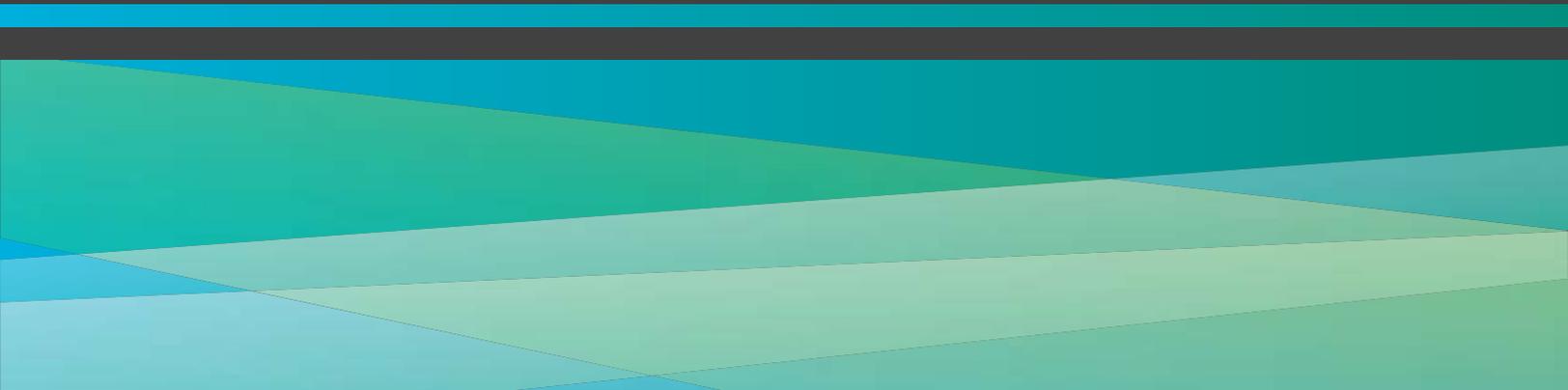


# Marketing Guide

for Community Microsoft Authorized Refurbishers

JANUARY 2009



# Table of Contents

03 Marketing Guidance

12 Public Relations (PR) Guidance

21 Microsoft and Community MAR Logo Usage Information

23 Sample Templates

# Section One

Marketing Guidance

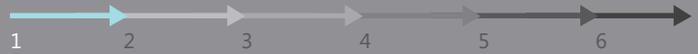
# Reach new customers. Build your business. Make a difference.

As a Community Microsoft® Authorized Refurbisher (Community MAR), you are poised to grow your business by selling refurbished PCs to educational institutions, non-profit charitable organizations, and other eligible customers. But in order to accomplish this, you need to create awareness and let potential customers know the value you offer. The Community MAR Marketing Guide is designed to help you do just that, simply and effectively.

Filled with marketing and public relations (PR) guidelines, sample marketing and PR templates, and additional resources, this guide provides you with clear, manageable steps to help boost your business' marketing power so that you can get the most impact from your marketing.

## Get started.





# Step 1:

Define your business value.

Before you can begin to effectively market your business, you need to be able to clearly articulate the value your business provides to its customers. Write down a one- or two-sentence description of your business. Make it compelling and concise.

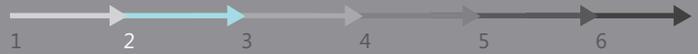
Example description:

- a) Schools and non-profits in our community need affordable PCs. [Your business] refurbishes PCs, preinstalls genuine Microsoft software, and provides high-quality products to these organizations, at prices they can afford.
- b) As a Community MAR, [Your business] offers quality refurbished PCs preinstalled with genuine Microsoft software to schools and non-profit organizations that are not able to afford brand-new PCs.

### **Look with a critical eye.**

Your business is professional, but does it look the part? Take some time to do a visual inventory of your business. Examine your business cards and letter-head, the signage and appearance of your store, and the organization and clarity of your Web site. It is important that these elements show customers that you are a respectable, professional business.





## Step 2:

### Research your market.

The Community MAR program is aimed at helping schools and non-profit organizations obtain affordable, high-quality PCs. Your marketing will be directed at the key decision makers at these organizations. How do you reach these influential individuals? Learn to think like they do.

