

Bonus Materials for

Office DEPOT®



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Grow Your Business Network



3 Costly Mistakes Small Business Owners Make

Using high priced advertising and PR firms.

- Retainer fees are exorbitant.
- It takes time to get you results - *even for a well seasoned PR firm!*
- You have extremely junior level people actually doing the work that you're paying top dollar to have done.

Investing in costly marketing materials.

- A lot of people feel they need a great deal of collateral right off the bat. Unfortunately, it becomes obsolete almost right off the printing press.
- With the web and various online media marketing tools, it's not necessary.

Lots of overhead early in the game.

- Not having a lot of money is an advantage because it forces you to be more creative and smart with your money.
- You want to test your efforts and investing a lot upfront is not wise.

Money-Saving Action Steps

Write down your marketing goals.

- Studies show that if you write them down their actually more likely to come to fruition
- Have map. Will travel. You have to have a plan to ensure that it actually gets implemented.

Evaluate the most effective strategies for your market.

- Helps you prioritize your efforts, time and money spent.
- You will have greater focus and get the biggest bang for the buck!

10 Marketing Ideas for Under \$100

Become a Social Butterfly

Your teenagers are hip to what's going on with [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). You need to be as well (not only to check up on your offspring), but also as a potential spring board into an on-line medium that's gaining in popularity and not going anywhere anytime soon. For the most comprehensive information on this subject visit www.officedepot.com/webcafe and click on the Archive section to download Mari Smith and Liz Lynch's presentations on the subject.

The "Readers Digest" version is this: set up a [Fan Page](#) on [facebook](#) by consulting with college student and upload the following:

Be sure you let your database (made up of prospects, clients, past customers, vendors, etc. know that you can see and be seen on [facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#). You only need to devote a few minutes a day to this endeavor and you can check it off your list of things to do.

Skip the Web Site – Go Blog Wild!

Tired of fiddling with a webmaster? Then blog! Blogging can move your business forward - whether its bridging the gap with your customers, saving time and money, achieving stronger search marketing results, enhancing your credibility, improving SEO or even distributing your multimedia. If you blog regularly and consistently add value to your readers, you'll begin to develop a readership that likes and trust your style, perspectives, rants, thoughts and opinions. This is where you can build your platform for being the thought leader or expert in your specific field or market. With this leadership comes influence and power... use it wisely.

Blog basics: <http://www.blogbasics.com/>

Wordpress: (www.wordpress.com)

Make Yourself a Star!

In today's world, we can all be stars and many folks have made it onto national news given the number of "hits" their videos have had on on-line "stations" like [Youtube](#) and [Viddler](#). So, don't be shy and know that at any time, you can grab a camera and be the star of your own show by shouting out lights, camera, action! Whether you're on cable, local or national news, use Skype or upload video footage to your web site, within an e-mail or on any number of video posting sites. Video – when well done is a wonderful way to build a presence for yourself and let people know more about who you are as a person/personality.

We all like to do business with people we know, like and trust. Video will take you there. As Andy Warhol once said, "Everyone is looking for their 15 minutes of fame!" Go grab yours now via video on the internet.

Digital Video Camera Overviews: <http://pcworld.about.com/news/Apr222004id115710.htm>

How To: <http://www.videomaker.com/youtube/>

Host your own Podcast or Radio Show

Think of podcasts as little shiny nuggets of audio knowledge and you will begin to see the possibilities open up before you. It can be as simple as making a recording into an mp3, or if you are more ambitious, you can create a streaming audio show. All this can be shared with your audience in many ways.

Use it to introduce yourself, or to share some helpful insights that you have. It will make you shine! Use it to distribute around the web to improve your SEO and build a newsletter list.

Podcast how-to site: <http://www.how-to-podcast-tutorial.com/00-podcast-tutorial-four-ps.htm>

Start your own online radio show: www.BlogTalkRadio.com

Write an Online Newsletter

It's inexpensive to produce and can reach a huge audience. They enable you to maintain a relationship with clients and customer or nurture a relationship with a prospect. Once you have a template constructed, it's a simple matter to edit. If you need help in this matter, find a freelancer to help you (see freelance section below). Use a hosted email server to more easily manage your mailing list and correspondence. Be sure to get an isbn number too, as it makes you a more credible source and official publisher.

