

The background features abstract geometric shapes. A vertical gold rectangle is on the left. A large purple diagonal band runs from the top right towards the bottom left. A solid purple horizontal band at the bottom contains the title text. The bottom left corner shows a small triangular overlap of the gold and purple shapes.

# SMALL BUSINESS BIG MARKETING IDEAS

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# Introduction

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This is a free e-book presented to you by Hughes Marketing Solutions. The concept of this e-book is to give you a tool that can be utilized to find cost-efficient and easy ways to help market your business. This e-book compiles various techniques in order to have a successful cost-efficient campaign. The focus is big marketing ideas targeted towards small businesses.

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## MARKETING 101

Marketing is an integrative processes involving many components and can sometimes seem overwhelming, but there is no need to deplete your budgets. An effective marketing campaign can be just as successful using low-cost techniques and strategies. This e-book only touches the surface on the many possibilities in low-cost marketing, but goes in depth on 7 different categories including: social media, search engine optimization, customer relations, strategic marketing, public relations, e-mail marketing, and guerilla marketing.



# Social Media

## FACEBOOK

The world we live in today is very technologically driven. In order to keep up with this new-age interactive social media, a great idea to help jump-start your business is to get a business facebook page. Facebook has over 750,000 new users per day. The numbers don't lie, it's a place you and your business want to be to interact with people who already are, or could potentially be clients or customers. There are several aspects of facebook that can be utilized to help market your company, and the best part is facebook is free.

Facebook ads are extremely useful for businesses for the 3 solid reasons: you can select your target market, you can deepen your relationships at the same time as advertising your company, and it's cost-efficient. Facebook advertising allows you to get your ad viewed to the specific people you want to see it. You can choose your audience by age, location and interests. Your target market views the ad on their sidebar. With 800 million people on facebook, who usually are on 2 or 3 times a day, you're bound to get your target to either look at, click on, or "like" your page. If you care to have a community feel to your company then facebook ads are a great way to do that, because it strengthens the relationships you have with people. You are constantly in contact with your customers and they can comment and interact on your page. It's a mix of relationship and advertising. Finally, facebook ads are extremely low-cost for the type of exposure you would get. You can make your own daily budget and adjust it to whatever you feel comfortable spending. You can also pay by CPC (cost per click) or CPM (cost per thousand impressions).

This is a way to show your followers what your businesses is doing, and to also get them involved. You can ask your followers questions, inform them on relevant industry news, or tell them about an upcoming event. You can post relevant articles that reflect your company or you think your followers would find interesting. You can upload pictures so the people who like your page can see first-hand what your company is doing, and have the ability to comment on it. You can even share recent company news. Allowing your publics to interact with your company is key to generating exposure and creating awareness.

Facebook insights is a free service that provides Facebook page administrators analytics and metrics on the performance of their page. There are many programs that can help heighten your performance on facebook. One of these programs is called hyperalerts.com. Hyperalerts.com alerts you when someone has posting onto your facebook page. Another program that aims to drive traffic to your social media ,and eventually website, is called cloudflood.com. Cloudflood.com allows you to give away free products to facebook viewers. There is a cloud button that they can click on to receive the free give away, but in doing so they either have to like your facebook page, or post about it.

An interactive way to either get your followers involved, or to get new followers is to have a facebook contest. This is also a great way to organically retain names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. You can do anything including photo contests, sign-up contests, and coupons or deals. The point is to create a landing page, and for the new followers to then “like” your page before they can enter to win or receive something. A great website that has an easy do-it-yourself setup is offerpop.com. Here’s an example of a facebook contest done on offerpop.com:



Submit a photo of your most fun, cool, sweet, or in any way interesting holiday tradition to win one of 12 Gap GiftCards worth \$500 each. Spend it on your friends and family, or splurge on yourself!

## TWITTER

Twitter has exploded over the last 5 years in the social media world. It is unique because a twitter page can be viewed by anyone, along with your tweets. Another unique quality that twitter has is “trending”. You have the ability to either join in on national or world-wide trends, or create your own trends that pertain particularly to your businesses. Again, you can tweet about things such as relevant news, company information, pictures or articles etc. Twitter is also free. Socialloomph.com is a tool for twitter that allows you to automatically follow those who follow you, and send your new followers messages directly.

Hootsuite/Tweet are great tools to use that organizes your social media. They are free social media dashboards. It allows you to send messages, tweets and status updates and even has a calendar for you to program your messages to be sent later in the future. It also has an analytics section where you can view who is following your business and how effective your messages are.



## GOOGLE +

Google + is a social networking and identity service. It integrates different aspects of various social media. You can create a business profile with Google + and incorporate things such as Circles and Hangouts. Circles allow users to organize people into groups for sharing. Hangouts are places used to facilitate group video chat. Google + is a very fun and interactive way to gain followers and get involved with clients, friends, and people that are interested in your company.

## LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is a great way to not only advertise your company, but also network with other business professionals. Networking and building relationships is key in having a successful small business. It should be about quality not quantity. By using LinkedIn, you can connect with other people and businesses, and have discussions on your page. Staying in touch with clients and businesses often have a positive impact. Again, LinkedIn is free to users.

