

4 Biggest Mistakes to Avoid in Marketing Your Small Business

by Boris Mahovac R.G.D.

YourEzineCoach.com
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Welcome to **Contacts2Clients**, your biweekly source of tips and ideas that will help you grow your business. We will cover issues such as: marketing, managing, networking, finances, etc.

This newsletter is brought to you by **Boris Mahovac**, of YourEzineCoach.com and iBizAcademy.com. My team of seasoned professionals will help you grow your business, attract more customers, and make your marketing efforts more worthwhile.

If you have any comments or ideas you'd like to see covered in the newsletter, call me at 905.844.4247 or e-mail Boris@YourEzineCoach.com

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To your success!

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Hello, my name is Boris Mahovac and I'd like to welcome you to the text version of my special report

4 Biggest Mistakes to Avoid in Marketing Your Small Business

Congratulations for downloading this special report from YourEzineCoach.com or iBizAcademy.com!

I am really glad that you have taken this first step in achieving real results in growing your professional practice or small business.

Not only will you learn about the **4 biggest mistakes** most small business owners make when trying to grow their businesses, but you will also learn the **secret that changed my business** profoundly.

The fact that you're reading this report puts you in a special league of small business owners who are eagerly looking for ways to do things differently. **You want to take your business to the next level** and I am here to provide you with the help you need to accomplish just that.

If you are a life coach, dentist, wine maker, chiropractor, real estate agent, or any solo professional or small business owner, you will soon learn how easy it is to build your business with simple online and off-line marketing strategies.

Although my business has changed dramatically over the years, one thing remains constant: **my eagerness to learn new things**, new strategies, new techniques, new

ways of looking at things, new approaches to solving business issues.

Today, I hope you will share the same enthusiasm for learning as I share with you some of the hard-earned secrets, by offering this special report.

MISTAKE #1

If you have been in business for some time, I hope that you have come to realize that as a solo professional or owner of a small business, **you are supposed to be wearing two hats, doing two jobs**: one job is **delivering the services** that you offer, and then there's your other job of **finding new prospects** to offer your services to.

As a matter of fact, if you're like most small business owners, you are painfully aware of the fact that finding those elusive new customers, attracting those reluctant new clients, or, and here comes the "M-word" – marketing your business – **is actually the hardest part of your day-to-day activities in running your own business.**

When you decided to go into business for yourself, I am sure you weren't planning on spending most of your time not working IN your business, but instead, **working ON your business**, that is, running around trying to get the word out and build that client list.

You are a professional in your field of expertise, and you rarely, if ever, question your own qualifications, you rarely doubt your own ability to perform the tasks of your own profession.

But, on the other hand, **you often have grave doubts in your ability to generate leads** and to work with those leads in turning them into clients.

In other words, you are constantly asking yourself

- How do I **find new clients?**
- How do I **attract more customers to my store?**
- How do I **make more money?**

and finally,

- How do I **work less?**

Although many small business owners are asking themselves these same questions,

they are still making the **biggest mistake of all—and that is not marketing themselves** at all, or at least not enough!

Not marketing yourself is certain death of your business, trust me, I've seen it enough times, and history is full of great ideas, and great minds not making it in business because of **poor marketing skills**.

So, what are your options for growing your business? How can you market your business?

Well, I am sure that you've tried pretty much everything that you can think of. And then you listened to your friends, and neighbours, and family and followed some of the suggestions they may have made.

Let's examine some of these options. First thing that comes to mind to most small business owners is:

MISTAKE #2 – BUSINESS NETWORKING

In case you're not familiar with business networking, it refers to the activity of meeting other business people, in person, usually in some organized, formal way, for the purpose of spreading the word about your business.

Most of the time, **you are required to pay** for this privilege, either as a one-time **entrance fee** (let's say, to a networking event, or a mixer) usually in the range of \$25–\$50, or as a **membership fee**, which can range from \$100 to hundreds, or even thousands of dollars per year.

