

MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The most common question entrepreneurs ask me, is “how can I improve my marketing with no or little money?” With this in mind, I asked for help from the TPE community and here is what I got... 115 ideas. Skim them or read them in detail, but whatever you do make sure you go through the list. Just one of these ideas may trigger a marketing opportunity that you never considered before. Just one of these ideas may take your business to a whole new level!

1. Focus On One Contact

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Target one decision maker you'd like to meet and invite him to share his expertise. Ask for a (very) short article for your newsletter or a quick phone interview for your podcast. Follow up by sending, or better yet dropping by with a copy of your finished production with a thank-you and of course, more information about your product & services.

2. Create Relevant Content

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Promote your business online via creating content areas on your website that would attract users and position your business and brand as a source of valuable knowledge. Creating these content pages does not require any additional budget, but they do require time and creativity. For example, a children clothes store can dedicate a page to ‘Tips on keeping your child busy on school vacation’ and through that page, attract parents to the site.

3. Write For Trade Magazines

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: If you want people to call you, there is nothing like writing an article for a trade magazine (for B2B) or local magazine (for B2C) to gain credibility and exposure. You can demonstrate your expertise and position yourself as the go-to person for your product or service. This strategy generates responses from people who are the ready-to-buy stage.

4. Google AdWords On The Cheap

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Run market research on the cheap by using Google Adwords to target an audience, with the landing page being a question survey. A snappy question to attract people, along with Google's Geo-targeting can provide great results, for next to nothing.

5. Sponsor Your Local Sport Teams

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Sponsor a local sports team. For less than the cost of a 1/4 page ad in a local paper, you can buy team uniforms for a local soccer, basket ball, baseball or other sports teams. This is a sure fire way to get the team, and their friends, family and fans that your business is a genuine part of the local community. It's a great PR technique too, as your local press will be very interested that you're taking this action and will probably send a photographer round to photograph you with the team and their new strips!

6. Its All Keywords

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Statistically, 3 out of 4 internet users live in North America, making exposure on the web critical. Having a website that is keyword optimized for what your small business does and where you are located works as an online brochure as well as a “24 hours a day” sales person for your services and products.

7. Get Out Of The Dark Ages

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Business owners should look beyond the brick and mortar and reach out to a bigger audience with the web. Establishing a presence online is key, whether it's by creating an interactive, regularly updated site or blog, or by building informative yet informal profiles on social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter. Opening communication channels online will not only increase brand awareness, it'll

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also boost your company's rank on search engines, and prove that you're a business that "gets it" and doesn't live in the dark ages.

8. Go To The Chamber

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Make yourself the expert in your field. Volunteer to teach seminars through your local Chamber of Commerce about your area of expertise. Your business will receive promotion through the event itself, as well as through all marketing for the event. Your association with the Chamber will boost your credibility, as well.

9. Create An E-News For Your Biz

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: As a relatively new start up, it may sound "old fashioned" in today's Twitter world, but having a great e-news with valuable content is key for our business. E-News is more than a sales pitch, rather, the opportunity to position your business as an expert, provide relevant information, and to add another layer in relationship building. Building a strong database with a focus on media/bloggers, giving your clients the opportunity to subscribe, and publishing frequently (but not obtrusively) is still one of the best, and least expensive, marketing tools in our arsenal. You would be surprised how often your content is tweeted on twitter, covered by bloggers, or open the door to a more extensive PR pitch.

10. The "Wow" Factor

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Marketing gurus often refer to it as "differentiation." Academics who fancy themselves as marketers – they're the ones who write marketing text books – prefer to call it a USP, your Unique Selling Proposition. What they're both taking about is more correctly described as "Wow!" Whatever it is that separates your Stuff – your products or services – from the similar Stuff your competition is selling, that's your Wow!, what makes your Stuff better.

11. Leverage Online Forums

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Many communities now have online forums/bulletin boards that offer varying levels of paid memberships. Purchase a membership that allows you to advertise your business and USE IT. Page with highest traffic in this specific area ... www.Paulding.com ... business advertising membership \$150/year. Every time you post with your business ID, your business name (and web page link) is put in front of potential customers. Post about your specials, sales, what have you. (Be VERY careful to remember that every post is representative of your business.)

12. Charity Donations

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: My #1 PR tip for small businesses: FOCUS, FOCUS, FOCUS. Pick one or two charity organizations or causes and donate only to them for the year. Create a letter that says why you chose the organization(s) so when you get inundated with requests for large donations, you can politely and formally say NO and still send a respectful message that you are committed to the community. You'll save a ton of money on \$50 year book ads and donations to the latest event that is NOT your target market.

