ink colors that will evoke golf memories every time your clients use them. [Available from asi/45100](#)



SCENARIO #4

You want to thank a customer for bearing with you after a screw-up.

Everyone and every company screws up sooner or later. When it happens your first objective is to shoulder the blame and make it right. Once you've accomplished that, accompany your apology with a pen that expresses your concern but doesn't call unneeded attention to the event that precipitated it. While saying "thank you" might sound a bit incongruous after a minor disaster, it's exactly the right thing to say. You're thanking the client for bearing with you and you're letting them know you're moving forward with a positive attitude. Try to present the pen at a time when you have other things to offer: new products, offers, incentives, etc. This helps reinforce the positive element and puts your client relationship back on the affirmative track.

Our top pick - This thank you pen expresses your gratitude with a series of "thank yous" etched right on the barrel. The cap may be laser engraved for an additional message. Available from [asi/35579](#)



SCENARIO #5

You're meeting with a technical person.

Meeting with an engineer, techie, contractor or architect? You've got a real in here when it comes to promotional pens, because these people love them. It may be a caricature, but have you ever really seen an engineer or contractor without a pen-filled pocket holder? Knowing that, you could give them almost any pen and they'd use it, but you'd soon find your pen had taken its place in a desk alongside scores of other writing instruments. To make your pen distinctive, pick something that looks more like a gadget than a pen. There are a host of multi-functional pens out there: Select one and demonstrate it to the next techie you call on. No doubt he'll ask you to leave it behind.

Our top pick - This mechanical beauty combines the conveniences of a twist action pen with a 38" tape measure that pulls out from the top. It's graduated in both inches and metric and comes in a black medium ballpoint. Available from [asi/31570](#)



SCENARIO #6

You're calling on a doctor or health professional.

Medicine is serious business. That's why physicians, nurses and health practitioners love it when you introduce humor into their lives. A funny promotional pen goes a long way here, putting the humor up front without distracting from your pitch. Keep it relevant by choosing pens that represent the industry in a fun way. There are lots of candidates here including bone pens, thermometer pens, syringe pens, and capsule pens. Whatever you choose, bring along plenty of extras because, chances are, the doctor or health professional you're meeting with is going to want to pass them out to the whole team.

Our top pick - This syringe design ballpoint pen is a great novelty for doctor's offices, drug companies or any health-care related business. The syringe portion of the pen is filled with colored liquid and encased in clear acrylic to display your logo or message. Click the plunger to retract the pen point and release it with the tab on the side. Available from [asi/52710](#)



SCENARIO #7

You're looking to stand out from the crowd.

Sometimes it takes something larger than life to get a reaction from clients. Maybe you're one of five different salespeople pitching to the same client in one day. You need to stand out, and a pen can help you do it. But you'll have to find one that's as distinctive as it is super-sized. The possibilities here include specially shaped pens, liquid filled pens with floating logos and light-up pens. Choose one that best matches your style and presentation and consider how to present it. Since you're going big, consider making a big presentation with standout visuals, big ideas and big offers. And when you introduce your big pen make sure your client understands that the pen is a metaphor for the king-sized service you plan to offer.

Our top pick - This extra wide liquid-filled pen's soft acrylic case encloses your floating logo. Add glitter, sand, seashells or other liquid enhancements to really make an impression. Available from asi/61013



SCENARIO #8

You want a customer to increase her spend.

For five years, the same customer has spent the same amount with you every year. How to grow sales? You'll need a pen to stimulate growth. Choose an eco-friendly pen (perhaps made with recycled newspaper) or – better yet – a pen in the shape of a flower or plant. (Believe it or not, they do exist.) Present them to your client on your next visit and explain how together, you can help her grow her business – but she needs to take the next step with you. Another way to use such a pen: Send a bouquet to clients in the spring, reminding them of all of the ways you can help them grow.

Our top pick - You can purchase this flower pen in a set of 24 assorted floral varieties including calla lilies, sunflowers and tulips. The blooming patterns and colors will add a touch of spring to your client's office space and the curved green stems serve to display your slogan or logo. Available from asi/98741



SCENARIO #9

The client is ready to sign on the dotted line.

A tough prospect is finally ready to close the deal. When he does, pull out a high quality, classic pen. A fountain pen makes a good choice. Once the I's are dotted and the T's are crossed, invite him to keep the pen as a symbol of your new relationship. Make sure that it is logoed with care, as you don't want the imprint to rub off. This is a pen you'll want him to keep in his desk for a long time to come.

Our top pick - Make no mistake: This eight-sided blue fountain pen tells a client that you really value his business. Available from asi/82258