

# 100 Low-Cost Ways to Promote your Business

Harold Taylor



HAROLD TAYLOR

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# **100 LOW-COST WAYS TO PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS**

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# INTRODUCTION

Before I list the 100 plus ideas on ways to promote your products and services on a shoestring budget, I should define what I mean by “promotion” and how it fits in with the other activities that are normally included under the umbrella of marketing. Then I will discuss some specific suggestions in more detail before finally offering the 100 quick tips in chapter 7.

*Marketing* can be defined as the action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including market research. It encompasses promotion, publicity, advertising, and for the purposes of this report, customer service.

*Sales* might be defined as the transfer of ownership of goods or other commodities or the provision of services by one company or person to another for a price.

*Promotion* is any attempt to influence others to buy your product or service. You could do that through social media, personal networking, news releases, speaking, writing, slogans on your business cards or handouts or simply being active in your local association. Normally you think of promotion as being free as opposed to advertising, where you buy space or air time from the news media.

*Publicity* is the process or information used to arouse public attention. These techniques are similar to promotion but the prime purpose is to become known by the public or your target market. This is important to all entrepreneurs and big business alike, including professionals, speakers, consultants or any expert in the field who wants to gain name recognition.

*Advertising* is a means of communication with the users of a product or service. Actual advertisements are messages paid for by those who send them and are intended to inform or influence people who receive them.

*Customer service* is the act of taking care of the customer’s needs by providing and delivering professional, helpful, high quality service and assistance before, during, and after the customer’s requirements are met.

As an entrepreneur, you will be participating in all the above activities in order to increase sales. In many cases it will be difficult to distinguish among some of these activities, and it really doesn’t matter. The main objective is to obtain the most sales at the least cost. This doesn’t mean you should ignore paid advertising since it can be extremely effective if tested and targeted. And it need not be expensive. In fact I have frequently exchanged articles for advertising, and bartered training for an equivalent dollar value in ads, and have had the odd seminar sponsored by a publication.

Display ads are expensive; but classified ads are usually quite reasonable. And according to Robert Bly in his book, *Become a recognized authority* (Alpha Books, 2002), a classified ad will give you a greater return for the cost than the larger ads. And according to a USA.com poll, the *most effective* forms of advertising are direct mail, Internet ads, and banners.

Since advertising can be expensive with limited return for your money, I recommend you seek out those publications, electronic newsletters or websites that target the same market you are trying to reach.

I include customer service as a function of marketing even though many management writers may treat it as a separate function. I do so because of its impact on sales.

A study conducted by the *Research Institute of America* found that 90% of customers who are dissatisfied with the service they receive will not come back again. They also found that only 4% of unhappy customers ever bother to complain, yet each unhappy customer tells his or her story to an average of nine other people.

According to *eMarketer*, it costs five to ten times as much to find a new customer as it does to retain an existing one. Loyal customers are more profitable to your business because they usually buy more of your products and services, are less sensitive to price, and often refer other clients to you.

It is important to keep in contact with past clients, offer guarantees, and provide fast service. Building loyal clients is an important part of any marketing strategy.

When you get customers or clients, convert them into missionaries so they will spread the good word about your products and services. Do this by earning their respect and demonstrating a sincere concern for their well-being. Deliver more than you promise.

# 1 CUSTOMERS ARE BOTH TIME CONSCIOUS AND IMPATIENT

## 1.1 THE SIX-MINUTE SALESMAN

In one of the first books I wrote over thirty-five years ago titled “*Making time to sell*,” I told the story of how a successful advertising salesperson explained his secret of selling so much advertising space by saying that he was a “six-minute salesman.” In those days, at least, a major hurdle was just getting to see the prospect. He would do so by promising the prospect that he would only take six minutes of his or her time. “Seven,” he would add, “if you ask questions.” The prospect was usually impressed. He didn’t really want to see the salesman, but this he had to see!

When the appointed time came, the salesman would walk into the prospect’s office, place his wristwatch on the desk and start his presentation.

The salesman claims the time urgency put him in control of the meeting. It also forced him to pare down his presentation and make every word count. The prospect was indeed impressed, appreciated the respect being shown for his time, and generally took more than the six minutes just asking questions. In fact, the prospect would usually detain the salesman well beyond twenty minutes - yet would not have agreed to see the salesman at all if he had actually *asked* for twenty minutes or more of his time.

Selling skills have increased dramatically during the last thirty-five years, while time management skills have remained the same. There are certain principles in conserving time just as there are basic principles in selling. They may not be applicable to all selling situations, but it may pay you to review them. There are hundreds of books on effective time management, including a few of my own.

A poorly organized, unplanned, rambling presentation eliminates some of the inroads made by the company through advertising and promotion, thus wasting the company’s time and money. And the prospects themselves may be missing a great opportunity to increase profits, cut costs or improve service.

## 1.2 DON'T KEEP CUSTOMERS WAITING.

If you are a professional or operate a business where the customer comes to you, don't keep them waiting. A certain amount of waiting can't be avoided – especially in the case of doctors, lawyers, accountants and so on. But research shows that customers perceive waiting time to be less if there are signs to read in your waiting room – or anything else that will keep them occupied. Always have something to read such as current magazines and signs as well as Wi-Fi. If appropriate, TV and a play area with toys for kids would also be a plus.

Waiting time also seems shorter if customers have someone to talk to. Paco Underhill, in his book “*Why we buy*,” recommends taking care of the customer within two minutes. This is not always possible; but any waiting without contact over a minute and a half creates time distortion in the minds of the customers.

Time waiting *after* initial contact seems to go faster than the same amount of time spent waiting *before* the interaction. So acknowledging that the customer is waiting tends to relieve time anxiety. It is a good idea to acknowledge the customer when they first arrive and at least every five minutes thereafter.

Even giving the customer an estimate of the waiting time is better than nothing. Underhill claims that being told the wait would be about two minutes makes the actual four or five minute wait go faster.

In a supermarket or in some retail store situations, a single line leading to the cashiers ensures that people are served in turn. And impulse items placed where the line forms, not only distracts from the wait, but is also smart merchandising.

Customers hate waiting in line, and stores with long line-ups at the check-outs frequently encounter abandoned carts containing merchandise.

This “want it now” syndrome was evident in the studies described in Martin Lindstrom's *Buyology* book. Students were offered either a \$15 Amazon gift certificate right away or a \$20 gift certificate in two weeks. They chose the \$15 certificate. The students' brains were scanned as they were made the offers, and the “\$15 right now” offer caused an unusual flurry of stimulation in those areas of the brain responsible for our emotional life.

This could explain the popularity of such services as overnight delivery, instant Kindle book downloads, and express checkouts. So keep in mind that it might pay you to use priority mail for shipping, for example, where the packaging is provided or even courier – even though it's more expensive to do so. You might decide to build the shipping cost into the price of the product. Speed does make a difference.

### 1.3 PUNCTUALITY IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS.

In many cases, the customer or prospect doesn't come to us; we have to go to them. And that's where time management skills come in handy. Show respect for other people's time, and you will be seen as a dependable vendor. You can avoid being late by practicing common sense etiquette and the application of sound time management and organizing principles. Here are a few suggestions.

- Make up your mind that you will be punctual from now on. In many cases lateness is caused by a lack of commitment to arrive on time. Have the right mindset.
- Record commitments in your planner, and also record the time you must *leave* the house or office in order to arrive on time. Plan to arrive 5 to 10 minutes early; but don't actually make your presence known until the scheduled time. Arriving early is seldom appreciated.
- Always allow more time to travel to the meeting or appointment than you think it will take. This is the same as scheduling more time for a task than you think it will take. It will allow for interruption by people you meet on the way, traffic congestion, parking, and so on.
- To determine the time needed, visualize the trip in your mind, adding time for each segment, such as taking the elevator, walking to your car, driving to the other office building, finding the right room, and so on. Then add your safety factor.
- Don't be trapped by the *one last thing* syndrome. If you're ready to leave and it's still early, leave anyway. Utilize the time at the other end rather than trying to finish one more task before you leave.
- If you have a morning meeting or other commitment, get everything you will need for the event ready the night before. Always plan ahead.
- If you use an iPhone or other electronic device, set the alarm for the time you have to stop what you are doing and leave for your meeting.
- If something unplanned and unavoidable happens and you think you might be late, make a quick courtesy call so others won't waste time waiting for you. When you arrive, apologize briefly but skip the excuses.

Punctuality is not just good etiquette, it's essential. In business, it shows you are professional, respect other people's time, manage your time well, and are on top of your job. It also lowers your stress level and provides a feeling of being in control.

And in your personal life, it shows respect for your friends and acquaintances, an eagerness to participate, and a reputation for being dependable and trustworthy.

## 2 PEOPLE DO NOT DECIDE BY LOGIC ALONE

### 2.1 HOW OUR CUSTOMERS THINK

In his book, *“Why we make mistakes,”* Joseph Hallinan gave examples of a bank testing various sales promotions. One involved letters beginning, “Congratulations. You are now eligible for a new cash loan.” Various interest rates were offered or a chance to win a cell phone, etc. In the lower right-hand corner of each letter was a photo of a bank employee. A woman’s photo instead of a man’s increased demand among men by as much as dropping the interest rate five points.

Martin Lindstrom, author of the book, *“Buyology,”* claims that neuromarketing isn’t about implanting ideas in people’s brains or forcing them to buy what they don’t want to buy – it’s about uncovering what’s already inside their heads. Neuromarketing is thriving today as more and more research uncovers more and more ways of understanding, **and** influencing what people buy. But it’s not an exact science.

We do know, however, that a can of goods advertised at four for two dollars outsells one for 50 cents. And based on trials in 86 different stores, multiple unit pricing results in a 32% increase in sales over single-unit pricing. “Quantity limits” also boosts sales. The higher the limit the greater the sales – until the limit becomes absurd – then it tails off. The limit appears to be 12. (When I shop, I stop at about 4.)