Start by describing your target audience—find out their needs and habits and what motivates them. If you need input, call up an existing customer. For example, ask:

- What publications do you read?
- What Web sites do you visit?
- To what radio stations do you listen?
- In what community activities are you active?
- Who and what influence your decisions?

The answers you gather will help give you a better idea of how to speak to your target audience, what mailing lists to buy for your direct mail campaigns, and where to place your advertising so that it gets noticed.

In addition, learn all you can about your competitors. Find out where they are placing their advertising. Look at what they are offering to customers and make sure your offer is even more compelling.

#### **Smooth your sales curve.**

Too many businesses focus on marketing only during the slow times. As a result, sales are inconsistent and unpredictable. A well-planned marketing program helps keep sales steadier. If you do encounter a lull, use the free time to make follow-up calls, send out flyers, contact new leads, and strengthen the relationships you've already built.



## Step 3: Outline your goals.

What do you want to accomplish? How many people do you want to reach? How much can you spend? What type of revenue increase do you want to achieve? Outline your goals, clearly and concisely, in writing. Then ask yourself, “Are these goals measurable and realistic?” If not, revise your goals so that they are manageable and aligned with your budget and resources.

Examples of goals:

- a) Get 6 more schools to commit to purchase 50 refurbished PCs each.
- b) Increase sales of refurbished PCs by 10% over the next 6 months.
- c) Acquire 300 donated PCs for refurbishing over the next year.

### **Co-Marketing: Reach more for less.**

Want to make a bigger impact but have a limited budget? Share your marketing with another business in the community that offers complementary products or services and/or is targeting the same customers. By co-marketing with another business, you’ll stretch your marketing budget and reach more customers. You’ll also be able to combine products and services to create a comprehensive solution or offer that is more attractive to your target audience.





## Step 4:

### Devise a strategy.

Once you have gathered information about your target audience and outlined your goals, it is time to get tactical. Choose a mix of tactics to build your marketing strategy.

For example:

Send a personalized e-mail to your existing customer base, reach new customers by placing a print ad in your local newspaper, and generate awareness in-store by placing information for potential buyers and donors near your cash register. As you access your marketing budget, keep in mind the reach of the various media and their response rates. A smart mix of techniques will help you reach all types of prospects—from prospects who know little or nothing about your business, to prospects who have purchased from you in the past.

Next, consider all that you know about your target audience and develop special offers that will appeal specifically to the prospects you want to reach.

#### Key terms in marketing:

##### “Reach”

The number of people who receive your communication.

##### “Response Rate”

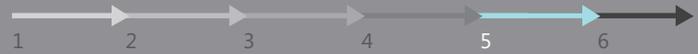
The percentage of people reached who respond to your communication.

##### “Conversion Rate”

The percentage of people reached who act on your communication.

The chart below illustrates how some media types performed in the United States, according to the Direct Marketing Association's 2005 Response Rate Study. Choose the media type that will generate the highest response in your market for the lowest cost per response. If your business is outside of the U.S., do an Internet search for “Direct Marketing Response Rates in [Your Country].” The information you obtain may give you a more accurate idea of what types of media are most effective in your market.

Media	Response Rate	Media	Response Rate
Telephone	5.73%	E-Mail	0.99%
Dimensional Mail	3.46%	Radio	0.38%
Coupons	2.78%	Direct Response TV	0.27%
Catalog	2.32%	Newspaper	0.14%
Direct Mail	1.61%	Magazine	0.13%
Inserts	1.46%	Freestanding Inserts	0.09%



# Step 5: Implement your plan.

Now that you have decided how you are going to reach your target audience, it is time to create your marketing materials. To help, Microsoft has put together a sample of templates that you can personalize and use to generate awareness, build business, and increase revenue. You can also create your own marketing materials, but remember to keep key marketing best practices in mind.

## Advertising:

Whether you place a print ad in a relevant publication, post a banner online, or mail a flyer to your potential or existing customers, advertising is a great way to spread your marketing message. As you customize these templates for your business, consider the customers you are trying to reach and remember to keep your messaging direct and succinct.

## Best practices in advertising.

### Make sure your offer is prominent and simple.

Example: Call [phone number] now and receive a free refurbished PC with your purchase of 20 refurbished PCs. A \$[XXX] value!

