

Growing Your Business in a Slow Economy

It amazes me how many people I talk to will complain about the economy today “business is slow” and think the answer is to spend less. The first thing they cut back on is the most important: marketing.

You must think about the dynamics of recession. If fewer people are buying, you have to work harder to get your share of prospects. Hiding your business until the bad news is over doesn't work. While you're doing that, all your potential clients will be doing business with someone else. When hard economic times start affecting your bottom line, the worst thing you can do is to cut your marketing budget. If you must pare your budget, find other areas to cut – and later, you won't have to work twice as hard to catch up with the competition.

Sometimes the dual pressures of running a business while facing too many marketing options can make us want to turn to a simple and fast solution: “put it all in one basket.” An action like this is usually counter-productive. Diversifying and, if possible, increasing your ad budget are your best choices to ensure the success of your marketing plan. Most advertisers' sales representatives will try to convince you otherwise, urging you to focus your advertising – with their product, of course; but putting your entire budget into one medium at a time will not get you the best return on your investment. Since your customers access a diverse sampling of the media, you must diversify with them! Find the media combination that works the best for you: referrals, direct mail, tradeshow, newspaper insets, print, e-mail, web, and others.

At ADG Printing, we utilize a combination of these marketing tools to reach our prospects 6-8 times during a campaign, which ultimately provides us with good results. With the economy at a crawl, our business is steady, but we still had to increase our marketing budget twofold. We are committed to enduring this time and we are also committed to letting our clients know they can count on us: continued market visibility is a proven way to achieve this. You must remember, in order to get the results you hope for from any ad campaign, consistency is the key.

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The old adage that the worst type of advertising is no advertising is still true. If you want to succeed, you must market your products or services. No matter what your marketing budget may be, there are many different types you can take advantage of. Here are just a few proven techniques that combine low cost with good results:

Word of Mouth: A referral from an established client is still one of the most powerful forms of advertising. Research shows that happy

customers will bring in new ones: advertising without spending a penny. Go the extra mile for your clientele; in return, they will spread the word about your wonderful products or services. Work hard towards building a long-term relationship – the result is loyalty and return business. Sending personalized promotions and coupons will show them you value their business. Don't forget the obvious: ask for referrals of their family and friends.

Online: Most businesses today have web presence. However, to direct traffic to your website, you have to let people know it exists. The use of online display ads or pay-per-click ads has opened a wide opportunity for small businesses. Search engines like Google can place your ads right alongside the competition to give consumers choices.

Traditional: Many companies achieve the best results by combining online and traditional marketing techniques. For example, you can use such local advertising as direct mail or print ads to drive potential customers to your website. You'll save money by using fewer words while building awareness. This great and proven combination will result in increased traffic and better adaptation to your online store.

Ultimately, spending your budget on a combination of ad campaigns can assure you greater success and better interaction with the public. Start small by combining a special promotion that will run both in print and online at the same time. You can keep track of the success of each method by using coupon codes to see which form best suits your company. The best marketing strategies take advantage of all the different types of advertising to create brand awareness.

Are time and money keeping you from growing your business and your revenue? Independent professionals and small businesses use our budget-conscious solutions for their marketing needs. "It's like having our own in-house design and marketing department without the high cost." – Greg Perry of John L. Scott Real Estate.

To create more success for your company's future, you must know the methods of effective communication to win over new prospects and retain established clients. We offer a free one-hour marketing consultation. Please call or stop by any time.

ADG Printing is in the top 100 USPS Authorized Mailing Houses in WA, we are located in Lynnwood. We received 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place Awards in Mitsubishi's nationwide printing competition.

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