

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!



By Leo Pacheco

www.LeoPacheco.com

© 2015 by Leo Pacheco. All Rights Reserved

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!

Every business owner knows marketing is one of the most important keys to drumming up business and promoting your products and services. However, the majority of small business owners lack even the basic marketing skills, let alone expertise.

Time and again I hear my small business clients spout off numerous ways to promote their business, the majority of which either cost large sums of money or are simply ineffective.

The mistake many small business owners make is creating poor, ineffective advertisements or simply not advertising at all, thinking word-of-mouth is going to draw in the crowds. Largely, they don't have the capital needed to effectively market their business.

However, there are numerous ways to market effectively that won't cost you a dime!

It will cost you time, but for most new small business owners and entrepreneurs just starting out, you have more time than you do money. So, what can you do as a small business owner to market your business for free or pennies on the dollar?

Here are 10 ways you can promote your business for FREE or for little cash:

1. Attend Community Events

Every community has events ranging from kids sprees to July 4th picnics and get-togethers in order to bring their community together. Contact your local city and county office (many of them post event calendars on their websites), and see if it costs to set up a "booth" or "canopy." The cost may be minimal. Even if it's not, show up as a member of the community and simply hand out 5x7 flyers and/or business cards promoting your business.

If you do find it affordable to set up a booth, be sure to have giveaways with your contact information. Sure, this is not free and some items could be quite costly. But, usually, you can get your name and/or logo printed on cheaper items such as balloons or pencils for not much of an investment. People love free stuff, and the more you give away, the more you're putting your name in front of their eyes so when they have a need, they already know whom to contact.

2. Call in to Talk Radio

Listen to various talk radio programs on your local stations. Often, they'll discuss various topics that may align with something you sell or do. For instance, my company has a department that creates websites for small business clients. Although it is not our primary function, we do offer that service for minimal cost to small businesses even if we don't do any other work for them. After hearing a woman talking about making jewelry to sell online to raise money for her neighbor, who is a wounded vet, I called into the radio program to offer our services and also to share with the radio host and caller that I had a non-profit organization that helps veterans.

The host asked several great questions about what we do and asked me to give out the website to both my non-profit organization and the for-profit company.

Although my intention wasn't to promote my businesses in order to capitalize on this woman's intention, we soon were flooded with emails and phone calls from others who were interested in learning more.

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!

This caused the light to go off in my head that this was actually a great marketing idea that didn't cost me a dime, yet out of that one phone call to the local radio station, I gained 23 new website clients (which doesn't sound like a lot), grossing over \$25,000 in revenue. Plus, it afforded us the ability to create and maintain the website for the jewelry-maker for free, helping her with her cause. At the same time, we received donations and gained lots of attention from others for the non-profit.

In the end, we were able to give money to the wounded veteran from both the revenue from the websites and donations sent to us through my foundation. So, it was a great win for all of use!

With that in mind, don't just start calling talk radio programs to promote your business and/or services. Radio is like every other medium. They're in business to make money, and they make money through paid advertisements. The producers are savvy and they can tell whether or not you're calling to just get free radio promos.

You have to be sincerely interested in helping others, not just gain new customers. Plus, if you make it intentional to help others, that's great publicity for your business. But, if you call just to promote your company, it will come across as tacky and harm your public image. So, use this tactic wisely, and it will be a win-win for everyone involved.

3. Create a Joint Partnership

Team up with other businesses that might fit in with your business (not direct competitors, however). For instance, I recently saw a flyer advertising a health and fitness club on one side and on the other side was an ad for a vitamin store. This was wisdom!

They were in the health and fitness industry, but were not competitors for the same clients. I don't know how well the campaign paid off, but it was a smart marketing tool where each business shared in the cost of the flyer (which was minimal, I'm sure), and tapped into people who are looking for a gym and others who simply want nutritional supplements.