### Keep your call to action bold and clear.

Example: Save on refurbished PCs for your school. Call [phone number] or visit [Web site] today.

Example: To donate a used PC, call [phone number] or visit [Web site] today.

### Add credibility by using customer testimonials.

Example: "Buying refurbished PCs from [Business Name] was an excellent move. It saved us over \$[X,XXX], and the quality was exceptional." – Jane Doe, Franklin Elementary Principal

### Focus your messaging on the customer's needs.

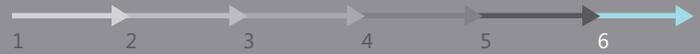
Example: With limited funding, your school needs quality PCs at an affordable price. We can help.

Direct  
Marketing Flyer

Web Banner

Print Ad





## Step 6:

Reassess, refine, and repeat.

Once you have implemented your marketing, be sure to track how it is performing. If response to one tactic is slow, change course and focus your efforts where they can make a bigger impact. Customer behavior, the market, and the economy are constantly shifting, so it is important to continually assess your marketing strategies to make sure they are as effective as possible.



# Section Two

Public Relations (PR) Guidance

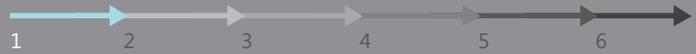
# Public Relations (PR) Guidelines for Community MARs

PR is an essential component of the overall marketing mix. It is important to identify your audience and understand the communication channels that reach them.

All PR activities should be incorporated into your overall marketing mix in support of your business goals. Within these parameters, outlining clear communication objectives, defining strategy and tactics, and measuring results are key to successful PR plans. The purpose of this section is to provide guidance that will drive PR success. It includes sample PR materials and best practices to guide your local planning.

## Get started.





# Step 1:

## Develop a PR plan.

A PR plan will help you outline the core elements necessary to drive a successful press engagement. Below you will find an outline of what a PR plan usually contains. This will vary based on the scope of your PR scenario and needs.

### PR Plan Outline:

PR plans should include the following sections, as appropriate:

a) **Situation Overview:**

Identify the current environment and business problem you are trying to solve or the perception you are trying to change. The situation overview should also outline the press environment—what is being written in the public domain about the product or service you are offering and what impact this public discussion has on your business and plans.

b) **Objectives:**

Outline the objectives for your PR engagement, ensuring that these are measurable. Some examples include:

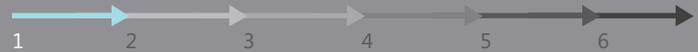
- Drive coverage of [insert your product or service] that positions our company as a preferred Community MAR for schools and non-profits in the local area.
- Reach [insert number] people with a message that demonstrates our company's commitment to providing high-quality refurbished PCs at affordable prices to schools and non-profits.

c) **Key Messages:**

An important element of the public relations planning process is the development of key messages for your PR activities. Your key message may change depending on what you are announcing. For example:

- You may be announcing a major "win" for your company in which you donated or sold a large number of PCs to a local school.
- Or you may be announcing an event that you are organizing.

Your message should include a precise description of your news, a quote from a person who supports your activity or a customer who is satisfied with your offer and service, and call to action information.



d) **Tactics:**

Detail the communication vehicles and specific actions to be taken to execute the strategies. For any given communication vehicle, learn when the deadlines are for submitting entries and develop a work-back schedule to make sure you do not miss those deadlines.

Potential communication vehicles:

- Targeted print publications
- Targeted online publications
- Targeted broadcast outlets
- Relevant local events (or create an event at your place of business or a customer location)
- Targeted e-mail outreach
- Other places that your target audience gets their information

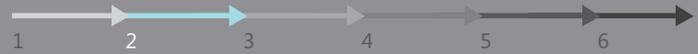
Take action:

- Gather third-party validation from influencers and/or customers for testimonials (see Step 2 for more information on securing third-party support).
- Develop supporting materials (see part (e), List of Required Supporting Materials).
- Call members of the media who cover your target market to start a relationship and begin educating key media contacts on your solution, event, or upcoming announcement.
- Research upcoming events that your business could sponsor and/or participate in. Events can provide opportunities to showcase your company via a trade-show booth or session presentations and are another place for you to reach your audience by handing out information about your company and offer.

