

XENA'S PROMO BATTLE TIPS

A Sales Warrior's Guide to Getting the Most
from your Promotional Product Dollar



Welcome back...

And welcome to the new design of my newsletter- thank you Barry!
(barry@shuchter.com)

On the right, have a look at what's new in the **Great Links** section;
particularly the articles addressing the impending increase of costs in
the economy as they pertain to our promo-world.

Below, I address what is on our minds, in our faces and in our back
pockets - the rising fuel costs and surcharges and how it affects your
promo-product orders. And, what you can do about it.

Read on,

Jenn

Gas Pains?

How to reduce your promo-order fuel charge discomfort.

A few weeks ago, when I saw the freight charges for my client's 500 beach towels, both my client and I nearly doubled over in pain - gas pain that is. Not the I-ate-lentils-for-dinner-last-night kind of pain but the kind that comes from that first glance of sky-high fuel surcharges on your bill. Looking at that shipping invoice, I heard a scratchy, tired little voice whisper, "Write about me" and this month's topic was born.



Fuel surcharges have been creeping their ways into our wallets for months. Showing up hidden, or not, into everything from the apples we buy from New Zealand, (I know, I know - eat local) to the gaping mouth

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to a friend

Xena's Loyal Followers

"I loved your recent newsletter on green products. Your comment that 'Eco is not synonymous with quality' is an important point that other, less sophisticated vendors tend to miss. Good for you for providing true value and for being REALLY green - and not just a pale imitation."

--Daphne Gray-Grant
www.publicationcoach.com

Another accolade comes from Michael Katz's E-Newsletter on E-Newsletters. Click to read: [Put Your Newsletter on "Shuffle"](#).

Great Links

[The Xena Tips Archives](#)

[Image Group Inc.](#)

[Pantone Colors](#)

Everything you want to know about Pantones

in the side of your car barking at you to, "insert nozzle here and pay left leg to cashier."

And now, these charges have edged their way into every promotional product order shipment.

Are you experiencing the my-shipping-bill-was-huge-on-that-order gas pains? I think it's safe to say most of us feel our shipping pipelines are more than a little bloated these days.

Here are **3.5 tips** that may help reduce your discomfort in ways three strips of peppermint Gas-X® cannot.

1. **Reevaluate the distance your product travels:** The further the journey, the higher the fuel charges. That order for those 20,000 pens you got so cheaply from overseas may just exceed the price per unit than if you had bought within your country. Why? Because of the current all-time high fuel surcharges to ship your pens (*or whatever product*) across the ocean. Whether your products travel to you by boat, by plane or by [Chitty Chitty Bang Bang](#) they all require fuel (*okay maybe not Chitty*) and right now, that means more money from your budget - to **surcharges!** Investing more of your dollars in **products** rather than additional fuel charges by purchasing within your own country, when possible, may be one effective way to relieve those gas pains.

2. **Become Informed:** My client nailed the analogy I was seeking the other day, when she said, "fuel surcharges are a moving target." There are just some things we cannot pin down in life. Remember when the Abbey nuns were singing about Sister Maria in [The Sound Of Music](#), and they said, "How do you catch a cloud and pin it down." The novice nun, Maria, was elusive and swiftly moving about the Alps and fuel surcharges are swift, moving and ever elusive in our economy. We cannot pin them down but we can be informed as much as possible and take away even a small element of surprise of these costs. Here are some reference sites that offer monthly updates on fuel surcharges in shipping:

- * [UPS Fuel Surcharges](#)
- * [National Traffic Services](#)
- * [Purolator Fuel Surcharges](#)
- * [FedEx Fuel Surcharges](#)

3. **Anticipate:** You can lower your fuel surcharge costs and foresee your freight costs by two simple steps. **One:** allow time for *ground delivery* of your product orders, whenever possible. Yes, this requires some planning on your part but avoiding expediting your orders to *air shipping* will give your budget and you some peace of mind. **Two:** ask for a freight quote/estimate on your order, because at least this way you can have an idea of the shipping costs (*not the fuel surcharge*) involved and some idea of these costs is far better than none.

3.5 **Don't Panic!** These kinds of cost fluctuations are some of the exciting and challenging aspects of doing business in an ever changing, unpinnable economy. Costs that are influenced by an infinite number of factors, primarily the economy, the "business" of oil, inflation or deflation,

[The Chinese Economy](#) - A White Paper on the rising costs in China and how they affect you and me.

[Rising Product Prices](#)
by Michele Bell

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dollar value and so on.

The thing is, **you don't need to freak out and mercilessly kill your promo-product budget.** There are always products available of excellent quality and value that can live within your budget parameters and still leave room for shipping and surcharges.

I'm not an economist and this article isn't the magic pill to ease all your rising costs pains, but keeping these 3.5 tips in mind will help as you move forward to your next promo purchase and dull the ache when you get your next shipping invoice.

And from a lentil-eating vegetarian who is, along side with you, experiencing her own gas pains, I can say prevention and knowing what you're heading into is a good thing.

About Xena Sales Warrior

As your **Promotional Products resource and creative consultant**, my goal is to give you outstanding value, inspired choices and economically sound solutions to your promo-needs.

To go the distance to communicate your message and have you stand out among your peers with warrior-inspired promotional products.

Bottom Line: Making you look great everytime.

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A Big Note Of Thanks

To me reader and editor extraordinaire, Eve Johson, I send an ear-popping Xena Battle Cry of THANKS for your time and attention to making this newsletter the leader of the promo-pack.

Eve Johnson is a professional writer and certified yoga instructor and the co-owner of www.yogaon7th.com