

The image features several black silhouettes of business professionals in suits, arranged in a circle. A large blue circle is drawn around the group. To the right, there are blue arrows pointing in various directions, suggesting movement or flow. The background is white.

Word of Mouth Marketing

Is This The Missing Piece of Your Marketing Strategy?

Earl B. Everett

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Although many professionals agree that word-of-mouth marketing is by far the most effective form of promotion, very few marketing specialists can actually say that they've applied this tool efficiently enough.

So in the next few chapters we will discuss some very solid guidelines you can use to master the art of word-of-mouth marketing. This approach is highly effective when used correctly and it is a skill that all marketers should seek to further employ and appreciate.

What Is Word of Mouth Marketing?

'Word of Mouth' is still one of the most effective marketing techniques, online or offline.

Joe arrives at your website and he likes it. In fact, he'd like to tell Fred about it. It's just the thing Fred's been looking for. What if Joe could recommend your website to Fred by sending him an email straight from your website?

Well, he can...if you have an 'email to a friend' script installed on your website.

There are many free scripts that will do this for you. But the one I found easiest to install is a script developed by William Bontrager, called 'Master Recommend'.

This one was easy. I had it working on my second attempt. You can see this script in action at:

<http://www.javascriptkit.com/script/script2/tellafriend.shtml>
↓

Basically all you have to do is (1) configure the cgi script and upload it to your cgi bin, (2) create a new web page with a form that is linked to the cgi script on your server. You can download Master Recommend at: <http://willmaster.com>

To learn how to install, visit: <http://www.willmaster.com>

This script will even send you a copy of your visitor's message (it's useful to know what your visitors think about your website).

If you prefer not to have anything to do with cgi, there's a much easier way of putting 'email to a friend' on your site.

<http://www.javascriptkit.com> has a program that is hosted on their site. Installing it is as simple as pasting some HTML code into your web page. Your visitors will be presented with a simple form where they can enter up to three of their friends' email addresses.

You can add this service to your website at the following URL: <http://www.javascriptkit.com>

Don't Underestimate the Power of Word-of-Mouth Marketing

Word-of-mouth marketing is rarely the focus of a new businessperson seeking to gain more clients. Everyone wants to start an affiliate program or pay someone far too much to "manage their add campaign".

However, many of the biggest businesses choose to use word of mouth marketing instead of a pricey campaign. Google (gmail) and Amazon are two prime examples that I will explain later.

Expensive research has taught these companies that people believe their friends more than they believe billboards or commercials and so it has been proven to be one of the best marketing methods around.

Word of mouth is probably both the most successful kind of advertising and the most profitable. People naturally talk to each other and spread ideas, names and opinions. This article aims to show you how to use this to your advantage, how to make money from word of mouth.

1. Business Cards

There are many places online where you can order large quantities of business cards. If you use them to introduce yourself with people who aren't already friends and family then you are already spreading your businesses name.

It may feel contrived and a little cheesy but it works. Few people rip up business cards. They usually end up deposited on a kitchen table ready to be picked up when someone who runs your kind of business is needed.

Also, they bring your business into conversation. You don't need to promote it, just give them the card and you are increasing your brand recognition.

2. Tell-A-Friend Scripts

Online you often see on the side of websites a link called "tell a friend". This makes it so much easier to tell a friend about a website and therefore far more people do.

BY adding one of these links to the side of your website you are immediately increasing your ability to market through word of mouth. You are making your website word-of-mouth friendly and so you are likely to be talked about more, become better known and make more money.

A free "tell a friend" script can be found here:

<http://www.javascriptkit.com/script/script2/tellafriend.shtm>
↓

All you have to do is copy and paste the script from that site somewhere in your websites html. Maybe at the bottom of the page. Try and pick somewhere near the rest of your links so that it isn't ignored. There we have it! Instantly better marketing.

3) Invite a Friend Offers

This is a strategy that many of the most profitable websites with the best marketing strategies online have used and I am about to explain it to you for free.

