

Promoting Your New Business

So you've done it! You've actually started your business. So what do you do now? How do you let people know that your business exists? Below are only a few helpful suggestions in getting started, ranging from deciding where you want to take your business and spreading the word via various media outlets to handing out samples of your product to potential clients.

1. **Develop a marketing plan** – This should be your very first step in determining your marketing strategy. This is your marketing roadmap. Where are you now and where do you want to be? A new business marketing plan should be formulated well in advance of your company's grand opening. Once you have your marketing plan developed, you can begin to initiate the steps of new business promotion, even before the doors open.
2. **Online Presence** - There are two major things you need to do initially: submit your site to the major search engines and list it with all the online directories you can find. Use blogging sites to help promote your business, this can be done even before you officially open. YouTube is also another great way to get the word out about your business. For example, if you are opening a new florist shop, consider videotaping yourself putting together a floral arrangement.
3. **Social networks** – There are many free networks online that you can join to get the word out about your business. Take advantage of them. Many of these sites allow you to set up your own social network within their network. Some examples are Meetup.com, MySpace.com, or Facebook.com. Network with other businesses, attend mixers, what is important is getting the word out about your new business.
4. **Be passionate about what you do** – Let people know about what you do with a strong conviction and confidence. Always keep a smile on your face. O
5. **Know that branding is more than a logo** - Branding works wonders for customers' perceptions of your business. You can indeed begin your branding efforts before you open your doors. Put your logo on promotional products, business cards, and magnets, and hand these items out. Your very first advertisement in the local paper or online should reflect your branding strategy.
6. **Send samples to local businesses with whom you have a synergy** – Think about other local businesses that are not competitors of yours, but share the same client base. For example, if you want to start a dog bakery, meet with the owners of doggie daycares and play clubs. You can distribute free samples through these companies and watch your customer base grow quickly.

A good business owner is constantly handling new business marketing – even before the doors of the business open. Be consistent with these strategies and others, you are well on your way to profitable success!