

Marketing Magic

Or Ten Things You Can Do to Promote Your Business for Free



Are you one of those people who think that marketing is expensive? Do you think marketing is only for big companies with big budgets? Most of us have spent and lost money on marketing in the past, but if you get it right, it needn't cost you a fortune.

You don't have to employ someone to do all the work, because there are plenty of things that you can do for yourself. Here are ten of them.

1. **Networking.** This is a good way to get out there and meet new clients. Some groups do charge you to attend, so if you want to do totally free marketing, look for groups that don't charge. If there aren't any free meetings in your area, try offering the organiser your services in return for free meetings or membership. When you're there, concentrate on getting to know the people you meet, rather than just trying to sell to them.
2. **Presentations.** Many networking groups invite people to give presentations at their events. You don't usually have to be a member or pay to attend the meeting, but it does help if you have an idea of who the audience is, before you present to them. Whether you're given ten minutes or an hour, use your time to give advice and ideas. People will remember you for that, more than if you just tell them about how great your business is.
3. **Workshops.** A longer and more involved version of the presentation, a workshop can help boost your reputation as someone who knows what they're talking about and is happy to help other people. Interactive workshops involve the delegates and make less work for you. Some venues will let you run a workshop for free . especially if the money you charge is donated to charity. Some networking groups will even organise the venue and the delegates for you.
4. **PR.** Writing articles can improve your reputation. Don't just send information to papers and magazines . speak to the editors first and find out what sort of articles they and their readers are interested in. Offer to write how to articles that give away advice, rather than writing about your business.
5. **Fact Sheets.** These are another way to give away free information. Pick subjects about which you know people need help. Keep them short and split information into bite sized chunks. Put them on your website for people to access for free, send them to your press contacts and give them out at networking meetings.

6. **Referrals.** The best way to get referrals is to give them. Make sure they are already warm, rather than giving them just for the sake of it. Let your contact know that someone will be getting in touch with them, so it's not a complete surprise to them. When you become known as someone who can put people in touch with others, more people will turn to you for advice.
7. **Email Signatures.** How many do you have? How often do you change the way you end an email? Do you think about what you want to say to each person you write to? An email signature is a completely free way of promoting your business so make sure it includes your contact details as a bare minimum. You can then create dozens of different ones to promote different products and services.
8. **Taster Sessions.** If you provide a service, some people will want to get a taste for what you do and how you can help them, before they decide to pay you. You can offer a free consultation or meeting, a free session on the phone, to show prospects how good you are. Don't give away all your secrets in the first session, or they won't need to come back for more.
9. **Articles.** As well as sending articles to press contacts, there are many websites where you can submit your articles. The Internet is used by many people to search for the answer to their questions. If your article answers one of those questions, it will be found. Remember to include your contact details at the end of the article and a link to your website, if you have one.
10. **Telesales.** You don't always have to pay someone else to make phone calls for you and you don't have to cold call. It's far more cost effective to sell more to an existing client than to recruit a new one, so pick up the phone and talk to your clients. Find what they're struggling with and how you can help them. Develop the relationship and they'll keep coming back to you. All it costs is the price of the phone call.

There are plenty of other things you can try, but these ideas should get you started. For more ideas on promoting your business, contact Apple Tree.

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