All you do is that you offer a discount for every person who invites a certain number of friends to your website. This is a bit like an affiliate program only you pay them with a discount that does not affect your profits much rather than actual money.

This however is harder to set up. If your website runs a "membership" sign-in system then it will be easy to just get your web engineer to add this script.

If however you plan to run a more basic website set-up (like me) then this still is fairly easy. When you are setting up your shopping cart software (if you read my guide on it then you will be using the free one offered by Paypal) then just customize it to allow "comments" while ordering.

Tell people that if 5 people "comment" or mention their name and email address while ordering products then you will give them a 40% discount on their next purchase. This will form an incentive for people to use word of mouth to grow your business and thereby increase your customer base and potential profits.

4) Email, Bulletin Board and Other Signatures

Whenever you write anything online, sign it with your website address if you have one. This includes emails.

A prime example of how this has worked for one company is hotmail. At the end of every hotmail email it advertises the free service that they provide and so they had to do less marketing because word of mouth gave them free advertising.

5) Buzz

Buzz is the modern term for when you do something exciting, edgy or different and people begin to talk about it - a lot.

While it is very difficult to tell you how to create a buzz for your product or website, I can tell you that you always need

Again, many very large and profitable businesses use this technique simply by doing something strange as seen in Burger King's "Subservient Chicken" campaign. To promote their new chicken sandwiches they created a website with a man in a chicken suit that would obey the commands that you typed. This was unusual, unique and interesting and so created "**Buzz**".

I wouldn't recommend doing things like that all of the time but when you are thinking of how to grow your business it is definitely something worth considering.

Simple Goals For Word of Mouth Marketing Methods

Haven't you heard that word of mouth marketing methods work? In fact, according to research, well over 75% of the most effective methods of marketers actually use word of mouth marketing, which, for the purposes of this article I shall refer to as WOM.

So, you want to start a WOM campaign. The first thing you need to do is to have a goal for your WOM campaign. I can immediately think of a few reasons why you might want to do this:

#1 - Generate Leads. This is probably easy to do if you have a few bonus products in hand. Giving free things away to people definitely will encourage them to think of a few people whom you can refer to you for the same thing.

All you need to do is get an autoresponder message set up so that they can forward you the email addresses of the people they'd like you to contact.

#2 - Generate Affiliates. Okay, this one is a little easier, but you will have to educate the affiliates you build. WOM for affiliate marketing is great because now you have an army of people who are incentivized to market on your behalf.

#3 - Convert Into Sales. For this to happen, you definitely need to create a lot of testimonials in order to create the buzz. This approach will then get other people talking about the quality and the level of "must-haveness" of the product you are promoting.

#4 - Build Credibility. This approach will help solidify your brand in the long run, so you will most likely have to

#5 - Retain Current Subscribers. Few people would have heard of this, but sometimes, your current list of subscribers need perks to keep them 'alive' and warm. Send them freebies or get a campaign going to increase the buzz amongst them. I have monthly events where different people actually get together and meet each other and chat so that they know who's who instead of a nickname in a forum. This keeps people from opting out of your mailing list!

#6 - Warm up for a product launch. When you want to do a product launch, you will want to ensure that people are ready for you. How can you do this? Well, all it takes is to create more buzz. Warming people on a list also takes time, but the sequence in which you do it is important. With this goal in mind, you can already think of some ways to get your list of people excited, talking to each other and involving themselves in a discussion.

Once your goal is clear enough for you, it will be far easier to keep track of your results. After all, without a clear direction, you won't know how far you need to go, or what you are aiming for in the first place.

There's a number of Word of Mouth Marketing Methods that you can find on any internet marketing blog. The marketing methods themselves are not as important as the way in which you use them. To find out more about word of mouth marketing methods, just go to:

<https://www.referralcandy.com/blog/10-word-of-mouth-marketing-tactics/>

How to Quick-Start Word of Mouth Campaigns

If you do build a great experience, customers tell each other about that. Simply put, it is word of mouth. Word of mouth is the most powerful form of advertising. It is the most honest form of marketing, building upon people's innate desire to share their experiences with family, friends and co-workers.