Some creative ideas for joint partnerships include:

- If you are in a strip mall or office building, create a coupon flyer and offer the other businesses space to add coupons or promo codes for their businesses. At first, you should do this for free and simply ask for a referral fee from potential clients who patronize their businesses as a result of the flyer. You won't make much money off this endeavor, but if you ask the other businesses to give the flyers out to their existing clients, it could lead to several new or interested clients.
- Host a "grand opening" or "open house" and invite other businesses around your location to join you. For instance, if you are a restaurateur and recently opened a new restaurant, invite your fellow businesses and offer each of them FREE coupons specifically for their staff to come and try. Not only will you encourage their staffs to make you their choice for lunch options, they will often refer their clients. Also, contact a local radio station that plays your favorite music or music that fits with your clientele to come to your open house. Often they love to come and park their trucks and broadcast live from the event – which generates tons of customers at no cost to you.

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!

4. Volunteer at Charitable Events

People love to support companies that care. And the best way to show you care is by volunteering at charitable events and supporting causes with your time and money. When you volunteer, chances are you will meet other volunteers who “know somebody” or is “somebody.” Don’t get me wrong, everyone is important. So, don’t take this the wrong way.

Unfortunately, society dictates whom they deem to be “somebodies,” meaning local celebrities, millionaires, government officials, etc.

By volunteering, you often run into these “societal somebodies,” such as the aforementioned, and it’s a great way to introduce yourself and share in a worthwhile effort at the same time.

5. Create Great Business Cards

Business cards are the least expensive and often one the best marketing tools you can possibly invest in. However, because everyone knows this, few pay much attention to the design of the business card.

Frankly, no one likes a boring, plain white business card. It doesn’t stand out and looks so clinical. So, unless you are a doctor or lawyer, plain white business cards are not effective in promoting your business.

Many people don’t know how to create a great business card, and for very little expense, you can get help at www.fiverr.com or www.vistaprint.com. Both offer great ideas for highly-effective, low-cost business cards.

6. Host a Business Card Drawing

Whether you are a public speaker or retail establishment, hosting a business card drawing is a great way to collect names of new clients while at the same time offering an incentive.

Simply get a cheap fish bowl and place it on a table and ask everyone who has a business card to drop it in for a FREE something. Do a weekly drawing and change up the prize from time-to-time. And DON’T offer worthless prizes like a free appetizer at a restaurant. This says you are CHEAP, and it doesn’t incent them to participate. Instead, offer something great like a free pizza party for the entire office (up to about 12 people) or a \$100 prepaid VISA/MC gift card. Give them a reason to drop their card into your bowl. Make it worthwhile and exciting.

7. Teach a Free Class at the Local Library or Recreational Center

Often public libraries and recreational centers offer free room rentals for members or local businesses. Take advantage of teaching a class that corresponds with your business. For instance, if you are a published author who wants to promote your book, teach a class about how to become a published author and invite people to attend. The library and rec. centers will often allow you to promote it through their systems, as well.

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!

8. Develop Loyalty Programs

Your greatest asset in free marketing is your currently clientele. Word of mouth from satisfied customers will be your best resource for gaining new customers and clients. Incent them with referral rewards and loyalty programs. For instance, ask them for referrals and if any new clients join your business the referrer receives a monetary bonus or free session/product or something of value that will motivate them to talk about you to others (in a good way, of course).

One of the biggest mistakes ever is when a business owner spends tons of time and money on getting new clients but doesn't maintain existing clients. Existing clients are already loyal! They will repeat their business with you time and again. But, the moment they become unsatisfied, they're gone and they won't refer anyone else to you. Frankly, they could hurt your business because of their bad experience.

No, you can't please everyone. But, if you have a lot more happy and satisfied clients than you do bad ones, new customers will not give much credence to the bad. You have to nurture your existing clients by thanking them constantly for their business and offering them an incentive to gain new customers. After all, they are your cheapest and yet most valuable sales force!

9. Fine Tune Your Social Networking

Along with attending as many local community events as you can, social networking is critical in this technologically advanced society. However, social networking is more than just merely typing a few words and sending it to all your friends and family.

Social networking involves being creative (like creating infograms). It also involves keeping your personal and professional networks separate. Clients don't care about your Aunt Martha's bunion on her big toe. At the same time, Aunt Martha is 90 years old and could care less about your graphic design business. Chances are very slim Aunt Martha is going to become one of your new clients, but it's a pretty strong chance a potential new client may change his/her mind about doing business with you after seeing a picture of Aunt Martha's bunion.