Our brain seems to have a mind of its own when it comes to buying things. The amygdala, the emotion center of the brain, sometimes takes over, and momentarily disables cognitive functioning. The more we know about neuromarketing, the better.

For example, one university study revealed how waiters could increase their tips. Diners were divided into four groups, one group obtaining no candies after the meal, one group getting two candies, a third group getting two candies – and then a third one as though an afterthought when the waiter started leaving the table . The fourth group, the control group, received no candies.

The results?

- One candy increased the tip by 3.3% over the control group.
- Two candies increased the tip by 14.1%.
- Two candies and then a third one increased the tip by 23%. (It’s as though this group thought they were getting special treatment that merited a reward in return.)

It's difficult to analyze all purchasing decisions since so many factors could influence them - everything from the environment and location of the product to the mental state of the buyer at the time.

For example, cold weather increases sales of cold weather items; but also increases returns. And German wine outsells French wine when German music plays in the background and vice versa. Unhealthy snacks outsells healthy snacks when people are hungry, and so on. Both keeping up to date on the research and testing different promotions yourself will help you learn what works and what doesn't.

## **2.2 PEOPLE LOVE FREEBIES.**

It's encouraging and motivational when you know you're well on your way to getting something free. That's why marketers give coupons for coffee or carwashes with one or more spaces already punched to motivate prospects to continue.

In fact neuromarketers have actually tested various vouchers for a car wash. One had 8 blank circles that had to be stamped before getting a free car wash. They made up another voucher with 10 circles instead of eight, but with 2 of them already stamped. This latter one was more effective. They were still required to purchase 8 car washes before receiving a free one, but two of the ten circles were already stamped so the customer was already a fifth of the way there! 34% used it for all 8 car washes compared to 19% of those using the one with only 8 blank circles. Go figure.

There is much money to be made by marketers due to the predictable – and sometimes unpredictable - behavior of customers. By one estimate, 40% of rebate coupons are never redeemed. Merchants frequently offer rebate coupons instead of just cutting prices because they know everyone won't bother filling them out and mailing them in. People are frequently reluctant to even go to a website to download a coupon.

The number one gift choice in America are gift cards, yet many – even most - are not even used. Joseph Hallinan, in his book *Why we make mistakes*, claims that on average, U.S. consumers have between three and four unused gift cards apiece lying around somewhere. He says in his book, "In 2008, for instance, Limited Brands, owners of the Victoria's Secret chain of lingerie stores, reported a quarterly pretax gain of \$47.8 million from unused gift cards." By selling gift cards, companies can't lose!

### **2.3 TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT.**

Find out what other companies are doing and do it differently. If everyone seems to be sending birthday cards or Christmas cards to their clients, try Valentine's Day cards or even Groundhog Day greetings.

One day as we were wondering who to call to get our furnace repaired, we received a card in the mail. It was a Valentine's Day card with a large heart on the front bearing the words, "We don't mend broken hearts..." On the inside it said simply, "...but we do fix furnaces." Guess who got our business?

In the book, *Do Something Different*, one of the things that author Jurgen Wolff suggests is to break up your sales message into a jigsaw puzzle before sending it to your prospects. The recipients will have a hard time resisting the urge to put the pieces together to see what it says. People generally love personal involvement.

Jerry Wilson, in his book, *151 Quick Ideas to Get New Customers*, tells of a case where putting prices on all the merchandise increased sales by 40%. Many people are reluctant to ask the price (too timid, too busy or just not interested enough) and simply walk away. Consider putting price tags on all your products. This is especially important for retail stores or when selling your products at trade shows. I have taken out a booth many times at Organizing Expos, and know for a fact that I sell much more when I take the time to place price tags on every book and other product. People tend not to read the signs I placed on the tables or they might have thought to themselves, "This probably doesn't apply to these particular items because they look really expensive."

### **2.4 DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF TESTIMONIALS.**

You might think that since almost every company uses testimonials to sell products that prospects are no longer influenced by them. This is simply not the case. Although the heading of the previous section is "Try something different," that doesn't mean you should ignore the tested and true ways of promoting business. Many if not most of them still apply. I seldom buy a book on Amazon or in bookstores without reading some of the testimonials. And rarely do I make a major purchase for the home or office without checking with friends and associates to see what brand they had purchased, and whether they were happy they did.

Testimonials create credibility for you and confidence for your prospects. To quote Barry Farber in *Entrepreneur* magazine (February, 2002) "In my experience, there is an instantaneous increase in the number of sales when real customers are seen or heard testifying as to how beneficial a product has been to them."

A study by Bazaarvoice and market research company Vizu found that 80% of shoppers have more trust in brands that feature reviews and that 75% of shoppers say it's extremely or very important to read customer reviews before purchasing. The study also found that peer reviews are preferred over expert reviews by 6 to 1. (Source: "Quick Bites," by Sam Geist) This reinforces the value of testimonials from your clients. It's also more effective to include a photo of the person giving the testimonial.

## 3 PUBLIC SPEAKING AS A PROMOTIONAL TOOL

### 3.1 THE WORD IS MIGHTIER THAN THE PEN.

Developing and delivering workshops and developing a public speaking business are covered in a separate e-book, but I recommend that you speak to as many groups as possible to promote your business, products and services. If you get paid that's a bonus. Speaking not only gives you self-confidence and experience, it is one of the best methods I know for getting your name in front of prospects.

Have a folder or promotional item for every person in the audience, regardless of whether there are ten people or 10,000 people. Combine information with promotion. For example, provide a handout containing the major points made in your speech as well as a description of your product or service. If you have consumer products, you might sell them at the back of the room following your presentation. Always obtain approval from the sponsoring organization to do this.



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When you obtain a speaking engagement, send information on yourself and your company to the person booking you. Include an introduction that they can read from the platform. If you have a book or product, offer one or more as draw prizes.

Ask for the business cards from the draw for your database of lukewarm prospects. Then email them an offer of a free booklet or other item that they have to ask for. It should relate to your area of specialty. Transfer the names of those responding to your hot prospects lists. You can then offer them a free subscription to your opt-in monthly or quarterly electronic newsletter.

It could be *Quick Business Tips* periodical or whatever. As long as it's an opt-in subscription, you are not guilty of spam. We currently have about 2500 subscribers to our quarterly time management newsletter, which continues to generate orders from our website every time we send it out.

After your talk, ask the sponsor for a testimonial letter. Send a thank you letter. Offer to add him or her to your newsletter mailing list. If you're short of groups to talk to, ask for a referral as well.

If you present time management keynotes or other presentations, how you deliver the material is almost as important as the content. You want to keep the group's attention and ensure that learning is taking place. Here are some suggestions based on my experiences.

### **3.2 OVERCOME STAGE FRIGHT**

It's natural to be a little anxious. Experiencing a little stage fright every time we appear before a group is normal. In fact, it's desirable; it helps us to do our best. We are naturally concerned about how we will come across, and we want to do a good job.

A little stress never hurt anyone — especially when we have the opportunity to work it off through the activity of delivering a talk or making a presentation. But we should never allow our stage fright to become out-and-out fear. It not only disrupts the talk, it disrupts the audience, as well. If we're nervous, they're nervous. It's contagious.

To keep stage fright under control, concentrate on your message, not on yourself. Talking to five, ten or fifty people is no different from talking to one or two — with the exception of having to talk a little louder. We would have no difficulty jumping a four-foot-wide stream, but a similar gap thousands of feet high on a mountain cliff can immobilize us with fear if we allow ourselves to think of the height. So don't. Concentrate on the jump — or the speech.

The more familiar you are with your material, the less prone you will be to getting stage fright. The biggest fault of many accomplished speakers is that they get lazy. They feel they no longer have to prepare, and their lack of preparation is usually obvious. If you're not an accomplished speaker, it's even more important to spend ample time in preparation. Lack of preparation aggravates stage fright. You should always know more about your topic than you'll ever have time to tell.

### 3.3 ORGANIZE YOUR TALK

Every presentation should have an objective. Write it down. Are you trying to inform, persuade or entertain? Have an outline or plan. Every presentation has an introduction (which should be flexible), a body and a conclusion.

The conclusion is usually more definite — even memorized in some cases. But don't memorize the whole presentation. Write it out; read it to yourself; be familiar with the ideas; but don't memorize it. Memorized presentations are not spontaneous. They become a performance. An act. You appear to be talking *at* your audience, not *with* them.

The same thing applies to reading a speech. If you *must* read a speech, be familiar enough with your material that you can look around leisurely and comfortably, imitating "first-time utterance."

Rehearse it to perfect your timing, pauses, inflections and change of pace. A better method than reading the speech or memorizing it in its entirety is to write it out, give each new idea a heading and memorize the headings or key words of each heading. And it's OK to do this when you're just getting started as a speaker. But professional speakers don't have to memorize cue cards. They are so familiar with their material that they present it as though they were having a conversation with a group of friends.

### 3.4 GIVE IT YOUR BEST SHOT

One of the biggest problems for beginning speakers is the use of the pause. They seem to be afraid of silence. Don't tear right into your presentation. Pause a moment to look at the audience and begin with a sentence that indicates you are aware they are there. Be enthusiastic.

Enjoy yourself. Exude confidence. Don't fidget or pace. Speak naturally but with enough volume that everyone can hear you. Gesture if it's natural to you. In fact, the key to a successful presentation is being natural in your delivery. Don't try to be a comedian — unless you *are* one.

Humor must be relevant. Avoid hackneyed expressions, jargon and pompous words. Everyone loves sincerity and hates a phony. Just be yourself. And make your ending neat and prompt. It's better for an audience to think "What? It's over so soon?" than "My word, is she never going to quit?"

