15 Ways You May Be Missing Opportunities to Build Your Brand

Chances are that your business has a logo, or at least an awesome name for which you are working to gain recognition every chance you get. You may already be promoting your business in obvious places like store signage, business cards or print ads, but there are numerous other fun and unique ways you can help build credibility, recognition and a connection with your desired customers:

1. **Online Presence**: Establish an online presence for your business that is in line with your brand. Whether it is a website or social media account, it is important that your business can be found online. Today, the first place most people look for a product or service is the Internet. Think about what customers will type in a search box to look for a product or service like yours and then try it yourself. Did your business come up? If not, this is a great place to start to build your brand. For tips, read: [How to Sync Your Website and Social Media Efforts](#)

2. **Mobile Presence**: If you already have a great website, is it mobile? According to We Are Social’s new *“Digital, Social and Mobile in 2015 report,”* mobile’s share of global Web traffic leapt 39 percent since January 2014, with one-third of all webpages served to mobile phones. Small businesses that either don’t have a mobile-friendly site, or don’t have a website at all, are essentially invisible when it comes to being found by customers who primarily use mobile devices to search for goods and services, especially locally. To learn more, read: [Mobilegeddon: Good for small business?](#)

3. **Branded Email**: A business-branded email (e.g., yourname@yourbusiness.com) shows the world your company is established and professional, whereas a generic email, like yourbusiness@freeemailaddress.com may project inexperience – or even worse, raise doubts about whether you’re a real company. Moreover, by using branded email, every time you send an email it promotes your business. Read: [Three Ways to Set Up Your Branded Email Address](#) and [Five Reasons to Brand Your Email](#)

4. **Register Domain Names**: The first step for many businesses is to register one or more domain names to represent their brand. Registering longer and more descriptive domain names (which conveniently make up the majority of available domain names) that include keywords, location information and/or memorable phrases is advantageous because many Internet users simply type search terms into a browser to find what they are looking for. Businesses can take advantage of this by thinking of keywords their customers might use to find their business and register a combination of those keywords as domain names. Leveraging multiple domain names can provide additional marketing opportunities and also aids in protecting your brand online as you won’t risk a competitor registering your name, or that a name won’t be available when you want to register it. Read: [How Registering Multiple Domain Names Can Help Your Business](#).

5. **Phone Calls**: Make sure that the people who answer your business phone answer it professionally and courteously, and name your business in the same way every time. It’s also important that your after-hours message shares your business name, location, hours and Web address, so customers can look up information about your business even when you are not open.

6. **Employee Apparel**: Outfit your staff in shirts, jackets and other clothing that features your brand colors and/or your logo and Web address. This reinforces your branding and makes it easy for customers to identify employees. It’s also smart to wear logoed apparel to events and trade shows to extend your brand beyond your four walls.

7. **Customer Apparel**: Make t-shirts, jackets, bandannas or other types of branded apparel available for customers to purchase. Better yet, give it away. Each customer wearing your branded apparel becomes a walking, talking billboard for your business. That’s free advertising worth the cost of a t-shirt.

8. **Business Cards**: You may already have business cards, but whether you do or don’t, make sure that any future cards you create are emblazoned with your logo, tag line, Web address and contact information. Consider using double-sided cards with a customer loyalty coupon on the back so people will hold on to it.

9. **Business Forms**: Make sure your logo, contact information and Web address appear on business forms like invoices, packing slips, receipts, etc. It looks more professional and can serve as a reminder for customers to visit your store again.
10. **Promotional Giveaways**: What is your brand known for, or what do you want it to be known for? For example, if you sell wine, consider giving away branded wine keys to your customers with your company logo and Web address. No matter what your business focuses on, everyone needs to stay hydrated and most people can’t function without coffee. Logoed items like mugs and water bottles as thank-yous or giveaways will get used and remind customers of your business with every sip.

11. **Make a Video**: If you own a smartphone, you can make a simple video at a very low cost and then share the video with your social media networks or on your website. Video is the most popular type of online content today. The trick is to create a video that is useful, interesting and in line with your brand. Read: 5 Ways Small Business Can Use Video in Unexpected and Effective Ways.

12. **Generate Creative Content**: Many small business owners have created a niche and loyal following for themselves by creating and sharing content via blogs and articles. It helps to set them apart from their competition by positioning them as experts in their field. The trick is to think of topics or experiences you can speak about in unique ways to gain the attention of customers. Watch a video about how realtor Doug Francis used content marketing to stand out among 13,000 competitors.

13. **Stationery**: Letterhead, envelopes and mailing labels are easy vehicles for conveying your brand and sharing your Web address. It’s also a great way to stand out by adding something special to your customers’ purchases. For example, Zulily adds a thank you card to each purchase that is branded with the company logo and Web address. Showing appreciation often results in loyal customers.

14. **Email Marketing**: Build an email list by asking customers for their email addresses at the checkout line or on your website and social media sites. This is a great way to ensure constant communication with them about information such as promotions and discounts, or events. The key is to send professional looking and sounding emails infrequently enough to not be annoying, but enough to stay top-of-mind. There are many reasonably priced email marketing services that can be leveraged to make the email marketing process easier and can help ensure that you comply with all applicable laws. Read: Tips for Leveraging Email Marketing for more information.

15. **Presentation Templates**: If your team uses a program like Microsoft® PowerPoint® to create and deliver presentations to clients, prospects or even internal groups, make sure every slide deck starts with the same basic template — one that uses your brand’s colors, logo and Web address somewhere on each slide. This brands the expertise and information contained within as yours, and ensures that you’ll be represented on every slide.

Before going out and investing a bunch of time and money into any of these suggestions, it is important to ask a few questions to make sure you invest in the right promotional opportunities.

1. Who is your target audience? How old are they, what do they like to do? The answers to these questions will help you understand which promotional activities will appeal most to them.

2. What is a realistic budget for marketing your business? This will help you prioritize promotional opportunities to get the biggest bang for your buck. Free and inexpensive activities like social media and websites can be a cost effective way to reach a broad audience.

3. How can you measure the effectiveness of your promotional efforts? This will help you determine which activities you should keep doing, or invest more or less into.

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