

## Marketing Your Business

The difference between the masters and disasters in having a successful business is creating a marketing plan. This one tool may be in the difference between a profitable business and a business that never gets off the ground. You can have the most amazing product or service but if no one knows about it, how will you make sales?

Your marketing plan will lay out specific action steps and a timeline that will help to keep you focused and on target. To be most productive, think marketing 2 hours per day in the beginning and budget 10% of your overall business budget in marketing. As you gain customers, you can reduce both the time and amount of money you spend on marketing.

Remember, marketing when done correctly will pay for itself, and even make you money.

We know you did not become a business owner to be a salesperson, but the truth is, they are an inevitable duo. To be a successful entrepreneur, you have to sell yourself. Remember to talk up your business wherever you go, and if you believe in yourself and your product, others will, too!

### 4 Ground Rules for Starting Business Marketing

#### 1. Spell it correctly!

Even if you think it is a clever play on words, don't misspell. Misspelling will only lead to your website being impossible to find. Misspelling and grammar errors make you look unprofessional and will compromise your legitimacy. Make sure you get 1-2 people to proofread all of your printed marketing material, your website, and any other copy to ensure there are no spelling or grammar errors!

#### 2. Keep it Simple

Imagine you are speaking to someone while they are holding a crying baby. This is the attention span equivalent to the internet and social media. Keep your messages and calls to action simple, easy to access, and brief.

#### 3. Don't Reinvent the Wheel

Who is succeeding in this business? Who are the influencers in your niche? What is working for your competition? There is a ton of information and resources out there and your job is not to reinvent the wheel, it is to research what works in your industry and choose the type of marketing you would like to use. Your competition has already done the Research & Development for you, so reimagine the design, improve on it, and make it yours.

#### 4. Be Vigilant!

Keep your finger on the pulse of your business, your competition, and your marketing. People want immediate responses and they want you to be in the know and up to date on your industry, and you should be.

## Marketing – Getting Clients

Here is a handy glossary of marketing terms:

**Bounce Rate** How often people click on your ad or listing and then bounce back out in a matter of seconds. It tells you if your listing is attracting the right people. If your bounce rate is high, this means your ad or listing is misleading or does not align with what people see on your website.

**Call to Action** Using social media/ advertising with the intention of finding clients or attracting business and not including a call to action is like throwing a party, inviting everyone you know, but never giving them the address.

Anything you post should tell people where to go and what to do next and should include a link or button that gets the user easily to the next step. Remember to make your posts genuine and not too sales pitchy. Think about what you can offer for free to your audience (free blog posts, advice, free class, free informational call, event, etc.)

**Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA)** This makes anything original that you post on your website instantly copyrighted without having to formally file a copyright. If it's on your website and you created it, then it's yours and you can protect it. You can serve a 'DMCA takedown' to anyone who steals it.

**FB + Facebook** You all know what Facebook is. They have paid ads and algorithms now, which means it is more difficult for your business page to get found unless you run paid ads. Keep that in mind. If you don't have a ton of money to spend on advertising, but you want to spend a little on FB, do your research to see if it will give you the best bang for your buck.

**Google MyBusiness** No seriously, do it! Can't find me? That's because I haven't listed my business on Google MyBusiness. Be sure to list yourself, before you build a website. List yourself on Google Maps as well if you are a local business.

**#Hashtag/ Keywords** There are what make your social media posts, pages, and websites findable. Think about what types of keywords your customers might use to search for products or services they need online. Match your hashtags and keywords to the words your customer would use to search for. If you want to get found and have more followers, use hashtags!

**LinkedIn** For creating a professional business profile and for business to business marketing, finding employees, and getting headhunted. Posts should be more in depth, technical, and business based. They have paid ads, too.

**Marketing/ Sales Funnel** This should be a clearly laid out path that people take on their way to making a decision on where to buy. Remember those calls to action. In marketing, we create a funnel that represents two things where the potential customer is in your marketing strategy and how you intend to get the customer to your ultimate goal, which is paying your for your goods or services.

