

Marketing your business for success (Part 1)

The days of relying on word of mouth to promote your business are all but gone. Developing and growing your business to become the next success story has never been more challenging or exciting. Even with a minimal budget it is vital for you to develop a business and marketing plan so that advertising, PR, or promotion campaigns grow your business and define your brand.

New to Business. Online tools like *business.gov.au* are designed to make this process easier as they offer the *New to business checklist* which includes the fundamentals of setting up your business from registering your business name and structure, to protecting your IP, insurance, grants and financial assistance which all flow into the development of your business and marketing plan.

A key aspect of becoming the next success story is your ability to define your competitors, target audience, objectives, communication channels and differentiation point, which will change over time.

Growing your Business. To make this process easier *business.gov.au* has developed the *Growing your business checklist* which covers the fundamental issues you need to consider when you are developing a marketing plan, from creating your own website, right through to, diversification, export and franchise strategies with a list of key contacts. It also covers compliance and regulatory issues, ideas for new business opportunities, and contact details for agencies that can give you advice along the way.

For any business it is vital to plan and identify opportunities for business growth and regularly update and review them. A marketing plan needs to be responsive and systematic in expanding your business and ultimately your customer base.

Develop your Brand. Also remember that your brand is what you stand for, what you are known for and what you are associated with. Thus it is important to think about the types of features, qualities, tangible and intangible aspects of your business that you want your clients to think of when they hear your business name.

Updating your advertising and promotional materials, such as business cards, signage and logos ensures that the visual marks of your brand are consistent and that they begin to establish an emotional connection with your business. This "brand personality" can be reflected in the ambience, layout, service, colours and attitude of your business. It is important to make your business people-oriented and service focused, and ultimately see your business through the eyes of potential clients.

Hot Tips for promoting your business. List your business in free directories; develop direct mail newsletters for customers to build your database and profile new products and services; host key events in your industry; implement customer competitions and loyalty programs; provide special offers; make presentations for charities and business groups; and give your clients great service and great goods and they will tell their friends!

It is important for new businesses not to think of marketing as a singular one-off event or advertisement but as creating an ongoing conversation or relationship with existing or prospective clients in a consistent and positive way.

For more information on marketing or to download the *New to business* and *Growing your business checklists*, visit www.business.gov.au and start planning how you could become the success story of the future.

Check out our next newsletter for the second installment of Marketing your business for success.

Marketing your business for success (Part 2)

In our last newsletter, we looked at developing your brand, promoting your business and growing your business. This week we continue with tips for marketing your business to become the next success story.

Be Media Savvy. Build the profile of yourself or one of your key employees to become a commentator of your industry for media publications - develop media contacts and distribution lists across all communication channels, TV, radio, print, and online; enter awards and competitions, develop a transit advertising campaign in high traffic areas such as buses and train stations; instigate a business card campaign with a special offer attached and use press releases to announce new staff, products and services.

Legal Regulations and Guidelines. To make planning and implementing your marketing plan easier *business.gov.au* makes understanding your legal advertising obligations easier. If you are conducting online transactions with your customers, or simply putting information about your services or products on the internet, you will need to comply with Spam laws, the federal *Trade Practices Act* and state Fair Trading Acts. The *New to business checklist* provides you with a list of all you need to consider, and contacts for the right agencies for further information.

Marketing Events and Seminars. *business.gov.au* can also give you access to relevant marketing and advertising events and seminars that can assist you in transforming your business and marketing plan. It also allows you to access marketing and business related support, services and licence information that is specific to your state or territory.

Grants and Support. *business.gov.au* provides information on grants from the federal, state and territory governments. You may be eligible to apply for grants for apprenticeships, succession planning, IT training, research and development, international marketing, exporting and a range of other business activities. You also may be able to receive free business advice and support across Australia from a range of agencies.

Next Steps. You don't need to be a marketing guru to start applying marketing principles. *business.gov.au* is the Australian Government's award-winning business website that offers you simple and convenient access to government business information, transactions and services which can help take your marketing approach to the next level.

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