

14 Big Online Marketing Ideas For Businesses On A Small Budget

Get new clients without spending thousands on marketing





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Most businesses are on a tight budget, especially when it comes to marketing. Many companies are finding that they don't have a lot of money to invest on advertising and marketing.

The irony is, not marketing your business will have a detrimental effect on your business.

One local business owner called Tom, who owns a fireplace store, has just put a closing down sign in his store window because nobody is visiting his store and he says he can't afford to advertise any more.

This year alone he has spent over \$6000 on advertising in his local newspaper with expensive one time ads and it was a total waste of time and money.

Although it is sadly too late for Tom, the good news for other companies who are still in business is that online marketing is not only much cheaper but it is far more effective than traditional methods of marketing.

Plus, you can easily track the success of each marketing campaign that you launch.

Here are some big marketing ideas for businesses on a small marketing budget:

1. Optimise your website for the search engines:

This is one of the first things you need to put on your 'to-do' list.

Why? Because Google is not only the most popular search engine on the Internet but it is also your business' best friend.

Google and the search engines want you to rank high in the search results. If their clients are searching for a product or service that provide, it is Google's job to tell them about your business.

However, you have to make it easy for them by optimising your site. This does not have to be expensive at all and yet will one be of the best investments that you could ever make. The return will be phenomenal as customers far and wide discover your company online.

2. Google Plus Local

While we are on the subject of Google, we can't miss out Google+ Local. As mentioned in the previous marketing tip, Google really is on your

side and it wants to help your business to be found. They make sure that if potential customers are looking for a product or service that you provide, Google wants to make sure that its results are totally relevant and your company appears in the listings.

As a result, search results are becoming much more local and personalised meaning that companies who claim their Google Plus Local Page and optimise it properly get the best rewards.

3. Start a Blog

No matter what type of business you are in, you can still have a blog. In case you don't know what a blog is, it basically stands for 'web log' and they're effectively online diaries.

If you are going to create a blog for your company you need to do the following:

Host the blog on your own domain.
E.g. YourBusinessWebsite.com/blog

Anyone can set one up, that's the easy part. Thinking of something interesting to say each time you blog is the tricky bit. You need to write good content that will be interesting for your visitors and customers. People won't thank you if it's just going to be one long sales pitch.

Create a community and make your visitors feel part of it by responding to each blog comment. If you do, the more people will be inclined to read and comment on your blog more often.

4. Social Networking

Facebook, Twitter and Google Plus are all popular sites that you can't ignore. By creating a profile on each of these sites, you will not only create new opportunities for potential clients to find you but they will also be excellent sources of traffic.

Local businesses that use social media sites like these, almost always see a significant increase in monthly traffic. The part that excites them the most is the fact that it is completely free. All it costs is a little of their time but the results are well worth it.

By investing a bit of time and effort providing good content that is relevant to your audience and interacting with your followers, you will soon build a loyal following. This will raise your online company profile and make your site easier to find in the search engines.

5. Case Studies and Testimonials

If you already have happy customers who love your product or service why not get a testimonial or case study from them?

Case studies and testimonials are a perfect way to get brand new customers because they build credibility and give the potential customers the confidence to try your product or service knowing



"If you make customers unhappy in the physical world, they might each tell 6 friends.

If you make customers unhappy on the Internet, they can each tell 6,000 friends."

Jeff Bezos
CEO Amazon.com



"You can no longer afford to ignore social media marketing."

In 2012, 85% of marketers found that social media generated more exposure for their business."

that other people like it. They will be less inclined to buy if they don't see any testimonials or reviews.

The secret is to get your customer to talk about your product or service, how they used it, and the results that they got.

Most customers will be happy to do this if you ask them.

You could also provide feedback forms on your website. Online customers are used to and conditioned to leaving reviews. They are a great way to get more people interested in what you have to offer.

6. Write a free 'Beginners Guide' for customers to download

No matter what kind of business you are in, you can get a lot more business by writing a free Beginners Guide. It is an excellent marketing technique.

They are an excellent way to get a lot of traffic to your site and increase the interest in your product or service.

Examples :

- Beginners Guide to Choosing a Fishing Rod
- Beginners Guide to Setting Up an iPhone 5
- How to Choose a New Bathroom Suite

- Choosing the Right Spectacles for You
- Beginners Guide to Tiling

These kinds of free reports rank highly in the search engines and do a superb job of up-selling your products and services, as well as making you an 'authority' in your field.

Customers will see that you know exactly what you are talking about and will decide to buy from you instead of your competitors.

7. Start an Affiliate Program

This is possibly the best marketing tip for any business on a tight budget.

By having a team of affiliates (individuals and companies who promote your products on their websites for a commission on each sale that they get) you get people marketing your product for free.

There is absolutely no limit to the number of people that you can have promoting your services. In fact the more you have, the more likely you will make many more sales.

There are a lot of third party applications and plug-ins out there which make setting up an affiliate program easier. They will handle all of your sales and commissions. Feel free to contact us for more information and we will get you up and running in no time.