When making a presentation, adhere to the rules of good public speaking. Think before you speak, get attention with your opening remarks and get right to the point. Follow up your initial summary with supporting information and close with a powerful statement designed to obtain agreement or initiate action. Don't hog the floor. If there is a time limit, stay within the allotted time. If there are no time restrictions, remember it is better to be brief than sorry.

If you feel uncomfortable on your feet, don't let it worry you. No one is born with a golden tongue. Practice will calm the butterflies and enable you to speak clearly, concisely and convincingly. In the meantime, avoid the simple mistakes made by some of the best speakers, and you will come across just fine.

Don't rush into your presentation and don't rush away from it at the end. Stay put until you have delivered the punch line before making any motion to pick up your cue cards and flee to your seat. Don't mumble; take your time, even though you feel like racing, and eliminate those maddening "ums," "ahs," and "you knows."

I used to say "you know" a dozen times in a speech. And I used to use the phrase "that type of thing" a lot. I asked my wife sit at the back of the room and draw these flaws to my attention. I recommend you get someone you can rely on to act as your critic. I also recommend you record all your sessions and listen to it later with a critical ear.

You may feel nervous, awkward or frightened, but you need not project those feelings to your audience. Smile, force yourself to gain eye contact with everyone and don't jiggle change, rattle bracelets, bury your head in your notes or slouch over the back of a chair. When responding to questions, take your time. If necessary, ask for the question to be repeated while you formulate your reply. When you answer a controversial question don't fix your eyes on the questioner; it could lead to a one-on-one argument. Deliver your reply to the entire audience.

Although practice makes perfect, your current activity as a speaker may not allow much practice. If you are never called upon to make a presentation, seek other opportunities to get experience. Join Toastmasters or a few associations. Volunteer to introduce or thank the speaker. Get involved as a committee chairman whose job it is to report at annual meetings. Seek out opportunities to practice. One day when you least expect it, you may be called upon to make that presentation that could accelerate your career. Be ready for it. Let's take a look at the details involved in a presentation and things to keep in mind.

### **3.5 BEFORE THE SPEECH**

Planning for your speech starts well in advance of the actual presentation. You may want to send a pre-program questionnaire to the sponsoring company or association so you will have a profile of your audience, information on the type of work they do, what their objectives for this program are, what other speaker's will be presenting, along with their topics etc.

The more you know about your audience the better you will be able to prepare. You may want to send material in advance for distribution to the audience. Also a diagram showing your preferred layout of the room and your audiovisual requirements. And a sample introduction. Some people are terrible at introductions and you want to get off to a good start.

Make everything as easy as possible for the client. The same rule applies if you are being paid as a professional speaker. For example, you would make sure you have an agreement made up specifying the terms of the engagement. I ask for half the fee upon signing the agreement and the balance on or before the date of the presentation. Put a price on your talk. Even if you're doing it free, invoice them for your standard fee of let's say \$500 and a special agreed upon discount of 100%. And always have a reason for giving a discount.

### **3.6 CHECKLISTS KEEP YOU ON TRACK**

Make up a checklist so you won't forget anything when you leave for the presentation. Those props you want to use during your speech. An extra copy of your sample introduction. Your PowerPoint slides and laptop. The handouts for the audience. Business cards. A few extra folders describing your programs. A few press kits.

Always arrive early to survey the room. If you're the first speaker you may be able to make adjustments. If you're not the first speaker and you can't make changes, you can at least plan how to work in the environment you find yourself. You have enough on your mind on the platform without being surprised by the position of the stage, the type of microphone you have to work with etc.

## 4 WRITING ARTICLES FOR SELF-PROMOTION

### 4.1 PUT IT IN WRITING

Writing articles is an excellent way of promoting your products and services. The process is covered in detail in my e-book, *[How to write articles for self-promotion](#)*, published by Bookboon.com and I recommend you read it in its entirety. Most writers think of writing articles for pay; but you can earn a lot more by increasing sales in your business or even launching a whole new career as a speaker, trainer, consultant or whatever – simply by getting non-fiction articles published in dozens - even hundreds - of small circulation, non-paying publications that target the same people who would be prospects for those things you market.

You could get ten times the value of any writing fees in publicity alone if you were to simply give all your articles at no charge to anyone who will publish them in either print or electronic format. The secret is to get a lot of articles published in markets where the competition to get published is minimal – and that’s the low-paying or no-payment trade journals, newsletters, house organs, blogs, and so on. You don’t need to be a professional writer to do so.

The more you write, the better you will become – and although my focus has never been on making a living by writing, it is responsible for my success as a professional speaker and trainer.

Published articles can act as free advertising to promote you and your business. They establish credibility, position you as an expert in your field, provide name recognition for both you and your company, and through the byline or tagline, tell people where you can be reached. You can even slip the odd “commercial” into your articles by mentioning your product or service as an example of a point you are making or offer a free form, sample, free advice or whatever.

Through an article, you can get your name and message to thousands of people at the same time. It can generate media interviews and invitations to speak in public and draw attention to yourself or your business and the products and services that you offer. It has a great chance of generating income indirectly, even if you don’t get paid for the article. You could sell a compendium or collection of articles on your website or extend them into a special report or a book.

You can get a lot more mileage out of a few articles than you can out of a book. You're lucky to sell 5000 copies of a book, even using an established publisher. But an article can reach millions of people through the combined subscribers of the magazines in which your articles are published. And you can write 50 or more articles in the time it takes you to write a single book.

## 4.2 A MAJOR ASSET IS YOUR ABILITY TO WRITE.

If nothing else, writing articles forces you to write. And the more you write the better you become at it. Think of all the areas of business where effective writing is a huge asset. From promotional e-mails, social media postings and newsletters to promotional brochures, advertisements, website copy and even books, the ability to write can make the difference between failure and success. And if you're an entrepreneur still in the start-up or growth stages of your business, can you really afford to outsource all those areas?

Some people find it impossible to tackle a project as large as a book, yet many books are simply composed of a series of articles strung together. My first book, *Making Time Work for You*, for example, was written this way. I wrote a series of articles for *Toronto Business* magazine. I suppose it was a column. It was a weekly or biweekly, controlled circulation magazine that paid nothing for articles they published. But it gave me exposure to my target market of managers in the Toronto area and provided me with a byline that included what I do, along with my contact information. I wrote the articles progressively, in a logical order, as though I were writing a book. But I only had to write 800 words at a time.

A year or so later, I took those same articles and pieced them together, three articles per chapter, to form a book. It took thirty-six articles in all. I did some editing to make sure the book flowed okay, added an introduction, contents page, conclusion and index, and voila – my first book! I must admit I was fortunate to have had it accepted by a publishing house, but if it hadn't been, I could have self-published.

The book gave me the credibility I needed to market myself as a time management expert. It was later picked up by *Dell Pocket Books* and published for the mass market. *Beaufort* in New York and *Kogan Page* in Great Britain both published it as a hard cover and it did very well. So don't ever underestimate the importance of writing articles.

And the point is, at the time, I would never have had the motivation to tackle a book. But it is fairly easy to write an 800-word article every few weeks - especially if it's on a topic that you know something about.

Here are a few comments and suggestions for writing articles as a promotion tool. You might find some of them helpful. If you decide to write articles for self-promotion purposes, I recommend you read the e-book that I mentioned earlier.

- Published articles give you credibility, position you as an expert in your field, provide name recognition, and in the byline or body of the article, they can tell people about your product and service and how you can be reached.
- Offer free information or sample products in your article to gain response and build your prospect list.
- Write articles on your topic of interest/expertise so that they later can be compiled to form a book.
- Even a few articles can be merged and edited to form a “Special report” that can be sold or provided to clients as a bonus.
- If you provide a service such as public speaking, training or consulting, articles make an excellent insert for your “press kit.”
- Focus on getting your articles published in trade publications, association newsletters, and community papers that reach your target market.
- Organize both electronic and hard copy folders so you can collect and store information relevant to your topics for reference when writing your articles.
- Always record the source and date of any information you collect for reference.
- The length of articles will vary with different publications; but when submitting unsolicited articles, aim for the 800-word mark.
- “How to” articles are most popular. Example: “7 ways to get more sleep,” or “How to hiring the right salesperson for your company.”
- The title is important to grab the attention of both the publisher and the magazine’s readers. A question will frequently do this – such as, “Are cell phones harming our brains?”
- Write the article first and edit later. Initially, ignore spelling, typos and even sentence structure, and focus on getting your message on paper. Writing is in the editing.
- Form a habit of writing every day at a time you feel the most creative. Frequently this is first thing in the morning.
- Get ideas while you walk, drive or talk or whatever, and jot them down or record them as soon as possible.
- If you are interrupted from your writing in order to do something else, stopped in mid-sentence so it will be easier to remember where you left off.
- Use simple words. Right for your reader, not yourself. A grade 8 or grade 9 level is probably a good target to aim for.
- When you have finished your article, read it aloud. If it doesn’t sound right – doesn’t flow smoothly – edit it until it does.
- Don’t plagiarize. But you cannot copyright ideas, only the way they are expressed.

- For contact information on magazines that buy articles, get a copy of “Writer’s Market,” published annually, or check for one in your local library.
- For contact information on smaller magazines and trade journals that don’t pay for articles, check a copy of the “Canadian Standard Rates and Data” publication.
- Make your writing crisp and clear. Use the active voice. Don’t convert verbs to nouns. Get rid of wordy expressions. Use simple words.
- Measure the readability of your article by determining the fog index of your writing. The fog index measures the readability of your writing. The index estimates the years of formal education needed to understand the text on a first reading. So a fog index of 12 for instance requires the reading level of an 18 year old. Watch it doesn’t get too high. You can check the fog index of samples of your writing at <http://gunning-fog-index.com/>.