Word of mouth for a brand is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do extraordinary things well. People notice that over time. While there are no shortcuts to generate word of mouth, you can use specific techniques to accelerate the process. Here are a few of them:

- Look at the customer as a friend or a family member and not as part of some vague demographic group.
- Develop entertaining and informative ads that can be easily forwarded.
- Work actively with social networks.
- Host discussions and message boards about your brand.
- Identify people who are able to influence your target customers.
- Inform these influencers about what your brand is all about and motivate them to spread the word.
- Recruit new evangelists, teach them about the benefits of your brand and encourage them to create a buzz.
- Set up online clubs for passionate users.
- For any assistance with
- Track online conversations about your brand by both supporters and detractors.
- Listen and respond to both positive and negative conversations.
- Participate honestly on online blogs and discussions.

Stimulating Your Word of Mouth Marketing

In order to stimulate word of mouth marketing, there are many things that can be done, but they must be instituted in a proper manner. In recent years, the concept of Pay-Per-Lead has proliferated the internet and marketers have leveraged that to generate leads. However, the approach can be as worthless as a 0.01% response rate per 50,000.

This is why word of mouth marketing approaches must be far more targeted than CPA programs, and far more dynamic than conventional and often simplistic permission marketing approaches.

In my opinion, there are at least 2 ways you can immediately stimulate word-of-mouth marketing right now.

Method 1: The Ethical Bribe.

This is a common method which you will want to use sparingly unless you know the nature of your target market. Will they want what you are offering? Will you be able to hit that raw nerve that will get them telling more people about your website or service or product?

The ethical bribe when used can be very powerful. It's simple to set up. Purchase an email marketing software like the [one](#) at:

<https://highpayingaffiliateprograms.com/ethical-bribe/>

and create an additional campaign and an additional page every time you run an advertisement.

Always redirect your main opt-in to the tell-a-friend page and set up your new opt-in codes on that page, always remembering to give them your ethical bribe.

The biggest drawback is that an ethical bribe does not guarantee that people will definitely tell a friend. They will tell anyone! Thus, the set up of the ideal tell-a-friend sequence is important. To tell an individual to bring another individual to a website has constraints which need to be addressed, and probably will not be as effective as it ought to be. Technology can catch up and software to generate tell-a-friend campaigns could be a little more efficient, and possibly offer a buffet spread of items that a friend could select to gift their friend.

Method 2: Social Proof

Social proof is a psychological mechanism that gets people to act. If one person has been told that something is good, they won't be able to say it's good. They need to see that there has been a fairly large quantity of people who say it's good before they jump without thinking.

Social proof does have its flaws and I do understand that there are people who feel that it is 'unethical' to create a buzz. Still, the method will work if you have a good product or service that adds value anyway. People are still communal in nature, and they will always tell their friends or associates in the appropriate discussion environment about things that will benefit them.

To find out more about word of mouth marketing methods, just go to: <https://www.referralcandy.com/blog/10-word-of-mouth-marketing-tactics/>

Using Public Forums to Help With Your WOM Marketing

Advertising by Recommendation

Without a shadow of a doubt, recommendation or word of mouth was the earliest form of marketing. Even in primitive times, people knew from whom they could get the supplies they needed. Without other methods such as radio or newspapers, trade relied entirely on recommendations. This method is still with us today.

Making the Most of Recommendations

So in today's world of technology, how do you use word of mouth marketing to your advantage? It is likely not as hard as you think, but you are going to have to do some research and also be organized if you want it to be successful. Word of mouth marketing can be a very positive experience. You want to create publicity and customer word of mouth marketing.

If a customer has enjoyed your product and has had a good experience they will be likely to share this with friends and colleagues. In turn, the people they have told are much more likely to purchase your product in the future.

Encouraging people to talk about your product can be both easy and difficult. Certain products are automatically talked about as they are new and innovative, others will need a little more encouragement.