13. Hand Written Follow Up Cards

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Believe it or not, I have found a lot of success with the good old fashioned hand-written follow up card. Whether it's to say thank you, that it was a pleasure meeting, or that I'm simply looking forward to a future business relationship, I am much more likely to hear back from that lead than someone who I simply met and didn't write to follow up with. How many hand written cards do you get in the business world these days? Almost none...it's an extremely personal effort that helps you stick out and remain memorable in your clients' mind. It seems simply and old-fashioned but it works.

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14. Buzz Marketing At Trade Shows

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Best tip, resist the urge to look/sound like your bigger competitors. To create buzz at a trade show for a client and demonstrate how other competitors waste customers' time, we strapped a big clock to a gurney and walked it around the show floor with two EMT types. T-shirts with the URL and booth number were the only "branding." Buzz = conversation, conversation = participation.

15. Personalized Gifts

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Identify a unique, personalized gift to give your target customer's customer on the target customer's behalf. Example: A small, boutique hotel recommends a restaurant. The restaurant gives the diner a free dessert, compliments of the hotel! Everyone wins.

16. Guest Blogging

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Visit blogs that attract your ideal customers and offer to write a guest post in exchange for a link and a byline.

. Tell Memorable Stories

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: A convincing (and free) marketing strategy you can use to 'tangibilize' your service is by telling stories—give specific and practical examples of what you have accomplished for clients. Use real-life examples of projects you completed, specific problems you solved or successes you achieved. If you're a new entrepreneur, create a realistic scenario about how you would help your ideal client overcome a typical challenge. Relate your story through articles, blog posts, public speaking or by publishing a special report.

18. Participate in Trade Associations

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Business-to-business professional service organizations get the most bang for their buck when they impress prospective referrers with their capabilities. One of the best ways to do this is through active involvement at trade associations where prospective referrers' congregate. This participation enables them to a) increase their visibility and b) gain the opportunity for the consistent and frequent interactions it takes to build lasting relationships."

19. Inspire Customers To Call You

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Send a postcard mailing monthly instead of a hard copy newsletter. Cost self printed is \$0.46 ea. including the stamp. Title - 100 reasons to call us - list 8, the 9th - call to meet for coffee, - 10th is .."more to come". List your skills, talents, tasks and ask questions - we've used it for a fun contest and sent a \$10. gift for all correct answers and a \$ 2.00 gift for participating. They read the card!

20. Enter A Business Award Competition

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: There is nothing like entering a business award competition to strengthen the reputation of your small business. Winning an award can catapult your reputation within your industry and with the sales audience you aim to attract. Many competitions cost nothing to enter – except for the time it takes to prepare your entry. Who awards business prizes? Professional and trade organizations, chambers of commerce, Better Business Bureaus, universities – even churches. Keep your eyes open for opportunities. They are all around. And remember, there is a secret all award winners share: They have taken the time to prepare well-written entries. Can't write well? Then pay someone who can to prepare your entry – or barter services if you're trying to save money. The rewards for winning a business award can last seemingly forever. Brag about winning on your website; send a letter to clients; post the award in your office or store so whoever comes in will see it. And of course, send out a press release and get your picture in the paper!

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21. Network Your Networks

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Networking with friends who then network with their friends. When trying to spread the word about my company, I have e-mailed everyone I know and told them to e-mail everyone they know...and so on. I've expressed that I am a one woman business and desperately need the support of my friends. I do believe that woman share an unspoken sisterhood and are more likely to help each other out...even without really knowing the other person. I have received unbelievable support, tips, and advice from people to date that I have never met face to face. The power is in numbers...6 degrees of separation. Someone ultimately knows someone that can help you out...and believe it or not...will want to.

22. Share Your Expertise Freely

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Let the public know what you're an expert at and use that to boost your credibility and value. Publish tips, share your expertise through public speaking, even try pitching the media... make it super easy for people to associate you and your business with excellence and expertise in your field.

23. Never Stop Growing Your Network

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Expand your network of contacts and potential clients. Ask your best, most powerful, most influential friends or business associates to introduce you to the five people they think you should meet to expand your business. Take each of the contacts out for coffee and get to know them. Discuss your plans and future goals, tell them about why your business is special and ask for their advice. You will be amazed at how these new contacts will pay off ten-fold with recommendations to you for new business and innovative ideas you hadn't thought of.

24. HARO Gift Bags

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Each Friday in the second edition of [HARO](#) there are Gift Bag Requests. You can find decision makers with events that have a match for your product or service. Once both parties agree that there is a fit it can lead to quality networking and future business opportunities.

25. Free Soap

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: give away soap products on Twitter. First I ask a question about a product on my web site or Blog. The first person to answer wins soap. The I write Be Sweet, please retweet upon receipt on the envelope so they will go on Twitter and say thanks. Pretty simple but a good way to get people to your site, blog and give a shout out for your products.

