

Preferred Vendors for Promotional Items Union University

We are pleased to announce that there is now a Preferred Vendor List for promotional items at Union University.

In exchange for inclusion on this list, these vendors have made the following pledges to the Union community:

1. They will provide competitive and fair pricing for all Union clients.
2. They will strive for first-rate service and the quickest turn-around times possible.
3. They will adhere to Union's branding guidelines as stated in the [Visual Identity Guide](#).

TWO IMPORTANT POINTS:

1. Union clients are NOT required to use one of these vendors when ordering promotional items. The vendors are recommended based on the work of a special committee formed by members of the Union community and discussions with individual contacts at each business. Everyone is free to make their own arrangements for ordering Union promotional items.
2. Whether or not you use preferred vendors for your project, a pre-production branding approval is required for all items that will be purchased with Union funds. This can be done by submitting a proof to the Director of Creative Services (sheit@uu.edu) or the Associate Vice President for University Communications. (mkahler@uu.edu)

The term "promotional items" can be defined in many ways. Our definition includes, but is not limited to items such as apparel, auto accessories, awards, bags, business supplies, bumper stickers, calendars, caps or hats, clocks or watches, folios or notebooks, furniture, golf items, hardware or tools, house wares, jewelry, mouse pads, notepads, pens or pencils, refrigerator magnets, sports items, toys or travel gear.

Here are the five preferred vendors for promotional items at Union University (listed in alphabetical order)

Kyrus Print Solutions, 2274 Hollywood Drive, Jackson, Tenn.
Contact: Andy Hall 731-512-0726 email: andy@kyrusprint.com
Website: www.kyrusprint.com

Midsouth Business Solutions, 4210 Altruria Rd. Ste 124, Bartlett, Tenn.
Contact: David Pearson 901-373-8597 email: ddpearson@bellsouth.net
Website: www.promoplace.com/midsouthsolutions

Mike Hopper Promotions, 255 Willowridge Circle, Jackson, Tenn.
Contact: Mike Hopper 731-394-0126 email: mike@MikeHopperPromotions.com
Website: www.MikeHopperPromotions.com

Printco, 2609 East End Avenue, Humboldt, Tenn.

Contact: Jeff Bateman 731-784-0052 email: jeff.bateman@printcoforms.com

Website: www.printcoforms.com

YOUTHMERCH, 121 Seaboard Lane, Suite 11, Franklin, Tenn.

Contacts: Valerie Hicks (Nashville) and Kevin Kee (Jackson)

Valerie: 615-208-1506 email val@youthmerch.com

Kevin: 731-668-5614 email: kevinkee@charter.net

Website: www.youthmerch.com

Union University Preferred Vendor List for Promotional Items

Ten Questions and Answers

September 2010

Union University has assembled an inaugural list of preferred vendors with whom members of the campus community can order promotional items. There are bound to be some frequently asked questions about the list.

What is meant by the term “promotional items?”

These items might include but are not limited to apparel, auto accessories, awards, bags, business supplies, bumper stickers, calendars, caps or hats, clocks or watches, folios or notebooks, furniture, golf items, hardware or tools, house wares, jewelry, mouse pads, notepads, pens or pencils, refrigerator magnets, sports items, toys or travel gear. Typically, these products are marked with a Union message or branding mark and given away to promote the University.

Am I required to order promotional items only from vendors on the preferred list?

No. Members of the campus community may patronize any vendors they wish. Preferred vendors on this list understand that they are still competing with everyone else in relation to product quality, first-rate service and low price.

If patronizing vendors on this list is not a requirement, why have the list in the first place?

Wise stewardship of Union’s limited resources is extremely important. Vendors that do frequent business with Union come to understand the University’s needs and can sometimes provide bulk pricing. Each preferred vendor has pledged to give Union customers every consideration on price and service. Another important issue is branding. There have been problems with vendors who offer low prices but simply re-design the Union branding marks they cannot reproduce accurately. Each preferred vendor has pledged to precisely and faithfully reproduce Union branding marks as outlined in the Visual Identity Guide, even if that pledge results in altering or refusing orders on occasion.

How were these vendors selected?

A committee made up of members from across campus developed a Request for Proposal (RFP) that requires the vendor to adhere to visual identity standards at Union and to provide first-rate service at the competitive prices in exchange for a preferred vendor recommendation. The committee surveyed offices, departments and schools across campus that order these items and asked for preferred vendor recommendations. Each vendor who was recommended at least once was sent the RFP. The committee then reviewed the individual vendor proposals and made recommendations to senior leadership.

Will this list change based on performance or the emergence of new vendors?

Yes. Vendors on this list who do not meet expectations could be dropped. Vendors not on this inaugural list who prove to be valuable partners could be included on future lists.

How frequently will the list be updated?

There is no fixed schedule for updating the list, but don't look for weekly or monthly changes. The list could be reviewed for possible changes each fiscal year, or perhaps more frequently as circumstances dictate.

Why is accurate branding such a priority?

Union's visual identity represents a consistent promise to our audiences. When vendors take it upon themselves to modify branding marks – even slightly – it weakens the University's message in the marketplace. Union is not alone in enforcing specific branding guidelines. This is done at every major university in the nation.

Will items with incorrect branding be recalled?

Yes. Union's Senior Leadership Team asks the Office of University Communications to make a pre-production branding check on each promotional order. If a vendor fails to correctly duplicate the approved branding, the proof must be modified so that those standards are met prior to final production. In the rare event that incorrect items actually are produced, a recall is necessary.

Are such branding approvals still necessary if I'm using a preferred vendor?

Yes. This is usually a quick and simple process in which a proof is emailed to the Director of Creative Services for a branding sign-off.

Are you looking for feedback on vendors who provide promotional items to Union University?

Such feedback is strongly encouraged. It is important to know when vendors are not meeting expectations, but it is equally important to hear about vendors who are providing superior service and price options. Address your comments to the Director of Creative Services at sheit@uu.edu or the Associate Vice President for University Communications at mkahler@uu.edu.