


## #POLITICS

 **In case you missed all** the yard signs and radio spots and billboards and SNL skits, 2016 is an election year. It's a big deal, and not just because it will decide the future of our country for the next four years—election years are big money. All of those ads and products are tied to large marketing budgets, and candidates are eager to get their name out in any way they can. (Well, maybe not on SNL.)

Political candidates spend a lot of cash to get into office—Wells Fargo researchers claim 80 percent of all campaign contributions go toward advertising. According to the Los Angeles Times, 2016's political ad spend could hit a record \$6 billion, a 16 percent increase over the 2012 campaign season.

How much of that money goes to promos? Looking at presidential candidate Donald Trump's January Federal Election Commission filing, we see that his campaign spent \$11,500,705 in that month. Of that, \$912,397.27 was spent on promotional products, specifically listing items like hats, T-shirts, mugs and stickers. Trump also spent an additional \$86,189.63 on printing and design services that many distributors can provide.

That's just under a million dollars—\$998,586.90—spent on print and promotional services by one candidate in one month.

Getting a presidential client isn't easy, but distributors have many other options. Most candidates are supported by political action committees and independent organizations that operate on a local level. These groups make heavy use of the most common political promotions, including bumper stickers, yard signs, pens and other handouts. Their local offices are a great way to get in on the ground level.

We're not just voting for a president in 2016. All 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives will be on the ballot in November, as well as 34 seats in the U.S. Senate and 12 governorships. Plus there are many state and local elections happening across the country for mayoral positions, state House and Senate seats, and other positions. Helping your favorite candidate with politically-themed products can help you both score a big win in November.

Lastly, don't forget your current customers. Many businesses take advantage of campaign season to promote themselves. Stars-and-stripes themed products like sunglasses, flags and water bottles are great ways for companies to get into the spirit, and many need promotions to give to clients and employees alike. Now is the time to make those calls so your customers don't miss the excitement when the national conventions occur this summer.



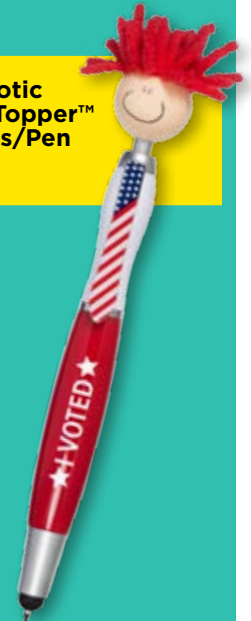
**Patriotic 6-Panel Hat**

### The Trend

#### Political Promotional Products Will Be Huge For All Markets In 2016

- T-shirts, stickers and hats are the most popular items
- Local elections offer the best opportunities for distributors

**Patriotic MopTopper™ Stylus/Pen**



**Patriotic Sunglasses**



# The Trend

## Wearable Technology Is The Biggest Health Trend In 2016

- Gyms need products to entice new members
- Sunglasses and sports bottles are popular for both indoor and outdoor activities

### Collapsible Hand Sanitizer



### Earbud Set



# #ACTIVE LIVING



### Whether it's hitting the CrossFit

gym or the hiking trail, physical fitness and active living are making big moves in 2016. With obesity verging on becoming a U.S. epidemic—the Centers for Disease Control says 35.5 percent of adults over 20 are obese, with that number predicted to hit 50 percent by 2030—people are taking health seriously like never before. The good news is that there are more options than ever for improving one's well being, meaning there are more opportunities than ever to promote your clients while also promoting better fitness.

**WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY** will be the biggest health trend in 2016, according to the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). This rapidly-growing category includes everything from fitness trackers, smart watches and glasses, heart rate monitors and even techy workout apparel. Forbes reports that the global market for wearable tech will be worth \$14 billion in 2016 and reach a staggering \$34 billion by 2020.

Also in the ACSM's top 10 fitness trends for 2016 are popular exercise practices like **BODYWEIGHT TRAINING, HIGH-INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING (HIIT), STRENGTH TRAINING AND YOGA**. The growing demand for these exercises ensures there will continue to be a need for gym towels, yoga mats, water bottles and other promotional staples. Protein shakers are a growing popular choice

among the strength-training crowd, while infusing bottles continue to do well across all athletic markets.

Speaking of gyms, the number of **U.S. HEALTH CLUB AND FITNESS CENTER** users hit an all-time high in 2014 with 54.1 million memberships sold, a 1.2 million increase over 2013, according to statistics research center Statista. These new memberships mean more sales opportunities. In addition to sports towels and bottles, T-shirts, lanyards and duffel bags are popular gym giveaways.

Not a gym type? **HIKING** is a great way to work out. The National Park Service reports that there were more than 300 million recreation visitors across all U.S. national parks in 2015. Outdoor fans need a lot of accessories to keep them safe and comfortable, including sunglasses, sunscreen, backpacks, water bottles, hats and visors. Visitors to cooler regions of the U.S. will appreciate fleece apparel, knit hats and gloves.

