

# Understanding Marketing



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## 11 Free Tips To Help Your Small Business Thrive, by Randye Spina

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?

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" or, "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. Add a tag line, announce a new product or service here too. 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, [sign up for an email service](#). The cost can be as low as \$15 per month and you'll have all the required opt-in and opt-out language to protect your business.

**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 and 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 - or to answer after-hours questions from potential ones.

**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 and write articles that will get people’s attention. Send them out on the web and be sure to send them to your local media outlets and publications.

**6. Website** – If you already have one, be sure to consistently update its content to stay fresh and 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 this yourself.

**7. Blog** – Many of them are free to set up and can be a [standalone marketing tool](#) or linked to your website. Be sure to tag each blog so the search engines pick them up.

**8. Network** – Pick up the phone and call 5 people every day that you think will be great resources for you. Call friends to ask if they know anyone who needs your product or service. Ask everyone, everywhere you go and make time to network once a week. I like Fridays when people are more relaxed and open to a quick (and I mean QUICK!) chat. Then, ask those people for more referrals and the list keeps going.

**9. Social Media** – Did you know it free and fast to set up business “fan pages” on [Facebook](#)? [Twitter](#) is also free and so is LinkedIn and many others. Don’t forget to say “visit me on \_\_\_\_\_” on your website too and link those pages back to your site.

**10. Do reviews** – Go to book sites and [review books](#) within your industry and area of expertise. Get your name out there and be sure to include links to your email and website, if you have one.

**11. 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 and cheese and invite your customers and prospects. Tell them to bring a friend. You’d be surprised how well this can work for you.

**Editor’s Note:** *Randy Spina* is the chief solutions officer for [MyAffordableMarketing.com](#).