Let say you get invited by a friend who is a member of the local networking organization, to visit a regular meeting of her chapter. Most networking clubs meet **weekly** or biweekly, usually for an **early morning breakfast**. Meetings run for about 1-½ hours, and during this time, you, as a guest of your friend, will get a chance to **stand up and deliver a 60-second infomercial**.

There will also be opportunities for meeting other members before the formal meeting begins, and most likely, also after the meeting is closed.

Now, although these **networking clubs** (because that's what they are, in essence) allow you to do your infomercial, you will **rarely get any business** from them until you

apply for membership. Unless you are a total newbie or have no business references at all, you won't have any problems getting accepted.

One of the benefits of membership is that you will have **no competition** inside the chapter, so if you're a dentist they will not allow another dentist to join.

OK, so far, so good.

Once you are accepted, **you must attend the weekly meetings regularly**, and will have a chance to do your infomercial every week, plus, you will be given a 10-minute spot to do an **extended presentation several times a year**, depending on the size of the chapter – the more members the chapter has, the fewer presentations you will be able to do.

The idea behind these networking clubs is that all the members are supposed to actively look for referrals for you, in a sense, to be your **"virtual sales team"**.

Before you go rushing to find the nearest networking club, consider the costs and potential returns associated with membership.

Business Networking Costs

- Membership fee \$500 annually
- Breakfast/meeting room fee of \$15-\$25 weekly, usually paid monthly in advance
- Door prizes @ \$20 each (these you give out at the time of your presentations)
- Transportation cost to and from the meeting (1000 km per year, or two bus tickets per week 100 tickets = \$200)
- You're looking at about \$1,800 or so of out-of-pocket expenses, without even accounting for your own time.
- Don't forget to account for your own **time to attend the meetings**, including travel time, 2-½ hours per week
- Your own **time for looking for new potential members** to join; **finding referrals** for your networking buddies – hey, it works both ways, they find referrals for you and you need to do the same for them. Conservatively, at least **one hour per week**.
- **Total investment of your time: 3.5 hours per week x 50 weeks = 175 hours per year.**

At a rate of \$50 per hour the cost of your time would be \$8,750!

Add the actual **out-of-pocket costs** or \$1,800 and that all adds up to **over \$10,000 per year!**

And, let's see what you get as a return on your investment.

- You can attend 50 meetings, and do your 1-minute infomercial,
- You can do two or three 10-min presentations, depending on the size of the chapter, the more members the chapter has, the fewer presentations you can do, or they will be shorter in duration (instead of 10 minutes you may only get to do a five-minute presentation, when two members do a presentation at the same meeting).
- At best you're looking at only **80 minutes of time** when you are at the center of attention.

Since an **average networking club has 25 members**, let's take all these figures, and see how many referrals must 25 people generate for you in a year, to quickly see the rate of return on your investment.

Let's say you're a chiropractor, and you charge \$35 per visit. On average, you see your patients 15 times, which makes the **lifetime value of your patient 15 x \$35=\$525**

If your cost of business networking is \$10,000 per year, then to simply break even you will need to have about **20 new patients referred to you every year.**

This means, in a networking group of 25 people, almost every single member would have to refer one person to your practice, every year, to make it slightly profitable for you.

So, you see, business networking is a tough one. I am not saying it's impossible to make it work, for example, in the early stages of your business, when you can "afford" to be away from your office and spend 3-½ hours a week **not servicing clients** or customers.

Seems to me like lots of work, for a questionable return on investment.

Trust me, **I know about business networking:** I was a member of a well known networking organization for a couple of years myself. My fellow members considered me a pretty good networker, too: I received the annual **Notable Networker award**, and the

next year I was **elected president** of my chapter.

But my networking days were **very hard on my family**. Every Thursday morning my family was on red alert, because I had to get the kids to daycare and make it to the 7 o'clock meeting.

This kind of early morning schedule was also one of the main reasons most potential new members decided to pass on the opportunity to join my networking club.

MISTAKE #3 – DIRECT MAIL

Ok, you've tried networking, and realised that **it's slow and inefficient**. You spend too much time talking to one person or at best, to 25 people at a time. So you look for ways to reach a larger audience, with less involvement on your part.