# 5 BUSINESS NETWORKING FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

## 5.1 NETWORKING IS AN ONGOING PROCESS.

Unless you are a recluse, you should be networking all the time - whenever you attend an association meeting, conference, trade show or whatever. It's the process of establishing a mutually beneficial relationship with other business people and potential clients and/or customers. The emphasis should be on "mutually." It has to be a win-win relationship. Networking does not mean infringing on other people's time by seeking out people who can help you.

Networking is more than just exchanging information. It's developing relationships. To be a successful entrepreneur you must develop relationships with those who can assist in locating information, contacts and prospects as well as giving advice on projects and tasks. This isn't to say that with everyone you meet you determine whether that person can help your career, and if not, move on. We already have our relatives, friends and acquaintances whom we socialize with and have fun together. But some of those business people that we network with may eventually become close friends as well.

But purposeful networking is an effective strategy to help you expand your business or further your career. Those who don't have a networking plan are seriously limiting their potential for success. 70 percent of all jobs, for instance, are not found from answering want ads or sending out resumes, but by networking. Most of the people that I have hired during my lifetime were from referrals from other people who knew I was looking for someone with specific qualifications.

The more people you meet through networking, the more effective you will be. We meet a lot of people simply by going about our daily routine. But we should also have a plan. To start with you should join two associations - a peer group, and one whose members represent your target market. If your target market is small business owners, for instance, you might also join the *Association of Women Executives* or the *Canadian Institute of Management* or an association of entrepreneurs or any number of professional and trade associations.

## 5.2 INVOLVEMENT IS THE KEY

Joining associations is not enough. You must attend their monthly meetings and other functions as often as possible. The more visible you are, the more chance you have of getting referral business. That's why you should not join too many associations. You simply wouldn't have the time to network properly. There is little reward for having your name listed in a membership roster.

Arrive at every meeting a little early so you meet people as they arrive. Overcome your reluctance to start up a conversation. I realize that some people are more extroverted than others, but you can overcome any fear simply by realizing that they are just as anxious to talk to you. The more you network, the easier it becomes.

Of course you must prepare ahead of time. Have plenty of business cards and one-page leaflets or folders describing your product or service. And memorize an “elevator speech” – a brief description of what you do for a living. When someone asks what you do, don’t simply say you’re an accountant or a speaker or workshop leader or professional organizer. Say that you help business managers to become more personally productive by training them in the principles of time management - or whatever. Keep it less than 10 seconds in length but include the name of your company, the specific service that you provide and the benefit of this service to your target market.

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### 5.3 BE SENSITIVE TO OTHERS

Don't thrust a business card at someone the moment you meet. Wait until they ask for it or leave it until the end as you are leaving them. I belonged to the *National Speakers Association* and I was amused by the number of eager members who stuck a business card in my face and give their "elevator speech" before they had ever met me. Ironically this happened most frequently when I got on an elevator and several members were already there. I suppose they think that this is what an elevator speech is all about. But it simply puts people off.

You have to earn the right to promote yourself by first showing a genuine interest in the person. Networking is a give and take process – with more giving than taking. Ask what *they* do and what *their* needs are. Offer advice, contacts or whatever is appropriate. You are selling *yourself*, not your company or your products or services. In fact the small talk near the start of your conversation is the important stuff – their family, hobbies, sports interests etc. Let the other person do most of the talking. Be a good listener. Make eye contact. Don't glance at your watch or scan the room to see who else is there. Give your full attention to the person you're talking to.

When I first joined the above association I recall speaking to several long-time members, who once they discovered I was a novice with little to offer, started looking over my shoulder to see who else was there who could be more important to talk to. They obviously weren't listening to me and were simply looking for an excuse to move on. I was not impressed with those people. Other members, usually the more successful ones, were eager to talk to me and offer advice. They quickly gained my respect.

Don't expect to get business as soon as you talk to someone. Remember, networking is about building relationships. They must know you and trust you first. Even in a direct selling situation, prospects buy *you* first and then your product.

Listen more than you talk. You learn nothing new when you talk, only when you listen. Be more interested than interesting.

### 5.4 NAMES ARE IMPORTANT

If you're going to build relationships you had better be good at remembering names. They won't always be wearing a nametag. You can improve by listening carefully to the name when first introduced. The tendency is to think about what you are going to say rather than listen intently to them, so break the habit. If you don't hear the name, ask them to repeat it. It may be embarrassing to have to ask two or three times, but it's not as embarrassing

as not knowing who they are at the end of the conversation. Some people talk quickly or have an accent or slur their words. Never be embarrassed about asking them to repeat or even spell their name. They will be flattered that you are interested in them. And people love the sound of their own name.

When you hear their name, immediately say it aloud. :”Glad to meet you John.” Saying it aloud helps get it into your long-term memory. Say it silently to yourself. And use it during the conversation. “How long have you been a member, John?” Say it aloud again when you leave him or her. And then write it down afterwards if you don’t have their business card.

But don’t be caught without business cards. When you design your business card, make the print large enough to see without squinting. Include all your contact information. If your name is difficult to pronounce, you might even include a phonetic spelling in brackets beneath the name. Make it as easy as possible for people to remember you and contact you. Use the back of the card to list your products or services. You might even include a map showing how to get to your office.

A photograph on the front will make it easier for them to remember you. Include your company logo. Choose a clear readable font and don’t let your card look cluttered. Some people try to cram too much onto one side.

The networking doesn’t end when the conversation does. Follow-up with those you’ve met. A brief e-mail indicating how great it was to meet them is sufficient. Hopefully you have jotted down their interests following your meeting so you can send them some information. Perhaps an article you have clipped out of a magazine with your business card attached. Everyone you meet and befriend may not be a prospect for your services. But they all know a hundred or more other people who might be.

## **5.5 NETWORKING STARTS BEFORE THE MEETING**

When you attend an annual conference, plan ahead. Review the pre-conference registration list and see who’ll be attending. Highlight those you want to touch base with. Send an e-mail to those key people indicating your common interests and your desire to meet them. You may be able to arrange a time to meet, or at least an agreement that you will search out each other during the conference.

Some people review the final registrations list *after* the conference and are disappointed that there were people there that they would have liked to have met.

Choose those sessions that are really important to attend and schedule them into your planner. Then network while the other sessions are taking place. There are always people milling around the registration desk, exhibits or recording table. Introduce yourself and remember the old adage, they don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

## 5.6 BE PREPARED WHEN ATTENDING EVENTS

When attending workshops, whether they are sponsored by one of your associations or not, arrive early. This is an excellent opportunity to meet a knowledgeable instructor and keen participants in a closed environment. The smaller the group the better, because it gives you a chance to learn more about the people there – before the sessions, during the sessions, during the breaks, and after the workshop is over.

Pay particular attention if the instructor makes the rounds with introductions. People are usually so busy thinking about what they are going to say themselves that they don't hear the information given by the other participants. If you have your "elevator speech" memorized and have thought about your objectives in attending the workshop, this isn't necessary. Listen to the names, and jot them down as you hear them. Determine who you would most like to meet, based on what they say about themselves and their job. And strike up a conversation with them during the breaks. Don't forget to bring your business cards and folders with you.

The opportunities for networking are unlimited. Not only at association meeting, conferences and workshops, but at social events, neighborhood get-togethers, company meetings, plant tours and Christmas parties. Everywhere you go, there's an opportunity to meet people – restaurants, banks, the library, grocery store – you name it. Networking simply involves meeting people and building relationships. But you are prepared in the event that the conversation turns to business. You may be the one to direct it that way if you feel it's appropriate.

Some relationships will be short-lived, but that's okay. As you become a "people person", sensitive to the likes, dislikes and needs of people, you will make many friends and acquaintances. It's important not to take advantage of these relationships by giving a hard sell. Be patient. It takes time. Don't be like a butterfly skipping from one flower to the next. When you're with someone, be there mentally as well. Even if there is no chance of getting business referrals or advice from them – at least you'll make a friend. And that's important.

## 5.7 YOU GET OUT OF NETWORKING WHAT YOU PUT INTO IT.

Business can come from the most unlikely places such as meeting a vice-president of a major corporation on the tennis court or having a magazine publisher in the audience while making a presentation.

The more active and visible you are, the more contacts you will make. Jump at the chance to make speeches, write articles or volunteer for committees. Submit items to association newsletters, church bulletins, or community newspapers.

Spend less time watching TV and more time in group activities. Ski clubs, bridge clubs, city tours – they are all opportunities to meet people and network.

I'll close this chapter by summarizing the key points in successful networking.

1. Number one is to have the right attitude. Don't attend a meeting with a negative outlook, thinking, "Oh boy another evening wasted!" Know you will meet some interesting people there. And have a giving attitude. Plan to help others more than they will help you.
2. Don't discriminate. I don't mean you should not seek out those that you think can help you. That's your goal. But once you are talking to someone, be as attentive and gracious as possible. Don't be abrupt or discourteous simply because you feel they have nothing to offer. They may have been brought into your life for a reason.
3. Have a plan. Think in advance about who will be there and how you will seek them out. Write down any questions you want to ask. What do you want to accomplish at the first meeting. Do you have information to bring along that you think will be of interest to them?
4. Prepare in advance. Have plenty of business cards and folders describing your services. If you have written a book, bring a copy with you. I don't mean walk around with a book in your hand, handing out business cards and leaflets. But have them with you - in your pocket, handbag, attaché case, computer bag or whatever you have with you. And use them when the opportunity arises. You might create some useful giveaways – promotional items that have a use. I always carried a pocketful of small retractable blades for clipping articles. They were shaped like a key and inscribed with the words "Time is Life. Get Organized. Call \_\_\_\_\_." Every time someone was struggling to open a carton or tear an article from a magazine, I'd give them one of the clippers.
5. Practice listening. I say this because most people I meet are poor listeners. I suppose that's why there are workshops on active listening. As mentioned earlier, when you do all the talking you only hear what you already know.

