

Marketing

Marketing hinges on creating awareness and demand for your business so you can:

- Retain existing customers.
- Encourage customers to switch from a competitor.
- Create new demand from customers who haven't thought about buying from you before.

Advertising and promoting is one aspect of marketing that creates awareness and demand. Other aspects are having a great website, helping out in the community, being environmentally responsible, having a recognisable brand, and developing a core competitive advantage. Placing an advert in the local paper is not marketing. You need to consider who you are targeting, what you are selling, who you are competing against, what your key benefit is, your price point, and the most logical way to get in front of your targets before you even think about placing that advert. Marketing is also getting more and more complicated as technology creates the 'hyper connected' customer who is online seemingly 24/7.

The first thing you should do is complete the range of free [online training modules on marketing](#), which will help you create an overall strategy for your business. Then, check out the information relating to the [Internet](#), and look at [new markets and customers](#).

[Plan your marketing](#)

Marketing is most effective if it is planned well in advance, and suited to market conditions and the products and services you offer.

[Market your point of difference](#)

Finding an edge over your competitors is a critical part of being in business. You need to show your customers how your product or service is different. Here are three strategies most businesses use to build and market their competitive advantage.

[Avoid common marketing mistakes](#)

There can be a lot of effort involved in promoting your business. And, you'll need to win customers if you want your business to do well. Learn the 10 most common marketing mistakes and tips for developing effective marketing strategies.

[Advertising](#)

Advertising can be an key promotion activity for your business. It is important that you understand how to advertise effectively to get the most value for money.

[Market research](#)

A successful business need a good understanding of its customers and marketplaces.

[Delivering great customer service](#)

One of the most compelling ways that businesses can differentiate themselves in the marketplace is to offer outstanding customer service. Find out how to deliver great customer service, the benefits of doing so, and the dangers if a customer leaves disappointed.

[An introduction to public relations](#)

PR can be a highly cost-effective way of promoting your business. Find out how to market your business effectively with public relations.

[Using PR effectively](#)

Effective public relations builds your reputation with customers and other important stakeholders.

[How to encourage word of mouth](#)

A referral from a satisfied customer is the most cost effective marketing you can get. A good marketing campaign combined with great customer service will create positive word of mouth. Here's six ways to keep your customers singing your praises.

[Encouraging repeat clientele](#)

How do you make yourself stand out in today's market? Find out how some businesses have gained their point of difference over competitors.

[Making an effective sales call](#)

Making a successful sales pitch is one of the most important skills a business owner will need to master. Follow these eight simple steps to help make your sale a success.

[Tips when pitching for business](#)

How effective is your pitching style? Make sure your proposals are accepted by following these simple tips on how to sway the customer's decision your way, and hints on how to sell the best option to your customer.

[Protecting your brand](#)

Is your brand protected? Brand protection is a critical area of any marketing strategy. It's as much about developing a distinct product or design as it is about stopping your competitors from using them. Here are five points to consider when you're planning, protecting and developing your brand.

[Assess the health of your marketing](#)

Interactive tool to help you gauge the performance of your marketing efforts.

[Assess the health of your product or service](#)

Use our handy tool to gauge the health of your product or service offering.

[Building customer loyalty](#)

Find out why customer loyalty matters and how to increase the loyalty of your customers.

[Getting started with direct marketing](#)

Direct marketing is a good option for small businesses because you can target your market, making it a cost-effective and efficient marketing option.

[Email marketing](#)

Email marketing is a form of direct marketing that uses email to communicate with existing and potential customers.

[Creating a customer database](#)

A customer database contains information on your customers that you can use to improve your relationship with them and, ultimately, increase your profits.

[Selecting gifts for your customers](#)

This article offers some useful tips to bear in mind when choosing gifts for your customers.

[Driving traffic with email newsletters](#)

Strategies and tips to improve your email newsletter performance.

[Maximising seasonal sales](#)

This article outlines steps you can take in both busy and lean periods to improve your overall business performance.