The funnels take on various forms. A click funnel is a series of things people will click on until they are prompted to buy. A sales funnel is when you incrementally encourage people upwards to spending more or buying more. For example, you can begin with a free webinar that teaches a particular concept or skill. Then, at the end of your webinar, you say “If you liked that then you’ll love xyz that only costs x amount”. They at the end of the paid service, you can offer another upgraded service.

**Niche Market** A specific area of a larger market tailored to the specific needs and interests of a specific customer. Not all business owners are in a niche market, but many are. Would you rather be the big fish in a small pond or the small fish in a big pond? Which would get you more clients?

### List of Power Words

Power words can crank up your marketing effectiveness and trigger an emotional response. You should use them!

**Words that make you feel safe**      Guaranteed, Certified, Licensed, Approved, Easy, Results

**Words that make you feel urgency**      Limited, Don’t miss out, Hurry, One time only

**Words that make you feel excited**      Revolutionary, Innovative, Extraordinary, Amazing, New

**Words that make you want to buy**      Now, Today, Sale

**ACTIVITY:** Write a Tagline that has one keyword and one power word in it.

EX: Vacation Rental Cleaning, guaranteed to get you your next five star review.

---

---

## **Branding: Design a Logo**

Design a logo that is unique, simple, can fit into a square or circle, and is easily recognizable. Think about which colors you want to use and how those colors either evoke a mood/ feeling or describe your product. Think about how your logo fits your brand and customer's needs.

Logo Making tools:

Logomakr.com

Ucraft.com

Logaster.com

Adobe Illustrator

Or, hire a designer. You can hire a designer for reasonable prices from Fiverr or Upwork, or work with someone locally.

## **Branding: Photos and Images**

Think about what photos and images you want on your website and social media. What do you want to say to your customer with these images. Remember, a photo is worth a thousand words! What is your plan for sourcing these photos. Hire a photographer? Use stock images? Think about what you want to showcase about your product or service and only use high-quality photography, no blurry, dark, or low resolution images.

Stock photo tools:

Canva.com

Unsplash.com

IStock Photos

Shutterstock

## Building a Website

Choose which hosting platform you want to use (Ex: Wix, Squarespace, Wordpress). You can do it yourself with easy to use templates, or hire a web designer.

A few key things to remember:

1. **Think Benefits, not Features!**

2. **Grab your potential customers** by inviting them to send you their email address or join your mailing list. Write a free newsletter and make sure to put your sales offerings/ sales funnel in the newsletter.

3. **What you write is important!** What you write should add value and make the visitor want to return. Review your web page objectives and your target audience and make your message suit that audience. Don't forget to check your spelling and grammar!

4. **Integrate SEO** (Search Engine Optimization) Most web hosts such as Squarespace and Wix have tools to do this, and to check your analytics.

5. **Make it simple and easy to navigate.** Have a few friends take a test drive on your website. Ask them: Is the information clear to them? Do they know what to do next if they want to make a purchase? Is anything missing? Hard to find the information you are searching for? Did it answer all their questions about your service?

6. **Write a blog.** Ensure your website and other pages are active by continuously adding relevant value content. Include content that is relevant to your business and your customers. 1 in 10 blogs is compounding, which means their organic search traffic increases over time. Websites with an active blog generate 67% more leads and 434% more indexed pages than those who don't.

7. **Embrace Social Media.** Integrate social media buttons on your website and decide which type of social media is used by your target audience. Make sure your posts offer enrichment and are engaging. Posts could include: Something funny or fascinating, a glimpse of something they would never get to see otherwise, something informing such as news, factoids, or educational content and discussion based posts and generate a conversation.

8. **Monitor and respond.** Make sure to monitor your website, Google ranking, social apps, and email. Respond promptly! Keep monitoring your competitors pages and content too. Review your website analytics and experiment with how ads or posts affects your web traffic and sales inquiries. Remember to thank people for sharing, commenting, and following. Thank positive reviewers and if you have a negative review, think about how to respond politely or seek resolution with the reviewer.

