

Secrets to
**Finding & Keeping
More Customers**
with print power



Things you can do in real life
to get more leads - and sales

Marketing is fundamental to success in business.

And yet so often it's the thing that gets attention after everything else (or when sales take a dip and panic sets in). While online marketing is a growing and immensely powerful tool, for most businesses, what gets done offline - in the real world - is even more important in determining whether your business gets really really busy.

Vivienne Kane



#1

Your Ideal Customer

One of the biggest mistakes many businesses make is trying to be all things to all people. Attempting to hit the spot with everyone means you'll probably end up appealing to no one.

It's critical to define your target niche- which logically will be the people or businesses who value what you have. If the wrong people are receiving your marketing messages, you're dead in the water before you start.

If you're not sure exactly where you're aiming

Think about your 20 best customers. What are their common needs, wants and frustrations? Why do they buy from you, and what do they value about your product or service? What would convince more people like them to do business with you? Who do you like working with - and why?

It may be useful to survey your existing loyal customers - either face to face, on the phone or online (try SurveyMonkey).

Look at the common characteristics.

If your target market is consumers, consider

- Location
- Age
- Gender
- Occupation
- Income
- Education
- Interests
- Where they shop/spend time



If you're selling to businesses

- Location
- Industry
- Type of business
- Number of employees
- Revenue
- Key decision maker
- Associations or groups with which they interact

So your ideal customer might be a business in the health care industry with 5-10 employees where the owner is the key decision maker, located within 15km of the CBD.

Or a forty plus woman in a professional occupation who loves designer clothes and lives within 5km of your shop.

“ *Nobody cares about your company or product. They care about themselves, their dreams and their goals. Help them achieve their aspirations, and you'll win them over.* ”

Steve Jobs



#2

“What’s in it for Me?”

The old cliché “What’s In It For Me” is even more relevant today than it was before. We’re all bathed in information, so if you want to connect with your target audience, you need to focus all your messages on them, not you.

Too many businesses talk about themselves when they market. They bore their audience with lists of features, instead of exciting them with benefits.

Customers will buy if you

- Solve a problem
- Surprise them or
- Make them feel great

Your messages should speak simply and directly - as though you were having a chat to your ideal customer.

You need to focus on specifics

How are you different from the competition?

Do you have a unique product? Or a price point that’s significant?

Do you have a way of doing business that’s much simpler - or offers additional relevant benefits?

Ikea is a good example of showcasing benefits - not just cheap pricing. Compare the average furniture store to an Ikea showroom. Ikea is full of room layouts, nooks and crannies that show how their products might work in real life - interesting product combinations and ideas to stimulate the imagination - and likely to encourage sales of more than one item. Have you ever been to Ikea and not come out with something you didn’t intend to buy?



#3

First impressions count

- so don't wear a tracksuit to the first date

Customers take only seconds to form an opinion about your business - and the way your communications and point of sale look and sound can play a big part. Getting it right isn't hard, but being consistently across everything they experience is important.

Think about the image you project with your

- Store or office
- Customer service/sales people
- Printed materials - at point of sale and in promotions
- Business cards and stationery
- Invoices and forms
- Website
- Advertising
- Uniforms/attire
- Email format and tone
- Telephone manner
- Signage
- Delivery vehicles

Aim for a consistent look and feel across all your marketing material, products and advertising through coherent colours, themes, design elements and typefaces.

Then back it up with great and consistent customer service. Customers will also form an impression based on what they hear, touch and experience (and even smell if you're in food!).

The attention you pay here will either support your image and brand, or detract from it. Which would you prefer?



#4

Does your visual branding need a detox?

Hopefully you're now convinced that image and brand does matter. It's your business personality. If it's not right, you could be losing business. Every interaction you have with your customer, and every message you send is reinforcing your brand.

So do a quick review of what you're sending out to the marketplace. 85% of the information taken in by the brain enters through the eyes. So what the customer sees matters.

Ask yourself

Is my logo up to scratch? That's if you have one. You may think you can knock something up in Word or Paint with some clipart. And you could. But what would that say about your business?

If you want to be taken seriously, a well-designed logo will help customers to identify you, and project a professional image in all your communications. That's why most successful businesses, even small enterprises, spend time developing logos and visual branding.