First thing you probably tried next, in your marketing efforts, was to **print some brochures!**

Perhaps you even hired a graphic designer, and somebody to write the copy. You then printed a nice quantity, say 5,000 pieces and had them delivered to your office, for a **total cost of a couple of thousand dollars**.

But, after a week or so, you realise that in order for these brochures to tell a story about you, to sell you, **you need to get your brochures into the hands of an interested audience**.

First you try putting them on display in your office, in hope that someone will pick one up and show it to a friend. That is, if you have an office, but if you work from home, or you're on the road most of the time, that's not going to work for you.

Then, you ask your neighbours, friends and family to distribute some to their friends.

Then you ask another business owner to display your brochures in their office, and in return you display theirs in your office. Of course, you would like to team up with a complimentary business, of course, not a competitor. If you're a graphic designer you can team up with a copywriter or a printer.

After a month or two, you realise that you still have 4,725 copies left, and no way to tell if the brochures are bringing in any new business.

You decide that it's time **to send them out by mail**. So, you go to the local post office and enquire about direct mail postage rates, and realise that it'd cost you a couple of thousand to send those brochures out.

You decide to do it, because having the brochures collect dust in your office is not going to bring any new business, right?

But now you have to find 4,725 people to send those brochures to! How do you find their addresses? Somebody may suggest using a list broker. You tell him who your target market is and he pulls a list, which you can use once, or several times for the cost of a few hundred dollars, depending on the quality of the list.

You send the mailing out and wait.

And wait.

And you wait some more.

Then a few telephone calls come in, and a few clients may actually knock on your door.

But – **Is that all?** – you ask yourself. Unfortunately, that's the fact of life that no one bothered to tell you: you see, a **successful direct mail campaign will have a 2% response rate**, while the **average is about 0.5%**.

Even fewer calls will actually translate into new business.

I've tried sending direct mail myself. I remember, many years ago, in order to save money, I even had my mother-in-law stick the address labels and stamps on the envelopes, and stuff the envelopes! I should have know better, because, to this day she still reminds me of the fact I used her as free labour!

So. What's wrong with direct mail?

Nothing, except that it turns out to be actually **very expensive**, because sending just one mailing is never enough, you realise that you need to repeat the process, not once, not twice, but, according to the Direct Marketing Association, **as many as 7 or 8 times before you start seeing tangible results**.

Another reason direct mail doesn't work is because you're **using a shotgun approach to marketing**, and you end up hitting very few, if any, targets.

This is because you're trying to reach an audience who

- does **not know** you,
- does **not need** your product or service and is therefore
- totally not willing to buy it from you.

At best, your brochure ends in the recycling bin.

OK, direct mail didn't prove to be the cure-for-all you were looking for.

Let's see what's usually the next marketing tool most small businesses would try?

MISTAKE #4 – COLD CALLING!

Yikes! It gives me the **chills** just to think about it.

Although I've personally never used cold calling in my marketing efforts, sure enough, some people swear by it. "Hey, it's only **a numbers game**," they would say: "All you have to do is **make enough calls!**"

Sure enough, you can find business consultants who offer training programs for those who want to learn to do it right.

And there are even services available that do the calling for you. **All you need to do is to pay them by the hour, while they don't promise any results!**

Does this sound like a viable marketing plan to you? I don't know, to me it seems like a **waste of time and money.**

But **don't take my word for it**; simply try to remember when was the last time YOU purchased something that was offered to you on a cold call? Remember those dinner-time calls that interrupt you every other day? What did you think of those businesses that called you and offered things you did not need, or products you did not want?

You thought of them as **annoying**, and that's if you're very polite, right?

Would you like people to think of you and your business the same way?

I hope not!

So, wouldn't it be better to have prospects and potential **clients call YOU, instead?**

Hmm... now, that would be something, don't you think?!

SOLUTION – CLIENT ATTRACTION MARKETING

Going after those clients doesn't seem to work, now does it?

How about I show you that you're looking at this whole marketing thing from the **wrong perspective**? That is – **your** perspective! You're not looking at this from the perspective of your potential clients.

