

Marketing in a Recession? YES!

Is the current tough market the right time to be slashing your advertising budget? Not if you want your business to survive the economic downturn and lay the groundwork to thrive when the economy improves! Tough times may actually provide us our best opportunity to reach out to our customers with little or no competition because so many of our competitors are doing just the opposite of that in an attempt to save money.

During good times everyone has the money (and bravery) to seek out clients, creating an atmosphere of extreme competition where reaching the consumer with your message proves to be exceedingly difficult. NOW is the time to have faith in your product or service, to reach out to your customers and to secure your success now and into the future. And there are easy and cost effective ways of doing so.

There are some simple things that you can do. Everyone knows about the internet, but not everyone knows the free ways to get exposure on the internet. You can write an article about your industry, or a product, and submit it to one of the many sites that accept them. At the end of your article, you mention your business and have a link to your website. Each site has it's guidelines on how the articles are to be written, so make sure to follow them. This will help establish you as a leader in your industry as long as the information you share is helpful and not self-promoting.

Guerilla marketing is great in slow time. Have some flyers or postcards made. One of your employees or friends can design it or you can find an affordable place to do it for you. During your slow time, have your employees go to a busy area and hand them out. Now you are putting your message directly into the hands of prospective customers. Make sure you have an attractive offer that will entice people to visit your business. Obviously, this is mainly for businesses with a store front, but you can do guerilla marketing online as well.

Guerilla marketing is done differently online. With blogs and social networking sites, there are opportunities to market your business in a different setting. You can create blogs and check the response you get from each entry, which can help you, check what the market is interested in at any given time. Or you can find blogs that have an issue that your company can help with. Respond to the blog with your company information. You can set up an account with a social networking site, giving more information about your business and connecting to other businesses to network and exchanges leads.

Cross promote with other businesses, in other ways. If you're feeling the pinch of the economy, most likely other businesses in your area/industry are feeling it as well. Find other businesses that don't compete with yours and see about exchanging some flyers or a banner promoting each other's business. Or if your business is online, do a link exchange with other businesses. Do not over do the link exchange or Google may lower your organic search results. Be selective in who you work with both online and in the brick and mortar world.

Press Releases can be a very effective way to bring attention to your business. If you have something that impacts the community, then you can have someone write a press release for you. If you hire someone to do it for you, make sure they know how to write and distribute it. Again, remember the topic must be something that impacts the community and not just a self-serving piece promoting your business.

These are just some of the ideas that will help your business grow in any economy. There are plenty of marketing options out there. You just need to find the ones that work for you.

About the Author: *Rob Bedell is an expert in the media industry and has worked in the industry for over 15 years. He has worked with some of the largest media companies in the world, Tribune and Knight-Ridder, as well as helping restructure and rebuild other companies in the Los Angeles, CA Metropolitan area. He now owns a marketing company that helps small to medium sized business, making sure that their marketing pays them back. www.bedellmediaconsulting.com.*