Create separate accounts with restrictions for each. It's okay to promote your business to family and friends because you certainly want them as customers. However, make your posts private to only your friends and family so that your personal posts don't end up on a public search that can be seen by clients or potential clients. Trust me when I say you and your friends and family members may find it cute when your twerking grandmother shows off her style on a YouTube video. But, clients won't be as amused.

Keep your accounts separated and post only business-related stuff to your professional accounts and personal stuff to your personal accounts, and social media will become an effective tool.

And speaking of social media, don't repost every single item you find fascinating. Think about content and how it might benefit your clients or potential clients. For instance, I see tons of posts on my newsfeed from certain people or businesses I follow. However, I can tell you that the majority of them are a waste of time and not worth the read. This is not only that – a waste of time – that you cannot get back, but it's not benefiting anyone.

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!

I often wonder what was the point! If it's not benefiting your business or someone else's business, don't post or repost it!

However, on the other hand, if you repost a great article from a reputable organization or business, that may benefit your clients or support your business, then not only will it be beneficial to the clients you serve, but it will show up on the original sender's newsfeed as saying you "liked" or "reposted" their content. This may intrigue them to learn more about you and could create interest or cause them to take notice and possibly refer people to you.

To give you an example, I often repost news articles from Entrepreneur or Success magazine. Why? Because they have great, effective content that benefits their subscribers. After reposting a couple of articles from one of the magazines, I received an email from one of their clients – who so happens to be a multi-millionaire – asking for more information on my speaking fees, etc. because he is looking at putting together a symposium and wanted to know if I might be interested.

He didn't know me from Adam, but he saw me repost an article that he liked also, pulled up my professional Facebook page, and discovered I am an author and public speaker, which piqued his interest.

What if he had pulled up my personal page and saw my recent postings wishing family members happy birthday or commenting on some cutesy photographs of a baby animal doing backflips? YOU know you do it too, so don't judge!

He didn't want to see all that. He only wanted to see what my professional postings were in order to give him an idea of who I am professionally and if I would be a good fit.

10. Join Networking Groups

By now you are getting the picture that all of these tips involve one common theme – NETWORKING! You would be correct. Why? Because people most often don't buy products or services because of the product or service. They buy because of the way they were treated by the seller. You could sell a product that far exceeds anything on the market in quality for \$100, but if there is a far less superior product at Walmart for \$15, guess what that means? You didn't effectively sell your product – which frankly wasn't the product itself. You didn't sell your people skills effectively.

Effective salespeople are not whom you think. Oh yes, we've all been there, done that with pushy salespeople who force themselves on you, feed you a line of bull, and try to convince you why you need their product.

Guess what? This is not effective sales. I run from those people! They annoy me to the point I wouldn't buy their product if it stopped me from aging AND raised me from the dead when I die! Why? Because they clearly don't care about YOU! They care about a paycheck.

Effective sales is all about selling people skills not products or services. If you treat each customer as a human being, listen far more to their needs than talking about what you have, you will gain more customers and sell far more services and products. And, guess what? They'll buy your \$100 product

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!

even if Walmart sells a similar brand for \$15. All because you paid attention to their needs and not your paycheck.

So, when you join network groups, don't join with the intention of selling. Join with the intention of listening and observing. Most networking groups know you're there with the intention of passing out business cards, so they'll be expecting one. But, don't just go around handing out business cards like you're giving out candy. Meet people, ask great questions to learn more about them, and trust me, they'll ask you about you and then you can offer your card. But, make it all about them, and you'll gain their respect, interest, and business.

Where to network: Check out your local chamber of commerce, Toastmasters group, Meetup.com group, BNI group, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, or any community event.

Conclusion

When I first became an entrepreneur, I made the huge mistake of following the mantra "if you build it, they will come," (from the Kevin Costner film, Field of Dreams) which only left me broke and bankrupt. You may think your product or service is the best on the market, but you and your mother will be the only two people who think so. And momma only because she loves you and doesn't want to hurt your feelings.