After all, all those marketing tactics you've tried seem to land of deaf ears, as far as your prospects are concerned. Why? Well, because whenever you send out a piece of direct mail, place an ad in the paper, print a brochure, make a cold call, **what you're doing**, in essence, **is cold calling**.

In other words, you're reaching out to people in hope they would be interested in you and your services or products, but as a rule you're reaching them at a time when they either

- **have no need** your services;
- or, if they have a need, they are **not ready** to buy;
- or they **don't have the money** or time to implement it;
- or for whatever other reason are **not ready** to hear your message.

Solution: you need to **start → attracting ← clients**, not going after them.

In order for you to start attracting clients you need to first develop **client attraction tools**. In this report I will concentrate on one of those tools, which I personally use and which has also proven to be easy and quick to implement by yourself, but also **affordable to outsource** if you don't have the time to do it yourself.

One of those tools is a newsletter, more specifically an **e-mail newsletter**, or **e-zine** for short (comes from **electronic magazine**).

OK, you may be asking yourself: what's so great about ezines? And why should I pub-

lish one?

Let me tell you **how using a newsletter changed my own business.**

Although I was pretty good at business networking, which brought in a number of new clients, and at using printed communications for attracting new business, I was still working too hard, and not really enjoying it anymore.

I started looking for a system that would allow me to reach out to prospects and my existing clients that would work in two ways:

1. it would be **non-intrusive** for my audience, and provide valuable information to them;
2. it would be **easy** and **automated** for me to implement.

Then, one day it struck me: **Why not use a newsletter?** As a graphic designer I've created dozens of newsletters for others, one of my clients being the **second-largest newsletter publisher** in North America.

Once I started sending out my ezine, first to my existing clients, and then to prospects as well, I started getting orders and projects from clients I haven't heard from in years! It turns out they haven't forgotten me and **reaching out to them with my ezine was a soft way of re-establishing that contact we once had.**

After I started publishing my ezine, I realised that this could be the niche I was looking for! Every single marketing guru preaches: "Find your niche, and profit!"

Today, I not only offer design services to make your ezine look pretty, I also offer writing (with my team of copywriters) and production, from start to send.

But, I don't want to talk about me anymore.

I want to give you **the top 10 reasons you simply must have your own ezine published as soon as possible** (and, by the way, it's easy and affordable, and you don't need to be a computer wiz to do it)

1. Publishing an ezine will **establish you as an expert in your field**, so you attract only qualified prospects that are willing to buy from you or work with you. You don't want to attract the wrong kind of prospect, right?
2. Your own ezine will **sell more services and products** for you, regardless of the fact that you may not even have a web site, so it will work both on line and off line, regardless of the kind of business you're in.

3. **Maintain “top-of-mind awareness”** with your clients and prospects. When the time comes they need your product or service, your name will, naturally, come up first.
4. Your ezine will be a **showcase for all you have to offer** to your clients and prospects. You can show them all what you can do for them, and that will increase your sales and maximize your profits.
5. And this is a big one: you will have a means of **capturing the email addresses of your Web site visitors**, gaining permission to market to them on a regular basis. Since up to 99% of your web site visitors leave without making a purchase on your web site, it’s essential to have a means of reaching them.
6. Easily **spread the word about your business** via “viral marketing.” Which is a fancy word for “word-of-mouth marketing” as your subscribers and clients forward your ezines to their friends, clients and associates.
7. **Package your knowledge** into articles that can be reprinted by others for even more exposure and traffic to your web site.
8. **Stop trading your time for money.** Leverage yourself by creating passive income streams. As a professional in your field you have valuable knowledge. Why not create an information product, such as a book, ebook, audio interview, or a tele-seminar, so that you can reach an even wider audience and market yourself worldwide. And trust me, this is easier than you think.
9. **Keep in touch** with all of your customers, prospects, associates and affiliates on a regular basis. They will be happy hearing from you, because you’re sharing valuable information.
10. If you already publish a printed newsletter, you will **save thousands of dollars in printing and postage** by sending your newsletter by email instead. You can send it monthly, biweekly, weekly or even daily for essentially **no cost**.

