

Full-service advertising
for print, broadcast, web

Wordspecs

<http://wordspecs.com>

AGENCY BACKGROUND

Wordspecs is owned and operated by Deborah Spector Barry, a veteran of publishing, copywriting and advertising, known for crisp, clear, stylish concepts that sell. She holds a bachelor's degree from Smith College, with a major in English Language and Literature and a minor in creative writing. Her post-graduate coursework includes Orange College and Printing Industries Institute.

Ms. Barry's career began in writing and editing for book and magazine publishers. After extensive specialization in medical editing for professional, educational and consumer publications, she became Vice President for Marketing and Client Services at Health Education Publications, Chicago. There she created the first national newsletter to market senior care services and 65+ clubs, while overseeing the annual sales, marketing and distribution of 12,000,000 custom newsletters for hospitals, pediatricians, third-party payers and professional fund raisers.

After opening Wordspecs in 1985, services expanded into logo and business ID development, production services for printers, publishers and agencies and design for print advertising and direct mail. Over the last dozen years, Wordspecs has created television and radio commercials for the regional Chicagoland market; full-color magazine advertising for regional and national trade and consumer publications; custom jingles; and internet sites with substantial numbers of unique visitors and search engine optimization. Wordspecs' practice currently focuses on new business launches, professional services practices and retail/service operations.

Wordspecs has been active in the community in chambers of commerce and professional networking organizations, including

Saturday Morning Entrepreneurs. Ms. Barry served several terms as a director of the Highland Park Chamber of Commerce, chairing the Communications Committee for one term, and was principally involved in the development of the City/Chamber Marketing Plan, the City's first *Shopping and Dining Guide*, the *Professional Services Directory*, *Sidewalk Sale Map* and *six00threefive* magazine, of which she is designer and executive editor.

About 15 percent of Wordspecs' professional efforts are pro bono locally and across the country; projects have included the Center for Enriched Living annual fundraiser, FOCUS on the Arts for a number of seasons, the Jamestown (RI) Piano Series, the 50th Anniversary of Temple Sinai (North Miami) and March of the Living. Since her graduation, Ms. Barry organized special events and designed promotional materials for her college class reunions.

She was appointed to the Programming Committee of the Advisory Board of National Public Radio/WBEZ-FM, Chicago. She performed for seven seasons with the professional Choral Ensemble of Chicago. She was appointed to the Design Review Commission of the City of Highland Park and is currently Public Relations Officer for an emerging community action group, Deer Park Neighbors.

Ms. Barry been interviewed in the *Chicago Tribune* and on CLTV and has been a featured speaker at programs for the Highland Park Chamber of Commerce, the Antioch Chamber of Commerce and the Independent Writers of Chicago, among others. She was recently the guest of CEOs for Cities at their national meeting in Chicago.



CHOOSING AN AGENCY

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

- Is the agency committed to your budget? Can they explain how to balance budget with results and timelines?
- Will the size of your account place you among the agency's "top clients"? Will you have access to the senior level?
- Does the agency's portfolio reveal a broad range of content and styles? Is the work genuine and original?
- Would you trust the agency to act on your behalf and in your best interest at all times?
- Can you be frank about your own goals and how you would measure success? Is the agency's estimation of short- and long-term results credible?
- Can you understand precisely how and through what sources the agency is compensated?

ASK THEIR CLIENTS

- What has the agency done for you? In what media? Over what time frame?
- Would you hire the agency today? Have you recommended this agency to others?
- Have you had problems with their billing?
- Do you trust them to make decisions on your behalf?
- How well does the agency understand your industry, your profession, your client base?

ASK THE VENDORS

- How long have you been doing business with the agency? Do you refer business to them?
- Are projects properly specified and prepared? Does the agency meet deadlines and pay promptly?
- Is the agency effective in resolving a problem, should it arise?
- Does the agency negotiate fees in good faith? Do they balance price with service?

COMMIT

- Be certain that all dimensions of the project to be undertaken are put into writing.
- Understand that advertising works best over time.
- Let the agency do their work; micromanagement is not cost-effective.