6. Be good with names. This ties into effective listening but there are also workshops on memorizing names and faces. Include one in your self-development plan. People you remember will remember you. If you need help remembering names, refer to my book, "*Boost your Memory & Sharpen your Mind*," published by *Bookboon.com*.
7. Dress appropriately. Dress comfortably but not sloppily. Don't wear jeans if it's a black tie affair. I had a rule as a professional speaker to always dress one level above the audience. It's true that you don't get a second chance to make a first impression. And first impressions are important. Straggly hair and dirty fingernails don't seem to attract people. If you don't know how people will be dressed, ask. *Someone* has to be sponsoring the event.
8. Take the initiative. Don't wait for someone to approach you. Introduce yourself. Initiate the conversation. You can attend all the events you want but you won't achieve anything if you stand in a corner by yourself all the time. And meet someone new. Don't spend all your time with the same people at every meeting you attend. If you are at a dinner meeting, be the one to initiate introductions at your table. Be the unofficial table host.
9. Have something to say. It pays to prepare that "elevator" speech. But keep current on the world around you. Scan the morning newspaper for the topical events. Be familiar enough with sports that you know they don't play hockey with a ball – unless it's ball hockey! In other words, be prepared to participate in conversations that don't relate to business.
10. Most important is the follow-up. If you skip this step, most of your time will have been wasted. Keep a database on the people you meet or add them to the telephone directory on your smart phone. Record their interests as well as their business and contact information. Be a clip artist and send them information that you get from magazines and newspapers. Even if they have already read it, they will appreciate the thought. Periodically review the people in your database so you will remember their names. Don't forget to send off a "great to meet you" e-mail immediately after the event.

Networking is fun. You are meeting interesting people, expanding your horizons, and growing your business or furthering your career. Sharing ideas with others is probably more effective than any self-development course you could take. But like anything else, you must keep it in balance. You don't want to be out every night networking with business people. You need time to network with your family as well.

## 6 WEBSITES FOR GREATER SALES

### 6.1 MAKE YOUR WEBSITE A PRIORITY

I'm not sure about entrepreneurs in general, but 30% of professional speakers in one survey revealed that they didn't have a website. Websites make you look professional, provide a great way to communicate quickly to your prospective clients, and may bring business you hadn't expected. And they're not that expensive to develop or maintain. You can develop and maintain an effective website on a shoestring.

For example, *Wordpress* is free, as is the e-Commerce component, *Woocommerce*, and you can get a domain for about \$15 a year. Hosting might cost about \$150 a year, and you're in business. And don't forget to take advantage of a free email service such as *Send in blue* for your monthly or quarterly electronic newsletter. Although *Sendinblue* is free, you can only send out up to 300 emails at a time. It's great for starting out or if you don't mind sending the newsletter several times. *Mailchimp* is great; but it is only free up to 2000 names.

Robert Bly, author of the book, *Getting Started in Speaking, Training or Seminar Consulting*, says, "next to a published book, nothing establishes you as an authority more than having your own dedicated website on a topic."

How much customers buy is a direct result of how much time they spend in the store. So capitalize on this fact by designing your website so people will stay longer. You can do this with interesting articles, tips, questionnaires and information of value to the visitor. Make your website attractive. Not just attractive in appearance, but designed to attract people back. Provide useful information, ideas or opportunities that are of value to your prospective clients. Give people a reason to return to your website. Make it a point to change something each week, whether it's an added article, a new product, a special offer, weekly quote or simply a color change.

Also, keep it simple. According to marketing consultant Mary Hayes, quoted in a *Toronto Globe & Mail* article, visitors to your site expect to find what they are looking for in 15 seconds or they're gone. She claims, "They want to *find*, not *search*."

I post a new article weekly on our website (as well as on Facebook and Twitter) and send out a set of 5 tweets each week on a specific topic relevant to time management. The secret is to work ahead whenever possible and build up a reserve of articles and tweets that you can draw upon when needed.

Many organizations have affiliate programs where you receive a percentage of any sale made when someone uses a link on your web to visit the other organization's website. If they are selling non-competing products that would help your clients and prospects, it's a win-win situation. If you link to several websites, the revenue will add up.

Since I currently write electronic books for *Bookboon.com*, I have a list of these books on our website with a link to the book description on the publisher's site. Generating sales for them is helping to generate more royalties for me.

## 6.2 MAKE YOUR NEWSLETTER WORK FOR YOU.

I find that newsletters are excellent vehicles for maintaining contact with your clients and prospects and for directing traffic to your website. By providing useful information on a regular basis, you will find your opening rate steadily increasing, and subscribers will actually look forward to receiving it. It is an excellent vehicle for introducing new products and services as well as new ideas.

Of course, you could charge for your newsletter, as many people do; but I use it strictly as a promotional tool. By providing an ongoing service to my past, current, and future customers, I keep my name, product and services alive in their minds. And I find that every time a newsletter goes out, orders come in.

Since my business is time management, in every issue I feature a time-related article, two time tips, two quick facts, 4 timely quotes, and a "trainer's corner" for those who do training themselves. There is very little promotion compared to the information provided, and based on the favorable responses, I'm sure that's appreciated. But I always include at least one small blurb, accompanied by a link, promoting a downloadable product or two. As I continue to downsize as I approach my 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, I am more interested in the writing than any resulting sales. It is so much fun being an entrepreneur!

Remember that you can't simply email your newsletter to all the contacts you have made or emails you have obtained during the process of doing business. You must have an opt-in newsletter so make it easy for people to subscribe when they visit your website. Besides being illegal, spam is ineffective. For example, according to an item in Sam Geist's newsletter, *Quick Bites*, it takes 12.5 million spam email messages to sell \$100 worth of Viagra.

### **6.3 PROMOTE YOUR NEWSLETTER IN TURN.**

The more subscribers you have, the more qualified prospects you reach, and the more sales you make. So promote your newsletter, which in turn promotes your products and services. You can do this in many ways – such as a brief promo statement (with link) used as a signature on all your emails. You can also add it to your business cards and product folders, include it on an insert with orders and invoices, mention it in your talks (including it on a PowerPoint slide if you use them), and include it in your byline for articles you write, and so on.

### **6.4 NEWS RELEASES REALLY DO WORK.**

Many entrepreneurs ignore an activity that could have a phenomenal impact on their sales, and that is the simple news releases that gets their story, including their products and services, to the public through the various media. This includes magazines, house organs, radio and TV, newspapers, and electronic publications.

According to Marcia Yudkin, author of the book, *6 Steps to Free Publicity* (Career Press, 2003), the *Wall Street Journal* editor Frederick Taylor once admitted that as much as 90 percent of its daily news originates in self-interested news releases.

As a previous owner, publisher and editor of four low-circulation magazines, I can verify that. When you publish a small magazine and continually work to deadlines, you appreciate unsolicited news releases and articles to fill your quota of editorial material to accompany the advertising. I'm talking about the hundreds of trade journals, association magazines and specialty publications out there, not the *Time* magazines and *Washington Posts* of the world.

New releases should be short, snappy, interesting and hopefully newsworthy. Try to keep the release itself to a single page. You can always include a fact sheet, photos, samples, booklets etc. in a press kit. Focus on the news value of what you have to offer or at least the benefits of your product or service. Make it easy for readers to spot information in your news releases by using bullets, placing the information in order of importance.

Be sure to grab the reader's attention with an intriguing heading, provide the relevant information in the first paragraph, and be sure to include your contact information. Many times I have asked the writer of the newsletter to give me a 500-word article on how someone successfully used their product, or supply photographs or whatever. Many small publications are hungry for information.

Know before you write your release what it is you want to accomplish. Are you trying to get a review of your book, a write-up on your company or mention of a new product? If you're trying to get publicity for a book, perhaps you should provide a little story about why the book was written. If it is a new product, you could include quotes from users who claimed it changed their lives. You will have a better chance of getting publicity if you have a human-interest angle.

Write with the media's audience in mind. You might tie in your product or service with a current event that's likely to be in the news for a while. If it's a local newspaper or magazine you are targeting, give it a local angle. If you're trying to get your product mentioned in a *New Product* column, include a photograph – preferably with the new product in action. If you're promoting a book, include a separate fact sheet that includes mundane information such as the title, author, number of pages, type of binding, size, ISBN number, publication date and publisher.

If you send news releases via email, cut and paste it into the message area. Many publishers refuse to open attachments.

## 6.5 YOU ARE YOUR COMPANY'S BEST PROMOTER

There are unlimited ways of promoting yourself and your business. In fact you are promoting yourself in the way you conduct yourself in public; the way you dress, talk, act, interact, write, listen or *anything* you do for that matter. If you are seen as a self-centered, arrogant promoter who will walk over others to make a dollar, you are not doing a good job of self-promotion. If people don't like you, no fancy brochure, premium or polished speech will change their minds. People don't like doing business with individuals they don't like.

Besides being a likeable person, there are still unlimited ways of promoting yourself, your services and your products. When I started out I did everything I could to get exposure for my name and specialty area. I would even walk into bookstores and turn my books around so the covers would show. Talk about miniscule attempts at promotion! I had someone place my workshop brochures on the tables in hotel lobbies and in waiting rooms. I held a time management workshop for the media, wrote letters to the editor of local newspapers, sent news releases to business publications, submitted my seminar dates to coming events columns, wrote articles for any publication that would accept them, gave free speeches and workshops, and asked for testimonials to use in my press kit. I gave out wallet cards, key chains, business cards, bookmarks, pens, matchbox calculators, and other tacky items bearing my name and my specialty. I did mail walks to businesses, asked companies to post my seminar flyer on their bulletin boards, and contacted TV and radio stations in an

attempt to get interviews. I even wrote to executives, whose promotions appeared in paid block ads in newspapers, congratulating them and suggesting they might want to attend a time management seminar. I sent free books to newspaper columnists, networked at association meetings, wrote a monthly time management report and eventually became the *self-proclaimed* top time management authority in Canada.

