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Small Business Resources

Without marketing, there is no business

FREE and low-cost tips to keep you marketing during this economy

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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 it? 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," or "times are tough," let me stop you. You can market your business without spending a fortune. Perhaps without

even spending at all.

Here are some amazingly affordable marketing solutions you can implement right now:

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 and even add a tag line. You'd be surprised how much mileage you can get from this consistent branding opportunity.

Email Marketing – At every opportunity, 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 and of course don't forget to use the "BCC" line to protect everyone's privacy.

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.

Business Cards – Be sure you have them stashed 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".

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.

Website – If you already have one, 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.

Blog – Many of them are free to set up and can be a stand alone marketing tool or linked to your website. Be sure to tag each blog so the search engines pick them up.

Network – Pick up the phone and call 5 people. Call friends and ask if they know anyone who could use 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.

Social Networking – Did you know it free and fast to set up business "fan pages" on Facebook? Twitter is also free and so is LinkedIn and others. Don't forget to say "visit me on _____" on your website too

and link those pages back to your site.

Do reviews – Go to book sites and review books you've read about your industry and area of expertise. Get your name out there and be sure to include links to your email and website.

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 works.

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