Is your branding consistent across your store or office, stationery, business card, promotional material and website? Or does each item look slightly different from the others?

Do people ever say “oh, I didn't realise that's what you did”?

Or is the main message about your business clear and compelling on everything you send?

Are all the details on your business card and brochures up to date? Or are you using labels or handwritten corrections to cover up inaccuracies?

If you answer yes to any of the above, consider a refresh. It may only take an hour or two of graphic design time - or you might decide to invest more and start from scratch with a whole new look.



#5

Brochures that actually sell your product

No you've thought about the "What's in it for Me?" question, apply it to all the messages you send to your audience. This is particularly vital with brochures. Many of them are a waste of time as they focus on the company, not the customer.

Plan your content carefully

Image - what are you trying to project? Who are you and what do you want your target market to think about you?

Photographs and/or other images - will you use in house, stock or professionally produced images?

Headline - a powerful benefit driven headline is crucial. It should communicate the key message immediately and make the recipient want to keep reading.

Copy - should be simple, and again focussing on the benefits (what's in it for your audience?). And make it sound like a conversation - not the spin of some smart marketer.

Testimonials and case studies

What other people say is ten times more powerful than what you say about yourself. But they need to be specific

- Why they choose you
- What problem you solved
- What benefits they derived from your product or service
- Why they would recommend you to others.



Ask them to do something - why you need a call to action *every* time. If you don't tell them, they probably won't do anything. So... make your offer clear and irresistible.

Call now for a free sample, bring this brochure for your 30% discount, go to our website for a free report. Whatever it is, make it easy to buy. Trial offers or low priced introductory products are a great way to allow customers to experience what you have.

Limited time offer it's valuable to limit the time frame of your offer - you want to stimulate immediate action eg free consultation during November, 25% off this week, free teddy with every quote.

Think about how it will be used

- As a stand-alone, at an exhibition, as part of a promotional pack with other items?
- Will it be handed out, posted, displayed at point of sale or sent with already ordered goods?

Of course all of this is just as important for a promotional letter, postcard or any other marketing piece.



#6

Business Cards

- the marketing campaign in your pocket

Business cards are one of the least expensive and most under utilised forms of marketing.

Obviously somewhere on the card you need your logo, company name and contact details. But that doesn't have to be all.

There's a promotional opportunity on the back of every card you print - space to market your business by:

- Offering a free report
- Promote online information or a workshop
- A special offer on product
- Testimonials
- Case studies

At the very least, give a compelling reason to ask you for more information; call or visit your website.

You might like to print several different versions for use with different audiences. And once you've worked out your content

Inject some personality into your business card

In the same way customers prefer to do business with those they like and trust, they are also more engaged by material that has a bit of zip. It's like the difference between cheap warm gin in and flat tonic in a plastic cup, and quality gin and fresh tonic over ice with a twist of lemon in a crystal glass.



How can you add a bit of dash?

- Laminate
- Round corners
- Die cut shapes
- Gloss UV
- Metallic inks
- Specialty coloured or textured stock
- Foil
- Emboss
- Raised Print
- Narrow or square format



Then get them into people's hands

- Always carry them with you
- Hand them to anyone you meet in a business setting and ask for one in return (people remember that)
- Attach them to everything you send out - letters, invoices, brochures
- Give them to anyone who asks for your phone number or email address



#7

Newsletters

With the growing popularity of email newsletters, printed newsletters have suddenly become a lot more respected - and much more likely to attract attention.

The typical email newsletter is lucky to get 30 seconds viewing - if it's opened at all. Email is still valuable - but it will get a whole lot more traction if paired with a regular printed newsletter.

Because

- Customers know and respect the effort, time and investment involved to produce a printed newsletter. It has a much higher perceived value.
- A printed newsletter gets delivered regularly, just like their favourite magazine.
- It's likely to be read from start to finish at a time that's convenient for your recipient. It's more comfortable to read than an on screen message, and can be kept for later reference
- On average, printed newsletters are read by up to 4 people other than the original recipient
- It makes you stand out you from your competition

The benefits to you of sending a regular printed newsletter can be massive.