The important part of promotion is to *do* it, not talk about it. Try everything that makes sense to you. If you hit it lucky and get on a popular TV talk show, your success curve will be shortened. But assume you will make it the hard way. It is just as satisfying, perhaps more so. And you will be stronger for it.

To find out what's working, ask your clients and the media how they found out about you. Was it from the *Yellow Pages*, an article that you had published, a referral form, another professional organizer's recommendation or your folder that you mailed out? Keep records. Repeat what works. Focus on the twenty percent of the promotional activities that yield eighty percent of your results.

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The advertisement features a young woman with long dark hair, wearing a white blazer, smiling broadly. The background is a blurred city street. The text is overlaid on the image in a clean, modern font. The AXA logo is in the bottom right corner.

Don't be afraid to revisit a technique that failed five years ago. Times change - and so do those things that work. Be innovative. Always be testing. What works for someone else may or may not work for you. Even a simple thing like a bumper sticker or sign on your car promoting your company name, phone number and website address may pay off. According to an article in *Entrepreneur* magazine, one individual posted magnetic signs on her car and had 400 extra hits on her website in a 24-hour period. She attributed 10% of her sales to these magnetic signs.

# 7 INCREASE YOUR SALES THROUGH PROMOTION AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

## 7.1 QUICK TIPS FOR MARKETING YOUR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES

In the following pages, I provide over 100 quick tips for increasing sales, either directly or indirectly – all of which require little, if any, cost. Check off those that you feel might help you to increase sales of your current products or services.

### **Trim your product line.**

Procter & Gamble in the mid-1990s trimmed its 26 varieties of “Head and Shoulders” down to 15, eliminating the less popular ones. Sales jumped 10%. Golden Cat Corporation junked its 10 worst selling small-bag cat litter offerings and sales increased 12%. And with distribution costs cut in half, often jumped 87%.

### **Offer gift certificates.**

Gift certificates are profitable because one out of every four certificates are never redeemed. Christmas in particular is a popular time for gift certificates. According to Square Inc., for instance, 59% of Canadians plan to buy gift certificates this 2018 holiday season.

### **Consider classified ads.**

Display ads are expensive; but classified ads are usually quite reasonable. And according to Robert Bly in his book, *Become a Recognized Authority* (Alpha Books, 2002), a classified ad will give you a greater return for the cost than the larger ads.

### **Use every outgoing piece of paper or package.**

Whether you're sending an invoice, a brochure, a newsletter or a product already purchased, include a flyer promoting your product or service.

### **Try something different.**

According to an article in *Entrepreneur* magazine, one individual posted magnetic signs on her car and had 400 extra hits on her website in a 24-hour period. She attributed 10% of her sales to these magnetic signs. Almost anything is worth a try.

### **Form Strategic Alliances.**

Band together with other entrepreneurs or non-competing professionals for group mailings, publicity, advertising, seminars, newsletters, etc. You can share costs.

### **E-mail beats direct mail.**

According to Seth Godin, in his book, *Meatball Sundae*, a typical direct mail campaign earns a 1% response. But an email campaign (opt-in, permission-based) can get 20 to 30 times the response. I have yet to receive no response to a mailing to our newsletter subscribers.

### **Capitalize on the healthy living craze.**

Health is an important concern for most people. According the book, *Why We Buy*, by Paco Underhill, a periodical called *Men's Health* sells over 1.5 million copies per month. If a health magazine can thrive, why not services that promote health? If your services or products can lead to a healthier lifestyle, say so in your promotions and advertising.

### **Credit cards increase sales.**

Everyone I have talked to has said that sales did increase when they started accepting credit cards. According to the Nilson report, quoted in *Home Business Magazine*, credit card users buy more and more often than people using cash. Of course, costs increase as well. The banks will charge you between 2% to 5% and there's a per transaction cost of anywhere between 10 cents and 70 cents. When we started accepting credit cards in our business, product sales increased at least 20%. The greater the price of your products, the greater the need for credit cards.

### **Consider downloadable products.**

With a website and downloadable product, you need do nothing after posting the product. You receive a copy of the order, the customer receives the product, and the money goes into your PayPal or bank account. No shipping needed.

### **Contacting TV shows.**

When you contact TV talk shows, contact the producer, not the air personality. Send a media kit and a copy of your book or product. Include a sheet of questions that you feel the viewing audience would like answered. When you go for the interviews bring a blank videotape with you. Ask for a copy of the program. Also prepare a few points that you want to work into your answers, such as “When I do corporate training programs I find that...” Also, suggest that you can send a tips sheet to any viewers requesting it. People love something free, and it will build your list of prospects.

### **Promote through signatures.**

Signatures at the end of your email messages can be mini-commercials promoting your business. Make up one that you use exclusively for emails you send to prospects for your products or services.

### **Identify needs.**

Kathleen Allen, author of *Entrepreneurship for Dummies*, suggests identifying and creating a place in the market where no one else is – serving a need that no one else is serving. As you go about your job of serving clients, listen to what they say and do, and always be on the lookout for a need you can fulfill.

### **Market to other people’s clients.**

If your networking reveals that non-competing associates have clients who would also benefit from your products or services, strike up a deal with them. In exchange for a commission or a share of profits ask them to introduce your services to their clients via a mailing, email, website or newsletter.

### **Bundle your services.**

Increase sales by offering three times the service or number of products for twice the price. Also try grouping different products together as a package, which would cost the customer less than purchasing each product or service individually.

### **Emphasize benefits in your bio.**

Most potential clients don't really care if you have three kids, a dog and a pet turtle and have been a member of the Bird Watcher's society for ten years unless it obviously qualifies you to help them solve their problem. Include only those things that will add to your credibility in your area of expertise or impact the sale of your product. A bio, like a promotional flyer, should convince the client how using your services or product will be a benefit to them.

### **Make up a press kit**

When a prospect or the press calls for information, be ready for it. Make up a press kit consisting of relevant information on you, your company and your services. Use individual sheets of letter size paper to facilitate updates and make it easy for the prospect to read, highlight and file. Insert them in a folder identified with your company name and logo. Don't expect them to keep the folder because it's awkward to file. Include your contact information in the footer of every page because the sheets may become separated and some discarded. Separate sheets for the various information makes updating easy when prices and other information changes. It is also more impressive than a brochure and is easily converted to digital for emailing.

### **Get published.**

Writing articles and books could be a profit center of its own, and I discuss these in separate ebooks. It is also a great way to promote your business and products and services. Whenever you write an article, newsletter, tip sheet, or guest column, always associate your name with your area of expertise. The more exposure you get, the more business it will attract.

### **Let prospects know you're there.**

You're not going to sell your services to someone if they don't feel they need it. But when they are ready, you want them to think of you. That's why promotion is a continuing process, not a one-time activity. Keep your name and contact information in front of your prospects, whether it is through cards, electronic newsletters, premiums, flyers, advertising, or any number of other methods. The more successful you become, the more ways you will be able to maintain that success through promotion.

### **The logic of a logo.**

Lee Silber, in his book, *Self-Promotion for the Creative Person*, says a logo is a visual representation and expression that describes you and your business. It represents you and your company when you aren't there to do so. So design one that will leave a lasting impression. Include it on all stationery, business cards, promotion pieces, and websites and so on.

### **Gain visibility.**

Stand out from the crowd of people in your profession by making yourself visible. Write articles, publish a newsletter, write letters to the editor, join and become active in your professional association, sponsor educational sessions, participate in e-groups, have a website, blog and e-zine, make speeches, volunteer, attend community functions – anything that will provide exposure to potential clients. (But don't become so obsessive that you neglect yourself and your loved ones.)

### **Don't leave home without it.**

You never know when you are going to meet someone who is a potential client. Always have a few brochures and business cards with you at all times. You could always stick a transparent self-adhesive pocket to the inside cover of your planner to house them. (The ones they sell to hold CDs would do nicely.)

### **Brochures that sell.**

S.J. Ross, in her book *Smart Marketing on a Small Budget*, reminds us that people make buying decisions based on emotions and justify their decisions with logic. So when writing your promotion copy, appeal to both emotions and logic.

### **Newsletters build customer loyalty.**

Lee Silber, author of *Self-Promotion for the Creative Person*, claims that newsletters are a lousy place to sell something, but an amazing tool to build goodwill and loyal fans.

### **Fridge magnets.**

Self-promotion guru Lee Silber makes a case for magnetic logos by claiming that 95 million homes have at least one fridge, which they open an average of 20 times per day for a total of 7,300 hits per year.

### **Impact of customer service.**

A study conducted by the *Research Institute of America* found that 90% of customers who are dissatisfied with the service they receive will not come back again. They also found that only 4% of unhappy customers ever bother to complain, yet each unhappy customer tells his or her story to an average of nine other people. Customer service is by far the most important marketing strategy a business can use. It is a way of doing business that is born out of a genuine concern for the customer.

### **What's in a name?**

Your company name should tell people what it is you are selling. If that's impossible, always use a tag line beneath your company name that tells prospects what it is you do – and perhaps why they should use your service.

### **Get media coverage.**

This is the brainchild of Peter Shankman who sends out a list of requests from reporters up to three times a day to those experts signed up to receive them. His website explains the process. It's a chance to get your information and name in print – and everyone needs exposure to the public. <http://www.helpareporter.com/>. PS: There's no fee involved.

### **Keep your articles simple.**

According to Jay Levinson, in his book *Guerilla Publicity* (Adams Media, 2002) your article should include no more than seven points and no less than three. Don't try to cram in everything you know.

