

125 Tips and Strategies to Market Your Small Business

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e-BlackWomenNetwork.com

Providing tools, resources, information, education and motivation to business women of color.

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First printing 2008



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This simple little tips booklet includes a great deal of information to help you start or jumpstart your marketing campaign.

Included are many low-cost and very effective ways to market your business so you can acquire more customers, more sales and increase your wealth!

How to Use This Tips Booklet

From the list of 125 tips and strategies, choose five to work on then mix up your marketing campaign by using other tips and strategies periodically.

Create synergy in your marketing. This means that all of your marketing efforts work together and compliment each other.

There are two types of strategies you want to use, active and passive.

Active strategies means two-way communication is occurring between you and your potential or existing customer. This can be done via phone calls, emails or networking. You can also accomplish this by reaching out to other business owners for joint venture projects.

Passive strategies means one-way communication is incurring. Examples of passive strategies include: your website, direct mail such as postcards and pay-per-click advertising.

The 'Tips and Strategies' List

- 1. Spend 1-hour everyday doing marketing activities.** This can be in the form of planning activities and promotions, or actually implementing your plan. Rely on yourself to get the word out about your business.
- 2. Create a coordinated marketing campaign.** Make sure all of your marketing methods are working together, supporting each other and are complimentary to each other.
- 3. Create a tips booklet.** Use your tips booklet to promote your product, service, or cause. You can also use it to establish yourself as an expert in your field, add value to existing products and services, and generate additional revenue.
- 4. Network at business and social events.** A common approach used by many small business owners, but is not done properly. Learn how to network skillfully.
- 5. Ask for referrals.** Ask for referrals from satisfied customers. Develop a business



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referral network of 100 partners. Referral partners are people who are in touch with your prospective clients on a regular basis.

6. Build a Website. It is expected to have one these days. Without it, you are missing out on the electronic explosion.

7. Learn how to do email marketing. Learn how to use email marketing as a way to keep in touch with your customers effortlessly and often.

8. Write articles. This will go a long way in helping you become known as an industry expert and gives you presence on the Web. Well-written articles can provide free advertising and build positive word-of-mouth. To submit articles on the Web check out [The Internet's Best E-Zine Directories](#).

9. Send out a newsletter or eZine. A powerful marketing strategy to keep your name in front of your customers and prospects. Provide key insights and value. Help your customers solve their problems. Electronic is less expensive than a paper format but if you own a membership website, you could send out a paper newsletter to paying members.

10. Make cold calls. This is a tough strategy but and it is usually the most challenging way to market a business. However, it can be a good way to uncover qualified prospects in a relatively short period of time.

11. Give away free information. Do not give away too much information, but a “taste” of your information and services may entice people to dive deeper into your product funnel.

12. Offer a guarantee. Eliminate risk for your customers. They will buy more.

13. Advertise your business. Create a powerful, compelling headline; create a good ad that tells a prospect how your product or service will solve their problem.

14. Make use of an electronic signature. On every outgoing piece of paper or electronic document, promote your business by including a special price or offer.

15. Send out a press release. Sending out press releases is a great way to get free business promotion. Make sure your press release contains information that is newsworthy and engaging.

16. Join an online forum group. Post messages in forums (a.k.a. bulletin boards). Choose forums where your target market visit and that are business-related or directly relate to your product or service.

17. Use a buddy marketing to promote your business. If you send out brochures,



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include a leaflet, flyer, or business card of another business that has agreed to do the same for you.

18. Post your business on your vehicle. Get a pair of magnetic signs. Include your business name, phone number, web site, or special “freebie” offer. A great place to get inexpensive large and sometimes free small magnetic signs is VistaPrint.com.

19. Promote your business through your leisure activities. Get t-shirts, hats and other gear made with your company name on them. Wear them when you go to your children’s’ athletic games, while running errands and give a few away to your friends and family and encourage them to wear your t-shirts and other gear.

20. Hand out your business card to everyone. When you pay bills, attach your business card. Hand your card out to everyone you come in contact.

