

10 TIPS

FOR ATTRACTING NEW CUSTOMERS



The Los Angeles Regional
Small Business
Development Center
Network

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www.smallbizla.org

DID YOU KNOW:

The later in the day and closer to a promotion's end you communicate, the likelier customers feel a sense of urgency to buy or act?

Last month we offered some tips for defining your target market. Now that you've defined your market how do you attract new customers and potentially further add to your 20%? Follow the tips below to assist you with revisiting your strategies for attracting new customers.

- 1 REVIEW YOUR TARGET MARKET:** The idea is to finely tune your target customer by placing them into groups with similar needs so you can align your appropriate products/services to fit those needs. The more you identify applicable categories, the more areas available to approach or create opportunities later. For example, maybe your target is middle class men, age 45-65, living in metro areas with families, interested in classic cars and mechanics that frequent local events and festivals of the same nature.
- 2 IDENTIFY POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH COMPLEMENTARY BUSINESSES:** Make a list of local businesses or organizations that offer products or services to the segments both partners have in common. This allows both partners to benefit from the relationship and keeps your customers returning. For instance, if you own a pet grooming salon, some likely partners might be pet supply and food stores, maybe a juice or coffee place everyone walks their dog by or even non-commercial partners like local parks or shelters.
- 3 DEVELOP A "PILOT" CAMPAIGN:** Start small, so you can test the results of a small campaign geared at your newly developed target audience in conjunction with your partner(s). You can promote a product/service "freebie" or one of your products/services at a discounted rate with a high perceived value, but low cost to you. For example, if you own a spa, perhaps give a free 30 minute massages when you bring your mother for Mother's day (free massage with the purchase of one massage) offered to your top 25 clients and 25 clients of the nearest luxury hair salon. This way, you manage the cost and the exclusivity of the promotion.
- 4 MEASURE, MEASURE, MEASURE:** How do you know if your efforts worked or failed? After developing the pilot campaign strategy, setup the appropriate metrics. Start with setting goals e.g. 25 new clients in 60 days and two local partnerships. Then, if you choose to market your promotions via email measure the amount of new leads that came in from the eblasts through click-through rates (CTR) or by prepping your materials, software, staff and the like to ask "how did you hear about us?" On your website, you can use tracking URLs like (www.salon.com/vipmemberdeal) or lead capture forms on a landing page that ask for contact information. If you're using printed material or advertisements use phone tracking services such as Mongoose Metrics, Marchex, or Call Source before you begin printing your materials.
- 5 CUSTOMER SERVICE:** Truly emphasizing the importance of genuine customer services goes a long way in creating the experience many customers will often not only return for, but pay more for versus less expensive competitors. Offering service primarily based on care and trust on an individual basis creates an opportunity for a friendly relationship with your business and you as an extension of your business. When communicating with your clients speak through the social perspectives of the business i.e. the aspects your employees, your clients, or even your vendors would find notable. Just the same, assure you or the appropriate team member responds to customer concerns, complaints, and praises in a timely and personal fashion without bias. "Do your best with the best attitude."
- 6 REVIEW THE RESULTS OF YOUR CAMPAIGN:** Review your web analytics for web visit behaviors, how long your clients spent searching your content, the most influential pages on your site, and the geographic location of your visitors to start. Once you map out all of the channels you used e.g. email, web, print advertising you can review which channels helped bring in the most new customers; identifying the most and least profitable. Review all of your leads and new sales and connect them back with their original channel in a spreadsheet or use your customer relationship management (CRM) software. Visit or call your local SBDC for more specific information. Then, begin to continuously optimize and target your efforts with the power of customer intel!
- 7 MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION:** Collecting contact information whether electronically or in person is crucial to maintaining a relationship with your clients, and especially your best clients. Set up an e-mail marketing system and send personal emails of "welcome," "thanks," or "revisits" for things like oil changes that occur every so often, checkups etc. through automated email marketing services like Constant Contact. Be sure to communicate: relevant and valuable information methodically, notable information (i.e. promotions, achievements like a new location etc.), positive and negative changes to products or services. You don't have to sell constantly, just stay on their mind. The key is communicating a healthy, transparent mix of your business' happenings to stimulate a sense of customer value.
- 8 ASK FOR REFERRALS:** Who? Your 20%, the loyal, and the new. Use your current client base and your top two or three most profitable marketing channels to communicate and remind how you fit a need, made life easier, or more enjoyable. Ask your best and/or most loyal customers for recommendations via social media if appropriate and don't forget to include the links to your pages! Assure that your newest clients hear from you within the first 10 days of their purchase for good measure and recollection.
- 9 HOST AN INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOP AT YOUR BUSINESS:** Invite your best customers and have them bring a friend. You can even offset sales period declines by hosting the event during your "slow season" in conjunction with a special offer for that day. Contact your SBDC for strategies on how to leverage SBDC partners to conduct a workshop at your business for free.
- 10 LOYALTY PROGRAMS:** CA brilliant source of rewarding your customers and attracting new ones on the basis of adding an element of exclusivity in addition to offering an opportunity to save on purchases and much more. For more, look into services like Belly, Five Stars, and Perkville.

Stay tuned for the next 10 steps for managing your business leads coming in April. For now, start with the ten steps above to help attract new customers to your business and remember, the LA Regional SBDC is always ready to assist you with extra expertise at 1-866-588-SBDC.



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