### **Hourly rate vs. fee.**

Charles Hardy, in his book, *The Age of Unreason*, says that wages or salary represents money paid for time given. A fee is money paid for results delivered. Consider charging fees rather than hourly rates.

### **Don't lower prices.**

Don't be so quick to lower your price if people hesitate to buy. There are buyers who are looking for the lowest price but there are those who are looking for value. Always take time to explain the benefits of using your service.

### **Project value.**

If you do pro bono work, don't send out invoices that read "no charge," "free," or "complimentary." Charge your regular fee and include a discount of 100%. And always have a good reason for discounting your fee. Maintain the perceived value of your services.

### **Outsource work.**

Although it may be impressive to have several people on staff, it is less expensive to use outside workers who are self-employed. If someone else can do a task 80% as well as you can, let them do it.

### **Your family business.**

If you have visions of passing along your business to a family member someday, or selling it as a going concern, it's never too early to start planning. Can the business operate just as successfully without you in the picture? If not, take action so it will.

### **Power of testimonials.**

“What others say about you and your product, service, or business is at least 1,000% more convincing than what you say, even though you are 1,000% more eloquent. (Dan Kennedy, author of *No B.S. Selling.*)

### **Watch for that 80-20 relationship.**

Is 80 percent of your business generated from 20 percent of your client base? It's 5 to 10 times more costly to generate new clients that retain the current ones. So continue to service those past clients. It could be friendly call to see how things are going, an electronic newsletter each month or periodic free invitations to workshops.

### **Little things mean a lot.**

Great customer service is in the little things. The friendly smile and warm handshake, the follow-up call, the free coffee, the thank you note, the complimentary newsletter to keep in touch, and the encouraging words. The more high-tech the world becomes, the more high-touch we need to be for our clients.

### **Treat your customers and clients well.**

The market for your products and services consists of four kinds of people: prospects, customers, loyal customers and former customers. Seth Godin, in his marketing book, *Purple Cow*, urges us to treat them as assets, not resources to be strip-mined and abandoned. So think of something you can do for *them*.

### **Build loyal clients.**

Loyal clients are built over time by being consistent, reliable, and true to your word. It's better to under-promise and over-deliver than to over-promise and under-deliver.

### **Keep an orderly business.**

As Michael E. Gerber points out in his book, *The E-Myth Revisited*, a business that looks orderly says to your customers that you know what you are doing, and that they can trust the results delivered.



The advertisement features a central image of a smiling teacher leaning over a laptop to assist two young students, a boy and a girl. To the right, two smaller circular images show students in a classroom setting. The background is a vibrant yellow and orange swirl. In the top left corner, there is a logo for 'e-learning for kids' consisting of a grid of colored squares. In the bottom right corner, a green oval contains a list of achievements. At the bottom of the advertisement, there is a paragraph of text about the organization and its mission.

**e-learning for kids**

- The number 1 MOOC for Primary Education
- Free Digital Learning for Children 5-12
- 15 Million Children Reached

**About e-Learning for Kids** Established in 2004, e-Learning for Kids is a global nonprofit foundation dedicated to fun and free learning on the Internet for children ages 5 - 12 with courses in math, science, language arts, computers, health and environmental skills. Since 2005, more than 15 million children in over 190 countries have benefitted from eLessons provided by EFK! An all-volunteer staff consists of education and e-learning experts and business professionals from around the world committed to making difference. eLearning for Kids is actively seeking funding, volunteers, sponsors and courseware developers; get involved! For more information, please visit [www.e-learningforkids.org](http://www.e-learningforkids.org).



### **Listen more than you speak.**

Some entrepreneurs talk the prospect out of doing business with them. Always listen more than you speak. And most of your speaking should be in the form of questions. It is the client's needs that you are interested in determining and fulfilling.

### **Age of speed.**

People are looking for everything from instant pudding to instant results. So if you want to keep ahead of the competition, respond quickly to queries and requests from prospects – even if it's simply to acknowledge their email and assure them that you will be responding within 24 hours.

### **Profit Centers.**

If you earn money offering different services such as public speaking, consulting, workshops etc., keep the revenues and costs for each area separated so you can identify the high profit centers.

### **Don't overextend yourself.**

A Zurich poll of 1,038 small business owners revealed that 70% of them were doing everything from customer services to marketing. A separate survey found that 64% of entrepreneurs felt that heavy workloads and stress had caused their home life to suffer. You can't do everything yourself. Outsource everything you can and concentrate on what you do best.

### **Increasing revenue.**

According to Jay Abraham, in his book, *Getting Everything You Can Out of All You've Got*, there are only three ways to increase your business:

- Increase the number of clients.
- Increase the average size of the sale per client.
- Increase the number of times clients return and buy again.
- Brainstorm each of these areas to see what actions you can take to increase all three.

### **Promote your company name.**

If your company name tells what you do, it's surprising the amount of publicity you can squeeze into a small space. Business cards, bumper stickers, match box covers, pens and business card ads can all become miniature bulletin boards telling people where to call for help. A distinctive logo will make your message stand out.

### **60-30-10 Rule.**

According to *Directions* of California, the success of direct response marketing depends upon

- Picking the right audiences for your message – 60%
- Making the best possible offer – 30%
- Presenting the copy and art creatively – 10%

### **Take advantage of deductions.**

If you have a home-based business and it's the only office, you could have plenty of business deductions, including a percentage of your utilities, property taxes, and even repairs, renovations, grass cutting and snow removal. Discuss your particular situation with your CPA.

### **Testing prices.**

One way to test a price is to start low with an "introductory offer," which indicates the price will be going up later. That gives you an option of increasing prices later while evaluating the sales at a lower price. Hopefully it will also result in greater sales so you can recoup your development costs sooner.

### **Pricing your products & services.**

When promoting your products and services in a brochure or on your website, list the most expensive package first and the other ones will seem more reasonable by contrast. But if you start with the least expensive one, everything else seems more expensive than they would if they had been listed on their own. Also, it's a fact that being listed first on a ballot, for instance, adds 3% to a candidate's results.

### **Tip sheets.**

If you don't feel confident writing articles, write one-page tip sheets in your area of expertise. Not only can you have them published, you can use them as handouts at seminars, inserts for your press kit, and as a mailing piece to your clients.

### **Use visuals in your sales presentations.**

We have the ability to speak 150 words per minute while our brain thinks at the rate of 600 words per minute. When you make a strictly verbal presentation you have only 25% of your listener's attention. He or she is thinking 75% faster than you can talk. Visuals fill this gap. Visuals can take the form of PowerPoint slides, flip charts, film clips, props or even your own animated gestures. But use more than just the spoken word to add impact to your workshops.

### **Warm up the cold call.**

Sending a sales letter ahead of a phone call can increase the effectiveness of the call by 1000 percent according to marketing guru Jay Abraham.

### **Maintain contact with past customers.**

According to Rick Crandall, author of *Marketing Your Services: For People Who Hate to Sell*, 60 to 70 percent of most people's business comes from last year's customers. Keep good records, develop a database, and keep in contact with useful information.

### **A personal touch.**

If you send mailings to your clients, keep in mind that 7 out of 10 envelopes still get opened even though they are direct mail pieces, according to *Executive Edge Newsletter*.

### **Lifetime value of a client.**

Be on the lookout for other services you can offer to your client. The first sale is the hardest. But the real sales start after the first sale is made by multiplying that one sale into many more sales.

### **Your unique selling feature.**

Identify what's different about your company, product or service, and communicate it to your prospects. It could be anything from your hours of operation, wide range of services or the type of clients you serve. If you don't know what's different about your company, ask your current clients. It could be something as simple as friendliness or willingness to travel.

### **The 80/20 Rule in action.**

Seth Godin in his book *The Purple Cow*, tells the story of a bank that discovered only 10% of their customers were using their online banking service every day. Most were only using it once per month. On the surface it appeared that they should not spend as much money on that service. However it turned out that this group accounted for about 70% of the bank deposits. Don't make hasty judgments based on volume.

### **Free offers.**

The word "free" is still at the top of the list of words that attract the attention of your prospects. Offer something free with your product or service.

### **Offer specials.**

Generate more sales by offering special discounts, bonus products or two for the price of one offers. Make the specials for limited times and return to your normal fees and prices.

### **Sales presentations.**

Sales writer mark Hunter suggests that when making a sales presentation, limit yourself from talking for more than 20 seconds at a time without asking a question directed at the comments you just made. This makes sure the customer understood what you just shared with them.

### **Direct mail.**

Using colored stock for your letter, flyer or envelopes will make your mailing stand out among the avalanche of paper that most people still receive, and are more likely to be opened and read.

### **Suppliers are clients too.**

If you're selling a product or service that would benefit your suppliers as well, when paying bills include a card (along with your brochure or leaflet) that says "Do business with your customers. It makes sense."

### **Christmas offers.**

Consider offering gift certificates or coupons with various values towards your products or services as Christmas nears. People still have the same old problem: "What do you give the person who has everything?"

### **Affiliate programs.**

If you sell your products and services through a website, consider offering an affiliate program where other website owners can earn money if a customer buys after clicking on an ad for your products that had been placed on their website.

### **Link to other websites.**

Many organizations have affiliate programs where you receive a percentage of any sale made when someone uses a link on your web to visit the other organization's website. If they are selling non-competing products that would help your clients and prospects, it's a win-win situation. For example, we used to offer 20% of any resulting sale. If you link to several websites, the revenue will add up.

### **Your salary is not your profit.**

You should be able to earn a decent salary from your company in addition to making a profit. Be sure to include the cost of your time when pricing your product or service.

### **Consider trade shows.**

Some Business Shows or Associations will provide a display table or exhibit space in exchange for a talk. If it's the right target market it might even pay to rent exhibit space, or split the cost by sharing a table with another vendor.