e) **List of Required Supporting Materials:**

Develop materials that will help your entire organization deliver consistent and accurate messages to target audiences and communicate a call to action where appropriate. These materials may include:

- Internal talking points
- Internal Q&A  
(What kinds of questions do you anticipate getting from reporters and how are these best answered?)
- Press releases
- Supporting fact sheets and partner and/or customer quote sheets
- Content for blog entries or Web sites that includes key messages and a call to action



## Step 2:

### Secure third-party support.

One of the most critical components to ensure a successful PR campaign is to integrate third-party support into your campaign. Third-party support validates, brings credibility, and provides additional interest to your story.

Work with local partners and customers to ensure that efforts are tailored to the community's specific needs. Highlighting a satisfied partner or customer in your public relations activities will also bring recognition to them. Third parties may include:

- Government partners
- Suppliers
- Partners
- Local elites
- Satisfied customers

Additionally, it is important to understand who the influencers are in your local market and how these influencers impact your target audience. Influencers can be academic elites, business leaders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or local luminaries.

#### **Who are influencers?**

Influencers have large social networks and are respected and trusted by others. After identifying who they are, try to increase awareness of your company within the influencer community. It is important to establish relationships with local influencers so they can become advocates for your business.



## Step 3:

### Develop a press release.

The purpose of a press release is to help generate press interest around a news announcement and provide the essential data in a manner that is concise but interesting, so that journalists are compelled to write.

Some essential elements of a press release include:

- Your key point or message stated early in the press release. This should be written in a clear and concise manner.
- A quote from a key person in your company that articulates your position on the value and importance of the topic.
- A quote from a donor or buyer that validates your position and highlights the importance of your message.
- A precise description of your news to support the key message.
- A quick description of your company. This is typically 50 words or less and simply describes your business at the end of the release. For example, a typical company description for Microsoft is as follows: Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services, and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

#### How does it work?

A press release is a cost-effective addition to your marketing mix. It is a simple way to raise awareness and generate leads.

#### Writing Quotes:

Generally, quotes should be concise and focus on the benefits that will result from your announcement.

Sample Quote:

#### **Computer Refurbishment Centre Opens for Business in Kampala**

"There is a significant market in Uganda for refurbished PCs, but until now no one has addressed the issues of affordability, training and recycling in a way that makes sense long-term," said Patrick Bitature, chairman of Uganda Green Computers Co. "The centre in Kampala has created 22 new jobs already and is expected to grow to over 50 within a year. It will help develop a local and regional industry for responsible and profitable PC refurbishment and recycling for the future."



## Step 4: Send to the press.

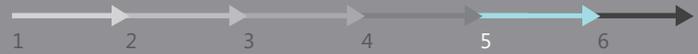
Depending on the desired reach of your release and your budget, there are several options for distributing a press release:

- If you are looking to create very wide impact (national or global) with your press release, contact a wire service such as PR Newswire or Marketwire. Keep in mind that there is significant expense associated with this option.
- If your desired PR scope is on a regional, local, or community level, you can distribute the release directly via e-mail or fax to local publications, reporters, broadcast outlets, or other influential people in the community.
- It is important when sending a release to identify the reporter who focuses on your message, for example, technology, education, or charity. Some publications will have more than one reporter for you to consider.
- It is also important that you follow up your press release with a call or e-mail and try to pitch your story in person or provide additional content to the reporter.

### **Use press aggregators.**

A growing number of free online press release aggregators, such as “PRUnderground,” post press releases that are made available for online media outlets in one location. If your business is outside of the U.S., find a press aggregator specific to your country. Some aggregators post press releases on a specific topic, such as technology. However, these outlets have a more limited reach and do not generally reach print press.





## Step 5:

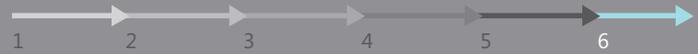
### Follow up personally.

Personal follow-up is perhaps the most important step. Reporters get so many press releases, it is hard to stand out—no matter how well written. Personal follow-up is a way to “sell” your story.

Follow up your press release with a call or e-mail and try to pitch your story in person or provide additional content to the reporter. If a reporter declines, ask if there is another reporter who may be more appropriate.

