24 AFFORDABLE SMALL BUSINESS MARKETING IDEAS

by **url/apps**

Your cash flow has reached an all time low. Most likely, the majority of your business's budget was spent developing your idea and hiring people to bring it to execution. Now, you have to find a way to market it without breaking the bank. Luckily, there are several different cost effective ideas that can help you stretch your budget while spreading the word about your business.

VALUABLE CONTENT

Not enough can be said about the value of quality content in developing your online presence. If you've got the skills to write well, do it yourself. If not, you can easily find a skilled content writer at an affordable price on freelance websites like **Upwork.**

You can shop for writers within your budget that can compose quality content for your blog and your webpage. Many people will try to encourage you to pay high dollar SEO companies to help you develop an online presence. But truthfully speaking,

> “...with a good writer and some excellent information in the form of tips, listicles, and industry best practice ideas, you can develop a strong online presence that will attract visitors.”

ADD ORIGINAL SIMULATION INTO OLD STATISTICS

A little digging can go a long way in helping to drive traffic to your blog or website, which can help develop your brand.

If you cannot afford a wordsmith to liven up your content, you can dig deep into the trenches of the data world and spin doctor some statistics to invite readers to your page. There are reliable resources online for any businesses’ niche. Use published studies and liven them up to develop superior material.

YOUR INFORMATION DOES NOT NEED TO BE ORIGINAL you just have to make sure that you offer citations to where you found your data, so it does not appear as if you are taking credit for work you did not do.

RECYCLE CONTENT

REDUCE · REUSE · RECYCLE

You don’t have to constantly recreate the wheel.

OLD BLOG POST + OLD BLOG POST + OLD BLOG POST = NEW SUBJECT!

Combine old blog posts to cultivate new subjects. Create an ebook of information you’ve already published. Use an old webinar to create a video tutorial. You don’t have to exhaust yourself looking for new ideas.

A lot of times old ideas will attract a completely new audience. Just put a spin on what you already have.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

SOCIAL NETWORKING IS A MUST IN THIS DIGITAL AGE.

You should, without a doubt, have pages on all the major social networks including:

- **Facebook**
- **Twitter**
- **LinkedIn**
- **Google+**
- **Pinterest**
- **Instagram**

These networks are huge, and they have the potential to reach many people. Make sure that you are adding insightful and quality content to your social media as well.

LINKEDIN

You need to make sure your LinkedIn profile highlights all that you have accomplished.

A well developed profile will assure you and your business credibility.

You also need to take advantage of the groups that LinkedIn offers for your niche. By sharing ideas and staying on top of what is evolving in your industry, you can be sure to add authority to what you are offering customers.

GROUPS AND FORUMS

With so many online networking groups out there, you need to take advantage of how free they are.

Quara, Reddit, LinkedIn Groups, and Google+, offer great opportunities for you to engage with others about your business.

By sharing what you know, you bring credibility to your brand and to your business.

In essence, by showing people you know what you are talking about, you create a sense of trust that can go a long way in building a customer base. You can also offer supplemental materials to your insights in the form of your blog posts or your website. Do not use your online networking as a link dumping ground so that people feel you are spamming their conversations, but you can certainly add a link here and there when it is relevant to your conversations.

STUMBLE UPON

StumbleUpon **is a great substitute to social media marketing.**

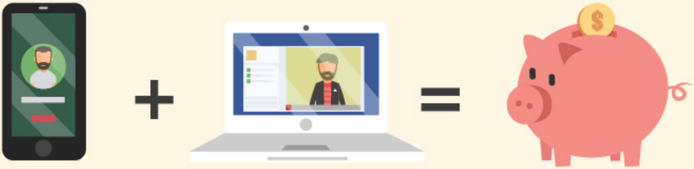
Stumble Upon does exactly what its name indicates. It helps web surfers “stumble upon” pages they may have otherwise never found. The social media site allows users to create a profile that indicates their likes, etc. and then it guides them through a web surfing experience that they would not have been able to complete without the help of Stumble Upon’s technology.

VERY AFFORDABLE

PAID DISCOVERY

What makes Stumble Upon great for small businesses is that it offers a **very affordable Paid Discovery option**, that will help guide prospective clients to your businesses information. This is an affordable and effective alternative to high priced social media advertising on networks like Facebook.

VIDEOS



A smart phone and a video editing program can go a long way in saving you money.

Making your own commercial, and publishing it on **YouTube** can get you some exposure. Add to your channel instructional videos about your niche, and you are sure to get followers.

It's a free and easy way to get your business out there.

PODCAST

A great way to forge connections and to market your business is to host a weekly podcast.

Invite others in your field or other business owners to join you as expert guests, and you can share stories about your time in business. Guests love to share what they know, and you can benefit by fostering relationships with other business owners.

INFOGRAPHICS

Purchasing an infographic can be expensive, but taking the time to learn to design your own can certainly be beneficial.

Infographics are a great way to get referral traffic because the data suggests that people are prone to sharing them.

Furthermore, they quickly and effectively communicate information about your business and your brand. The wealth of online DIY infographic tools makes it easy to create infographics with little to no knowledge of graphic design.

EMAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is another simple and effective way to communicate.

While popular conception is that email marketing is a dead end, the data suggests otherwise.

MailChimp

MailChimp is a great email campaign tool that can help you communicate with current and prospective customers.

Setting up a monthly newsletter can help you inform clients about:

- **About new products**
- **Upsell opportunities**
- **Changes to your business**

Something as simple as communicating with your clients on a consistent basis can help keep your business's name in their mind. You never know when they might have an opportunity to share your information with another prospective client.

