

TOMORROW'S
★ STARTS TODAY ★
SUCCESS



Online Marketing Success for Small Businesses



How will you achieve online marketing success?

Whether the busy season is just around the corner or you're right in the middle of your busiest time of year — having a plan to make the most of your email and other online marketing programs is the clearest path to success.

It's time to get ready. This guide will help you answer the following questions so you can get the most from your online marketing efforts:

- How will new customers find your business online?
- How will you stay top-of-mind and build relationships with new and existing customers?
- How will you get customers to come back and do business with you again and again?
- How will you encourage them to tell their friends/connections about your business so you reach new customers?
- How will you evaluate your success and make smarter choices?

Start on your path to tomorrow's success, today.

How will new customers find your business online?

When you think about how people find businesses today, many times it starts with an online search. At this point, you most likely have a website for your business. That's the first step in making sure you are found. But, oftentimes a website is not enough. The ways consumers find information has changed.

In addition to search engines like Google or Bing, consumers are using city guides like Citysearch, review sites like Yelp, and other mobile apps to discover new businesses. This is great news because there are now even more ways for new customers to find you. But, it also creates a bit of problem. There are now more places for you to manage. Many of these listings are automatically generated and can often contain incorrect or out of date information. This incorrect or out-of-date information is not what you want as the first impression someone has with your business.

What this means is that you need to stay on top of your business listings to make sure all information is correct and current. That way you're not missing out on potential new business because of an incorrect listing.

✓ Action items:

- 1 Do a search for your business online using a search engine like Google. Also, search for your business on popular sites like Yelp and yellowpages.com.
- 2 Make a list of the places your business turns up. Are you in all the places you expected? Do any of the results surprise you?
- 3 Confirm that all of your information is correct and current.
- 4 Make a list of any places your business isn't listed but should be.
- 5 Update your information regularly to keep listings current.

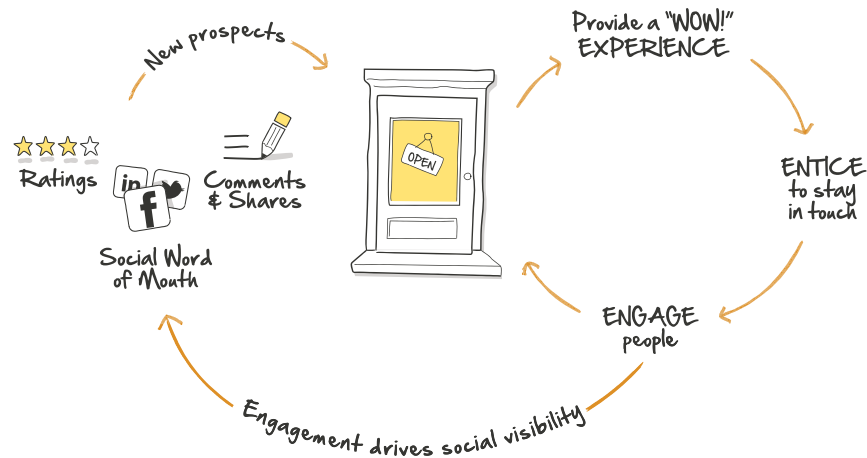


How will you build relationships and stay top of mind?

As you know, customer relationships are crucial to the success of your business. And when you're able to keep your business top of mind, you'll be their first choice when they're in the market for what you offer. Great relationships also mean people are more likely to refer you to their friends.

But how do you stay connected with someone after they visit your store or website?