21. Advertise in sports, dance recital, and church flyer events. Inexpensive; but make sure you know who is going to be looking at these programs. You do want to budget your marketing funds wisely.

22. Direct mail postcards. A highly effective and VERY low-cost way to promote your business. Old-fashioned, often overlooked but very, very effective. Get a good deal on large and normal sized postcards; you may even get a few hundred for free at VistaPrint.com.

23. Pay-Per-Click campaigns. If the Internet is part of your marketing strategy, try Yahoo Search Marketing or Google AdWords.

24. Opt-in box for visitors to your Web site. Have an opt-in form so visitors to your web site can sign up for a newsletter or eZine. A great way to develop relationships, and build the “Know, Trust, and Like” factor. Two companies that will manage your newsletter sign up effortlessly are iContact and Constant Contact.

25. Use link exchanges on your Web site. To drive traffic to your Web site, consider linking to other popular web sites.

26. Create an online blog. Learning how to blog can help you create authority, connect you with your customers, and provide greater visibility in search engines.

27. Give away a free lunch, T-shirt, hat or book if you are an author. People love to win things. Every month hold a contest that people can enter. The winner gets a free lunch or product!

28. Make a donation to a charitable organization. Promote this in your communications to customers and prospects to let them know you are community or cause minded.



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- 29. Use lottery tickets as incentives for referrals.** Market your give-a-way as a chance to win thousands or a million dollars.
- 30. Include candy in your mailings.** Especially chocolate (if weather is cool)! You will be remembered.
- 31. Hire a student to hold a sign.** It might draw attention to your business even if it is online. Hire a teen (or teens for more effect) to carry your sign. If you own a brick and mortar business, you could hire a student to 'picket' your business with a sign that reads, "This place is full of nice people," or "We protest great customer service!"
- 32. Drop in and deliver cookies.** Visit a customer's place of business and drop in just to deliver cookies, and say you are there to brighten everyone's day.
- 33. Advertise using flyers.** They cost about 2 cents each. Canvas a targeted area; put them in mail, post at grocery stores, the laundry mat, library, etc.
- 34. Call or email someone everyday.** Keep your network alive and you top-of-mind.
- 35. Offer a free seminar, teleseminar or workshop.** It gets your name out there, you help people solve problems, and you build your contact list.
- 36. Up sell at every opportunity.** "Would you like to upsize to a meal?" becomes "Would you like the 5 CD set to go with the book you are buying?"
- 37. Offer partial payment plans.** If you have high-priced services, breaking the payments into smaller pieces makes the purchase more affordable.
- 38. Sell gift certificates.** Great gift-giving ideas.
- 39. Develop an electronic brochure.** You can direct people to your web site to download it. It also becomes visible to everyone on the globe.
- 40. Join your local chamber of commerce.** This is a must to develop relationships, become involved in the community, network, build your knowledge, etc. I highly recommend involvement in chambers.
- 41. Movie theater ads.** Run your company ad in movie theaters while people munch away on their popcorn. Believe it or not this is quite affordable.
- 42. Hold or co-sponsor a special event.** Invite the business community, or the community as a whole. Great exposure for your business. If the event is for a good cause, so much better!



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43. Put your business in a postcard deck. A colorful postcard campaign gets read. They are interesting, and usually profile quality businesses. It's not as expensive as you may think.

44. Gifts and ad specialties. Put your business name on promotional items that you give away to others. Make sure it is something useful to your target market.

45. Run a classified ad. This is a good way to "test" the market for their receptiveness to your marketing campaign. You may also generate sales, as a result! Start with a small ad. If someone needs something, they will contact you whether you have a small ad or a half page ad.

46. Develop a catalog. With your product and service offerings. It does not have to be complicated.

47. Business card special. Be sure to advertise your free offering on your business card. Include the URL to your web site.