### **Piggyback on other people's mailings.**

By sharing mailing costs, or remitting a percentage of the sales you make, you may be able to insert your flyer in someone else's mailing with no additional cost to the other person.

### **Use social media to your advantage.**

If you have a small following on Twitter or Facebook, consider including your product or service offerings to raise customer awareness. I still post all my blog articles on both Twitter and Facebook in addition to my website. Most of my articles contain links to either my website or one of my 23 e-books currently being marketed by Bookboon.com. Retreats by any of my 1400 followers is a bonus.

### **Consider offering literature on your product or service.**

*New Equipment Digest* once reported that readers responding to literature ads are more likely to buy products than those responding to product ads. It was noted that literature requests come from business people are often close to making a purchase decision.

### **Make your order form a different colour.**

Make your reply card or order form stand out by printing it on a different colour. Tests showed that non-matching paper outsold matching paper by as much as 19%.

### **Use multiple inserts in direct mail.**

Direct mail is expensive; but it can be effective – and more so if you include multiple inserts. We used to include up to five or more inserts promoting different products and services. Use different colours for the inserts and make sure you don't exceed the weight allowance to keep costs down. Direct mail expert Rene Gnam agreed that it increases sales, yet doesn't confuse the reader.

### **Ask for the order up front.**

Rene Gnam, who offered direct mail workshops back in the 80s and 90s, suggested we ask for the order in the main headline. He tested this approach and more than doubled of the results of the previous efforts of one of his clients.

### **Give advance notice on price increases.**

When you plan to increase prices, let your customers know in advance and provide an "Order before ...." letter to stimulate sales.

### **Business cards.**

Consider including your mission statement on one side of your business card, and your contact information on the other side.

### **Sell to the sold.**

When you ship a product, included in the package a letter thanking them for their order and offering a 10% or whenever discount on a different product. When we did this, about 10% bought the discounted product.

### **Take advantage of trade publications.**

Take advantage of New Products, Coming Events, or similar free columns in newspapers and magazines. We once sold over 100 "Meeting Mates" from a free new "product" item.

### **New growth.**

Be on the lookout for new products and services to deliver. According to Edwin E. Bobrow, in the book, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to New Product Development*, most businesses rely on new products & services for more than a third of their sales.

### **Tip sheets.**

Clients are always looking for relevant information delivered quickly and simply. A sheet of bulleted quick tips with a brief explanation of each will provide this service. Example: "10 Ways to Organize Your Closet" or "5 Steps to a More Organized Office."

### **Write articles.**

Articles with your byline (and if possible, your contact information) help to build your credibility as well as visibility. Don't aim at the paying markets, but rather at those trade publications and newsletters that are more eager to accept your work and still reach your prospects. Articles in magazines reach more prospects than a book

### **Getting exposure.**

If books, articles and e-zines seem too daunting a task for you to produce, try blogging. A weekly posting gets you in the habit of contributing in your area of expertise on a regular basis. It's a first step in gaining visibility in the marketplace.

### **The most important person could be your receptionist.**

Be careful who you hire or have associated with your company. Entrepreneur Naomi Rhode is credited with the following statement in the book, *Riches in Niches* by Susan Friedman; "You don't stop going to a store because you don't like a decision the president made. You stop because the clerk was rude to you."

### **Ask questions.**

One of Martin Grunder's suggestions in his book, *9 Simple Steps to Entrepreneurial Success*, is to simply ask questions of your customers and prospects. You can probably learn more from asking questions than you can learn from reading a book or attending a seminar because you are zeroing in on what you specifically want to know. Never be reluctant to ask.

### **Not just another T-shirt.**

Don't underestimate the power of providing T-shirts bearing your company logo and motto to the members of your project teams. T-shirts or other items instill a sense of identity and help to build team spirit. They help people realize they are part of a team, not a diverse group of skilled individuals. TEAM stands for *Together Everyone Accomplishes More*.

### **Get more mileage out of flyers.**

If you plan to repeat a workshop or other event later in the year, I suggest that you advertise all the dates on your flyer. I usually listed all my workshop dates for the entire year – which may only be 5 or 6 for one particular workshop. That increases the mileage you get from each flyer.

### **Sell locally but promote nationally.**

Let's say you live in or near Moncton, New Brunswick, and that your email list consists of only companies headquartered in Moncton. If you were to choose dates and times for other major Canadian cities as well such as Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto, it has been shown that your registrations would be higher in your home town, Moncton, than if you had only advertised the event in Moncton. This may seem deceptive if you have no intention of conducting your seminar or other event in those other cities; but isn't it interesting how you're perceived to have more credibility if you conduct seminars, etc. nationally or even internationally? And in actual fact, one of the local companies may have offices or divisions in one or more of those other cities, and it may indeed pay you to proceed in one or more of those cities as well.

### **Keep your website updated.**

Assume that most people now view your website on iPhones and iPads, so make sure it's mobile-friendly. Keep it clear, simple and constantly updated.

### **Do you have an Advisory Board?**

Consider forming a volunteer advisory board of savvy and honest friends and associates who are interested in seeing you succeed. It's lonely at the top, and you might feel more confident in having others with whom you can discuss ideas and receive advice.

### **Placement of shopping baskets.**

Shoppers who pick up a shopping basket on the way into the store tend to buy more products. Make sure you place the baskets where they can see them once they have entered – and this doesn't necessarily include right at the doorway.

### **Few people read as they open a door.**

Don't place important notices on the door of your store if you want customers to read them. People rarely take time to read the door as they enter.

### **Encourage the use of shopping baskets.**

Encourage impulse buyers by having shopping baskets placed at the front or back of every aisle. And encourage employees to offer a basket to shoppers who already have products in their hands.

### **Shopping from the back of the store.**

If you run a pharmacy, remember that people are usually more likely to shop once they've dropped off or picked up a prescription. So have signs and displays placed for those shopping from back to front.

### **The right side is the right place.**

Most shoppers go to the right when entering a store so that's where the most important and profitable items should be placed.

### **Say you care with a chair.**

Placing a chair or two in your store, particularly in a women's clothing section, is more than just customer service. Men like to sit while women shop, and with reading materials there, they may be free to shop longer. When either men or women have to wait, they prefer to set.

### **Shopping could be a social event.**

Since women like to shop with friends, and they buy more when they shop together, why not have a "Bring a friend and get a discount" day? You could schedule it for one of your least busy days.

### **Make contact with the customers.**

According to Paco Underhill, author of the book "*Why we buy*," the more shopper-employee contacts that take place, the greater the average sale. He claims that if employees spend most of their time stocking shelves and doing trivial tasks, and very little time talking to the shoppers, it is usually an underperforming store.

### **It takes time to make a sale.**

Richard Legg, in his book, *Hidden Profits*, says that studies have shown that 80% of purchasers have needed at least 5 exposures to an offer before buying the item. So don't stop your email campaign at one or two mailings. Most sales comes from follow-ups.

### **Start seasonal promotions early.**

Procrastination can lose sales. According to Square, Inc., more than half of Christmas shoppers, for example, start to research and plan their gifts in early October.

### **Contact prospects in the morning.**

If you want a more positive response to your email messages or newsletters or social media postings, send them in the morning when people are generally more responsive. They become grouchy as the day goes on according to an analysis of about a half a billion Twitter messages by Cornell University researchers. (Reported in *Scientific American Mind*, April, 2012.)

### **Do what works.**

I'm not that savvy when it comes to marketing via the Internet since I left that part of my business to my son who grew up with the technology. But I am amazed at the results some companies have obtained, including our own at times. If you are not taking advantage of website sales, I recommend you get help. I have listed in the bibliography those books referred to during the course of this report; but I particularly recommend the "*Hidden Profits*" book by Richard Legg if you want a quick run-down on the opportunities available online.

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## 9 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Harold Taylor, currently owner of *TaylorInTime*, has been speaking, writing and conducting training programs on the topic of effective time management for over 40 years. He has written over 20 books, including a Canadian bestseller, *Making Time Work for You*, originally published in 1981.

He has developed over 50 time management products that have sold in 38 countries around the world. His time management newsletter, now in electronic format, has been published for over thirty-five years and he has had over 250 articles accepted for publication in various magazines.

A past director of the *National Association of Professional Organizers*, Harold received their Founder's Award in 1999 for outstanding contributions to the organizing profession. He received the CSP (Certified Speaking Professional) designation in 1987 from the *National Speakers Association*. In 1998 the *Canadian Association of Professional Speakers* inducted him into the Canadian Speaking Hall of Fame. And in 2001, he received the Founder's Award from the *Professional Organizers in Canada*. The award has been renamed the *Harold Taylor Award* in his honor.

Prior to his speaking and writing career, Harold held management positions in industry for twelve years at Canadian Johns Manville and American-Standard, and was a teaching master in the business division of Humber College in Toronto for eight years. He has been an entrepreneur for over forty years, incorporating four companies during that time.

His first company, Harold Taylor Enterprises Ltd., established in 1967, was a multiple association management company that also published four magazines and a line of greeting cards, and sponsored public seminars and management training programs. Since 1981, when he incorporated the time management company, *Harold Taylor Time Consultants Inc.*, he has personally presented over 2000 workshops, speeches and keynotes on the topic of time and life management.

Now in his 85<sup>th</sup> year, Harold lives in Sussex, New Brunswick. He writes e-books for Bookboon.com (23 to date), publishes a weekly blog at his website (also posted on Facebook & Twitter), a quarterly time management newsletter for his 2000 plus subscribers, sends out 5 weekly tweets, and speaks to senior's and other groups on "growing older without growing old" in addition to "time and life management."

He is on the board of trustees in his local church, a member of the board of directors of Sussex & Area Chamber of Commerce, president of the Fundy Silverados Friendship Club, and performs additional volunteer work in his spare time.

His website is [www.taylorintime.com](http://www.taylorintime.com).