

10 Tips for Growing Your Business the Organized Way

By Maria Gracia

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Growing a business is similar to tending a vegetable garden. Knowledge, careful planning, organized systems, use of proper tools, continuous care, and dedication give you the very best chance of producing a beautiful and abundant garden that brings forth fresh veggies for years to come.

The same is true when it comes to growing your business. By following a specific sequence of steps, just like growing a garden, you can succeed. Neither can be accomplished with a haphazard approach.

Discovering how other businesses are growing, thinking through your marketing strategy, taking an organized approach, using the proper tools to get the word out and focusing on achievement will help you reach your business goals and set you on the right path towards accomplishing your greatest success.

1. PROSPECTING

For most services and products, it is imperative to first generate qualified prospects. Only then do you work on converting those prospects into first-time buyers, repeat customers, and finally, life-time customers. If you're trying to generate an immediate sale, chances are, you're going to be disappointed with the results. You will make most of your sales by following up with your prospects repeatedly.

2. WHAT IS A PROSPECT?

A person is a prospect only if they:

a) have a genuine interest in the particular service or product you provide

AND

b) have responded to one of your offers

AND

c) they have provided you with contact information (name, e-mail, etc.)

AND

d) they have the authority to buy your service/product and can afford it.

Everyone else is a stranger. Not a prospect.

3. TARGET

You can't try to market to everybody. When you do, you're marketing to nobody. Pick a niche market and focus on your main audience. Target them in all of your marketing materials.

4. OFFERS

To get people to respond to your marketing, develop an enticing offer and get it in front of as many people in your target market as you can. Perhaps, a free tips report, free e-zine, or free sample. The best offers are generally the FREE offers.

5. GETTING THE WORD OUT

There are a multitude of ways to get the word out about your offer. You can try traditional marketing, such as direct mail, press releases, networking, ads, etc. Or, you can use the Internet, such as online networking, joining in discussion forums, submitting to search engines, link exchanges, affiliate programs and so on.

Whatever you choose, schedule time each day to market your business. Write it on your calendar. When it's written down, it is more concrete, and there is a better chance that you will do it.

5. FOLLOW-UP

Once you begin to generate prospects, it is imperative that you get their contact information (i.e., name, e-mail address, and any other pertinent information) into an organized database. Why all the work? Because follow-up is the key to successful marketing. Once you have contact information, you can continue to make enticing offers for

your product and/or service (discounts, gift certificates, 2 for 1 deals, etc.)

7. ONE SERVICE/PRODUCT

Choose ONE product or service to market at a time, or you're liable to confuse your prospects. You can have more than one product listed on your website. However, when you contact your prospects, it's best to focus on one product at a time.

8. GUARANTEE

Guarantee your products or services. Offer, at minimum, a 100% Money-Back Guarantee. When it is clear that you stand behind your services/products, you will have accomplished a trust-factor. This is called risk-reversal.

9. PROACTIVE

Don't use the Passive Marketing technique. That's when you distribute general information, verbal and written, about your company, and then just sit around waiting for the phone to ring, or for your e-mail inbox to fill up with orders. In the real world, it doesn't work that way. You have to be proactive.

10. TRACK

Track. Track. Track. I can't say this enough. Keeping accurate numbers will help you make good marketing decisions. If you don't know what's working, you're going to waste a lot of time and money. However, if you do know exactly what's working for you, you're practically guaranteed to reach your goals.

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