48. Do a radio spot. If your product can be described easily, consider a radio spot to your targeted audience.

49. Do a TV spot. If people must see your product to appreciate it, do a TV ad instead of a radio ad.

50. Have a toll free number. Studies show people are more likely to call a toll free number versus make a paid for call.

51. Offer a club or special membership. People love to "belong". These clubs and memberships can generate monthly revenue for you.

52. Be a giver versus a taker. Always approach every customer with the frame of mind that you are there to help them. Put that thought above making the sale...and you will make the sale!

53. Publish success stories. Publish in your newsletter, eZine, special mailings.

54. Gather testimonials. It helps to build your credibility and ease "purchase anxiety" of others. If they see you helped others, they will let you help them, too.

55. Do free demonstrations. This is effective if you have a product to sell. Just be sure not to give away too much.

56. Employee attire. If you own a brick and mortar operation or you and your employees attend trade shows and the like, shirts and/or uniforms with your company name and logo look professional. So is a standard dress code if you want your business to exude a certain "presence".

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57. Add streaming audio to your web site. Your Web site will talk!

58. Hire a copywriter. Writing attention-grabbing headlines and copy for advertisements and your website is crucial. Don't waste months or years. Hire a copywriter to help you today!

59. Hire a virtual assistant. Doing everything yourself is difficult. Hire an assistant to help you with web site updates, article submissions, and invoicing, editing, bookkeeping, return non-critical telephone calls, answer emails, send out brochures, etc. Use your time to add value and generate revenue.

60. Develop a marketing calendar. Use it to plot out the year's marketing activities. It will help keep you on track, and help you achieve your goals and objectives.

61. Be easy to do business with. Make it easy to order, easy to reach you, easy to find out information about your business.

62. Keep websites simple. Have you ever been lost in a website? I have. Make it clear what you want your customer to do on the home page—call you, sign up for a newsletter, request more information, etc.

63. Hire a telemarketing firm. If you do not like making cold calls, hire a firm that does. Telemarketing firms work best for a business that has a USP (Unique Selling Proposition) from competitors.

64. Do an infomercial. Yes, they are expensive but if you can afford – now or later – it's something to consider. It may work for you.

65. Offer a free report. It has to be of interest to your customers and prospects. Developing one entices people to join your email-marketing list, or sending it offline to customers may stimulate telephone calls for business. 16 pages is about the right length.

66. Write letters to the editor. This is a good way to get free PR. Many times, a letter to the editor has a better chance of being published than a press release. You can write a letter about someone else's PR.

67. Podcast to the online community. Podcasts should be of interest and value to your target market. How can you help them? A once-a-month delivery is all you need to give a boost to your marketing campaign.

68. Get involved in affiliate marketing. Affiliate marketing is a Web-based marketing practice where a business rewards affiliates for each visitor, subscriber, customer, sale for the affiliate's efforts. It is a form of Internet marketing. Linkshare is big player in this league.



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69. Buy banner ads. A banner ad is a hypertext link to your Web site. It is similar to a printed ad, like what would appear in a newspaper or magazine.

70. Find Your USP. Identity your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) by identifying an outstanding benefit that makes your product stand out above your competitors.

71. Create powerful headlines for your ads and brochures. The best ones start with 'how to', ask a provocative question, or make an announcement. Your number one benefit is always stated in the headline.

72. Put "Quotes" around your headline. You will get a 25% improvement in responses for your ad if you put quotes around your headline. Your headline should offer your biggest benefit to get their attention and to answer their gnawing question, "What's in it for me?"

73. Maintain a media contact list. Put together a contact list for local TV, radio, and newspaper editors. You never know when a publicity opportunity may arise and the opportunity may be lost if you do not know who to contact.

74. Find joint venture partners. Type your primary keyword into the search engines and visit the top 20 sites that come up in the search results. These sites will often be great joint venture partners.

75. Submit your Web site to online directories. A fast way to get a high number of inbound links is to submit your site to many existing directories. Go to the search engine and type in 'your keyword' and phrases such as 'add URL' or 'submit your site' and you'll find lot's of places to get reciprocal links from websites in your market.

76. Create a personal nametag or pin. Include your name, your company name, and logo. Wear it to meetings and networking events.