26. Network With The Media In Your Niche

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Maintain relationships with media contacts that cover your industry, even when you don't have news for them. Check in with them every month or so and ask how you can help them as an expert in your field. When you do have news, it's that much easier to get them to print it!

27. Work For Free

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: I volunteer for the local public broadcasting station as on-air talent and to answer phones. If you are part of a group, you can answer phones during one of their pledge periods during one of their more popular shows they will mention your groups' name. When I am on the air, my name and/or org. get announced as part of the introduction or if you are creative you can weave in what you do with what you are saying about the program if there is a sensible link.

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28. Be Transparent, Tell Your Story

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: The best way to get noticed in today's market is to tell a personal story. The media is dying for news as they lay off thousands at newspapers across the country. Have ready-to-run articles prepared to send off at a minutes notice will create a great relationship with papers. They'll consider you a source of valuable information!

29. Build That List

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Use opt in email marketing to talk to your best customers – the ones that want to hear from you and have signed up to receive your marketing messages and offers. Be sure to deliver relevant, unique and valuable messages to their inbox. This can build loyalty, drive sales and cut other costs.

30. The Low Hanging Fruit

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: When I opened my law firm I treated older, more experienced attorneys to lunch and asked that they consider referring me smaller cases they didn't have time to handle. With every successful referral I sent a thank you card enclosing a Starbucks (or their favorite restaurant) gift card thanking them for their support. This helped me start my practice and build a client base without having to spend a lot on advertising

31. Use Short Compelling Videos

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Create a short but compelling video that succinctly explains your product or service. Short is under 3 Minutes MAX. Compelling is that not only informs, but entertains and/or personalizes you and your company. This can be done quickly and easily using a camera like a flip video. Then post the video to your site and as many video sharing sites as possible.

32. Be A Thought Leader

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Being quoted in the media... being seen as a thought leader... is both effective marketing in itself and useful as the root of broader marketing efforts. And one of the least expensive ways to get quoted is to participate in the HARO list.

33. Apply The Triple Play

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Need to build your mailing list? Apply the triple play. Combine a charity drive with a bonus for customers when they provide their mailing info. Example: Soldiers in the desert often go days without the luxury of a shower. Have customers bring a package of wet wipes in to get entered in a drawing (be generous) - gift certificate, Amex cash card, IPOD - whatever appeals best to your crowd . BAM! Triple play - soldiers benefit, customers benefit, your list grows. Don't forget to alert the press in advance and again when you announce the winner.

34. Join Forces With Other Businesses

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Get more mileage out of promotions and advertising efforts by joining forces and finances with other business owners aiming for the same target market. Three or more complimentary businesses putting together a wedding promotion, for example, can afford better pricing, bigger ad space, better in-store graphics through a joint effort. All you need is a plan and a bit of creativity to get major traction from co-promotion.

35. Survey Your Customers...Then Leverage It

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Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Reporters love numbers! It validates their story pitch to editors. So, conduct a survey with your customers and prospective customers. Compile the results, put them into a press release, and pitch to editors at your target publications. Write an article about it and post it as a downloadable PDF on your website. And, blog about it.

36. Define Your Target

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Do your research: For an SMB with limited time and resources, research should be the foundation for any successful marketing or PR campaign. Know your audience and understand how the services that your business offers will help these customers. By targeting the right audiences with a message that they can resonate with, a marketing or PR campaign will definitely help an SMB achieve its strategic goals.

37. Integrate Your Brand Into Social Media

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Develop your personal brand and integrate it into your marketing and social media. Bob Jones is the Technology Tutor, Sue Evans is the Financial Wizard. Create a brand and persona that match your personality, industry and the value you bring, to help people connect with you, ask questions, and better understand your role and value.

38. Maintain Relationships With Clients

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: The difference between a successful company and a mediocre one often boils down to an owner's commitment to building (and sustaining) relationships with clients and prospects. While it's important to keep up traditional communication and PR, business owners should also be extending their relationships through online forums - website, blogs, and social networks. Conversations are happening all around you – are you listening, are you participating, are you a thought leader? Be visible!

39. Donate Your Products To Non-Profits

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: I donated several of my products to a non-profit organization who is sponsoring a live auction and the proceeds will be donated to the charity. My store name will be displayed on the products for the three day event and the donation is tax deductible and helping others!

Thanks To: Karl of HudsonGoods.com

40. Follow All Leads

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Fear not a) the phone, internet, email, or b) people. Get out and let everyone know you exist, neighbors, nearby businesses, media with press releases, announcements, specials, etc. You'll see people will want to know about and help you in all kinds of ways. Printers will want to give you special rates (since you'll keep coming as a startup) designers will want to design or makeover your website, and neighbors may connect you to potential clients. This is not the time to not be a people person. FOLLOW ALL LEADS, EVEN IF IT MEANS YOU DON'T SLEEP.

