

Marketing Ideas for the Entrepreneur

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Many people who decide to start their own business begin with unrealistic expectations. The smart ones conduct research and discover that they'll need to learn and perform a variety of unexciting tasks on the way to success. If you are willing to do that and move forward while you do, then perhaps you have the makings of an entrepreneur. With over fifteen years of growth and success (and setbacks!) in my communications business, I can honestly say it has been a journey I would not trade for anything. I have learned so much and I have met incredible professionals who have become valued clients and close friends. I've turned out some of my best work and that has made me proud of what I do. Personal satisfaction at the end of the day makes being an entrepreneur worth all the challenges.

Do you have what it takes?

Once the decision was made to start my own business, I had to be honest in evaluating whether or not I had what it takes to succeed. Consideration was given on a number of fronts including technical skills, adaptability, handling isolation, organization skills, customer service, selling and marketing skills. Most importantly, was there a market for what I was selling? Throughout the evaluation process the decision to get started really became a matter of confidence. I'll tell you this: the first step is believing in yourself enough to start. The details can be figured out from there.

Marketing Your Business

Once you've decided what business you're in and who your target customers will be, the next important step is to get the message out to those people that you are open for business. There are several marketing strategies available to small business owners, some more effective than others. Many tactics are low or no cost which will matter when first starting out. The key is to develop a variety of marketing tools and platforms to reach your target audience in all the places where they might be.

Planning and Strategizing

Plan out what marketing options are available to you and strategize which ones will work for your business. First you'll want to create a brand identity. What does your company stand for? Create a logo and website that convey this image. Be consistent in how you present yourself to the outside world. That goes beyond the colours and fonts you use in your letterhead and brochure. This means the way you communicate, your approach to handling customers, your involvement in your industry or community.

Get Yourself Out There

Every business needs a modern, mobile-friendly website. You will likely require some type of marketing collateral such as brochures or business cards. For most businesses social media platforms are important for reaching and staying engaged with your audience, colleagues and competitors. You don't want to be left behind because you weren't paying attention.

One of the best ways to market your business is through networking. People do business with people, not with websites and brochures. Looking someone in the eye and shaking their hand can mean the difference between being hired and being passed over for the competition. For your business, networking can lead to new job opportunities, client leads, partnerships, and mentors.

While the glamour of entrepreneurship might fade over time, the thrill of doing something you enjoy and bringing value to others are the drivers that will continue to inspire you toward success.
