

"Promoting Your Business on CD"

By Kenny Love

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Subtext: Instead of traditionally distributing your business's sales info by sending it on paper via postal mail, revolutionize and upgrade your promotion by letting prospects now 'hear' and 'see' your business.

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In the Music industry, whenever most independent musicians release a new recording today, a certain aspect of their promotion entails their distribution and giveaway of FREE samples of their music on a separate promotional compact disc. This serves as a 'teaser' in enticing prospects to then go to record stores to buy the full-length recording.p

As 'writeable' promo discs can be purchased inexpensively at stores such as Wal-Mart, after which the music samples are copied from the hard drive to the CD, or by using what is known as a CD burner (high-speed duplicator), it should come as no surprise that even the most financially challenged musicians are now embracing this invaluable and well proven promotional aspect for bringing immediate attention to their music.p

And, as this method has proven unanimously beneficial in terms of ease of finance, promotion and time, there is absolutely no reason that a similar process cannot also work for your own business, albeit, a few elements properly customized (be sure your computer's compact disc is a "writeable" type, and not simply a "readable" one).p

As such, I am providing a "from start to finish" outline that you should find very effective, almost immediately, whether you wish to reach out to your prospects locally, regionally or nationally.p

Hypothetically, let's say you are in the field of Cosmetology, and own and operate a hair salon. Though your industry has a ready-made market, with women repeatedly visiting on a regular basis, naturally, there is also a fair degree of competition from other salons in your area as well.p

And, as such, you've noticed that your business sales and clients, have either begun to level off, stagnate or, possibly, even diminish. What can you quickly do to maintain and increase your clientele and, accordingly, your salon's income?p

1. Why not take all of the elements of your business, such as your weekly specials, information about your salon such as its history, your web site address, email address, regular prices, business hours, contact information, along with the various products and services you offer, then format them into attractive files and place them on compact discs for distribution?

Your prospects are certain to be pleasantly surprised with this new out-of-the-norm promotion method and anxious to see what surprise awaits them on the CD.

2. Next, consider all the businesses women might patronize, such as women's shoe stores, women's clothing stores, jewelry stores, supermarkets, mall stores, cosmetic stores, etc. Your goal is to consider businesses that are complementary to your own services, yet, are not in competition in any way.

3. Now, contact the store managers and/or owners, informing them that you are a fellow local business owner, and request to know if they will consider handing out your CD of information to their customers and/or clients who have computers and, hopefully, have Internet service. You might even request to enter into a barter agreement with these businesses, whereby, you distribute their sales information as well.

While all contacts you make might not be receptive to this idea, undeniably, you will acquire more than a few who will be interested, if for no other reason than the opportunities to offer their customers a little something extra and/or the to get their own business information into the hands of new prospects as well.

4. Also, be sure to not only consider distributing your CDs hand-to-hand on your own, always having them available on your person ready to hand out, but also having them available at your salon to give to your existing and new customers.

5. Another avenue, is to consider doing a local or regional mail-out campaign. You could simply call them up via telephone and attempt to qualify them by simply asking if they own a computer and, if so, that you would like to send them a CD of info regarding your hair salon and its services.

6. If your budget allows, yet, another method is to contact an area print publication that specifically targets women and request if you can pay to have your CD attached to one of their issues, or included as an insert.

7. To backtrack for a moment, be sure that your web site contains a form readily viewable on it so that when prospects with online service access your site, your form can readily capture their email address, as well as their mailing address.

This is vital information that you need in order to provide your customers with any updates to your products, services, prices or any other changes that might occur. And, speaking of the provision of updates, you should also consider starting a newsletter for this purpose as well if you have not yet done so.

Again, you also want to be sure your CD contains as much vital information for people who don't have online access although, practically anyone with a computer these days, also has access.

This aspect of promotion could serve to either offset and eliminate any print, radio or television advertisement costs you currently have, or serve to complement them. Your overall production costs (bulk rate price and time spent copying files)

on the compact disc will probably be between \$.30 and \$.40 per unit.p

If you distribute, say, 1000 info CDs at a cost of \$400, and gain merely 10% (100) new customers, I believe you will find that the \$400 will be a very wise and worthwhile investment, not to mention that you can continue and/or repeat the process as often as you wished.p

And, if you happen to reside in a small rural area, you could also experience great results by simply distributing your CD information county-wide, or regionally.p

Again, this promotional analogy is applicable to, virtually, any business. Further examples include:p

1. Auto dealerships working with car parts suppliers, or vice versa.p

2. Lawn services working with lawn mower repair shops, or vice versa.p

3. How about photography services including their CD of info in their yearly school/student packages?p

4. Even in an agricultural community, feed stores could include a CD of their info in farmers' purchases.p

5. Why not even go a couple of steps farther by placing audio files or, perhaps, even video files on the CD as well?p

Your audio could include your voiceover giving a welcome to the prospect at the beginning, and also serve as a direction to the various business elements on your disc. Likewise, your video could integrate animated video for an even more pleasing experience for your prospective client.p

As I stated previously, virtually, everyone, in all areas of your community has a computer and/or the availability of online access through friends, relatives, area schools, libraries, etc. And, the creativity of any part of the promotional CD is only limited by your imagination.p

So, why not truly give some serious thought to bringing the marketing and promotion of your business into the 21st Century? At the very least, your promotion via CD should certainly get you noticed far above your area competition.p

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Editor's Note: Kenny Love is a business marketer, promoter and also authors inexpensive handbooks on unique but highly-profitable businesses that many people are unaware of, or simply overlook. His web site is located at <http://www.kennylove.net> .p

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