Constant Contact: <http://www.constantcontact.com>

Mail Chimp: <http://www.mailchimp.com>

For isbn number: www.isbn.org

Do Affiliate Marketing

Nothing is a win-win marketing situation like affiliate marketing. You can build your customer base with lightening speed. Your affiliates generate excitement and sales and in turn get a share of the profits. There is no risk on your part as you only pay after results are delivered. What could be better than that? You'll want their job to be as easy as possible so be certain to provide them with plenty of promotional materials. Always be on the look out for new affiliates and be certain to treat the ones you have with the utmost care!

Affiliate Marketing Overview: <http://www.startupnation.com/articles/1311/1/affiliate-marketing-basics.asp>

Postcard Campaign

Postcards also offer a cost-effective way to reach your market in a colorful way for a dime. There's magic in sending things out in a series of three, as it reinforces the old advertising adage that it takes at least six or seven impressions on the minds of your prospects before they know what you are trying to sell them.

Here's another tip: Mail on Mondays so it hits people's homes or desks mid-week. They'll be more of the mindset to review the information and hold onto it if you are hitting them when they most need that message. Always offer a resource or helpful hint, quote or statistic that would compel someone to hold onto it.

pingg: <http://www.pingg.com/>

Modern Postcards: <http://www.modernpostcard.com/>

DIY - "Do-It-Yourself"

Use your own talents to grow. Everyone has strengths that can be utilized to grow a business. Perhaps you're an excellent writer or speaker. Maybe you're good at design or solving technical issues. To cut costs, pick your best strength to "Do-It-Yourself" as you'll save yourself a great deal of time and money. CAUTION: Don't trap yourself by doing tasks that are outside of your skill set. Oftentimes, business owners get distracted attempting to engage in tasks that are not truly their strengths. Either seek out the appropriate training for yourself or find the best person who can offer their best strength at a great price. This will increase your productivity level ten-fold.

Freelancers and College Interns

If you need to hire help, find a good service provider who works with startups and understands budget constraints. We use a series of college interns majoring in communications who have great telephone and writing skills. You can even find specialists in SEO, social media and article writing. Oftentimes, freelancers offer affordable labor, as they want to put their work efforts on their resume and it costs us a fraction of the cost than working with a big agency.

Elance: <http://www.elance.com/>

Guru: <http://www.guru.com/>

99designs: <http://99designs.com/>

Logoworks: <http://www.logoworks.com/>

Build Relationships with the Press

Since you are building good relationships which in turn will create good PR, the most important thing is to be your pleasant self. Being people themselves, editors and the like want to talk to real people. Also, determine who your target audience is and figure out which media reaches that audience. It's better to have a short personal list.

When you've found them, find out what they are interested in and what their philosophy is. Then approach them accordingly. Be persistent, but not annoying.

And always remember their time is valuable and they are always on a deadline. Freelancers usually get a fixed fee, and staff reporters have endless deadlines. Be considerate of their needs, and you could become an invaluable resource to the media.

Help a Reporter Out (HARO): <http://www.helpareporter.com/>

Radio Guest List: <http://www.radioguestlist.com/>



Nancy Michaels is America's most sought-after consultant to America's Fortune 500 Companies. As the liaison between big business and small business owners, her expert opinion is wildly sought after and has been profiled by Inc.com where she is the solo-preneur expert, Entrepreneur Magazine's Marketing Expert, Success Magazine, Fortune Small Business and The New York Post. In addition, her sales and marketing advice has been featured on CNNFn, The Weekend Today Show, and Fox News. She is the author of five books, including [Off the Wall Marketing Ideas](#) and [Perfecting Your Pitch](#). Nancy is most at home showcasing her message "virtually" through web casts and tele-classes as well as at special in-person events. She's a sought after host and speaker for Fortune 500 Companies targeting the small business marketplace including Office Depot, UPS, The Home Depot, Microsoft, Wal-Mart, Alcatel-Lucent, AT&T and many more.

For more business tips, visit www.GrowYourBusinessNetwork.com
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