It is a good idea, when possible, to try to develop an ongoing relationship with reporters at key media outlets. This will make it easier to pitch stories the next time. In addition, the reporter may call you when doing a future story. When calling to pitch a story, ask if the reporter would like a tour of your business (if appropriate) or would like to discuss your business in person.





## Step 6: Track results.

The key measures of your PR campaign's success are press coverage and tone of the coverage. It is important to report results so that media perceptions are accurately tracked for future outreach opportunities. Knowing whether you reached your target audience is also important as you navigate and track your overall "noise" in the market.

The following is recommended information to gather in your coverage report:

- Publication name
- Article headline
- Journalist
- Date of publication
- Link to article
- Summary of message pickup and coverage, including key quotes
- Ranking of story tone: Positive / Neutral / Negative



# Section Three

Microsoft and Community MAR Logo Usage Information

# Microsoft and Community MAR Logo Usage Information

## Guidelines for Using the Microsoft Logo:

A logo is a visual representation or symbol that is designed so people can quickly identify your business. As such, your logo is an important part of your marketing materials.

As a Microsoft partner, you can also use the Microsoft logo in a supporting role in your marketing efforts—for example, on ads, flyers, posters, and online banners. When using the Microsoft logo in your materials, it receives secondary logo sizing and placement, and your logo receives primary logo sizing and placement. Below is an example.

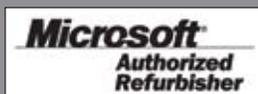


Partner logo is prominently placed and larger than Microsoft logo.

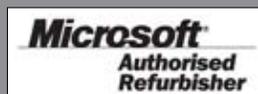
Remember to follow the guidelines at <http://www.microsoft.com/about/legal/trademarks/usage/logo.mspx> when using the Microsoft logo.

## Guidelines for Using the Community MAR Logo:

The Community Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher logo adds instant recognition and credibility for partners in the Community MAR program and is available for you to use in your marketing and communication materials. It may be downloaded in various formats, including U.S. and international versions, from the Community MAR Web site. Remember to follow the logo usage guidelines on the Community MAR Web site when using the logo.



*U.S. Version*



*International Version*

# Section Four

Sample Templates

# Sample Templates

The following are some of the sample templates that have been created for your use. Please note that these are meant to be a guide, and you should edit them with your own logo, contact information, and offer. The following pages show the templates in their completed state.

**An important note:** The template files use pink text and brackets to indicate where you should insert your company's information. Make sure you change the color of the pink text to match the rest of the text, and remove the brackets, before printing or publishing.

Art files and related links are available in the Resources area of the Community MAR Web site for you to edit or create your own templates.

- Templates can be edited using Adobe InDesign or Photoshop.
- In case you do not have access to InDesign, Microsoft Word documents and PDFs are also provided.
- Word documents contain copy blocks and images that can be updated.
- PDF files can also be edited if Adobe Acrobat Professional is used.

## Additional Resources:

- Community MAR Web site: [www.microsoft.com/communitymar](http://www.microsoft.com/communitymar)
- Secondary PC Web site: [www.microsoft.com/secondaryPCs](http://www.microsoft.com/secondaryPCs)

# Advertising

## Print Ad

- Make sure your headline tells the audience how they will benefit.
- Keep your call to action bold and clear.

Insert logo to match your operating system offer here.

Insert your offer here.

Insert your company logo here.

Insert your contact information here.

**Your budget will go further with our refurbished PCs.**

*Make a smart PC purchase for your organization today!*

Microsoft Windows XP

Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher

- Genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP software
- Pentium III
- 15" monitor
- 6-month warranty
- PC end-of-life take back
- Free Web-based support
- Prices starting at \$150.00

contoso

Call 302.405.7549  
or visit [www.contoso.com](http://www.contoso.com)