**GOLF IS ALWAYS A POPULAR PASTIME**, with more than 24.7 million U.S. participants in 2014, according to the National Golf Foundation. Players are always in need of new tees, balls and towels, making these promotions a source of steady business. Golf products also do double duty—the popularity of the sport among the office crowd makes golf gift sets great giveaways for businesses and corporate events.



**B-Active Fitness Band**

**Cool Gear® 28 oz. Arc Bottle**



**Easy-Fit Sport Armband Phone Holder**







**Dual USB to AC Wall Adapter**



**Lynx Power Bank**



**Strand Commuter Backpack**



# #TRAVEL



**694,000,000.** That is the approximate number of passengers boarding U.S. flights in 2015 according to the United States

Department of Transportation Bureau of Transportation Statistics, a 30 million increase over 2014. That's a lot of trips and doesn't take into account people traveling by car, train or cruise ship.

The U.S. Travel Association, a non-profit organization representing the travel industry in the U.S. spent an average of \$2.5 billion per day. That adds up to \$927 billion per year on direct travel expenditures alone, part of an estimated \$1.2 trillion in annual travel-related costs.

Business travel makes up a large segment of that sum—\$283 billion in 2014—and shows no signs of slowing. When those tradeshow warriors touch down in a new city they're bound to forget a few necessities, and that's where you come in. By offering the most-popular products for the business class you guarantee that your clients' brands will see the world.

## 1. ELECTRONICS

It's no surprise that personal electronics are the most in-demand accessories on the road. Power chargers, headphones, flash drives, portable speakers and device carrying cases have become necessities in today's always-connected world. Items that passengers are most likely to lose or forget, like chargers and earbuds, can be low-cost lifesavers and never go unused.

## 2. PERSONAL CARE

Airline restrictions on liquids and creams in carry-on luggage—a 3.4 oz. maximum size, a quart-sized bag limit—mean many travelers leave home without all their per-

## The Trend

### U.S. Business Travelers Want Products That Make Trips Easier

- Top 2016 product categories are electronics, personal care and bags
- Provide items travelers may forget, like power chargers and sunscreen

sonal care supplies. Universal items such as lotion, sunscreen and antibacterial hand sanitizers in 3.4 oz. containers are popular choices for gifts and incentives. Package several in a reusable one-quart travel case to create a promotion that frequent flyers will appreciate.

## 3. LUGGAGE

Checked luggage costs are leading to more travelers carrying on their bags—the TSA reports screening 1.6 billion carry-on bags in 2015, compared to 432 million checked bags. As a result, smaller bags that fit in overhead bins and under seats are the most in-demand options. Backpacks and weekender bags have become must-haves for frequent travelers and are good options for gifts and incentives. Focus on providing modern features, such as padded laptop compartments, to ensure your promotion lands with its recipient.

## 4. AND EVERYTHING ELSE

When people travel, 99 percent of their belongings stay at home, and chances are they're going to need something they left behind. Anticipating these needs and providing solutions is an easy way to earn someone's appreciation. Bring notepads and pens for conference attendees, or water bottles, sunglasses and tote bags for tourists and sightseers. The right product at the right time, no matter how small, will have a big impact.

#WHATSTRENDINGNOW



# Using Technology For A Good Cause

**I love my smartphone,** and I bet you love yours too. We use them for work and play, taking photos of our kids and sending emails to our customers without missing a beat. I bet some of you are reading this on your smartphone right now.

As much as modern consumer technology enables us to connect, it is often criticized for its power to isolate. We interact with others through text messaging or social media, but the smartphone screen divides us from any real connection.

Still, technology has the ability to bring us together if used correctly. A great example of this is how charities around the world are using tech items to raise money and awareness for important causes. Many use endurance events to drive fundraising. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society, for example, hosts a mud-run version of its popular Ride MS and Walk MS events. Often times, these charities reward top event-fundraisers with tech fitness products—earbuds, wearable fitness trackers, pedometers and more.

Not only do these items incentivize race participants to hit fundraising goals, they also remind recipients about

their experiences with the charity for years after the event—I still use the earbuds I received from a walkathon in 2013, and I know other recipients hold on to these thank-you gifts as well. This increases the likelihood that a participant will fundraise again, helping charities turn one-time supporters into lifelong advocates.

It's up to you to put this all together. Imagine you're working with a nonprofit to promote a 5K run. The charity can use a tech fitness product giveaway to encourage sign-ups and boost fundraising. Then, you could provide race participants with armband smartphone holders, T-shirts, water bottles, sunglasses... the opportunities to upsell are endless. And you don't need to sell only to the nonprofit—local businesses that want to get involved also need promotional items.

At this event, technology would be everywhere—the headphones, the pedometers, fitness trackers. But if you watched the participants, you wouldn't know it. They won't be staring at their smartphone screens. They'll be walking together, bonding for their common cause.

It doesn't get more connected than that.



## #TOP 5

