

# **Marketing Strategies That Can FLOOD**

**Your Business With Customers  
No Matter What Condition  
The Economy Is In**

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# Four Hot Marketing Strategies That Can Flood Your Business With Customers, No Matter What Condition The Economy Is In

The bottom line of all businesses is to make a profit. That's why a business exists in the first place. It sounds nice for someone to say that the reason they're in business is to help other people, or to provide some needed service, but in the end the real bottom line is that the business owner wants and needs to realize a profit on his or her investment.

Profits are what drive businesses and allow them to provide more goods and services, create more jobs and expand the economy. Profits are what allow the philanthropist to continue giving and providing relief and humanitarian service to others.

There are many factors that affect profits, not the least of which is customers purchasing goods and services provided by the business. Without customers making purchases, there simply would not be a business.

If a business expects to remain in business for any length of time, or to grow, the business owner must master the skill of getting customers to do business with them.

That includes new customers... those with whom they have never done business before; current or existing customers... those

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who patronize the business regularly; and past customers...those who have done business before, but may have taken their business elsewhere.

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The process of getting people to do business with you is called “marketing.” Unfortunately for many businesses, this process, as critical as it is to the success of the business, is one of the tools business owner’s least understand.

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Marketing... *effective* marketing... the kind that produces inquiries about your offer, ads customers and increases your profits, is not just a matter of placing a couple of ads in the newspaper or sending out some mailings.

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And it’s not creating a beautiful brochure that describes the company, the president and the products and services offered by your business.

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Results-producing marketing... the kind you want for your business... is a combined and coordinated effort of a number of factors.

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But what about the economy? Doesn’t that have something to do with how a business approaches marketing?

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It certainly does, there’s no question about it. The economy, and how it’s performing, does have a real impact on businesses and how they should approach their marketing efforts. And here’s where a lot of businesses get in trouble.

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When the economy is down, most businesses stop, or drastically slow down their marketing efforts.

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Then, without new customers coming on board, existing customers making repeat or additional purchases, and past customers returning, the company’s business drops off even further.

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Fewer customers making purchases automatically translates into less profits. Less profits, of course, means less available funds

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for marketing, and before you know it, a vicious cycle develops with a downward trend.

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When times are tough, is not the time to cut back on your marketing efforts. Sure other businesses do it. But people still have the need or the want for your products and services.

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So, when other businesses are cutting back, that's the ideal time for you to forge ahead, and increase your marketing efforts. It's the one time you will have the least competition for your customer's attention.

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On the other hand, when times are good... when the economy is booming, good marketing... effective marketing can blow the socks off your competition.

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Why?

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Because your competition doesn't understand the difference between the marketing they've always used, and high-impact marketing that's accountable and that produces results. And if they keep on doing the kind of marketing they've always done, and you move on to more effective types of marketing, they don't stand a chance.

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Marketing can consist of many forms. Some involve money, some involve personnel and some involve a certain commitment of time. Some work well in good economic times, and others work better in a down economy.

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Here are four good, useable marketing efforts that work well in any economic climate. These strategies can be put to work in your business today, and help move your business forward regardless of the economy or your available financial resources.

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## Marketing Strategy #1

**“Do what you do so well, that when others see you do it, they want to see you do it again, and will bring others to see you do it.”**

That quote comes from Walt Disney. It was the strategy he used for marketing Disneyland, and he said it could apply to any business, regardless of what that business sold or offered.

Broken down to its individual components, it means this:

**“Do what you do....”** That’s what *you* do... not what anyone else does. It’s important that you do the things you (or your business) does the best. While it’s okay to emulate other successful businesses and copy some of the traits that made them successful, you should adopt those traits, add your own personality and adapt them to your business.

Do what you do... **“so well....”** That means excellence...not mediocrity. If you’re going to do something in business, do it with excellence. No longer is it possible to maintain...long-term, a competitive advantage because of your product or the price you charge. We live in a “me-too” world, where your customers can buy the same or very similar products to what you offer from any number of other suppliers for the same or less money. You must do what you do very well.