A great way to raise your profile with the public is to do something such as participating in a community event or making a donation to charity. This will automatically encourage people to take notice of and talk about your organization.

Tips for Increasing Word of Mouth Marketing

Customers are very wary of being tricked, so one of the best things that you can do is to treat your current customers with integrity at all times. They will then tell their friends that you are trustworthy.

You should also remember that often simpler is better. And you should never make claim that you can not back up. Lastly, you should also treat your customers kindly and with respect. They will enjoy the experience and then go on to tell other people about you and your company.

Tune Into and Know What Customers Really Want

Customer relationship marketing is powerful in theory, but troubled in practice. We need to take time to figure out how and why we are undermining our own best efforts.

Perhaps we're overlooking the fundamental elements of a good customer relationship program. With the means to connect with customers easily, maybe we're rushing to cash in on the potential rewards, while forgetting the essentials of all relationships: intimacy and trust.

Close examination reveals that relationships between companies and consumers are suffering. U.S. satisfaction rates are at an all-time low. Complaints, boycotts and growing unhappiness with big corporations are strong indicators that most CRM isn't working.

Ironically, the very steps marketers are taking to build relationships with customers are often responsible for destroying these connections. Companies may delight in learning more about their customers and providing services to please them, but customers are fed up. They're tired of irrelevant survey questions, overwhelming product choices, features they'll never use in phone plans and cars, and rebate-driven buyer reward programs.

The New Frontier: Mining the Internet

With the proliferation of online stores that complement traditional outlets, companies now have a tremendous source of information about consumers' preferences. Because a traditional store may not always have a product on its shelves, purchase results are not always a good measurement of desires. Online stores can track consumer

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The web is more than a sales channel; it is a powerful means of collecting data in real time. The Internet is truly the new frontier in connecting with the customer, offering a huge opportunity for companies to improve customer relationships.

The New Social Marketing: Buzz and Word of Mouth

Where does marketing enter the mix? Some experts claim the old days of "push" marketing are over, where a company shoved a one-way message to customers via print or TV. Corporations are asking themselves just how much return on investment there really is from a 30-second Super Bowl commercial.

Consumers are turning away from media and, instead, tuning into each other. Engagement and word of mouth marketing are the buzzwords of this new era. Customers are doing their market research online and listening to each other. Unfortunately, many marketers continue to look at engagement in a one-sided way.

Corporate blogs have become an excellent resource for CEOs and others to connect with customers in a personal manner. In spite of the possible pitfalls in opening two-way communication between the public and employees, there is much to be gained by being personable, accessible, authentic and transparent.

Customers are already communicating with each other online about products and experiences with your company. If you can join the conversation in a real way, in real time, you'll have an advantage over those who remain silent and inaccessible behind corporate doors.

Now there is finally a way to discover what customers want, and a way to connect with them authentically. But there are risks involved in being honest and transparent. Will you and your company take the risk?



Steps to Create Awareness of Your Word of Mouth Advertising

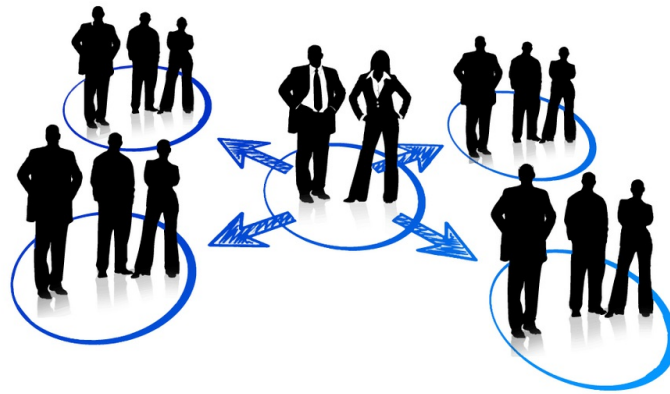
Word of mouth advertising creates an awareness campaign where your business information travels from person to person, creating a world wide of awareness. For a new business start-up, word of mouth marketing is often the best and most effective advertising method.