77. Put a label advertising a special offer on the outside of a package. Such as, "Look for 20% discount coupon inside". This alerts the customer of an offer, and they look for it inside.

78. Ask a simple question. Survey your clients about what problems they are having. Do so by asking them a simple question, such as, "What is your biggest challenge growing your business?" Collect responses. Develop new products and services that solve the problems.

79. Create a new product or service. See Number 78.

80. Offer simpler and cheaper. Do you have an expensive product? Can you downsize it into a simpler and cheaper version?



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- 81. Offer fancier and more expensive.** Do you have a simple product? Can you put it on steroids and make it bigger and better from the 'simpler' version?
- 82. Take a creative journey.** Visit another city, state, or country to observe and learn about creative marketing techniques being used.
- 83. Give discounts.** To stimulate sales, give discounts or do a special promotion. If you have old inventory this is a good way to 'make room for the new'.
- 84. Create a calendar.** This will keep your business in front of customers and prospects minds all year. Make sure to develop a calendar that people will not be able to cut off your company name, though!
- 85. Publicize a milestone.** Did you get your 100th or 500th client? Did you reach a sales milestone? Publicize it to your audience, and try to get PR in the newspaper.
- 86. Create your own TV program.** Market the show to your local public broadcasting station as a regular program.
- 87. Submit "tip" articles.** Submit them to newspapers and online article directories. People love tips, and quick information.
- 88. Publish in other people's eZine.** Get more coverage for your articles. Expand your publishing base.
- 89. Send baseball tickets to customers.** Or any other type of event ticket of interest to your key clients.
- 90. Send hand-written thank you notes.** It means so much more that you took the time.
- 91. Send birthday cards and seasonal greetings.** It shows you care, and promotes your business.
- 92. Host a holiday party.** Network, build relationships, and create good will. Everyone loves a well-thrown cocktail party or well planned special event.
- 93. Hold an open house.** Invite customers and prospects to visit your facility, meet your employees, and showcase your products or services. Provide hors d'oeuvres and beverages. You can even do this if you don't have a brick and mortar place of business.
- 94. Get a memorable telephone number.** Such as, 1-800-WIDGETS.
- 95. Send mail bumps.** A mail bump is anything mailed that creates a "bump" in the



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envelope. The “bump” makes people curious, and the open rate is much higher!

96. Project your company’s name on the sidewalk. Use a light directional device.

97. Consider an automobile vanity tag. Include your company name.

98. Attend a trade show. Showcase your company, collect prospects’ names, and addresses, and hold a contest to encourage people to stop by the booth.

99. Teach a class. Do this at a local college or adult education center.

100. Volunteer your time to a non-profit charity organization. The exposure for volunteering for a good cause will reap a lot of positive exposure for your company.

101. Appear on a discussion panel. Be part of a panel discussion group, and be seen as an expert, promote your business.

102. Write a “How To” pamphlet. Self-publish and sell to your target market.

103. Produce a 60-minute CD-ROM or DVD. Distribute to prospective clients FREE or charge a small fee of \$4.99 for shipping or to get more information. Develop larger programs for larger fees.

104. Self-publish a book. Getting published by a large publisher is difficult. You will be more successful getting your information out to the public if you self-publish. The Internet has made publishing available to many people.

105. Ask clients if there is more you can do for them. Many of your clients may not know about all of your product or service offerings. You may be able to sell clients additional products, if you tell about them.

106. Take orders over the Internet. Use services such as PayPal or 1ShoppingCart.

107. Develop a promotional package. Basic components include a biographical profile, description, and history of business, vision or mission statement, product or service description, sell sheet or mini brochure, publicity photo, copies of articles, testimonials, endorsements, broadcast resume, product sample, cover, or query letter.

108. Advertise in directories. Such as the Yellow Pages™, trade and/or specialty directories.

109. Phone and hold button messages. Communicate to customers and prospects the benefits and features of your products and services while they are “on hold”.