However, there is a lot of competition out there. Don't think for one minute that by simply building your business and opening the doors will get you customers. That's why I emphasize "networking" so much throughout this report.

If you are like me, when my coaches first pounded the whole networking drum to me, I would sigh with dread. "I don't want to network and go to all these events and hobnob with people who think they are better than me – and probably are," I'd whine to myself.

Until one day when one of my dearest mentors kicked me in the butt and said, "Well, then, stay broke and making excuses," she said sternly. Mind you, she was a multi-millionaire, and she obviously knows a thing or two about networking and making money.

The reality is meeting new people is uncomfortable and intimidating. Especially when you are the brokest (not really a word) person in the room! It's hard to meet business men and women who have had great success, wearing their Rolex watches and thousand dollar suits, driving their brand new BMWs and Lexuses! After all, my old Chevy SUV pales in comparison parked next to them. And I didn't want them to think I was a failure. Why would they buy from me when one glance at my car and Timex watch will make them run away?

Excuses, excuses, excuses! You cannot make money and make excuses at the same time. It's impossible.

Guess what, the fear of intimidation and fear of failure are nothing but lies!

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!

If you're life depended on it, or if you had a sick child in need of major emergency medical attention (God forbid), would you allow fear to stop you from asking the most successful, wealthiest people you know for their business or support?! Of course not!

I finally woke up to this fact. No, I am blessed to not have a sick child and no, I'm blessed not to have to be dependent upon success. BUT, my motivation was "what if..." What if, God forbid, I end up with an emergency or life pulls the rug out from beneath me? Am I prepared? What will I do? How can I best position myself now so that should an emergency arise, I would not need to beg for money or clients?

Networking and getting in front of as many people as possible is critical to your success and marketing strategy. Marketing is not an instantaneous return on investment. Sometimes marketing can cost you more than you'll ever make back, when done ineffectively.

No, you are not going to get rich by utilizing these free tips. It will eventually cost you more to market your business. However, this report is a great way to start off when you are a new business owner or entrepreneur just getting started.

But, the most important step you can do right now is get out there and make yourself known to your community and those people of influence. Don't think for one moment your friends and family will be your saving grace.

I have found for most business owners, myself included, that family and friends will often say they support you but are the first to spend their money elsewhere.

That's why networking is important. Strangers will build your business and become loyal customers far faster than most relatives and friends.

I own several business ventures, and I can tell you that 99% of my business comes from strangers or repeat clients, not family and friends. And how will they know to come to you if they don't know you exist?

YOU are your number one marketing tool. Not your car, not your t-shirt, not your banner hanging outside the business, not your employee, not your spouse, not your neon sign. YOU are it! No one will share the same passion as you do or explain your business like you do. It's your vision and your passion that will overcome the fear of intimidation and fear of failure.

The truth is most people at networking events are business owners who started out the exact same way. Many are still in the same place. And even those who have had great success and raking in the millions you so desire, would shock you to know they're driving an old car they bought used or wearing the cheap watch from the department store.

Think about it. Steve Jobs and his fellow entrepreneurs founded Apple in his parent's garage. He was broke and barely had the money to survive. Along with his friend and business partner, Steve Wozniak (the inventor of the Apple computer), they began meeting with people of influence to try and sell their product. Networking every chance they got, eventually paid off with a multi-billion-dollar company! Neither allowed intimidation, rejection, or fear of failure to stop them, and the pay-off is substantial. And when they first started selling computer boards to companies, the product wasn't very good. Companies invest in them because of their personalities, not their product.

10 Ways to Promote Your Business for FREE!

That is but one example of thousands of now highly successful multi-millionaires got their start. None of them care about what watch or suit you are wearing or what car you are driving. Show up, meet and greet, and sell your stunning personality, and before long, your client base will dramatically increase.

Thank you for requesting this free report. For more resources, online courses, books, and how to book me at an upcoming speaking event, please visit my website at www.leopacheco.com or feel free to email me your questions at leo@leopacheco.com. I love to hear from you!

FREE BONUS OFFER:

I would like to send you the free MP3 audio that corresponds with this report.