Newspaper print and classified ads can get very expensive, and have lost much of their effectiveness with the popularity of the internet in the past decade. New business owners can't even consider radio or television advertising as a viable option. What is left for a home business or small start-up to do to spread the word about their enterprise?

Here are some steps that you can take to start a viral word of mouth marketing campaign about your business:

Acquaintances: Approach your friends, family and neighbors initially, followed by contacting other people you know in your community and beyond. To begin your campaign, you may take a broad approach to spread your information; ultimately streamlining your message to your target market.

Networking: Both online and off, networking is the backbone of the word of mouth marketing. You need to have a large network to build a database of prospective customers. Find forums and other groups where your target market 'hang out.



Website: It's the Internet age. Establish your website with good, focused keywords to get favorable results from the search engines. Also, keep your website, user-friendly with easy navigation and complete updated information about everything regarding your business.

Freebies: Everyone loves to get something free. Create a free report or ebook related to your idea or product and give it away to potential customers, asking them to give the item to their friends and family as well.

Mailers: You can use email or postcards or pamphlets about your business to inform your acquaintances prior to calling them.

Word of mouth advertising has stood the test of time and is effective for every business. There are simple, affordable methods of starting a viral marketing campaign that will spread like wild fire.

By putting into place some or all of the ideas mentioned above, you can create a world of advertising for your business.

Word of Mouth Marketing on the World Wide Web

Online marketing presents you with an opportunity to get more bang for your buck compared to traditional marketing. This is particularly true for word of mouth marketing.

Word of Mouth Marketing on The Web



Word of mouth marketing refers to a type of marketing that promotes something by enticing independent parties to promote the service, idea or product to friends. The idea is to create a buzz for the subject matter. In creating the buzz, the goal is to create enough word of mouth momentum to get the idea to spread quickly. People are the sole conduit for the momentum. If you get it right, an entire product can become an established success with little or no paid marketing.

A classic example of word of mouth marketing, *often called viral*, is the situation involving Red Bull. Red Bull is an energy drink. When it was first introduced in Europe, rumors spread that the drink was an aphrodisiac. Nobody knows who started the rumors, but Red Bull became very popular. It then evolved into a mixer for alcoholic drinks in nightclubs and the rest is history. It is a hugely popular product and much of the popularity arose through this word of mouth process.

Word of mouth marketing online works in much the same way. The primary difference is it tends to happen much quicker than in the real world. The Internet is full of forums where like minded people congregate. A new, cool product, idea or service can blow up a site over night. If you don't believe me, consider the wild success of the My Space platform, Napster, EBay and so on. Most of these sites grew into behemoths because of word of mouth endorsements, not paid advertising.

Obviously, this type of marketing can lead to tremendous riches. Unfortunately, it isn't particularly easy to accomplish. Everyone is trying to do it, so you really need to be pushing something unique. If you can come up with something, it is time to hit forums and other sites to create a buzz.

A traditional way to pursue viral marketing online is to offer a free e-book. The book will detail your thoughts on some subject matter, such as marketing. One makes the book available for downloading and also allows people to send it to others. If you are offering something of quality, the book should spread quickly to thousands and thousands of people.

The ultimate goal is to promote it over and over until hundreds of thousands of people have read it. At that point, you write another e-book which you sell for \$3 to \$5. If people liked the first book, they will buy the second. If 100,000 read the first one and only 10 percent buy the second, you will have 10,000 sales. This strategy has been pursued over and over by many authors.

The word of mouth approach is definitely a hit and miss strategy. The large online communities make it a viable strategy, but there are a lot of people trying to do it. If you fail 50 times, but succeed once, ***life will be very good.***

Collaborating Word Of Mouth Marketing with Email Marketing



EMAIL MARKETING

Sometimes the benefits of email marketing are quite different than anticipated. Most Internet marketers understand the basic concept of email marketing which is to email promotional materials to a large group of Internet users to promote an interest in your products or services.