## Top ways to convert your website visitors into paying clients:

1. Show the visitor they have landed at the perfect website for what they need right now. Very few visitors to your website need to learn about why your product is so great. What most of them need is someone who can assist them in solving a problem, helping them make a choice between products/ services, or give them specific information they are seeking.
2. Again, use a call to action on the homepage. Most potential clients will only visit your site once, so it's key to get their email address so you can market to them later. Offer them something they may need or want right away and make sure it has value. This could be a downloadable file, a coupon, or some free offering.
3. Make a direct offer to assist the visitor in any way you can. Most visitors to your website are looking for something. They may not know exactly what they are looking for, so make it quite clear and help them out! Show your visitor how you can assist them.
4. In summary, build a website that functions, is simple, professional, and is easy to navigate that targets your clientele. Today, you have so many options for building an effective website. You can hire someone, but there are also so many simple tools out there to do it yourself. Think about which aspects of website building you might want to take on (design, layout, copy/writing, branding, SEO, marketing, calendar set up) and which of these tasks hiring a professional might be money well spent.

## Quick Tips on Getting more Clients:

- Schedule a coffee, lunch, or meeting with at least five people you know who may either be a potential client or lead to a paying client.
- Put together a workshop or event in your community.
- Treat your business like a business, not a hobby.
- Ask your customers for referrals. You can offer some sort of referral bonus for your current customers, such as \$25 gift card for each referral that signs up as a paying client.
- Always answer the phone, and call people back right away. Time is money and clients will go elsewhere if you don't connect with them quickly.
- Become a known resource and 'go-to' person. Brand yourself as the authority on improving people's lives,
- Become friends with your competitors! Who knows, they may throw you some business.
- Have your pitch prepared and be ready to tell anyone, anywhere about your business.

## **Customer Service Must-dos:**

- Ask your clients to come back again.
- Return those phone calls and emails promptly!
- Ask your customers what you can do to help them.
- Send hand-written thank you notes.

## **Networking:**

- Join a Chamber of Commerce or another local organization.
- Mail brochures to members of organizations to which you belong.
- Hold an open house or community-based event in your place of business.
- Send letters to attendees after you attend a conference.

## **Advertising:**

- Obtain a memorable URL and email address and include them on all your marketing materials.
- Promote your business jointly with other professionals. Ask others to collaborate.
- Code your ads and keep records of results like Google AdWords analytics.
- Sponsor or host a special event. Get a booth at an event. Partner with a local non-profit organization.

Notes:

## Scheduling Time for Marketing

*Fill in the chart below. What specific steps will you take in the next few months to achieve this goal?*

*Write the year and the month (The month you will start your marketing plan will be month 1). Fill it out 6 months worth of marketing steps that you will be taking, which should follow your marketing plan. Then write the specific tasks/ actions you need to take in order to complete that marketing step. Finally, estimate how much time that month you think you need to set aside to get these tasks completed.*

Year:	Marketing steps I will take	Specific Marketing Tasks to be completed	Time to complete monthly tasks
Month 1:			
Month 2:			
Month 3:			
Month 4:			
Month 5:			
Month 6:			
Ongoing:			



*Example:*

Year: 2021-22	Marketing steps I will take	Specific Marketing Tasks to be completed	Time to complete monthly tasks
Month 1: October	Get business cards made	Research where to order business cards. Design card layout. Order cards.	5 hours
Month 2: Nov	Pass out Business cards	Pass out business cards at xyz place where I would find potential clients. Meet and greet face to face, introduce myself.	8 hours
Month 3: Dec	LinkedIn and Social Media Profiles	Edit and update my LinkedIn and Social media pages, make sure they are all linked to my website	4 hours
Month 4: Jan			
Month 5: Feb			
Month 6: March			
Ongoing:	Monitor/ Post on Social Media	Write 1 post per week and post on Facebook and my blog. Monitor and respond to comments.	8 hours