But there's a commitment required - you must make sure what you produce is professional in appearance, and has real benefits for the customer.

Printed newsletters should:

- Be relevant - the content must be about the customer and their needs (not your company or staff).
- Arrive regularly - ideally newsletters should be sent monthly, and that needs to be consistent
- Have interesting, new and exciting content. Newsletters with interesting information are much more likely to be kept.
- Tell stories about how others have benefitted from your product or service.
- Have specific offers and calls to action.



#8

Your invoice as a marketing tool

You should be using every contact with your audience as an opportunity to educate them about your offering - or to encourage additional sales. Your invoice is no exception.

Treat your invoices seriously - don't waste them. They are the one piece of communication that most customers read very carefully!

And if you're already paying postage, why not add some value to the exercise?

For starters, make sure all your invoices are strongly branded and match your other marketing material. Include your logo, tagline and contact details.

Then you can use them to upsell, encourage repeat business, announce a new product or service, or generate referrals.

You could

- **Print an offer on your invoice** - eg bring this invoice with you on your next visit for a 10% discount - available until December 31.
- **Attach a label promoting a new product** - or a complementary product from your range that's relevant to that customer
- **Include a discount coupon** - or print one on the invoice as a "tear-off". This is great for referrals, as they can be passed to colleagues or friends. You might even specify it as a "bring a friend" discount, and include a reward for the referring customer.
- **Ask for feedback on your product** - and offer a reward for those who respond.

Whatever you do, make sure it stands out - with a message that is appealing and relevant to your customer.



#9

Direct Mail

- how do I make it work for me?

Direct mail is an incredibly powerful marketing tool that has the advantage of a simple and immediate measure of success - the response rate.

For small businesses in particular, direct mail is often the best option for sending messages to tightly targeted groups or customers or prospects.

It has very high open rates - at the very least your recipient is likely to glance at it.

Your audience can see and touch it, and digest your message at the time of their choosing.

Remember - if you don't keep regular contact with your customers, someone else will. Don't lose business by apathy.

What's important when you use direct mail?

Define your target market as precisely as you possibly can. The more precisely you target, the better your response rates will be.

Mailing to existing customers and including information relevant to their interests will invariably generate the highest response rates.

Series of mailings versus a single mailing is almost always more effective - sending to the same person 3 times is much better than sending one piece to 3 people.

Postcards have a lot going for them as direct mail. When a postcard arrives, there is a 100% open rate. The message is read, even if only briefly. They are cheap to produce and mail, quick and easy to manage. Great for special offers, invitations, new product announcements and discount coupons.



Integrating your mailings with email and telephone follow up will increase your response rate.

Getting the mailing list right is vital. If you're using your house list, make sure the information is kept up to date. Keep refining your lists and checking them for accuracy, to improve response and reduce waste.

If you decide to use a list from a list broker, be very specific about the customer profile you request.

Why personalisation gets more sales

Personalisation helps to create a sense of relationship between you and your customer

The sound we love more than anything is said to be our own name. So using someone's name in your print marketing is a powerful tool to trigger interest.

Getting started in personalisation doesn't need to be intimidating or expensive, as digital print has made it simple and affordable. There are many sophisticated tools in the marketplace - but if you don't have a database with extensive information about your customers, you can start with something as simple as printing the recipient's name within the message on a direct mail postcard. That could be enough to hit their hot button more effectively, as research shows even simple personalisation can increase response rates significantly.

Timing - make sure you send it when the audience will be around to receive it. For example - in Australia a campaign timed for the first two weeks of January is unlikely to get maximum results.



#10

Testing, testing, testing

Advertising and marketing can be a bottomless pit into which you pour money - unless you test.

This is particularly critical for small businesses, which often have limited marketing budgets. It means you won't be wasting money on something that's not working.