This concept is easy for many to understand but sometimes there are added benefits to email marketing. This article will discuss the basics of email marketing and will also explain how sometimes email marketing can reach a larger audience share than originally planned. This additional reach can be either a positive or negative depending on the quality of the original emails and the reactions of the original recipients.

Email marketing is a very simple concept which is also extremely cost effective. The general idea behind email marketing is that an email is sent to an email distribution list and these emails are intended to create an interest in the products or services offered by the originator of the email.

In theory this concept could not be simpler but email marketing can get significantly more complicated. One of the biggest complicating factors is the potential for the emails used in the marketing campaign to be viewed as

This potential alone creates a major complication because Internet marketers have to make a significant effort to assure their messages are not trapped by a spam filter or immediately deleted by the recipients for appearing to be spam.

Once the email messages get through to the recipient, they have a small window of opportunity to make a positive impression on the recipients and influence him to make a purchase or at least visit the business owner's website.

Providing quality content, keeping advertising subtle and at a minimum and providing a clear call to action are all factors which can help to get the message across and entice the potential customer to make a purchase or at least visit the website to research the products and services a little bit more.

As previously stated the goal of an email marketing campaign is to convince the email recipient to either make a purchase or visit the website to obtain more information. When an email recipient performs either one of these actions, it is considered a huge success.

However, thanks to the power of the forward button email marketing can actually be much more successful than even the business owner intended.

The great aspect of email marketing is that when the email recipients receive an email which they think is worthwhile they are likely to make a purchase and may also forward the information onto a friend or family member they think might be interested in this information as well.



The ability to forward email messages has become comparable satisfied customers using word of mouth to tout the quality of the products or services they received. However, the ability to forward a worthwhile email message is exponentially more effective than using word of mouth to spread the word.

With just a few clicks of the mouse, the original email recipient can forward the message to several of his friends at once. This can result in significantly better results than the business owner had originally intended with no additional effort on behalf of the business owners.

Effective Word of Mouth Marketing and Facebook Tips

Internet marketing is now considered to be essential in the business world. With it, you will be able to get more clients and significantly let your business grow without spending too much money. Internet marketing is a new breed of marketing. It is very different from marketing on the real world and for most people, internet marketing is quite complicated.



If you don't know how to market on the internet, the best way to start is by marketing on one of the most popular social networking websites available today, which is Facebook.

First of all, Facebook is primarily a social networking website that is designed to let people communicate with their friends in a dynamic way. It also serves a way for people to meet new people and establish new relationships.

For internet marketers, Facebook is packed with features that can be used to market products and services as well as their business website. If you are a first time internet marketer who wants to start easy, you might want to start with Facebook. You will see that Facebook will provide you with a lot of marketing potential and also help you let your business grow.

The great thing about Facebook is that it is steadily growing. Today, it already has an estimated 64 million subscribers and growing. With this number, you will definitely be able to find a lot of people who will be interested in what you have to offer.

Also, Facebook has all the tools you need to market your products or services. Even if the tools and applications here are designed for communication, you have to consider that the main point about internet marketing is communication. Facebook has all the communication tools that you will ever need.

Facebook also have a Facebook Ads feature. Here, you will be able to officially advertise or market your brand, business or products. You can even market your website here at Facebook Ads.



Facebook Ads, you will be able to take advantage of its great marketing tools, such as the Advanced Targeting feature. Here, you will be able to target your niche market by age, gender, interests, location and more. This will mean that you will be able to easily target the clients you want. By having this feature, you will be able to quickly find people that may be interested in purchasing the products or services that you are offering.

The Facebook Ads will also provide you with Trusted Referrals. With this feature, you will be able to attach friend to friend interactions about your business to your ads. Facebook encourages word of mouth marketing. This is a great feature as people are more likely to buy a particular product that is recommended by the person they know.

Starting in Facebook Ads is very easy (click on the image below to learn more). The first is by pasting the URL of your website. After that, you will choose the audience you want. You can choose the age range, the location, education status, political views and relationship status. You can also include some keywords that will normally show up on interests.