8. Answer Questions relating to your product or service

The internet is the first place people look to for answers if they have a question about a particular product or service.

They post their questions on discussion forums and question and answer sites like Yahoo Answers. If you can provide the answers to their questions relating to your products or services, you can attract a ton of brand new customers. It is a perfect free way to get more visitors to your website and gain credibility.

9. Go To Networking Events

Networking events are a great place to find new clients and all businesses should make it a practise to attend networking events if possible.

These are generally arranged by The Chamber of Commerce or global organisations such as BNI (Business Networking International). A quick search online will reveal a number of networking events in your area.

They work because you will always meet somebody you can form a business relationship with. This will either be as a customer or as a useful contact to give your referrals or joint venture with.

10. Ask For Referrals

It is surprising how many companies don't ask their customers for referrals. Why not? If you have satisfied and happy customers, you really should be asking for referrals as it a very effective way of getting even more happy customers.

Some people feel shy about asking and are afraid that the customer will turn them down. However, you will be surprised at how few customers actually will say no. If a large proportion of customers do refuse to introduce you to others, it might be a sign that you are doing something wrong and could be doing a much better job of

making them happy, giving you something to work on.

For a pain-free way of asking for referrals, why not try this method; Look up your current customers on LinkedIn and see who they are connected with. If you think someone that they know can personally benefit from your product or service, ask them for an introduction.

Most, if not all, will say yes, especially if you return the favour.

11. Harness the Power of YouTube

Companies are latching on to the importance of YouTube in their marketing campaigns. Not only do videos now appear in the search results, but you can also use videos to show how good your product or services actually are.

If, for example, you create stunning cakes, why not show a video of you making and icing the cake. Or if you are a painter and decorator, create a video showing the transformation of the room with a before, during and after video. Do you provide a lawn care service? If so, again, video the results.

There is no end to the things that you could video relating to your company. Even a tour around your company premises could be interesting to your customers.

12. Provide exceptionally good customer service.

The best way to keep a customer for life and to get them to tell others about your company is by providing exceptionally good customer service. By doing so, not only will customers be happy with their purchase but they will spend more of their hard earned money on your product or services in the future.

There has never been a more important time for your company to provide excellent customer service, especially as customers are more willing to tell others about their shopping experiences

on their social networking sites and by leaving reviews, good or bad.

You want them to tell all of their friends about the great experience they had using your company.

13. Do some online PR

As you know, getting some good PR is a great free way to get people talking about your company. The more they talk about you, the more people will come to your website and check out what you are offering.

Most people think of PR coming from major media outlets such as radio and television. While this would be fantastic, it is not easy to get that sort of attention.

However, there are easier ways to get PR online which can be just as effective, especially if you have a targeted customer group.

Getting the attention of blog owners is one way of doing this, especially if it is a popular and attracts the sort of readers that you want to target.

You can email the blog owner, asking if they would like to interview you. As they are constantly looking for new topics to write about, many will be happy to interview you, especially if it is something that they think their readers will benefit from.

14. A Crafty Twitter Technique

If you want more customers, here is a great suggestion to encourage people to promote your business for free AND build up a huge mailing list at the same time.

Here is the plan:

Offer a free downloadable report, or set up an exclusive password protected VIP Loyalty Group on your website or Facebook page where you will have special offers and discounts not available to anybody else.

People can get access to the report or VIP area by Tweeting about your product or service.

Once they have sent the Tweet, they notify you and you give them access to their prize.

This is an incredibly powerful way to not only spread the word about your company and website but also to build your online mailing list (if you are giving them the report) or group of followers on Twitter and Facebook.

This means that you can keep in touch with these people and build a relationship with them. It will be good for your branding and for your internet presence.

As a variation, you can do this by asking for 'Likes' on Facebook or any other social site.

If just 10 people do this per day and they each have a following of 100 friends and family, you can see how quickly word will spread about your business.

If you are inspired by any of the powerful marketing tips in this article and want to know more about setting them in place, you can find our contact details on this free guide/magazine and we can do this for you.



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connecting your business ideas

How We Can Help

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We are a local web design company who specialise in “One Stop Shop” web service including Web Design, Graphics, Multimedia, SEO and Internet Marketing.

We are incredibly friendly and have a wealth of experience in online marketing so we can help you to gain more loyal fans, convert them into customers, get your website noticed in the search engines, gaining new traffic and brand exposure.

If you don't have the time or confidence to get started online then please give us a call or email us. You will be so glad that you did. We are not pushy but you will love our enthusiasm and will be very excited to learn what we can do for your business.

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We are based in Cardiff, South Wales (Website Design Cardiff) and we have diversified our web services to a huge number of clients across the UK. Our clients place repeat orders, born from confidence, friendly customer service and reliability. With many years of experience within the IT industry, you can be rest reassured that you will receive cost effective web services and eye-catching design to help your business stand out from the marketplace.

Our underlying philosophy is simple, and that is to work closely with our clients on a one to one basis, making sure that they get the most appropriate web solutions and original designs in order to stimulate awareness, client retention and build sales.

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