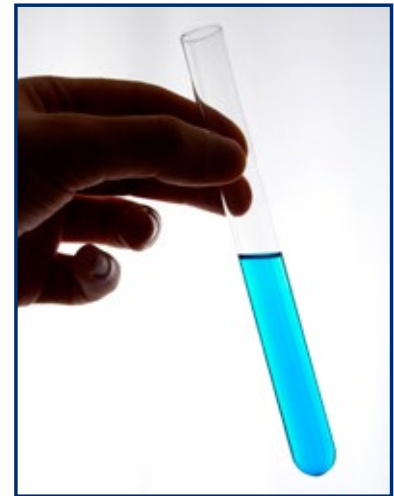
And it means when you do something that does work, you can keep repeating and repeating

You need to have a system in place to measure everything you do

- Response to direct mail
- Sales from press ads
- Telemarketing
- Email marketing
- Newsletters
- Sales from a brochure offers

You might

- Send them to a specific web page or special product related site
- Have a dedicated phone response number
- Ask them to bring a coupon to your store
- Set up a campaign email address



Whatever your method

Test small - then review the results. If you get success - roll out to a bigger list - don't wait.

If not, change one thing at a time - it might be the headline, or the wording of the offer, or the way you've explained the benefits.

Retest and review again.



#11

Your marketing worked

- what are you doing now?

You've done the right thing - marketed through both online and offline channels to present your product or service to a thoughtfully targeted list of prospects.

You've dazzled your ideal potential customers with enticing offers.

What happens when the phone rings or an email comes in, and they actually want to buy?

Visual branding is important, but ultimately, it's what you do that counts.

Make sure their experience is positive and consistent - regardless of which staff member works with them. It's vital that all the hard work educating your prospect doesn't stop once they become a customer.

They should know

- What to expect from you
- What you need from them to get started
- How to get the most from your product or service
- How/who to contact if they have a question or problem
- What their chosen product or service will cost, and your terms of payment

This information might come in the form of a simple explanation at the counter, a customer kit, order confirmation form or email - however you do it, make sure everyone is crystal clear on the way things will work.



#12

Why you should be in the repeat business

Are you a business which focuses most of its marketing effort on finding new customers - rather than getting the ones you already won to come back?

Assuming you're providing a quality product or service, it's so much easier to give encouragement to the convert than to convince the sceptic to buy the first time. They've already had a good experience, so are ripe for a repeat. Statistics show it its 5 x easier to get a customer to come back than to win them in the first place.

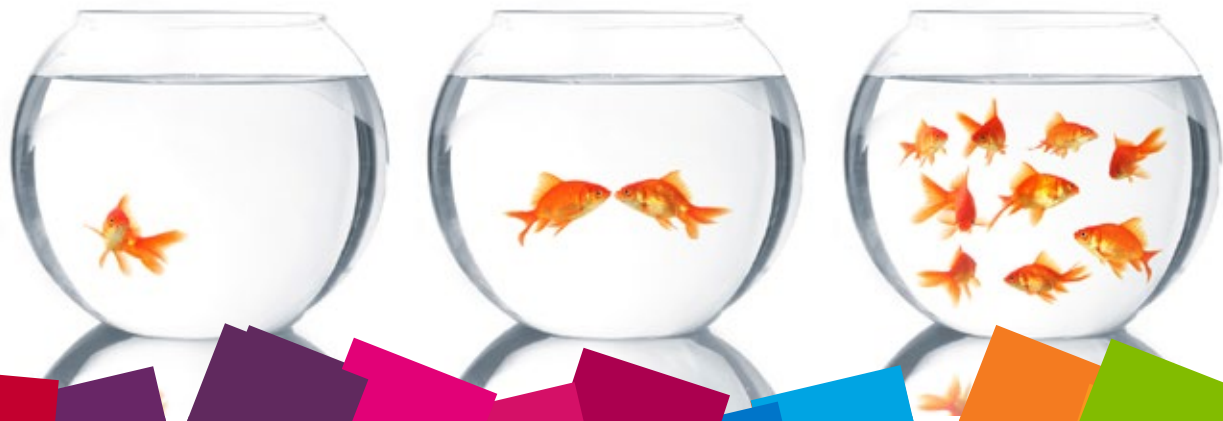
But you need to have a strategy to make that happen.

Rewarding loyal customers is a great way to make sure they won't even think about shopping around. The fact that customers continue to buy from you doesn't necessarily indicate loyalty, it may just mean there's an absence of credible alternatives.

Think coffee cards - they work for cafes, bread shops, bookshops, nurseries and a host of other retail businesses because they encourage repeat buying by the promise to give something back.