After that, you will create the advertising where you will insert a title and a body. You can also include a photo if you want. The last step is by setting up a budget.

These are some of the tips that you should try to remember when advertising in Facebook Ads. By properly using it, you will be able to get your money's worth and eventually let your business grow. Go to:

<https://kimgarst.com/facebook-ads-3-ways-boost-post> for an experts' guide to all you need to know about facebook advertising.

Advertising on Facebook Tips: Part 2



As an owner of an online business, you know that you need to market your website in the internet in order for you to generate targeted traffic. You have to remember that in order for an online business to become a success, targeted traffic is the key. With targeted traffic, you will be able to increase sales and also continue to increase the amount of people entering your website.

Internet marketing is a hard thing to do. You will need to work hard in order for you to effectively attract targeted traffic in your website. However, if you want an easier way to market your business website in the internet, you might want to consider marketing on Facebook.

First of all, Facebook is a social networking website that now has over 60 million active subscribers from all over the world. Most subscribers in Facebook are in the 18-25 demographics. So, if your business is targeting people between the ages of 18-25, Facebook is the perfect place to market your website.

So, how will you be able to market your website in Facebook?

Unlike other social networking websites, Facebook will be able to offer you a lot of tools that you can use in order to market your products or services as well as your business website more effectively and efficiently. With the number of people subscribing to Facebook each day, you will definitely generate a lot of targeted traffic to your website.

In Facebook, there are quite a lot of ways to market your products or services. In Facebook marketing, advertising is by far the most common way to market in Facebook.

Here, you will be able to purchase mass banner ads. You can also use flyers targeted to specific people. These flyer advertising can be purchased for as little as 5 dollars and it is already featured in the website.

If you are interested in advertising to featured groups or promotions, then you can take advantage of what is called Next Steps. This tool can be inserted in your homepage with links to a corresponding sponsored group.

You can embed ads within your homepage's news feeds

Another way to advertise in Facebook is through word of mouth. Try asking your network of friends in Facebook if they are willing to advertise for you in their own network of friends in Facebook. Here, they will be the ones doing the advertising for you by recommending your products or services as well as your Facebook profile page and business website to their Facebook network.

You have to remember that word of mouth marketing is one of the best marketing strategies available. Try to remember that people are three to four times likely to buy a particular product or service if it is recommended by someone they

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You can also market your products, services and business website on the notes section in Facebook. This particular tool acts almost like a blog. When you write or post something on the notes section, it will be sent out to all of your friend's news feeds, which can be read by other people. This is a great way to get messages across.

These are some of the great ways to market on Facebook. By using some of these tools, you can be sure that you will be able to attract more people to visit your Facebook profile page and let them know what you have to offer.

Should Moms Disclose They're Getting Paid to Endorse P&G Products--(How Not To Use WOM)

When a friend or co-worker tells you about a product she likes, as women do, and you then bought it too, how would you feel if you found out afterwards that she'd been paid to tell you?

Most private product talk among women is not commercial. Among men, either. Think TIVO, iPod, movies or restaurants - people refer those to each other because they love them, not because they get paid to do it.

If they did get compensated somehow, and you found out later, would you be as trusting of their next referral?

People telling each other about products they like, like TIVO, iPods, or other products has been referred to in the past as word of mouth advertising or word of mouth marketing.

The trust that the recommendation is not secretly motivated in anyway by compensation from a third party is what makes it a recommendation accepted at face value from people who know and trust each other. That's what makes it so valuable to product manufacturers and marketers. Some of them, like Apple, try to make products remarkable enough that people will WANT to tell others about them.

Others pay to manufacture that word of mouth. They use people who are members of a group, like Moms, or Teens, and pay them to do so-called word of mouth.

Often, these newly created word-of-mouthers don't tell the others that they're being compensated, and that's where the question arises: Would you feel manipulated if you gave your trust to a friend's recommendation, bought the product, and then later found out that the friend got paid to talk it up to you?