WEEKLY EMAILS

Develop a creative weekly email. Come up with

a CREATIVE TITLE and try to make it something that your clients and other people in your network look forward to.

You've all seen motivation memes that bring a smile to your face. Or, how about those motivational quotes that sometimes just help push you through that rough day?

Something along the lines of **"Managing My Monday"** can be a pick me up to encourage people to start the week on a good note. You don't have to market your business.

The purpose should be to keep your name what you do at the forefront of people's thoughts.

REFERRAL PROGRAMS

Nothing says motivation like FREE!

And better yet, nothing speaks better of your brand than word of mouth referrals.

By creating a referral program that offers existing customers something free for bringing new customers on board, you are getting the best of both worlds. You are pleasing existing customers, getting new customers, and getting word of mouth referrals—all of which are huge assets to your business.

CONTESTS

Everyone loves to win, and contests invite new and prospective customers to leave you their contact information.

Data about who to contact is priceless, so hosting a contest and giving something away will more than pay for itself in resources.

There are several online contest

ENTER TO WIN!

websites that make hosting a contest very simple. Simply find one that you feel will work for you, and launch your campaign. Keep in mind that your prizes do not have to be grandiose vacations, but **they need to be enticing enough to encourage people to enter for a chance to win.**

PARTNERSHIPS

An easy way to double your exposure is to partner with someone in your industry that compliments what you do.

PROMOTION
PROMOTION

For example, a public access network provider may partner with a hotel chain to add validity to products. The hotel chain benefits by getting free promotions on the networks splash pages while the network providers get to piggy back on the hotels established brand. By exchanging promotion opportunities, partners in both businesses benefit.

Find another business that compliments what you do, and help each other.

APPLY FOR AWARDS

Any type of accolade you can place beside your name is a great tool to use to drum up business. People see value in achievement, and if you can prove that experts in your area value what you are offering, people will follow their leads.

Post awards on your website in plain sight, so people associate your brand with positive achievements in your industry.

CREATIVE BUSINESS CARDS

One really creative way to stand out among the competition is to get creative with your business cards.

Make you card one that people will remember.

The key to using this strategy is to make sure that you hand out your cards. It's not enough to invest in a really cool design, you have to make sure that your card gets into the hands of every person that you meet. It does not matter if they are in need of what your business has to offer. **Somewhere down the line, they will run into someone who is, and they will remember to say something because of your creative business card left an impression.**

BiznessAPPS

FREE STUFF

EVERYONE LOVES FREE STUFF!

FREE!
FREE!
FREE!
FREE!
FREE!
FREE!
FREE!

Some of the most successful businesses started by giving away their products. The process is really simple. Find a local carnival, craft show, or festival that will allow you to let people sample your product. If what you are offering is worth it, people will go to great lengths to find it again. Make sure you have literature there that directs them to your website or to stores that carry what you sell. This extra little step will help you close your sales.

NETWORKING EVENTS

Attend every networking event that will fit into your schedule. Don't limit yourself to networking events for your niche.

Attend every opportunity to network.

MAKE YOURSELF KNOWN!

Go to local fundraisers or to youth sports organizations' opening days. If there is an opportunity for you to create a relationship, take advantage of it. Simply put, the more you get out there and let people know who you are, the more likely that you will become the go to person for your niche. It's really that simple. Make yourself known.

CREATE A NETWORKING EVENT

If you are finding that you are seeing the same people during opportunities to network, host your own networking event.

Some of the most successful people in business find that hosting events for the sole purpose of meeting other people with an entrepreneurial mindset helps to foster the necessary relationships to grow their business.

Your ultimate goal is to be the person people think of when your niche is mentioned. In order to become that person, you have to make great strides to meet people.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

Another excellent way to meet people and to let people know who you are is to lead organizations. Become the president of the baseball organization in your community. Head the volunteer committee at the retirement home. Be the lead marketing volunteer for the local spaghetti dinner. Make your face and your name known in your community.

Again, you are the face of your business, and the more people see you, the more they are reminded of what you do.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

STATISTICS SAYS THAT:

44% of consumers develop a positive perception of business who are members of the local chamber of commerce and of that 44% of patrons,

63% of them will go out of their way to purchase products from these businesses as opposed to their competitors.

So membership in a local chamber of commerce is certainly beneficial to your bottom line.

In addition to creating a positive awareness of your business, chamber members are privy to business trends in the local market, which allows them the necessary foresight to adjust their business plans accordingly.

SUPPORT A CAUSE

Find something you care dearly about, and begin vocally supporting your cause.

Maybe the local animal shelter is in need of food. Host a pet potluck and invite people to bring a covered dish and a bag of pet food. Have your business provide the main course and some entertainment, and your business as well as something you care about with both benefit.

SPONSOR AN ORGANIZATION

SPONSORS

There are countless youth programs in your area that are always looking for sponsors.

Baseball teams, soccer clubs, hockey teams, and even dance teams are always asking businesses to help their organizations.

Sponsorships bring with them a lot of FREE advertising.

Sometimes you will get your business information on a t-shirt or a banner at the establishment. Regardless of what the program is offering, sponsorships are a great way to get your business' name out in the community. When people associate your business with doing right by kids, it leans well in your favor.

CONCLUSION

While your marketing budget may not compare with some of your competitors, you are not without resources. With some leg work and a little creativity, you can reach prospective customers without spending millions.