What could your business offer to encourage repeat purchases?

How are you going to treat your best buyers when they buy from you? What can you do that's special?



..... *business.*

You could

- Have a special “members only” event or invite selected clients to participate in a special sale or presentation with a **personalised invitation**
- Create an exclusive range available only to customers over a given spend
- Send a **Gift Voucher** to all your existing customers, offering them an exclusive price on a special product or service
- Create loyalty scheme or frequent buyer system with a special offers to encourage repeat visits
- Send a **reminder letter or card** if your product or service has a finite life, or if they’re due for a check-up or move to the next level of service. Offer something extra if they return - either for them or a family member or friend (great for dentists, optometrists and specialty product retailers)
- Mail a **Catalogue** customised to each customer’s needs
- **Package prepaid maintenance** at discount rate
- **Create a membership program** (perhaps with a monthly subscription if you’re selling a high value product) that gives them additional benefits and offerings not available to one off customers

Brainstorm what might appeal to the customers you have - or better still, ask them. That way you’ll tailor a program that’s motivating to them.

Don’t be complacent with the customers you have - they are your most valuable business asset.



#13

Referrals

- how to make them happen more often

Is yours one of the (many) businesses that gets more of its new business from word of mouth than any marketing or advertising campaign? If it's not - ask yourself why.

Word of mouth is probably the most powerful generator of leads to business - whether it's in the real world, or increasingly online, via social media.

People want to buy from someone they trust. If a friend or family member recommends you, the level of comfort about buying is already much higher.

How can you make good word of mouth happen more often?

Firstly - make sure you give great value. A happy customer is the most likely to talk about your product.

Make sure your customers understand the sort of people you're looking for. Be specific about who you want and what you can do for them. Make it easy to refer.

And then

Ask! And make sure your staff are asking too

It's the one thing most of us rarely do.

And be specific - eg an IT support provider might ask "Who do you know who is having computer support problems?"



Ask

- When a customer tells you that your service is incredible
- When a customer sends a testimonial
- When a customer refers someone - ask for more
- When a customer admits you've saved their skin
- When you complete a project with a partner

And when someone refers, ask them what made them do it! That way you'll find out more about what your customers value about your business.

Make it easy for people to talk about what you do - you might want to change the name of your product or service to make it more descriptive.

Thank them

It's really important to thank customers who refer, and keep them in the loop about progress on the referral. And it's often useful to offer reward if the referral results in a sale - perhaps an additional service, accessory or a discount voucher.



More ways to encourage referrals

Educating your customers about referrals, and asking for them, is useful. But it's still a bit hit and miss.

Creating a system is much more likely to generate a consistent flow of referrals.

You could

- Send a thank you note with a supply of business cards
- Include gift vouchers for family and friends with your product or invoice
- Partner with a business that has a complementary product or service - ask for and give each other referrals eg a cleaning service could partner with a gardener, window cleaner, and handyman to hand out discount cards at the time of service, share databases and offer word of mouth referrals.
- Produce an information sheet on your special area, co-branded with the logo and details of a complementary business, for their customers. Then return the favour by distributing similar material for them.



What Next?

If you're ready to recharge your current branding and marketing materials, or have an idea for a new marketing strategy, call ExcitePrint on 1300 907 399 or email info@exciteprint.com.au

ExcitePrint offers graphic design, copywriting, a comprehensive & innovative print service. We can also arrange assistance with mailing and distribution. We also have lots of ideas about using printing effectively to grow your business.

We'd love to share our ideas about how to use print marketing to grow your business.

Innovative Print Marketing Products!

Get attention from your target audience with creative customised print materials

Your Ultimate Sales Brochure!

Message - Design - Print Packages to deliver sales brochures that actually sell

Workshops!

Find out how print can connect you with the right prospects and customers

EventBox!

Branded event, workshop and seminar print packages that will be remembered long after the event is over

Every business is actually a marketing business. Think about it for a moment. Do you really have a business without being able to reach out and motivate a customer?

John Jantsch - *Duct Tape Marketing*



554 High Street Prahran Vic 3181
1300 907 399
info@exciteprint.com.au
facebook.com/exciteprint
www.exciteprint.com.au