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## 7 NO COST TIPS TO MARKET YOUR BUSINESS

Marketing a business can be fun, exciting and creative. It can also be very frustrating and expensive if one doesn't know what outcome they are looking for or how to evaluate cost effective methods of marketing.

Over the years people have come to know me for my unique ability to develop low cost and no cost strategies to market and promote a business, product or service. Strategies that have realized incredible returns.

Some of my successes have included:

- Before my last book was published I pre-sold over \$8,000 in books
- Over 250 people registered for a recent seminar in less than 2 weeks and the cost to promote was under \$25
- One company used my strategies for a career expo and made over \$180,000 in consulting fees
- One speaker sold over \$23,000 in product sales back of the room at a two hour seminar with strategies outlined in my program

I don't share this to impress anyone, rather to impress upon you when using the right strategies for your market, you can realize some incredible results.

People have also come to know me as someone who is a stickler when it comes to putting systems in place. My marketing successes are a direct result of the systems I have implemented.

With a bit of forethought, planning and desire, you can successfully market your business in a very effective manner. Below are seven proven strategies sure to increase visibility, leads and sales.

### 1. Business Cards

Business cards are often one of the most underutilized tools in one's marketing.

Use the front and back of your business card to gain full benefit. Depending on your market you can put some very valuable information on the back such as a sports schedule, emergency numbers, or special dates people want to remember.

Keep some in your wallet, your automobile, on your desk, and some at home. Be sure to carry them with you wherever you go and be willing to hand them out as opportunity presents itself.

Creatively distribute your card. When you eat out you can leave one with the tip.

If you borrow a library book, use one as a book mark. Hand them to clerks in stores who may know other people who could use your product or service.

When someone gives you their business card be sure to enter their information in your database. Send them a short note or email within 48 hours of meeting them to keep your name fresh in their mind.

### 2. Send a picture

A great way to keep your name fresh in a customer's mind is to send them a picture of when they purchased a product or service from you.

Put a picture of a buyer's auto purchase in a beautiful calendar. Likely, the proud owner of the vehicle will display the calendar for the next 365 days.

For specialty gift shops, when a customer makes a substantial purchase, have a picture taken with the shop owner. Frame the picture and send it to the customer.

Chances are very good the picture will be displayed proudly for friends and family to see.

A dentist who specializes in smile makeovers can easily arrange to have a professional makeup artist and photographer capture the patient's beautiful new smile. No doubt the patient will be more than happy to show others their new look.

### 3. Associations

Associations particular to your market are a great resource for marketing. There are associations specific to virtually any industry, job type or business. A quick web search will likely show you how much is available.

A major opportunity within many organizations is the chance to network. Additionally, to make presentations. Along with presentations come publications. Often, when you do a presentation, you will get a mention in the association newsletter, their Ezine and/or on their website.

In many cases, when an organization has a newsletter or Ezine, they welcome the presenter writing a press announcement for them. It saves them time and often assures you have a better chance of the information making it into the publication.

They may also welcome you writing an article for their publication or website.

This lends itself to pre-presentation visibility. Additionally, you will position yourself as an expert and increase credibility.

Most organizations have the following opportunities that can help you to gain visibility and do some very effective marketing:

- Newsletters
- Internet listings
- Links to you website
- Discounted advertising rates
- Networking opportunities
- Business referral services
- Special recognition events
- Education seminars
- Business and membership directories

In many cases you will need to be a member of the association to take advantage of the multiple marketing opportunities. In other cases membership is not necessary.

### 4. Committee Involvement

Committee involvement is a great way to give back to the association or community while building visibility for you and your business. In some cases, you may even want to get involved in a committee where you have little experience or knowledge. This will give you an opportunity to stretch yourself and meet and network with individuals you may not have otherwise had the chance to meet.

### 5. Contests and drawings

Contests are a favorite for many businesses such as restaurants or those that have high foot traffic. Contests are a great way to build your database quickly. You are generating very hot leads when you have a contest with people who have already frequented your place of business. The key though is to do back-end marketing. Far too many businesses hold contests, get lots of names and do nothing with them. In this case, it is a complete waste of time to hold a contest.

You can advertise a contest to gain new foot traffic in your place of business.

Trade show booths are a great place to hold a contest. Pre-show marketing helps to generate traffic at your booth. Invite people to stop by booth # \_\_\_\_\_ (whatever your booth is) to enter to win. Creative contests can also generate free publicity.

### 6. Cross-promoting

Join with other companies who have products or services that compliment yours and promote each other. Let's say you have a massage business. You could partner with a candle company to sell their candles to your massage clients. They can give out coupons for your massage business. Or the candle company

can partner with a gift basket company. Cross-promoting is only limited by your imagination.

This can considerably cut down the cost of business promotion and allow each business to use promotion techniques that might be too expensive to implement alone.

#### 7. Bonuses

Secure special offers from various businesses who want to share a similar market as you. When a customer buys a minimum amount they receive a bonus packet with the various offers from the other vendors. This is a win/win all the way around. The other vendors gain visibility, you have something extra to offer you customers and the customers get incredible value for their purchase.

Be aware of who you cross-promote and joint venture with. You want someone who will be equally committed to a campaign.

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