Thanks To: Fresia Rodriguez of Kingley&Posh

41. Follow Newspapers and Magazines

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Read articles in newspapers and magazines and take the time to email the reporter or author of that article how much you enjoyed the piece. Don't pitch your business in your email. Just explain how much you enjoyed it and what you liked about it. When you do this you will go a long way towards building a relationship with this reporter and it may even spark a dialogue about your business for a future story about you and your company.

Thanks To: John Sternal of UnderstandingMarketing.com

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42. Host Educational Events

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Partner with companies which target the same audience as your firm to host “educational” events. A small accounting firm can partner with a small law firm and a marketing firm to hold a seminar on “strategies for surviving the recession,” and invite small businesses to attend. The costs can be split, as can all the work that goes into holding an event, including inviting prospects and clients. It’s a cost-effective way to market to the other firms’ clients, to prospects, and to build a relationship with these other partners in order to gain future referrals.

Thanks To: Bob Zeitlinger of [B To Z Communications](#)

43. Rank High

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: How can your business gain exposure and increase revenue if you can’t be found online? Have your company budget for Search Engine Optimization or (SEO), which is a growing online marketing strategy (relatively inexpensive) that uses highly specific and relevant keywords to reach your target audience and convert online traffic into revenue. SEO helps businesses rise above their competitors and build their brand reputation both online and offline.

44. Go Viral

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Use social mediums (the way there were intended) to virally spread your marketing message. Twitter short messages, driving traffic to specific pages of your website; Send a Network Update via LinkedIn conveying what you’re working on that will pique the interest of those needing similar services; Use Facebook to give your small business a “personality” so that people feel comfortable doing business with you — ask your customers to become Fans.

45. Go For The Gold

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: ENTER BUSINESS AWARDS: More than ever, business professionals are looking for new ways to promote their business and their employees during tough economic times. Although organizations have countless channels to promote their business - they all cost money. One cost-effective way for business professionals to increase awareness is through business awards, which can laud your organization as a whole, executives, internal teams or your website/marketing materials. By winning awards, you gain third party credibility from an independent organization and also draw more attention to your business through the resulting publicity.

46. Leverage Linked-In

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Join as many Linked-In groups as you can that are related to what you sell and post a question or tip on a regular basis. If you have a blog or e-newsletter, post an announcement to your Linked-In groups with a link whenever you release a new issue or blog posting. It’s free, you’ll be recognized as a leader, and you’ll reach thousands of business people interested in your field.

47. Facebook It!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Your Facebook friends can be your greatest free marketing tools so enlist their help! In Facebook, use the NOTES application to create a special, limited-time “friends and family” promotion (ie: enter “facebook09” at checkout to receive 10% off), tag all your friends and ask them to pass along your exclusive deal to their own friends. A great offer goes a long way quickly...especially through our favorite social networking sites!

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48. Share A % Of Sales

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Make it part of your mission statement to contribute a certain percentage of sales or profits to a favorite cause, especially one related to your business. A recycled paper company might donate to land conservation and tree planting, a caterer to a food pantry, a pet supply store to the animal shelter, etc.

49. Coupon It!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: The best thing about small businesses is their flexibility and ability to be creative, think outside of the box. Develop a great sales promotion, couponing, giveaway, etc and be aggressive in getting the word out about it. PR is the most affordable tool for small businesses with virtually no cost, yet you can generate new interest and build credibility with existing and potential customers. Show customers that you understand what it is they need in times like this. When times are better they will remember your loyalty and remain loyal to you.

50. Contest It Up

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Hold a contest, tournament or event. Done right, you can get lots of publicity and good will, and some sales. Example: If you have a dress store, hold a fashion show. To top it off, you ask for a non-perishable food item to get in for the food shelf.

51. Build Champions

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Build champions. Champions are people who know exactly what you do, why it matters to the market and who specifically cares to buy your product or service. Champions believe whole heartedly in you and your business. They send referrals and are credibly marketing your business for you everywhere you go. Nurture these relationships, build your champion list to 50 and watch your business explode.

52. Cell-It-Up

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Marketing tip/strategy: Mobile marketing connects businesses and each of their customers—through their mobile devices—at the right time and at the right place with the right message and requires the customer's explicit permission and/or active interaction. Kim Dushinski's "5 Steps to Creating a Dynamic Mobile Marketing Campaign" are 1) figure out what your target market wants and offer it, 2) align what your target market wants with your desired outcome, 3) choose the right mobile marketing tool for this campaign, 4) launch your mobile marketing campaign and market it, and 5) track what is working and make any necessary adjustments.