**“...when others see you do it....”** “Others” means your customers...the people who buy your products and/or services. When they see you do what you do (or buy what you sell, or deal with your company)... they,

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*“...want to see you do it again...”* We call that, “repeat business.” Your offer was so good, or the way you dealt with your customers was so unique, that they want to come back for more... to see you do it again. Not only that, but they will...

*“...bring others to see you do it.”* That’s called “referral business.” When your customers like what you do and bring others to experience it, that business costs you nothing in hard marketing costs. It’s a result of word-of-mouth. It’s a personal endorsement of your products or services from a satisfied user. That’s the sincerest form of flattery, and the best form of advertising you can get.

You’re not trying to “meet” your customer’s expectations... you want to “exceed” them... to give them more than what they expected. Similar products and services can all be expected to perform in similar fashion. But when it comes to the attention, care and service we receive, we all have our perceptions of what “good” means.

Keep in your mind a balance scale. On one side of the scale mentally put the dollar amount you charge for your products and services.

On the other side of the scale, Make sure that the “service” of the scale always outweighs the “price” side. Be sure you always give more service than the customer perceives they should be getting from their transaction with you.

Here are a few questions to ask yourself that will help you determine how well you’re doing:

- Do I offer the best quality product or service I possibly can?
- What can I do to improve it?
- What is the best benefit to my customers that each of my products or services have to offer?
- How can I better convey that to my customers?





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underlying layers of skepticism they bring to the relationship and establish the trust level they need to say “Okay” to your offer.

People don’t like to be the first to do anything... especially if it involves parting with their hard-earned money. And, they don’t like to be manipulated. The sales world is full of hype and promotion, and oftentimes, false and misleading promotion.

If your customer or prospect can see that others have done what they are being asked to do, or that others are currently doing it, they tend to feel more safe, and will be more likely to participate. But you first have to relieve any nervousness they may have of being “taken.”

Testimonials are not difficult to get. One of the most effective ways is to send users of your products or services a questionnaire or evaluation form that asks for their feedback on how they’ve benefited from using the product or service.

The questions should be in “open-ended” form, and ask for them to write their *feelings* about their experience with your product or the service they received from you, and not just for “yes” or “no” answers.

Another effective method is to call your clients on the telephone and record the conversation (with their permission, of course).

Then you can transcribe the parts you want to use, and send a copy to them for their approval and authorization.

Often, after a brief warm up conversation, people will forget the tape is running, open up and give you all kinds of good, useable information that can be edited for use as a testimonial.

Using testimonials is one of the most effective ways you can eliminate fear, increase the believability and credibility of your offer, and add to the number of sales or inquiries to your advertisements or promotions. Whatever you do, don’t overlook this important and valuable tool!

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## Marketing Strategy #3

### **Build a database of current, past and prospective customers and keep in touch on a regular basis.**

Who are your current customers? Do you know? How do you know? Do you have a record that shows who they are, what products or services they regularly purchase, what their last purchase was, when it was, and how often they make purchases from you?

How do you know that the person you consider to be a “current” customer isn’t, in fact, a “past” customer? When was the last time he or she bought from you? Have they sent any referrals to you lately? If so, who? If not, why not? Have they taken their business down the street to a competitor? If so, to whom? And why?

What about your prospective customers? Do you know who they are? Have you developed an “Ideal Customer Profile” that accurately describes who your best customers are so you’ll know whom to target with your marketing efforts? Do you have a list of them? Do you know how to reach them? Are you reaching them on a regular basis?

The answers to these questions can give you valuable information that can blast your business to never before dreamed of heights.

By knowing exactly whom you have dealt with in the past, who you currently deal with, and who you would like to deal with in the

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future can dramatically change your business, your profits and your bottom line.

If you're not currently using a computer to keep track of these and other categories of customers, you should be. This database can be the starting point of unbelievable profits!

Targeting your marketing efforts to the right people can make or break your entire advertising or marketing campaign. And if you're a small business, you can't afford to have that happen too many times. It'll drive you right out of business!

