

Without marketing, there is no business

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FREE & lo-cost tips to keep you going during this economy

Imagine getting in your car and expecting to get to your destination without gas. Silly, right? Now, imagine trying to create a successful business without marketing? Hmm...see where I'm going with this?

By Randye Spina

Marketing IS the gas that fuels your business.

There simply is no other way to bring revenue in the door without some form of marketing. It's just flat out impossible.

Now, before you say "I'm just starting out, I don't have a marketing budget", or "times are tough, I don't want to spend a lot", let me stop you. You can market your business without spending a fortune. Perhaps without even spending at all.

Let's look at some amazingly affordable marketing solutions you can implement right now:

1. **Email** – Do you have signature block at the end of your emails? If not, you are missing a large opportunity to get the word out. Make sure you include all the ways to contact you & even add a tag line. You'd be surprised how much mileage you can get out of this consistent branding opportunity.
2. **Email Marketing** – At every opportunity, try to collect emails from prospects as well as existing clients. Then, using your existing email system (no subscriptions required) just be sure to send them something relevant & of course don't forget to use the "BCC" line to protect everyone's privacy.
3. **Phone** – Do you have a message on your after hours, or voice mail system that plugs your business? A short, simple message that states "Thank you for calling _____. The company that _____. This is _____. No one can take your call right now, so please leave us a message & someone will return your call as quickly as possible." Even if you use your home phone as your business line, do it! Remember, for a first-time caller,

impressions are everything. You may also want to consider stating your cell number for client emergencies.

4. **Business Cards** – Be sure you have them stashed everywhere. In your briefcase, padfolios, wallet, purse, notebook, pockets – I mean everywhere! You never know when an opportunity arises to give someone your card, or to put it up at a community location. Also, don't forget to include a business card with every piece of correspondence you send out. It can subtly say "pass me along".
5. **Write articles** – If you want to set yourself up as an expert in your field, set aside time & write articles that will get people's attention. Send them out on the web & be sure to send them to your local media outlets & publications.
6. **Website** – If you already have one, be sure to consistently update its content to stay fresh & of course, add to it as necessary. Learn how to update verbiage yourself. It's not that difficult and you can save money by doing these yourself.
7. **Network** – Pick up the phone & call 5 people everyday that you think will be great resources for you. Call friends & ask if someone they know needs your product or service. Ask everyone, everywhere you go & make time to network once a week. I like Fridays when people are more relaxed & open to a quick (& I mean QUICK!) chat. Then, ask those people for more referrals & the list keeps going.
8. **Do reviews** – Go to book sites & review books within your industry & area of expertise. Get your name out there & be sure to include links to your email & website, if you have one.
9. **In store/office** – If you are lucky enough to have a retail location use it to your marketing advantage. Invite speakers, have distributors give product demonstrations. Then serve tea or wine & cheese and invite your customers & prospects. Tell them to bring a friend. You'd be surprised how well this can work for you.

Good luck!

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