53. Be A Pilot

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: The least expensive and most effective PR move is to provide product free to "pilot" project at any company and ask only in return a statement of their reaction to the use of the product. Hardly ever turned down, and gets you endorsements and orders for many more from that company.

54. Leverage Existing Customers

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Most companies do a poor job of leveraging existing customers to create new ones. If your company does events, give people a discount or free gift to bring (or just invite) a friend. If someone buys your product online, send them a coupon for the same item suggesting that they pass it on to someone they think will use it.

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55. Get Endorsements

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: If you are introducing a revolutionary new product, an endorsement from a top expert makes all the difference. Read your trade magazines and write the expert. You will be surprised at how generous some of them are.

56. Outsource

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Outsource what isn't your core business. Your main focus needs to be one 1) your current customers; 2) attracting new customers; and 3) your current employees, to ensure they're aligned around #1 and #2.

57. The "FOJ" Sticker

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: I spent \$150 to make up two huge rolls of round, neon-green stickers with FOJ printed on them in big, black letters. I stick them on all my friends at big events and conferences I attend. Everyone asks what FOJ stands for, and my friend tells them Friend of Jeanne. Next they ask: Jeanne who? Jeanne Perdue— you should meet her! This gets you lots of word-of-mouth advertising from your buddies. You can put any three or four letters, e.g., BPF = Buy Pizza from Fred, which will lead to the inevitable question: Fred who? Fred Smith, who owns the Domino's Pizza at Main and Elm.

58. YouTube Dramedy Series

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: YouTube Dramedy Series. Take your product or service and dramatize it through a simple, home-made YouTube movie. Go a step further and script out a four-part series that you can post on your website. Heck, run a loop in your business. Say you own a dry cleaner business and you feature the chance meeting ... a customer falls in love at first sight with another customer. The series shows the courting at the dry cleaner. Before you know it, your dry cleaning business is a chick magnet spot. Dry Cleaning Harmony ... Our Customers Love Coming In.

59. Leverage Local

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: My number one tip for small and medium size businesses is to get online locally. There are hundreds of websites that people use to search out local business, like CitySquares, Yelp, etc. They are free to use and easy to find. Make sure your business is listed. Go the extra mile and upload pictures, menus, or something relevant for your service or product.

60. Help "Other Employees"

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Offer employee incentives to various big businesses. For example, offer Southwest Airline employees 20% off their bill. Call their HQs and ask how you can offer discounts to their employees...it's usually called 'Employee Perks Program' or something similar to that...and all you need to do is tell them what the discount is and they will post it on their website or post it in some other capacity.

61. Online Reviews

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Let your fans review your business. Online reviews are a critical component of your business' reputation and can do wonders for converting new customers. Services like RateItAll.com/Promote allow you to submit anything for review - whether it's a local business, a blog, a website, a product, or a brand. Other popular review sites include Yelp (local businesses), TripAdvisor (travel related items), and Viewpoints (products).

62. Insult People

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Marketing Strategy For Small Business: The harshest rule in marketing: “If you have insulted anyone, you haven’t said anything.” Kind of harsh, but the point is that you need to dare to be out of the ordinary. It needs to be worth for your customers to mention to their friends, to laugh about, to be shocked about.

63. Volunteer

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Get involved in the community. Attend chamber luncheons, join committees and/or volunteer for non-profit organizations. Then, not only will you be doing good, but you will establish relationships with many people who you can contact without “cold calling” and when they need your services or products, you and your company will be top of mind.

64. You’re Not That Great

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: If you “pitch” local media about your company, don’t tell them how great you are. Instead, talk about how your company’s expertise in certain issues can benefit their readers. Serve as a resource for your local media, rather than a company skill. And they’ll cover you.

65. Attend Annual Conferences

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Join the Industry Association relevant to your product or service where your customers participate in events and share knowledge. Definitely participate in any online discussions or groups at the association providing free expertise and sponsor webinars/activities to get your brand out there. If budget allows, try to attend the annual “conference”; you’ll make a lot of connections quickly and can get fast brand recognition.

66. Free Events

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: One of the best ways to score free publicity is to create a free event at your place of business (or elsewhere if your business location does not work). Ideally, the event should tie-in with the theme of your business, but it’s not necessary. The event can be holiday-themed or simply fun and silly! The press is ALWAYS looking for newsworthy events that will be of interest to the public, and you are sure to get coverage. Be sure to also send out press releases after the event too, reporting on how much fun people had.

67. Your New Best Friend: Fed-Ex Drivers

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Reach hundreds of potential customers daily by getting your fliers, business cards, catalogs, etc. delivered by FedEx, UPS, or any delivery service. They already reach your perfect buyer whether it’s residential or business and you can ride along for free and pay them a commission.