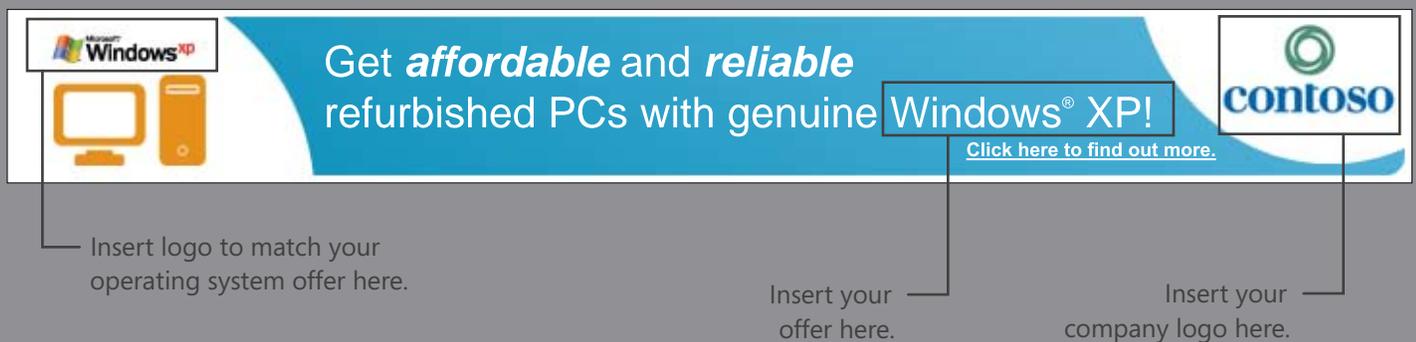
Contoso Computers  
3456 Technology Drive, Seattle, WA 98109

Microsoft

# Advertising

## Web Banner

- Your banner headline should clearly state the benefit to your audience.
- Be sure that your Web banner links to your Web site and include information about the offer there.



Insert logo to match your operating system offer here.

Insert your offer here.

Insert your company logo here.

# Direct Marketing

## Flyer

- Make sure your offer is prominent and simple.
- Include a clear call to action.

**Access an affordable computer solution.**

**Purchase a refurbished PC from Contoso Computers today!**

**We offer affordable and reliable refurbished PCs.**

If you are looking for ways your organization can enjoy the benefits of owning a PC that fits within your budget, consider refurbished PCs from Contoso Computers, a Community Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher (Community MAR).

A refurbished PC purchased through a Community MAR gives you an affordable system that is preinstalled with genuine Microsoft software.

As an educational institution or non-profit organization, with a refurbished PC you can:

- Immediately begin to enjoy the benefits of PCs throughout your organization, without breaking the budget.
- Stretch your budget and expand the number of PCs you can buy.
- Have the confidence of knowing that your PC has been professionally refurbished—wiped of all of the previous owner's data, repaired, tested, and then preinstalled with genuine Microsoft software.

**The value of genuine Microsoft software.**

Our refurbished PCs come preinstalled with genuine Microsoft software, giving you the confidence of having a system that helps you:

- Keep your computer running smoothly, because genuine Microsoft software gives you access to downloads, updates, and enhanced features.
- Avoid downtime and lost data that can occur when counterfeit software malfunctions.
- Protect your systems from the dangers of counterfeit software that can expose users to security risks, including viruses and spyware.
- Be in compliance with authentic and properly licensed Microsoft Windows® software.

**A partner you can trust.**

All Community MARs go through a thorough application process with Microsoft. Before granting the status of Community MAR, Microsoft reviews and confirms the validity of each application and requires that Community MARs submit regular reports and undergo audits.

**Contact us today at 302.405.7549 to learn more about purchasing refurbished PCs.**

**Contoso Computers**  
3456 Technology Drive, Seattle, WA 98109  
302.405.7549  
www.contoso.com

**Microsoft**

Insert your company name here.

Insert your offer here.