OK, now, are you ready to finally grow your business, and get the recognition that you deserve, the income you desire?

If you think publishing an ezine is a great idea, but have some questions about it, don’t worry, I’ve developed several coaching programs to help you with that. They are so easy and simple I wish I had somebody to coach me when I was starting my business.

Go to your computer and type in www.YourEzineCoach.com. Once you’re on my home page, scroll down to the bottom and click on SERVICES (or click [here](#)).

This will display a page that shows you all the different programs I have developed to help busy solo professionals such as yourself, use the power of ezines to promote their business.

At the top of the page you will find the PREMIUM PACKAGE, my full-featured coaching program. This works for people who either don't have the time or the skills to provide the content themselves. If this is the case my team of copywriters and I will write, design and produce your ezine for you, **from start to send**.

If you're able to write your own articles – that's great. You will save some money in the process by selecting my second coaching program, the Ezine Design and Production program.

Please, explore this page, and see if any of the programs fit your needs. We can always discuss a **custom program tailored to fit your specific needs**.

Even if you already publish an ezine, stay on my list of subscribers to receive tips and ideas every other Tuesday, as I send you my own ezine, called **Contacts2Clients**.

Once you've explored your options, then pick up the phone and **call 905-844-4247**.

That's my direct line. Let's schedule a time when I will call you and you can grill me for 15 minutes. **You can ask me anything about email marketing**. After this free initial consultation, I am confident that we will both be able to determine if it would make sense for us to work together or not.

Thank you again for taking the time to read this special report. Regardless of what you decide about on line marketing, please at least **promise me that you will keep marketing your business**, one way or the other.

Remember: Marketing is the single most important key to the success of your business.

I hope to hear from you soon! Have a great day!

Important Notice

If you received this special report by registering on my web site, YourEzineCoach.com or iBizAcademy.com, you are also registered to receive my free biweekly email newsletter, called **Contacts2Clients** that I publish on every other Tuesday. Keep an eye

on your in box for more useful small business marketing tips and ideas coming from YourEzineCoach.com

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BONUS ARTICLE: EZINE PUBLISHING – LEARN HOW TO PICK THE RIGHT EMAIL PUBLISHING SYSTEM PROVIDER

One of the basic tools today's on line entrepreneurs simply must have in their promotional strategy is email marketing. **Following up with prospects and existing clients with email, either by using autoresponders, or by sending regularly published e-newsletters (ezines), or better yet, a combination of both, produces measurably better results than any other type of direct marketing.**

With the latest advances in technology, it has never been easier to prepare, publish and profit with ezines.

How fast you can expect to see results from email campaigns will depend largely on the type of business you're running. For example, if you are a life coach, it may take you months to establish a connection with your contacts, until they get to know, like and trust you enough to hire you. However, if you sell real goods, such as vitamins and supplements, your email promotions may produce results immediately.

Unfortunately, many budding entrepreneurs **mistakenly think that sending email is free**, and that they can simply use their own email program to send email promotions. Wrong! This type of email list management can quickly get you in trouble: with your local ISP, possibly with the law, and, most importantly, with your contacts!

As an ezine marketing coach I see this on a regular basis. People collect hundreds of email addresses from various sources, such as Yellow Pages, chamber of commerce directories, association members lists, etc., and start sending them email promotions from their own PCs.

Most beginner e-marketers don't even know they can **put all the addresses into the BCC (blind carbon copy) field**, so that everyone's contact information is hidden from public view.

If you're thinking of marketing your business or professional practice by email, the **first step you need to take is choose the most appropriate Email Publishing System** (EPS), or List Management System, as they are sometimes referred to. Please notice that I am not using the word the **best**, but rather the **most appropriate**, because the best will mean different things to different people.

