

Free & Cheap Offline Marketing for your Web Site

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“There’s no such thing as bad publicity”.

Our e-Business Advisers don’t necessarily agree with that, but they do know some cheap (or free!) tips to promote your web site offline - and gain customers:

1. Tying all your marketing together

As your web site is an integral part of the marketing activity of your firm, it’s vital that you tie together both your online and offline marketing activities.

Your web site, whether you sell online or use it to promote your business, is a vital tool. You want as many of your target visitors as possible to see how you could provide the product or service that they, or their business, needs.....

All the below have been tried and tested by several clients - and they work.

It’s always worth asking the simple question of enquirers though - “how did you find out about us?” to test the effectiveness of your different marketing channels.

2. Free or cheap tips to get your web site seen

- Put your web site address on your Voicemail / Answer phone message - landlines & mobiles too.

If you’re out or not available, potential customers seeking information about your product or service might just look at your web site, and not have a chat with your competitor!

- Likewise, if you’ve got a shop or other premises, put your web site address on your external business signage.

If you’re closed, customers can still go and look at your web site to see what services you could provide to them.

- Put your web site name and business details on your vehicles - especially on the back.

Perhaps the person sat in the traffic jam behind you is looking for exactly what you can provide!

Vinyl vehicle wraps are much cheaper than a paint job, can be replaced if company details change, and don’t affect vehicle resale values: just search for “Vinyl vehicle wraps in” in any web search engine to find a local supplier.

- Of course, your web site address is on all your stationery - invoices, delivery notes, complement slips etc - isn’t it?

Often, customers don’t know the full range of products or services you could provide for them - perhaps they’ll have a look whilst writing your payment cheque?

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- Whilst we're talking about company literature, don't be shy about the web site address - many firms put it on their literature in print so small that it's easy to miss it. Remember - if you've got it, flaunt it!
- Business cards - very easy to forget to put your web site address on these, but absolutely vital to do so.....
- If you've got an existing stock of company literature without your web site address that you don't want to reprint because of cost, a cheap sticky label saying "Visit our web site at www....." placed on them will tide you over until you can reprint.
- Put similar cheap, small sticky labels on the base of products.

A client who decorates gift glassware found that 25% of her web site orders were coming via people who'd seen her label on the bottom of glassware owned by friends. They liked her product, the label told them where to go to buy - and buy they did!

- Beer mats with your web site address and attractive graphics can be very effective for the right business.

A client's e-commerce web site sells First Aid products to rugby players - who are renowned for liking a drink (or two) post match. He distributed free beer mats to rugby clubs (who often have to pay for them) - and his business really scored!

- If you have staff that wear company uniforms such as T-shirts or sweatshirts - have the web site address prominently printed on them.

This is really effective at trade shows and exhibitions, when you're often rushed off your feet and might not have the chance to speak to everybody.

Likewise - the stand should also have the web site address prominently displayed too, for the same reason.

- There are loads of other promotional giveaways - pens, rulers, executive toys that you could use - the problem here is, so is everybody else....
- You may well be advertising your web site address in magazines etc, but if you sell a particularly **local** product or service, advertising space in Parish or Community magazines can be bought for next to nothing - people in the next village might never have heard of you, but could really do with what you sell. Your web site address in the ad will let them find out more about you.
- If you don't mind public speaking, talk with your local Chamber of Commerce and volunteer to be a guest speaker on a topic that relates to your business.

The trick here is not to do a sales pitch to the audience: that will just switch people off.

Talk about how they can use that general type of product or service to benefit their business - and take plenty of business cards with you....with your web site address on them, of course!

- Contact your local newspaper or other appropriate publication and offer to contribute an article on a regular basis,



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provided your credits (with domain name) are included.

Again, the same trick as above applies - don't do a sales pitch in your articles. Your offer is quite likely to be accepted - finding interesting content is often a chore for editors of small local newspapers.

3. Finally.....

The final trick isn't really a trick at all, but sound marketing sense.

If you know who your customers are, and where they are likely to be - target them at that location in a way that gets them to see your (easily memorable) web site address.

Try to never miss an opportunity to tell the world what your web site is - you'll never know how much business you can drive your way until you try!