

WE KNOW

MARKETING

EFFECTIVE MARKETING

QUICK GUIDE

This Quick Guide provides you with tips on how to market yourself in tough times.

KNOW YOUR CUSTOMERS

When times are hard, it is more important than ever to know who your customers are. Chances are, it's harder to get new ones walking through the doors and so it is absolutely vital that you look after your current customers, as well as trying to find new ones.

Now is the time to keep marketing. Develop a marketing plan identifying your target audience, your vision and values and how to measure the success of individual marketing goals to make sure they work.

Before you start your plan, ensure you are clear about what makes your products or services different (your unique selling proposition) and identify your place in the market. If you can, develop a 'story' focussed around your values, ethics and vision; something that customers can really relate to and makes your product or service a better choice to buy.

Below are some tips to help you retain your existing customers and find new ones through effective marketing:

- Keep your marketing initiatives regular and your overall marketing messages consistent.
- Create regular, relevant and timely communication for your customers e.g. a newsletter, product/service trends etc.
- Link with relevant websites, both industry (eg. as a tourism operator link with www.newzealand.com) and associate partners. Most sites will have information on how to do this, or contact the organisation to find out how. Links from these sites will move your Google and other search engine rankings as they act as a virtual referral.
- Keep your website current – this also helps keep it at the top of search lists. Develop a schedule to remind you to do this.
- Consider advertising on some of the more popular sites or with the search engine providers themselves. Talk to some of them about promoting your business more effectively on their site.
- Brochure ware – this could be DLE cards, a folded brochure or another format. It is important that this looks professional and reflects what you do. Think about the best methods and places to distribute them.
- Talk to and develop partnerships or reciprocal referral arrangements with other players in the industry with an associate or complimentary product or service.
- Work your word of mouth referrals. Deliver excellent service and add in a little extra effort. Customers will appreciate this and tell others, and this also ensures you get their repeat business.
- Look after your existing customers – protecting your existing customers is a lot cheaper than prospecting for new business.

- Make it easy for your customers to buy from you. Make your contact details readily available, be available if they need you, and make the experience of purchasing from you pleasant and memorable.
- Talk to your customers – find out what they like about your business and why they keep coming back. This is a great way to find out your strengths, and probably some weaknesses you can work on.
- Consider a low cost reward, incentive, or similar to customers referring new clients to you.
- Consider ways to add extra value to your customers – be it tools, advice or resources on your website (for example, a currency calculator, online booking, online ability to check availability etc), or an additional service.
- Don't forget about PR opportunities. Find interest-catching ways to get your business out there in the media in a positive light. Use product launches, good deeds, and/or special announcements as an excuse to promote your business to the media. Write articles for newsletters. Become an authority in your field to gain free media attention.
- Keep an eye on what your competitors are doing. How does your pricing compare to theirs, and what additional services are they offering?
- If you have a limited advertising budget, focus on the fundamentals. Make sure all your customer-facing media and activities have the same message about your business.
- Review and understand your advertising channels. Before committing to advertising, ask about the distribution figures, channels, their target audience and readership figures and ensure these are a match for your marketing goals.
- Use your Employers' Chamber membership to market to, and network with, other members. The table top expos are a very cost effective way of getting your product or service in front of other businesses attending. Alternatively, if you want to take a more targeted approach consider hosting a B2B (Business to Business) event.
- Include your staff. Encourage them to put ideas forward, no matter how out-of-the-square it may be. All ideas are valuable because you can build on them to make them workable.

The Chamber has a range of resources available to help you implement the above tips into your business:

Resources

Quick Guides

- Effective Communication
- Identifying Core Strengths
- Protecting Customer Relationships

Training & Events

Strategic Planning

Business Expos

Networking Events

For further information on Effective Communication, or other aspects of communication, please contact The Chamber advisers, email info@cecc.org.nz or phone 03 366 5096.