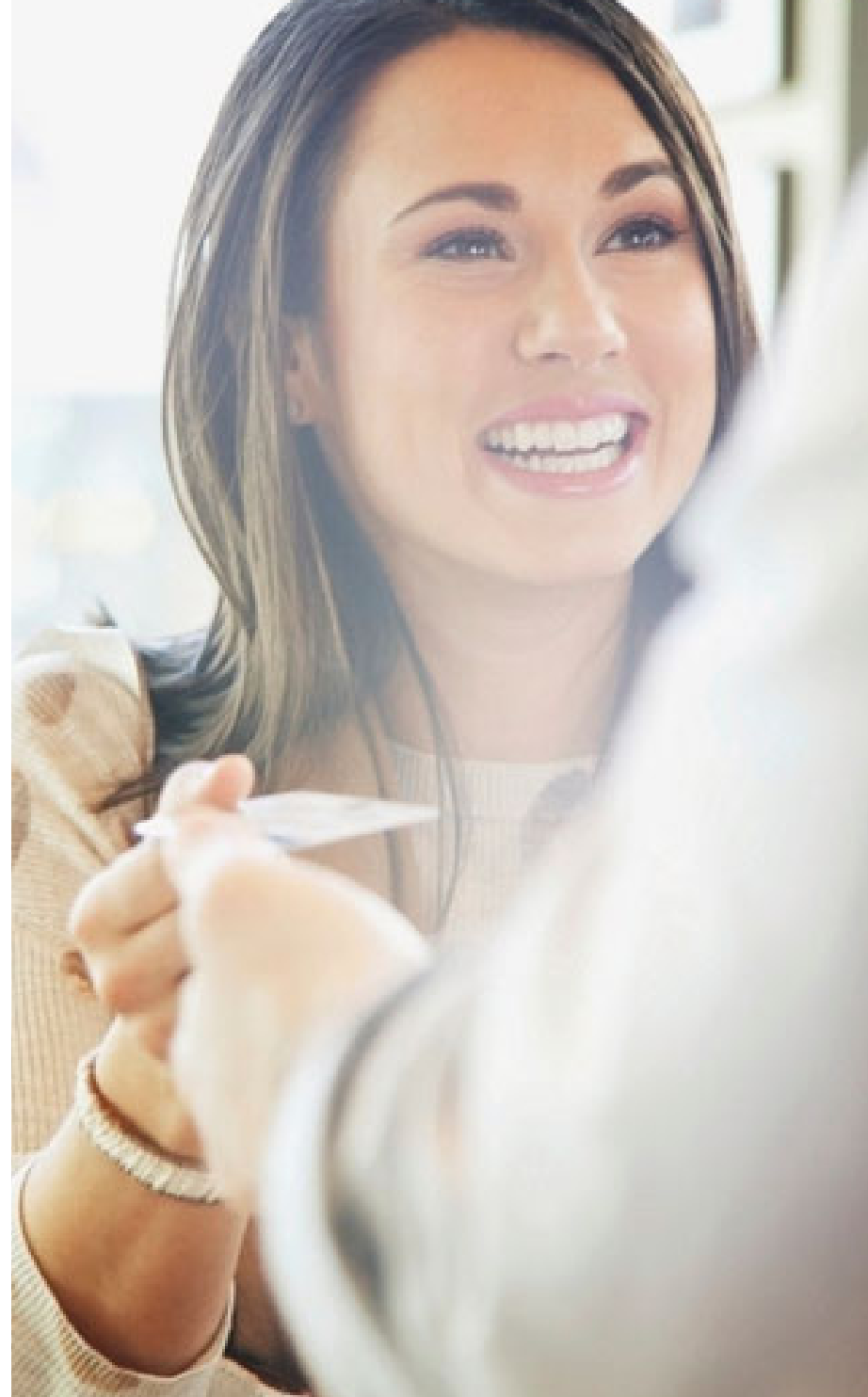
At Constant Contact, we call it "Engagement Marketing" and it works like this: you provide your customers with a "**WOW! Experience**" wherever they engage with you. This could be in store, on the phone, at an event, or online. Next, you **entice** your customers to connect with you by joining your email list or interacting with you on social media. Then, you **engage** with them to deepen existing relationships and create social visibility and word-of-mouth referrals for your business to bring in repeat and new customers. The cycle repeats from there.



How will you build relationships and stay top of mind? (continued)

✓ Action items:





- 1 Map out your customer process and trace their experience. Look for bumps and glitches that you can easily smooth out. Then, look for one or two places where you can create a **WOW! Experience**. It doesn't have to be something big. It can be something as simple as how you answer the phone.
- 2 Give customers a good reason to connect with you. What's in it for them? Is there something you can offer to sweeten the deal? This could be a special discount, whitepaper, or something else your customer would find valuable.
- 3 Make it as easy as possible for customers to connect with you. Include links to your email sign-up form on every page of your website. Make sure every employee is trained to ask people to join your email list. Promote your email list at your place of business — this can be as simple as a paper sign-up sheet on your counter or more high tech ways like allowing people to scan a QR code on their mobile device or send a text message to join your email list.
- 4 Keep all of your contact information in one place. This lets you collect more information about your contacts over time. You'll also be able to keep your contacts organized so you can get relevant information in front of the right people.



How will you get customers to come back again and again?

Engage regularly with your customers, its smart business. The more customers engage with you, the more they get to know, like, and trust you. And once you deepen these relationships, these people then become your biggest supporters.

So, how can you keep these customers engaged and reward them for their loyalty? Here are a few ways:

-  Use an online survey to find out what information your customers will find relevant
-  Organize a special event to bring more people to your store
-  Run a sweepstakes on Facebook
-  Offer a special deal you know your customers will love and share with their friends

The key is to create a healthy mix of content and promotion. A general rule of thumb is to offer 80 percent content that adds value for your customers and make an offer 20 percent of the time. When you focus on adding value for your customers, they are more likely to act on your offer.