68. Logo It Up

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Use Your Logo- Now that you have a logo it is time to use it everywhere both online and in print. Put it on all of your marketing materials including business cards, letterhead and even envelopes. Include it in your email signature, on your Web site and use it in all correspondence to reinforce your company and encourage repeat customers and referrals. Once you have a solid logo that makes an impact, it should be synonymous with your company name.

69. Write A Book

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Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Write a 150-175 pg. business book and self publish it with on-demand printing. The status of being a published author provides you with unprecedented access to media, speaking gigs, and other opportunities like nothing else can. (cost = \$0 other than some time)

70. Neighborhood Food

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Anything involving food gets attention. Partner up with local neighborhood businesses and a restaurant (or other service providers in a complimentary but non competing industry if that's your gig) to throw a special event, complete with noshing. Combining your database with other businesses will expose you to an entirely different segment of people for a shoestring of the price.

71. FOOD!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Using food is a great way to generate some PR for your product, service or event. For example, we sent s'more kits to local TV newsrooms to help promote a camper & RV show and had great results (got coverage from almost every local TV station). The media love you for thinking of them, and in return, will help you get exposure!

72. W H I T E Paper

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Once you generate some news in the media, either by issuing a press release, writing a bylined article, creating a white paper, or participating in a PR interview for an article, you need to "work" your news. Create a "friends" list of prospects, customers, analysts, investors, prospective employees, etc. and send them the news with a little blurb like, "We're making news! See us in The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur story about marketing strategies for small businesses. Make sure that you make consistent news so that you will regularly appear in the media and also keep your company in front of your "friends."

73. Don't Over-Use News Releases

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Don't overuse news releases. While they can sometimes be effective, they are often over-relied upon and can end up in the "circular file." Identifying target media, establishing good relationships with them and "pitching" them specific ideas designed to meet their (and their audiences' needs/interests) can often be effectively done through a quick - even informal - email or a phone call. The first step is building the relationship and that is most effectively done by demonstrating that you have their needs/interests in mind and are not single-mindedly focused on pursuing your own.

74. Article Marketing

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Article marketing is a subtle way companies can gain exposure for their business by writing articles that provide information about news and trends occurring within their respective industries. Companies that incorporate article marketing into their marketing campaign demonstrate their expertise in their respective industry while simultaneously attracting new customers.

75. LOL!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Evoke an emotion. Your audience will listen and remember your message if their emotions are at play. Make them laugh, tug at their heart strings, shock them.

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76. Survey Customers

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Take advantage of the tools on the internet for gathering customer feedback. They know what they want better than you do. Find out how to build a simple online survey and change your survey questions once a month.

77. Become a Resource

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Small business owners can over time break down the wall between them and their local press outlets. For instance, restaurant owners should drop off lunch at their local radio station once a month like clockwork. Find out the editors name for the assignment desk at your local newspaper and send them information about your upcoming events or news that has local relevance. Become a “news resource” for your local press. It’s a numbers game—the kid who shows up for every game eventually gets his turn up at bat.

78. Do You E-Mail?

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Don’t forget to make full use of your e-mail signature for marketing. If you have a sale, new product, open house or other event, put it in the signature so it goes to everyone you correspond with via e-mail. Ex: “Final winter mark-downs! Get 70% off of all winter items now through April 15th.”

79. Sell Marketing Materials

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: If you have a buzz-worthy business name, you can get free exposure by monetizing your name through merchandise sales and having people pay you to advertise your brand. Spoon Me frozen yogurt sells everything from bumperstickers to booty shorts and Stuff a Sock In It sells laundry bags and t-shirts with their name on it.

80. Forum Chatter

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: I have decided my niche market are small businesses (1 or 2 people) who require start-up support. Determining a niche market is firstly an important tip as it narrows the search and makes marketing less overwhelming. Once I knew who my target market was, I joined forums relating to the topic. At first I just listened to what people were looking for to help me determine where the main needs lie, but now I involve myself and offer up advice. This in turn has paved a path for me as a professional in my industry and a client here and there! Word of mouth is the best marketing method there is and anyway to gain word of mouth is fantastic.

81. Free Content!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Offer your customers, potential customers, and visitors to your website a free resource, such as a guide or report that is packed full of solid information related to your product or services in exchange for their name and email address. The guide is delivered electronically to their mailbox so there’s little cost involved. Every two weeks, or so, follow up with more useful content, not a sales pitch, but do include your company’s info at the end. You’ll be building credibility, establishing trust, and reminding those potential customers of your product or services. When they’re ready to buy you will be the first company they contact.

82. Online-Map Listings

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Online map listings are essential for businesses with brick-and-mortar locations. They are the first thing people see on search engines and they offer a concise snapshot of business info so customers can easily contact you or visit your store. And best of all, they don’t cost any money!”