110. Use business cards as samples. If you are a beautician or image consultant



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attach a mirror, or you own a health food store attach an energy bar. Get the picture. Just be sure to keep your items low cost.

111. Co-register with other businesses. In your eZine, offer your contacts the ability to sign up for other eZines of interest. Have the other businesses reciprocate to you. This helps to build traffic to your Web site, and generate more business.

112. Develop a signature style. Make your first impression your best impression. Be professional, and project poise, self-confidence, self-assured, and competent. Remember, there is no modesty in self-marketing.

113. Make Your Visual Identity Unforgettable. Your marketing materials represent you and your company when you are not present. Do your marketing materials draw a second glance? Do they create interest that someone receiving them will be interested in reading further what you have to say or learning more about you? Your graphic image needs to be unique, attractive, and full of impact. Make it stand out from all the other symbols and designs in the marketplace. Be consistent in the portrayal of your design throughout ALL of your marketing materials!

114. More business card ideas. Create cards that are bigger or an unusual shape. For example, if you are a caterer, make your business card in the shape of a chef coat. Use creative edging (think pinking shears). Texturize your card foil or embossing. Create a card with a fold to serve as a mini brochure. Print your card vertically rather than horizontally.

115. Buy bags and affix custom labels. Walk around town or events with them. When noted decorating author, Alexandria Stoddard, started her business, she asked friends to walk around NYC with bags she made herself by affixing a custom-made label. They were classy and eye-catching, and she began 'building her brand' and name recognition from this inexpensive activity.

116. Give pie. During the holidays, thank your customers by sending them a certificate for a free pie from a local bakery known for delectable goodies!

117. List yourself as an expert. Buy an ad and list yourself as an expert in *Radio-TV Interview Report* or *Yearbook of Experts, Authorities, and Spokespersons*, which are distributed to media nationwide.

118. Create products that sell while you are asleep. Infopreneuring is a hot trend. Audiotapes are an excellent way to clone yourself, as well as create passive income. Record one of your speeches, write an eBook, or planning guide, record a videotape, etc. Sell the products on your Web site.

119. Wear your planning guide or eBook as a nametag. Nix the boring nametag, and present yourself as very clever at the next meeting event you attend. Make a copy of your book's (or brochure) cover. Reduce, laminate, and wear.

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120. Create unusual premium gifts for your best customers and prospects.

Bottled water, gourmet coffee, chocolate champagne bottle. Make sure your business name and logo are prominently displayed. You may find less expensive vendors for this on the Internet rather than using local vendors. Just make shipping costs don't steal the discount.

121. Answer your phone differently. Announce a special offer when you answer the phone. For example you could say, "Hello, this is Carmin with e-BlackWomenNetwork; ask me about my special marketing offer." The caller is compelled to ask about the offer.

122. Send a second offer to your customers immediately after they've purchased.

Your customer just purchased a sweater from your clothing shop. Send a handwritten note to your customer thanking them for their business, and informing them that upon their next visit to your shop, this "note" will serve as a private offer, such as 20% off their next purchase. To create urgency, include an expiration date.

123. Bartering. This is an excellent tool to promote your business, and get others to use your product and services. You can trade your product for advertising space or for another company's product or service. This is especially helpful when two companies on limited budgets can exchange their services.

124. Grassroots Marketing. Walk around, talk to your customers, and get creative. Get word-of-mouth marketing for you.

125. Follow-up with customers. Do you follow up with customers? Many businesses make the mistake that once a sale is made, the follow-up process should end. Unfortunately, they are losing a significant opportunity to build additional rapport, satisfaction, trust, credibility, lower returns, and increase knowledge of items purchased. Follow up is for more than just prospects. Make sure your customers know how to use your products, and are satisfied.

Conclusion

There you have it; 125 marketing tips and strategies you can use to grow your business.

Words of caution—do not try all ideas at once! Remember, choose five tactics you will use on an ongoing basis. And, for fun and effect, choose other activities, as you need them, to make marketing fun!

Enjoy, and I wish you much prosperity.