## YOUTUBE

YouTube can have an effective hold on your marketing campaign. You can post videos of company events, or anything unique or creative that your company is doing. You can manage your own channel and get subscribers for your channel. YouTube also has an analytics section that shows you who's viewing your videos, how many subscribers you have, and the reaction to those videos. It gives a good insight to how people feel about your company in a very visual way. YouTube is also free. At [https://ads.youtube.com/keyword\\_tool](https://ads.youtube.com/keyword_tool) you can generate new ideas for keywords to help promote your videos on YouTube and better access your target.

Using banner ads on YouTube is another way to directly target your market. You can choose where to place your ads depending on the type of videos your target watches, and again it's paid by either CPC or CPM.

## BLOGGING

Blogging is a great way to generate awareness of your company, and to increase your organic search in search engines. Writing a blog about once a week gives your target insight into your company, and increases awareness and credibility. You can start your own free blog at [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com).

# Search Engine Optimization

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## SEO

SEO is essential to online searches and increasing web presence. According to the Google click-through rate, the volume of users clicking on a link after the first page decreases significantly. Therefore, it is crucial for your business to secure a top location within search results. This can be achieved by using keywords and phrases within the HTML code of the your website. The most vital component to SEO is keeping it up-to-date. The most frequently updated and used sites are more likely to appear higher in search results. SEO is free to perform and is extremely beneficial to the success of a company because of the traffic it will drive to your website. Two sites where you can find out who is linking to you and examine your link competition by analyzing competitor back links, anchor text etc. are [linkdiagnosis.com](http://linkdiagnosis.com) and [opensiteexplorer.org](http://opensiteexplorer.org).

Google remains the most utilized search engine, surpassing Bing, Yahoo!, AOL and MSN. Google Adwords, its most profitable sector, is an advertising system that seeks “to drive traffic from Google to their sites and generate leads” (Hoovers: Google Inc, 2011). In order for your company to capitalize on Adwords, you must bid on specific keywords. Once these keywords are searched via Google, company ads will appear as a sponsored links in the search results page. This approach will draw attention to your specific business and give you a greater web presence by driving traffic to the main website. Below is a chart showing how Google completely dominates the market share when it comes to search engine optimization.

### SEARCH ENGINE MARKET SHARE

May 2007 by Hitwise

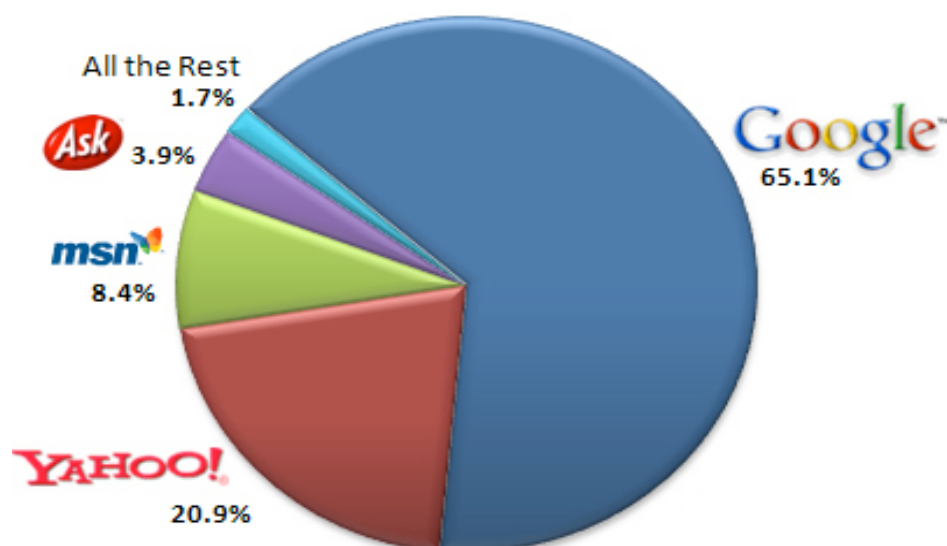


Chart by [www.internetworldstats.com](http://www.internetworldstats.com), Copyright © 2007

# Customer Relations

## FORM RELATIONSHIPS

Forming relationships with people and your clients might seem miniscule in the scheme of things, but it really can make all the difference when it comes to running a small business. Portraying a company that will provide quality work and relationships over quantity is key to small businesses. First, give your clients valuable time and effort. Value your relationships and make the best out of them. That will keep them coming back and could potentially lead to a referral. A good way to measure your client's response to you and your company is to get feedback through a survey. SurveyMonkey.com is a free online survey site.

## REFFERALS

Once you've formed these relationships be sure to refer them to other clients or even friends. Seeing that you are so willing to help them, they will be willing to return the favor and refer you to their contacts. Their contacts could include businesses, professionals, and prospective clients. It is much easier to contact someone that has been referred to you instead of going and searching for someone. Refferals can be categorized as free advertising for you and your business.