Just like it is with anything these days, choosing an EPS can be a bad case of "too-much-choice-itis". Because they all offer a free trial period or a money-back guarantee, you may think you're not going to lose money if you make a bad choice. However, if you're working on launching your business online, you'll want to make your first choice the right choice. **Your money may be refunded, but your wasted time can't be replaced.**

Here's an overview of four major players in this area: [AWeber](#), [Constant Contact](#), [GetResponse](#) and [1ShoppingCart](#). I have hands-on experience with all four of them, so this, in a nutshell, is my personal list of their best features.

[AWeber](#)

- * I like their robust list-management features; absolutely the highest CAN-SPAM compliance, and very high deliverability rates.
- * Of course, major feature is unlimited auto-responders, with unlimited follow ups and broadcasts, plus I like their low flat monthly fee for up to 10,000 contacts.
- * In December 2005 HTML templates were introduced, however, even after the Fall 2006 upgrades to the graphical HTML editor creating an HTML email is still not as

user-friendly as **Constant Contact**'s mail wizard. However, for those who'd like to use their own HTML code, AWeber offers much greater flexibility and ease of use.

Recommended for: those who either do not sell on line, or have an e-commerce or shopping cart system already in place. **AWeber** connects nicely with most e-commerce solutions currently available, such as PayPal, ClickBank and 1ShoppingCart, among others.

Constant Contact

- * In early 2007 they have completely revamped the email creation wizard, that puts anyone with average computer skills in the captain's seat of creating a great-looking HTML email, without knowing a bit of HTML. Using the wizard also automatically updates the text-only version of the email. (N.B. **Constant Contact** has limited text-only format send options: emails are ALWAYS send in MIME-text/html format by default, unless the subscriber specifically selects text-only format; however, as an ezine publisher you cannot create and send text-only format email!)
- * Some entrepreneurs will appreciate the ability to import their existing lists without being required to re-confirm every single subscriber (like **AWeber** does). Subscribers can be re-confirmed "softly," over time.
- * Their tracking features are probably the most detailed and useful out there, although, in my humble opinion, they border on being a Big Brother tool. More on this in an upcoming feature article.

Recommended for: e-marketers who have large lists of existing contacts, or for those who'd like to create their own snazzy HTML emails without hiring an HTML coder or designer.

GetResponse

If you're looking for a full-featured auto-responder and ezine publishing system, take a look at GetResponse. I recently signed up with them because I like to try the service first to see if I can recommend it to my clients.

So far, my experience has been very positive. The auto-responder feature has some very powerful options other email publishing services don't have. To make the deal even sweeter, this auto-responder costs less than **Aweber**, or any of the other services I use and recommend.

GetResponse also comes with an integrated co-registration option to grow your list

with targeted subscribers. Because the co-registration is handled by the same company as the auto-responder there's no need to confirm the subscribers that join your list. If you've tried co-reg services before, and you use double opt-in, you quickly realized that buying 100 leads usually means ending up with only a fraction of that number joining your list because of the need to confirm your subscribers.

With [GetSubscribers](#) service you keep 100% of the subscribers on your list. This fact alone is reason enough to try [GetResponse](#) today!

1ShoppingCart (a.k.a. Kick Start Cart, Auto Web Business)

- * What I like best about this system is that it's a **completely modular on line business system**, that provides list management, autoresponders and ezines, a shopping cart with credit card processing, on line delivery of your digital products (such as PDF e-books, courses or music in MP3 format, etc.) and an affiliate program.
- * You can start with just an auto-responder and ezine list management package, and add the shopping cart, and affiliates at a later date.
- * **1ShoppingCart** is also more friendly towards purchased leads, through various co-registration services, such as [Glen Hopkins's ListBuilder](#).
- * The system supports split-testing (to see which landing page or ad converts better, for example) and ad tracking, and so many other great features. It's really no wonder that most big-name internet marketers use it.

Recommended for: new and established e-marketers who want a completely integrated turn-key system which includes a variety of tools and features all under one roof.

Conclusion

With monthly fees for these services ranging from \$15 to \$29, and a wide variety of features and capabilities, one of these service providers should fit both your budget and your requirements. Defining your requirements before you go shopping for an Email Service Provider will save you time and aggravation in the long run.

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