You no doubt know that marketers are not a very credible bunch these days. One of the most popular business books today is entitled, All Marketers are Liars <https://youtu.be/AZnYRaQfjK4>

So now, must we add "All Friends are Liars"?

Proctor & Gamble Co. has quietly come out with an advertising program, Vocalpoint, that is such a manufactured word of mouth campaign. It was developed to pitch its own and other companies' products. <http://www.businessweek.com>

P&G has recruited 600,000 women into their new advertising army over the past year or two. All moms. All on the take. Here's how the company is using them:

"By crafting product messages mothers will want to share, along with giving them samples, coupons, and a chance to share their own opinions with P&G, the Cincinnati consumer-product giant is using personal endorsements to cut through advertising clutter."

And, says the company,

"We know that the most powerful form of marketing is an advocacy message from a trusted friend," says Steve Knox, Vocalpoint's CEO <http://www.businessweek.com>

Right. So let's exploit that, he says. They're not his friends
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Ask yourself one question and you will know if you like this: Would you give your trust as freely to the recommendations of someone you know, if you can't be sure up front if they're on the take or not, for whatever product they're talking about?

Aside from the possible loss of trust between friends,

"...Vocalpoint also raises a serious ethical issue: Should the person spreading the product message disclose her affiliation?"

The Word of Mouth Marketing Association Code of Ethics requires "connectors" like these moms to disclose who they work for. But P&G does not require these women to do that. And many don't.

Ethics and morals aside, ask yourself: Do you want to be able to trust a friend's recommendation to be motivated by nothing other than the interest she has in telling about something she thought you'd like to know about?

If you found out later that she DID get paid, in money or free product, would you weigh her recommendation differently next time?

If you, like me, would take any future recommendations from this person with a giant grain of salt, then we all know this gal has lost something she once had - my freely given, no strings attached, trust. This is not a good thing.

The FTC is looking into it... <http://www.businessweek.com>

P.S. Telling your connection up front is always good policy. And that's of course why I suggest that when you are introducing your product to others, you let them know right up front that you are marketing it and why - because it's helped you, say - and now you've decided to make a business marketing it - so you can do good AND make some income. (That's all laid out in the If My Product's So Great, How Come I Can't Sell It? book and CD program. <http://www.bananamarketing.com>)

In summary, some of the numerical data provided in this eBook may be a little dated but the basis of this manual and its tips still hold true—providing your customers with a product or service worth talking about, is imperative to boosting good word-of-mouth marketing.

Excellent customer service will always benefit your business, especially with the influence of viral marketing (another term commonly associated with word-of-mouth marketing). If companies put an emphasis on providing their customers with the best service possible, the positive results of an effective word-of-mouth marketing campaign will take care of itself.

On the other hand, in order to forward this process, it's imperative to have an honest representative for your brand. When customers trust the referral given to them by your company spokesman/woman, they are more than likely to believe that your products are good and worth buying.

Keeping your most loyal customers close could potentially benefit your company's bottom-line because word-of-mouth marketing is the basis of consumers returning to buy other products and/or services that are offered and provided by the company. Making long-time customers feel valued, respected and appreciated.

If you can integrate some of the tips provided in this short manual, your company's word-of-mouth marketing has a good chance of succeeding and your customers will be satisfied which will lead a more dynamic and progressive word-of-mouth marketing strategy for your company.

Word-of-mouth, viral marketing or buzz marketing is one of the most important strategies you can employ to improve the awareness of your products and services. Learning more about these subject matters is crucial for a businessperson looking to succeed in the marketing world. I hope these few short tips help to remind you to engage with your customers in order to enhance your word-of-mouth marketing policies.

In conclusion, set the parameters and stick to your mission. If perceived as inconsistent by your customers in any way--their trust will waver. Be true to the core values of your objective in all aspects of business, especially, while executing your marketing policies. Customers are the most important contributors to your business success and the growth of your business and its brand is entirely determined by their satisfaction.



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