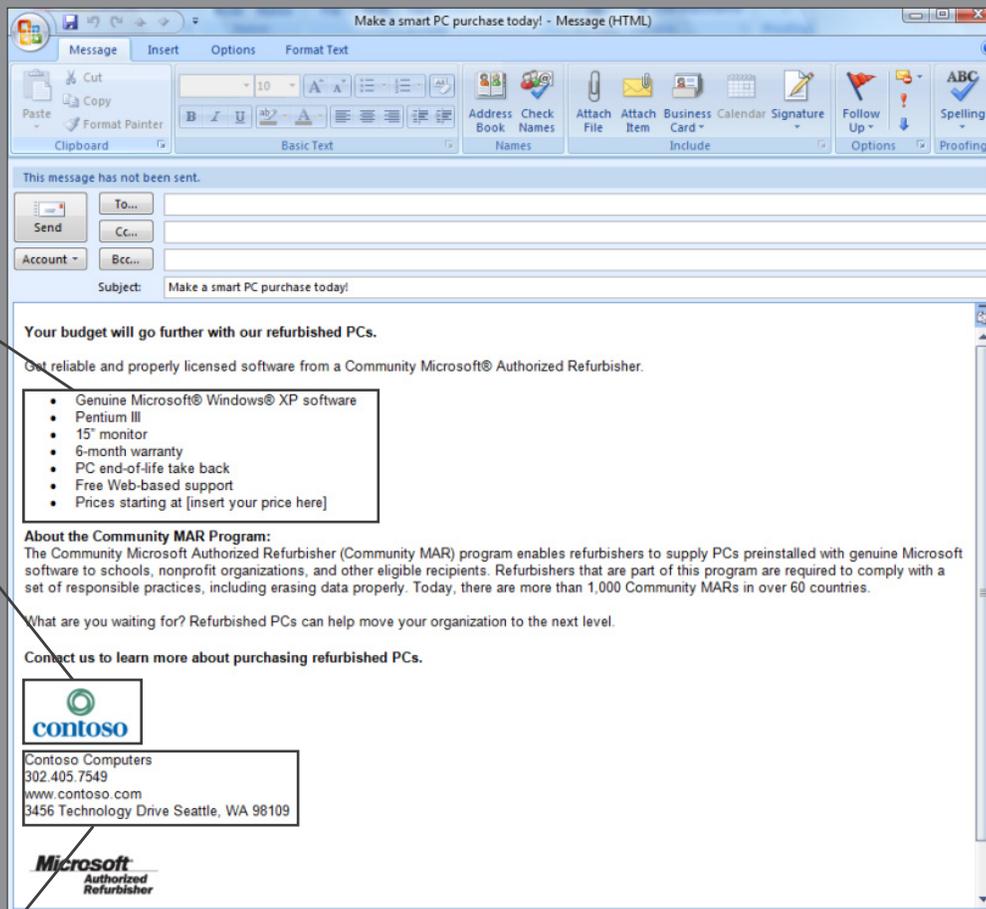
Insert your contact information here.

Insert your company logo here.

# Direct Marketing

## E-mail

- Make sure the subject line grabs the interest of your audience.
- State the main selling points about your offer.



Insert your offer here.

Insert your company logo here.

Insert your contact information here.

# Point of Purchase

## Information Sheet

- This sheet can also be handed out with other marketing materials, such as the flyer, to provide buyers with additional information.
- Include a clear call to action with your contact information.

### Tips for Buying Reliable Refurbished PCs

**Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher**

**If you're interested in purchasing a refurbished computer, it's important to be an educated consumer. Below are some key questions to ask to make sure you are getting a reliable machine with legitimate software:**

- What are the full specifications and capabilities of this computer? Is it a name brand? Can I see it working?
- Where did the PC come from? Has it been upgraded with any new or used parts? Has it been tested for electrical safety?
- Does the PC have a warranty and, if so, what does the warranty cover?
- What is your return policy? What is your return or failure rate?
- What is the percentage of your computers returned because of operating problems?
- Does the PC include genuine operating system and software?
- Where can I get support?
- Do you offer end-of-life take back and, if so, is there a charge?
- Do you offer workstations networked to a server?
- How fast is your customer response time?
- Are you a Community Microsoft® Authorized Refurbisher or Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher?

**Community Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher Program**

The Community Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher (Community MAR) program enables refurbishers to supply PCs preinstalled with genuine Microsoft software to schools, nonprofit organizations, and other eligible recipients.

Refurbishers that are part of this program are required to comply with a set of responsible practices, including erasing data properly.

Today, there are more than 1,000 Community MARs in over 100 countries.

**Microsoft**

**contoso**

Contoso Computers  
3456 Technology Drive, Seattle, WA 98109  
302.405.7549  
www.contoso.com

**Contact us today at 302.405.7549 to learn more about purchasing our affordable and reliable refurbished PCs.**

Insert your contact information here.

Insert your company logo here.

Insert your call to action here.