

No Marketing Budget? No problem!

By Will Dylan

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5 Marketing Tips for a \$100 Budget

So you've got a great business idea, and you've spent some time setting up a basic website to tell the world about it. Good for you, but the idea is only half the battle. Communicating your idea to the masses through marketing is the key to driving traffic to your site and generating business for you. If you're like many new or small businesses on the Internet you either don't have a big marketing budget or you are not willing to invest too much in your new idea until you see some results.

How do you get started? If you don't market your site, nobody will visit it. If nobody visits, sales will be zero. And if sales are zero, the idea will die. Here are 5 tips to get your on-line venture up and running:

Start Making Headlines: Is your new product or service an interesting one? If so, a publisher somewhere in the world will probably agree and will be willing to write a news article about your new website launch. There are thousands of publications out there, both on-line and off-line, that are looking for news stories to pass on to their readers. If you've just invented a new type of model airplane, search the Internet to find websites that are part of the Model Airplane hobbyist community. Prepare a small news release or write the website editor a quick e-mail to invite them to visit your site. If they like what they see, they will probably feature your new idea in an upcoming article on their website or magazine and they will likely include your website address. Now readers of the publication can find you online, resulting in highly targeted free traffic for your business. COST – \$0

Write your own Article: If you can't get anyone's attention for your new idea, then write your own article. Since your site is all about model airplanes, you are an expert on the topic. Those same publications I mentioned above who are looking for news items are also looking for expert opinion articles and advice for their readers. So write a 500-word article on a current issue in the model airplane community. Then find websites that publish articles on the topic of model airplanes and send them your article along with a request to publish it and your URL if they find the article useful. (At the end of your article, type a few lines about your business, just as I have at the bottom of this article. This is called a resource box, and it is included with your article whenever it is published on another website or in an e-zine). COST - \$0

Ask for a Review : If you don't have a new idea, and you aren't much of a writer, then ask for a

review of your product or service from an established website or e-zine. Reviews are regularly published both on-line and off-line as a way for editors to keep their readers up to date on new product or service offerings in their industry. By requesting a review, you are opening the door to some very good publicity if the review is favorable. However, there is some risk. An unfavorable review may hurt your reputation, and once you ask for a review you can't control the opinion of the editor. COST - \$0

Google AdWords : To generate fast traffic, look to Google's "AdWords" program. Their AdWords program allows you to quickly buy an ad that appears on Google when certain keywords are typed in, such as "Model Airplane". The price of the ad is determined by the popularity of the keyword you are targeting. Broad terms like "Hobbies" will be more expensive than more specific terms such as "Model Airplanes" or "American Coin Collecting".

The key feature of Google is the speed with which your ad can appear online. Once you have signed up, written your two-line ad, and selected your keywords, your ad will start running within minutes. You also have the option of setting a maximum daily budget that will limit your daily expenses. For new websites, set your daily budget to \$10.00. In the first 5 days of your ad, you should get a good idea of what type of results you are getting from this service. COST \$50

Ezine Advertising : Ezines are electronic magazines (hence the name "e"zine). There are ezines for just about every topic imaginable. Most ezines will accept advertising from businesses just like yours. The key to ezine advertising is that your message is being sent to a highly targeted market. Rather than place an ad for \$100 in a publication that deals with hobbies, you could place a \$50 ad in an ezine that deals specifically with model airplanes. By narrowing your target audience down to only those who are most likely to be interested in your message, you increase the potential for business as a result of your ad. COST – up to \$50

Even with a budget as low as \$100, you can make an impact on-line by using a combination of low cost promotion and highly targeted advertising. If one of these 5 tips pays off and results in business, you can re-invest that revenue into further promotion and advertising, leading to a snowball effect that eventually will turn your \$100 budget into a powerful on-line marketing force.

Will Dylan is the Author of "Small Business Big Marketing" a powerful e-book for small businesses available through his website www.marketingyoursmallbusiness.com . Will also offers article and news release writing services.

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