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Holiday Season Marketing



It goes without saying that it is time to wish all of you the very happiest of holidays for 2015. We're entering the period of year-end holidays where families, friends and colleagues gather together in celebration. Our hearts are a little lighter - and more inclusive.

We are all a little bit happier. We are a little more generous than the rest of the year, and treat each other better. Feasts are prepared, treasured family recipes are pulled out, decorations are hung and gift shopping marathons begin. It is the time of year to remember

those who are not able to do all of those exciting things, mentioned above. Supporting those less fortunate than ourselves should be a year round habit, but at this time of year, it is a must.

With the holiday greetings shared, we small business owners still need to get up, go to work and continue our business between all of the festivities. What has your company planned for marketing during this chaotic, yet highly profitable season? Retailers make a high percentage of their yearly sales this time of year. Many companies, large and small, enter that 'use it or lose it' part of their annual budget. If budget allocations are not spent, it's unlikely those funds will be available for the coming year. 'Spend it now' becomes more urgent as the days pass quickly toward year's end.

What have you planned for your small business as a part of this annual economic boom? Sales, special offers and discounts can help draw customers into your store or showroom. Holiday gatherings for customers can pull them into a party atmosphere where they can celebrate with you and do a bit of shopping while they are there.

The same can be said for online holiday and year end marketing and advertising. For those with retail shops, have you ordered in specialized seasonal gift items and used as many of your marketing and advertising channels as possible? Let customers know that you have some special items available that would be perfect for gifts. Do some extra direct mailings or email marketing pieces. Tell customers how much they mean to you and to the success of your business.



This is the perfect time of year to consider unique, new ways to get the word out to your target market. You should use your social media pages to get directly to your customers. Feature one or two unique items on your Facebook page with a link to your website for more details and deals.

Offer something that is totally unrelated to a sale; a gift. Send your favorite holiday recipe to your newsletter readers - a favorite cookie recipe, a recipe for readers who need gluten-free or peanut-free dishes, or a special holiday beverage. Don't forget you *can* include a link back to your website where a special deal will be highlighted when they link for that recipe. *"While you're enjoying this awesome beverage in front of your fireplace, stop by our website to check out our holiday (or year-end) specials."* With or without the link, it's a free gift.

Social media is about being social and developing strong relationships with prospects and customers. It's about bolstering that Know-Like-Trust part of your business relationship. Put your creative hat on and brainstorm a list of unique ways to attract customers who are in their once a year holiday spending mode.

If yours is a service industry company, you might appeal to your clients with a deal to purchase something for themselves. Put together a package or deal that features your company's products. You can offer a free webinar, a white paper or an e-book to move them in your direction for 2016. Try offering a free 15-20 minute person-to-person phone call to talk about their most pressing problem. Follow up with a limited time, special offer for a package that allows 'sampling' one of your services. Selling a small 'sample' can lead to their purchasing more of your services in 2016. If you've written a book, offer a limited time discount, or a discount for ordering multiple copies (autographed, of course).

Everyone knows how hectic the period between Thanksgiving and New Years Eve can be - then nothing. It's like someone shut off the tap, stopping the flow of water. Consider offers that you can deliver after the New Year settles in. January can be a pretty boring month. Right after everyone goes on their 'gift return' and 'gift card spending' trek, toasts in the New Year and watches the Big Ball Drop in Times Square, what is there to do? Parties are over. Decorations are taken down, boxed up and stored away for next year. The world comes to a screeching halt in terms of holiday festivities and celebrations. Ho-hum time has arrived.



Plan something exciting to do that involves your customers. How about a 'We Made It Through the Holidays!' gathering in your shop or showroom after work some evening in January or February? Make your annual inventory sale an event people will want to visit. Nothing left to sell? How about hosting an educational program for customers? If you don't have a store, use your social media platforms, your blog or an online webinar about something related to 2016. Dream up something unique that no one else is doing to

create buzz about your company and its products.

Don't let the year end sneak up on your business either. Be sure to get your financial books finalized to be closed on schedule. Be sure your strategies for 2016 are laid out and ready to go so you can hit the ground running in January. Hopefully you planned for the ideas noted above earlier in the year, but don't think it's too late to do something strategic to leverage your company's offerings during the holiday season. In today's Internet and technology world, small businesses can make big marketing and advertising miracles happen much more quickly than ever before.

All the best to you and yours during this Holiday Season!

OUR HOLIDAY GIFT TO YOU -- We've been making some changes to our web site recently. A new [Resources page](#) has been added. You will find free articles to download, a book list of some of the books I've used to build my own business. Archived copies of all of our 'Designing Strategies' newsletters are available there too. Yet to come are a number of different tips, cheat sheets and checklists for those building a small business. Things are a bit 'dusty' at our website during our reconstruction, but come on by today and look for information that will help you address one of your own issues.

***Visualize -- Analyze -- Strategize
Your Company's Path to Success***

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