Marketing Tools

In the last two columns I have been commenting on the process of taking your good idea (your new business) to the market place. This can be daunting, so I suggested that you break it down into some key marketing tools to help you successfully brand and promote your business. I gave a list of some of those “must have” suggestions for your marketing tool kit: A brand identity, An elevator pitch, Promotional tools, A social network, and An experienced mentor.

**Promotional Tools:** After you’ve identified who you are and what you do, you’ll need a variety of marketing tools to reinforce your brand identity and give your prospective customers something tangible to remember you by. Here are some ideas that can play a vital role in promoting your business:

- **Business logo:** Start with a professional logo – this will serve as the foundation for your brand’s style. Creating a logo is essential to branding your business because it will be positioned everywhere throughout your company, including your business cards, envelopes, websites and packaging. For more established businesses, think about if your existing logo represents your business today. If it doesn’t, you may need to consider refreshing it.

- **Business cards:** A business card is often the first thing a prospective customer or client sees, so making a strong initial impression is crucial. Make sure to include the following information: Name, Phone number, Company name, Website, Business logo Social media profiles, Email address and Physical address (if applicable). While the front of the card should be all about your business, the prime real estate on the back can be utilized as appointment or loyalty cards. Depending on your industry, eye-catching designs and colors might also go a long way towards leaving an enduring impression.

- **Professional website:** A professional website is a must-have for any business. Think about it – if you’re looking to purchase something, the first thing you’re likely to do is check online to see where it’s available and at what price. If your business isn’t online, potential customers will have a
much harder time finding you. Also, having a website with search-engine-optimized (SEO) content – key phrases that match what your customers are typing into search engines – is critical to ensuring your business’s online visibility.

In these few ideas I have focused on you getting your business into the minds of your potential clients. But, let me close with this question: Does your small business have a social media presence? Although it may seem intimidating, social media can provide many benefits, including direct customer interaction, word-of-mouth marketing and customer service. We will look at that next week.

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Dean L. Swanson
Southeast Minnesota SCORE
c/o Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce
220 South Broadway, Suite 100
Rochester, MN 55904
www.seminnesota.score.org/
*Dean is a volunteer SCORE Mentor and District Director of SCORE Minnesota