83. Stay Silent

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Marketing Strategy For Small Business: I have found great success with donating my services to swanky silent auctions. Most of these events benefit non-profits so the donation is tax-deductible, and the exposure to the often well-to-do attendees is amazing. Best of all, I almost always sell additional services to the winner once they've completed the package that they bid on in the auction.

84. Fund Raisers Rock!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Schools are always looking for fund-raising opportunities. Offer your product as part of a fund-raiser — you raise money for both the school & your company. Keep it as turn-key as possible, and then ask to be referred to other schools afterwards.

85. Return The Favor

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: ALWAYS ask someone that has done something nice for you, what you can do for them. No one does it. You will startle them. They will remember you....kindly. Let them know the offer stands and rethank them for their efforts on your behalf.

86. Name my Name

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Invite consumers to help name your next product! A food company could ask consumers submit names online for their new potato salad, chocolate truffle or ice cream. This quick and cost-effective strategy lets you connect with consumers, build buzz, and snag high profile media coverage on the web, in print and on TV.

Thanks To: Sunshine Morrison of [Radiance Communications](#)

87. Small Groups Rock

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Start an informal group providing something of value to the market in which you specialize. For example, a monthly breakfast discussion on current news and events in the pest control industry. Leaders in this industry will come together in this informal, low-pressure situation, because keeping an eye on the state of the industry is their job. Since you're the one providing the benefit of this group, they will already be predisposed to a positive relationship with you, and it's a short leap to noting your business savvy in their field.

88. Online/Offline Engagement With Web

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Get involved with your online community and get the community involved in your business. Hold a competition related to your business, announce the competition locally, and get good press coverage for the winner. We started a community book project where the first chapter was written and authors got their chapters voted into the book thereafter. We got sponsorship for the book, a product to market the business with profits going to charity, as well as good media coverage at little to no cost.

89. Fundraiser Partnering

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: One of the techniques we've been using lately is to partner with an organization in a fundraising effort. For example, we make art kits for kids. We've been partnering with local schools to sell our kits through a fundraiser for the school, and the school keeps a percentage of the sales.

90. Top Of Mind Awareness

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: You must invest time and effort if you want to generate a genuine conversation and relationship with your customers. We call it top of mind awareness. The goal is regular communication about who you are and what you're doing so that you stay at the top of customers' minds.

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91. Twitter Scavenger Hunt

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: We're going to send out Tweets and an email newsletter announcement about a scavenger hunt/contest on Twitter to advertise our website which helps people find things they really need.

92. News Hooker

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Have a compelling news-hook. Does your company have an innovative approach to help businesses increase efficiencies during this tough economic climate? Are you donating resources to help others who are struggling during the recession? The media is looking for solutions, innovations and other "good news" angles during a very pessimistic news cycle.

93. Just Wrap It

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Wrap your vehicle. If done right (clever creative), this relatively small investment can generate a ton of exposure. Word of caution: you'll need to keep the road rage to a minimum.
Thanks To: Dana Severson of [Idea Heroes](#)

94. Tweet Tweet Tweet

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Get a TWITTER account in your business name. Post links to your articles educating people in your niche market. At the bottom of the article have links to your products & services. Also offer discount coupon codes to twitter members. This has worked very well for me.

95. Treat The Local Police

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: For Companies or Individuals with products. Call your local mayor's office, Police Department, and Fire Department. Find out when their Annual parties and fundraising events are, and tell them you have a nice item to put in their gift bag. This item could even be a glossy card with a service for free (Doctors and others could provide a service not a product). Now you have a great credit (we were in the Police Department's Annual Christmas Dinner gift bag, and that itself is a great press release to send to people, and lends your product or service instant legitimacy and specialness.

96. Teleseminar Gold

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Host a 1 hour teleseminar with time for content, a specific offer and questions from people on the call. People are hungry for information and like to learn. Create a web page with a sign up form and use email and social media to announce the call.

97. Use Twitter Search

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Every few days, search twitter and join the conversations. If people tweet about your business, comment. If people tweet about a need you can fill, tweet them! Its free, public and it is appreciated!

98. Love Your Customers...Really

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Love your customers - they are your greatest asset. Giving prospects examples of how you have helped others do what they would like to do is the quickest way of establishing your credibility, and giving concrete evidence of your value proposition. Let your customers do your marketing for you by having them sing your praises. One word from a happy customer is worth more than a library of purple prose from a vendor.

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99. Bookmarks Woo!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Reach out to your target market by providing free stuff. Bookmarks (what we do), notecards, playing cards - inexpensive items that provide tidbits of advice or information tied into your company mission along with your website address. Your company will gain a reputation as a good corporate citizen and consumers will find you on the web.