## NETWORKING

So how do you find and form these relationships? A great easy and cost-efficient way to do that is by networking. There are really no set rules to networking and you can do this in many different ways, but here are a few ideas:

- Visit your local chamber of commerce website and see what events are going on in your community.
- Become involved in your community by attending events, seminars, group meetings etc.
- Create business cards and always have them on you.
- Being affiliated with group and organizations within your industry creates great networking opportunities.
- Join your local chapters and then go to their events.
- Check out various groups on [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com).

# Strategic Marketing

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## BRANDING

Branding your company is a very important step you can take in order to gain recognition and create awareness. Branding can range anywhere from creating a certain slogan for your company, having signature company colors, or even creating a logo that is associated with your business. The key to this is to make sure it is clear people know who you are and what you are offering.



## BUDGET SAVVY ADVERTISING

Advertising can be deemed as very expensive, and because of this, small businesses tend to avoid advertising all together. However, there is a way to advertise effectively on a small budget. You can advertise locally instead of nationally. Advertising locally is more cost-effective and can reach your target market much faster. If you are wanting national recognition, then another option would be online advertising like facebook ads and banner ads that were mentioned before. Another budget savvy advertising technique is to sponsor a local event. This could be a large event that is happening in your community such as a charity event, or even something smaller like a 5k run. Advertising and sponsoring locally will make a huge difference in the usually large advertising cost, but just be sure to pick the right media for your specific target audience.

# Public Relations

Public relations is probably one of the most important aspects of marketing your business. It strategically is the liason between your business and your relationships. Advertising is important for a brand, but without support through public relations, efforts to reach the target audience are not fully optimized. The two-way PR communication effort will better establish a relationship between your business and audience. PR efforts can be created through multiple media channels, maintaining a synergistic message across all platforms.

## EVENTS

Having an event is a a great way to generate good PR and create awareness for your business. Tie your company to an event that not only promotes your business, but also gives you credibility. An even better way to generate good PR is to tie your company to a charity event or something that is going to a good cause.

## PRESS RELEASES

You haven't created the PR unless your public knows about it. An easy way to do that is to write up a quick one paged press release and send it out to your target audience. This will consist of 3 to 6 paragraphs and provides all the relevant facts and information a reporter should use to write a story. Here is what a press release outline consists of:

- Headline
- Summary
- Body
- Media Conact Information

There are several different free press release sites that can be utilized for this task such as: [free-press-release.com](http://free-press-release.com), [clickpress.com](http://clickpress.com) and [24-7pressrelease.com](http://24-7pressrelease.com). Most of these sites even have options where you can select exactly where geographically you want to send out your press releases and to what type of people and businesses.

## PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking is free and extremely beneficial for you and your company. You can speak in affilaited organizations, community chambers, or at events. You can sign up online at sites such as HARO, Reporter Connections, and [google.com/alerts](http://google.com/alerts) to receive e-mails of listings with reporters looking for content, speaking opportunities and expert opinion. There are several positive outcomes that can come from public speaking and here are a few:

- It helps promote your business and creates a networking opportunity.
- It highlights your knowledge and expertise in your field.
- It gives you and your business credibility and raises awareness.
- It creates a good image to your public.

# E-mail Marketing

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E-mail marketing is a very useful tool that can be utilized to easily reach your target audience at no cost. We live in a time now where almost everyone owns a smart phone and our constantly accessible via e-mail. To take advantage of this on-the-go lifestyle, you can market your company straight to your target's e-mail.

## E-MAIL BLASTS

In order to send out an e-mail blast, you have to have a database of contacts that will receive them. In order to have this database, you have to ask them first for their permission to opt-in and receive your e-mails. This way, none of your e-mails will go to their SPAM. Once you generate a good database of contacts, you can send anything from newsletters, to press releases, to event announcements. A free e-mail blast website is [mailchimp.com](http://mailchimp.com). In order to view what your e-mail will look like using every e-mail and client, check out [www.emailonacid.com](http://www.emailonacid.com).



# Guerilla Marketing

Guerilla Marketing is a form of marketing that is low-cost and allows you to get creative on a shoestring budget. It is an alternative to traditional advertising and the possibilities really are endless.

## QR CODES

We have seen a rise in QR codes over the past year and the reasoning is simple, they're free and a creative, interactive way to promote your business and draw attention to your website. QR codes are barcodes that are highly responsive and direct users to specific data. You can utilize this tool for your business by manging where you want your QR code to send people. It can be to your website, to a coupon or promotional item, or even to an event registration form. You can place QR codes almost anywhere including posters, t-shirts, business cards, labels etc. You can download your own free QR Code at [www.quikqr.com](http://www.quikqr.com).



## OTHER GUERILLA MARKETING TECHNIQUES

Guerilla Marketing is all about getting creative and being cost-efficient. Here are a few more guerilla marketing techniques that have become popular:

- Flash Mobs
- Street Art
- Banners and Posters
- Car decals
- T-shirts
- Sticker bombing

# Conclusion

We hope that you enjoyed this e-book and found it beneficial for you and your small business. Our goal was to provide helpful tips and techniques to maintain a strong marketing front while being cost-efficient. In order to have a successful small business you have to get creative and come up with big marketing ideas.