Keeping in touch with your customers...past, current and prospective, is one of the best marketing tools you can employ. It doesn't have to be "hard-sell." It can be as simple as any of the following examples:

- Send birthday cards to your clients.
- Send postcards on the anniversary date of their first purchase with you.
- Send a questionnaire asking for their evaluation of the product or service they purchased, or feedback on how it could be made better.
- Send an informational newsletter on a regular basis.
- Involve your customers in a contest or promotion... perhaps a referral generating promotion.
- Sponsor client luncheons with guest speakers that address subjects of interest to your clients. Have them bring a friend.
- Send announcements of "preferred customer" sales or events by special invitation. Include an invitation for someone who is not one of your current customers.

Make your current customers feel special.

Make your past customers feel missed





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With institutional ads, you have no way of knowing how effective your ads are because you have no way of measuring how many people respond to them.

So, you have no way of calculating the actual cost of the ad. That's not good.

On the other hand, because direct-response ads require a person to take a specific action, they have an automatic built-in method of measurement, and you can measure whether or not it is profitable to run that ad again, or if it needs to be changed to be more effective.

Direct-response ads can be integrated effectively into the marketing efforts of nearly any business, and can take the form of mail order, newspapers, magazines, radio, TV and telemarketing.

Each of the components of a direct-response ad can be measured and tested separately so you can determine which combination of headline, opening statement, body copy, offer, guarantee, etc. works best.

Here are three simple, but not conclusive guidelines that can help you get the most from your direct-response ads:

- Create an attention-getting, emotional-based, benefit-oriented headline.
- Start small and test each component separately. Only increase the size of the ad gradually as you determine which combinations work the best.
- Offer a free gift for responding. Make sure the offer has a highly perceived value to the reader, listener or viewer. Consider things such as special reports, free tapes, booklets, introductory seminars or initial consultations.

Remember that the only reason you ever run an ad... any type of ad, is to evoke an immediate and qualified response from your customers or prospects.

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You want and need this feedback, and you need it now, not six months from now. How else are you going to know if you should continue running this particular ad, or if you should change some component of it?

You're in business to make a profit, not just to tell others about your wonderful products. Your ads have to work. They *must* work. They must produce results that can be translated into dollars.

That's the entire reason you run them. That's the entire reason you're in business.

Change your advertising efforts from a cost into an investment... a *profitable* investment with a measurable return, by changing all your advertising and promotional efforts to direct-response. It can add significantly to your bottom line, and will be one of the best moves you can make.

## Conclusion

Marketing... effective marketing doesn't have to be difficult to be productive. But it must be done. If you fail to market, or if you market ineffectively, you can't expect to remain in business very long, let alone grow your business.

With the tremendous increases in technology, and labor and materials availability, more and more businesses are finding it difficult to maintain any type of competitive advantage because of their products or prices. For your business to prosper and grow, you need to aggressively engage in effective marketing practices.

If the products and services you offer to your customers and prospects are really worthy of their hard-earned money... if they really will provide a benefit to them... then you, as a business owner, owe it to yourself, your employees, your suppliers and your customers to learn as much as you can about the marketing strategies that work in today's competitive business environment.

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You then have an obligation to see that as many people as possible take advantage of the wonderful benefits your products and services can provide for them.

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And, you have an obligation to do it as cost-effectively as possible so more people can afford them and so your business can remain in business to serve even more people.

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Now you've learned four strategies that can be implemented immediately and help you get on the road to making your business more successful and profitable.

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Study them. Tailor them to fit your operation. Then apply them. They won't do you or anyone else any good unless you put them to work.

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Finally, learn all you can about results-producing, lead-generation marketing. Become a student. Apply the concepts and strategies to your business, and watch it grow!

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If, for some reason you don't have the time or desire to learn the latest marketing techniques, don't just drop the ball. Your business and your customers are too important.

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Make sure you find a qualified consultant that can help you analyze your business, decide which strategies will work best for you, then set in motion a systematic plan that will help you skyrocket your business to the next level.

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These four strategies will start you on your way. Apply them in your business, and your competition won't stand a chance!

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