100. Differentiate Dramatically

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: The single best way for your small business to get exposure is to discover—and showcase—your unique focus. This differentiation—provided it's meaningful and relevant to your target audience—will prevent your business from becoming a “me too” proposition and create a preference for your offerings. You should be able to quickly and confidently complete this simple sentence: “Our business is the only _____ that _____.” The first blank is the category your business is in. The second blank should be filled in with your differentiating factor, the one thing that makes you compellingly different.

101. Be Outrageous

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Be outrageous. Reporters want to cover the unusual/wacky/even controversial. One article about your business can be worth thousands of dollars. Give them what they want.

102. Find An Intern

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: If you don't have a clue where to start with your marketing and are low on funds, find an intern. If you have a nearby college, contact their business division and ask about their internship program. The student will get class credit and you will receive some of the latest marketing techniques and an intern that is excited about marketing.

103. Help First

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: When networking, do NOT focus on getting a referral or lead. Instead, focus on helping others. If you help them first (by adding value to their life/biz), they'll help you later.

104. Blog Tour

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: We found a great way to expose our t-shirts. We simply contact “mom” blogs (which is our target), but you can target any specific blogs that fit your product. We contact the owner and ask them if they could review our product. We ship out one shirt (very little cost) and then also ask them to do a contest with their viewers. The owner of the blog then writes up the review about our shirt and also offers the readers a free t-shirt if they enter. The entry requires them to go on our site - answer a question - in our case - which “mom” illustration do they most relate to? This requires them to go to our site and look around and get introduced to our products.

105. Review Exchange

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: One of our clever marketing ideas that we use are review exchanges - we review your product and put it on our blog, and you review our product and put it on your blog. It's similar to

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an article exchange or a link exchange, but with a lot more meat behind it, and links point into the depths of your site, so looks more natural from a search engines perspective.

106. Pay Per Click

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: The fastest way, bar none, to create a strong Internet presence and get in front of potential customers when they are in active “search and buy mode” is pay-per-click search engine advertising. Start with Google – set a budget and bid, select your keywords and write a quick ad. Now you’ll be there when some “Googles it!”

107. LISTEN!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Identify your ideal clients and find them on Twitter. Then start following them! Spend weeks listening to them; you’ll be amazed what they will tell you about their concerns, their ideal products, their current frustrations with their vendors. It’s a great way to get open honest market research.

108. SURPRISE!

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: To keep customer loyal to you, instead of a frequent buyer program, send your customers “surprise” gifts. Customers come to expect rewards when they are members of a program. Surprises always work to instill loyalty and retention.

109. Teabag It Up

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Businesses make the mistake of thinking that promotional items are only for conferences and tradeshow. When given out with (or in place of) a business card at a lunch, a meeting or in passing, they become a gift. People expect free stuff at conferences, they don’t expect gifts. Keep a small, branded (and useful) item with you. You can be sure they’ll remember you. (Example: I give out a tea bag with our logo on the package. I have a colleague who gives a pocket floss card with her logo on it to everyone she meets along with her business card.)

110. Blog Blog Blog To Get Media

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: If you want to get on TV, first reach out to reputable bloggers. Interns at TV shows are usually the people [scrolling] through the blogs to find the great ideas, then they pass what they find to the producers.

111. Long Shelf Life

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Leverage your exposure by putting yourself into situations where your marketing efforts have a LONG shelf life. Start by researching the various Web Radio show. Email those who have your ideal clients with a list of topics you can speak about. AND make sure you write that “if your line-up is already scheduled, I’d make a great filler-inner when someone has to cancel”. Those words alone will get you remembers.

112. Frequent Buyer Program

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Send your best customers an email with a discount on the product or service they’ve purchased in the past or a complementary product or service and call it your “frequent buyer program”. Give them a special deal for being a long time customer to make them feel special AND to get your name in front of them again. Continue to treat them special and they’ll continue to come back for more.

113. CEO Space

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Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Nothing is a better for your business than CEOspace. The people who attend are there to conspire with you reather than compete against you. It's done well for my business!

114. Pay For Placement

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Many publications are balking at paying freelancers right now. But since my clients want exposure and the newspaper only offers so much exposure, I pitch articles about my clients' specialties and offer it at no pay. They are welcome to that idea! I then write a very objective piece mixing clients with other sources and then billing the client for the exposure. The exposure in an objective article also gives much more credibility to a buisness than an ad or advertorial, and much less expensive.

115. Make Their Job Easier

Marketing Strategy For Small Business: Schedule a coffee or lunch meeting with the local (relevant) beat reporters in your market. Instead of pitching them your business, start the conversation by asking, "How might I be able to make your job easier." If you can make their lives easier and they know you aren't going to try and sell them your story, you will likely be a valuable and ongoing resource to them in the near and distant future.

Material Source:

<http://www.toiletpaperentrepreneur.com/blog/marketing-strategies-for-small-business>