✔ Action items:

Set goals and create a great offer. See how: 



Step

1

Set your goal

What's your vision of success? What specifically would make it a success for you? Ultimately, this boils down to generating more revenue. What is that dollar amount? Also, think about how many existing customers you'd like. How many new customers? These things can color the strategy behind your offer and how you present it.

Write down your goals. Pick ONE that you'll use for this offer.

Step

2

Understand your audience

Understand who you're talking to so you can create an offer that appeals to them. Here's a simple way to get started. Think about one of your best customers. Create an offer that would appeal to that person specifically.

Write down your answers. Pick ONE that you'll use for this offer.

What does your best customer want or need? What would really WOW! this customer?

What type of incentive has inspired this customer to take action in the past?

What is it about your business that would make this person want to refer you to their friends?

Step

3

Understand your value

Your customers have a lot of options — why would they want to support your business?

What products or services do you provide that make your best customer's life better?

There are probably many things that make you valuable to your audience. Write them down.

Pick ONE key value to use for this offer.

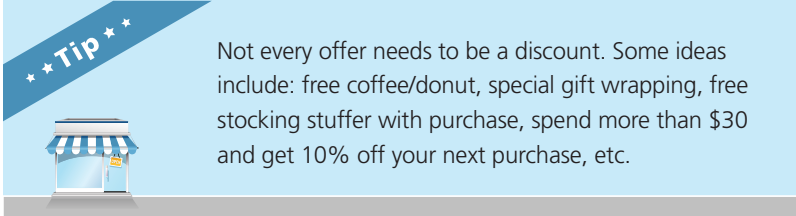
Step

4

Create your great offer

Take the one thing you chose from steps 1-3 and put them together to answer the question:

Why would someone want to redeem your offer?



Not every offer needs to be a discount. Some ideas include: free coffee/donut, special gift wrapping, free stocking stuffer with purchase, spend more than \$30 and get 10% off your next purchase, etc.

Here's an example of how to put it all together:

Heavenly Croissants

- Step 1  Heavenly Croissants chooses to get 100 customers to their store.
- Step 2  Heavenly Croissants had great success in the past offering a percentage off to their best customers. The customers consider it a nice little "thank you."
- Step 3  Heavenly Croissants also understands its coffee and pastries are an important part of their customers' morning.
- Step 4  Heavenly Croissants puts it all together to create a delicious deal offering **15% percent off a customer's next purchase** which they can promote as a "thank you" to its customers for shopping with them.



Now that you have a great offer, it's time to put a plan into place to let people know about it. Let's go!

How will you encourage customers to tell their friends about you?

You already know how important word of mouth is for your business. The friends and connections of your existing customers make great prospects for new business. Until recently, word-of-mouth referrals happened on a one-to-one basis. But now, thanks to social media, these referrals also happen on a one-to-many basis. As you saw in the "Engagement Marketing Cycle," this increases your business's social visibility, which can lead new business through your door.

So, once you have your great offer, you'll want to make sure you ask people to share it. This could mean forwarding your emails or even sharing them on social media. You could also think about adding an extra incentive to those who take up your offer and share it. Just make it easy for them to share.

✓ Action items:

- 1 Identify which social media networks make the most sense for your business. Start with one to avoid getting overwhelmed. You may also want to survey your customers to see which social networks the majority of them are using and start there.
- 2 Follow the 80/20 rule of thumb for your healthy mix of content and promotion on social networks.
- 3 Check to see if all of your promotional channels have sharing capabilities.



How will you track your success?

When you created your offer, you should have also set some goals for your efforts. You'll want to check in to see how things are going. What worked? What adjustments can you make so that things work better? Once you set benchmarks for yourself, you'll be able to implement adjustments moving forward and once again evaluate your success.

✔ Action items:

- 1 Review reports from all of your promotional channels. Look at things like email opens, clicks, forwards, social shares, and registrations. You'll also want to look at how many people claim, buy, share, and redeem your offers.
- 2 Identify the things that worked really well. What can you apply in the future?
- 4 Identify what didn't work so well. How can you make improvements?
- 5 Put together a plan for what you'll try next time to have even greater success.



5-POINT CHECKLIST FOR ONLINE MARKETING SUCCESS



Step

1



Make sure your business can be found online

Step

2



Ensure you have a way to stay in touch with new and existing customers

Step

3



Create a plan for ways to generate repeat business

Step

4



Engage and encourage people to interact with you online

Step

5



Measure your success