

50 Low and No-Cost Creative Marketing Ideas for Your Small Business

By Stephanie Treasure BS, MBA

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About the Author



Stephanie Treasure is a marketing consultant and founder and publisher of The Jamaica Real Estate Guide and JaRealEstateGuide.com as well as several other niche sites. She graduated from the City University of New York with a B.S. in Marketing and earned her M.B.A. in Marketing Management from St. John's University in New York with honours. She has utilised online marketing and social media marketing tools to leverage visibility of the Jamaica Real Estate Guide brand, form key partnerships and build a top 10 website in prominent search engines. Stephanie has used her experience with online marketing media to help other consultants and small businesses build and leverage their online presence to grow their business and clientele.

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1. ABM (Always Be Marketing) Engage in at least 1 marketing activity EVERY day
2. Get business cards made and carry them with you all day, every day
3. Join a few email lists related to your industry, keep up on trends and best practices.
4. Learn to barter or form alliances; offer discounts to members of certain clubs/professional groups/organizations in exchange for promotions in their publications. You can also engage in cross promotions with alliances. Bartering is NOT dead!
5. Offer quick pay, cash or continuity discounts.
6. Publish an email newsletter for clients and prospects, send out weekly or bi-weekly with helpful tips and link them to your services.
7. Create and print a brochure of your services. Print small quantities at a time as budget allows.
8. When handing out business cards – which you should do on a regular basis – hand out two at a time, one to keep and one to pass along.
9. Create a flyer to give to clients and prospects.
10. Include "testimonials" from customers in your literature, on you website, in your newsletter and in your presentations or proposals.
11. Create a "signature file" to be used on all your e-mail messages. It should contain contact details, including your Web site address, and key information about your company that will make the reader want to contact you. Every email you send will be a promotional tool for your business.
12. Print a slogan and/or one-sentence description of your business on letterhead, fax cover sheets and invoices.
13. Create a slogan that promotes the **results** you can offer clients or prospects as opposed to a slogan promoting the **service** you offer. Think in terms of solutions to your target clients needs.
14. Develop your own Web site. (I can help you do that at a very reasonable cost.)
15. Announce free or special offers in your direct response pieces like direct mail, broadcast fax, email newsletter messages. Include the offer in the beginning of the message and also on the outside of the envelope for direct mail. Make it stand out by being creative.
16. Write a column for the newspaper, business magazine or industry publication, so that people begin to view you as an expert in your industry.
17. Contribute articles to Jamaican websites, blogs or email newsletters.

18. Write and submit articles to online article directories like EzineArticles.com, GoArticles.com, iSnare.com
19. Send timely and newsworthy press releases as often as needed to the local newspapers and Jamaican online press release distribution services. [JamaicaPressRelease.com & Caribbeanpressreleases.com]
20. Appear on a radio or TV Morning Show.
21. Submit 'Tip' or 'Advice' articles to newspapers.
22. Create a Press Kit.
23. Start a [YouTube channel](#) and make videos with tips appealing to your target market.
24. Start a [Facebook Fan Page](#) Invite your friends, update daily with tip of the day, link to your website or motivational quotes.
25. Create a [Twitter](#) Profile and follow advice for point #24 (I can help with creating all social profiles, synching and automating them to keep them current and keeping your followers engaged).
26. Return all phone calls promptly!
27. Create a professional voicemail message for your business phone and if you are not able to answer and talk business, let the call go to voicemail and return the call promptly.
28. Set up an email auto responder system to capture prospect's contact information and answer certain inquiries quickly, efficiently and professionally.
29. Spice up your voicemail greeting with a 'tip of the week' related to your industry.
30. Create a special area on your website for your customers.
31. Join the Small Business Association and get involved. Also, publicize your membership on your website, bio and business cards.
32. Obtain a memorable website and email address and publicize on all your marketing materials.
33. Promote your business jointly with other small businesses via email newsletters.
34. Create and distribute promotional items such as pens, pencils, pocket calendars or mouse pads.
35. Consider a bumper sticker or car poster pointing to your website with your company name and tagline.
36. Place classified ads for a specific time period or at intervals throughout the year.
37. Advertise on popular Jamaican websites that reach your target market.

38. Advertise on [Facebook](#)
39. Advertise through [Google Adwords](#)
40. Secure a booth at a fair or trade show attended or geared towards your target market.
41. Teach a class or seminar at a university or continuing studies adult education center.
42. Donate your product or service to a charity auction.
43. Write a 'how-to' brochure/pamphlet and distribute as a flyer.
44. Write an e-report or e-book and give away as a freebie on your website via your email auto responder system to build your prospect and contact list (something like the one you're reading).
45. Start every day with phone calls to at least 2 new prospects.
46. Create and post regularly to a blog sharing your views on industry practices, general tips, etc. Position yourself as an expert in your industry. [Tip: The same content can be used in your email newsletter or vice versa – Repurpose your content!]
47. Make it easy for customers to deliver packages to you. If you work from home and live outside of the corporate area, build a relationship with a local courier and ask them to receive or collect items for you. You can arrange to pay them per package or establish an account.
48. Informally recruit an extended sales force by giving your brochures and/or business cards to your banker, lawyer, accountant, Doctor, printer, suppliers, etc. You get the idea.
49. Don't spend money ad hoc on advertising. Make a budget or profit and loss statement for your business and allot a line item for advertising based on projected revenue. Revisit every quarter.
50. Get a yellow pages listing.

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51. Get a memorable phone number like 946-SOLD or something like that. This will not work for everyone, it depends on your business.
52. Host an information session at your place of business or secure a small conference room. Collect attendees contact information and promote your business or service.
53. Photocopy interesting article and send to your clients with a handwritten note. The faster, electronic alternative: send an email with a link to the article online.
54. Conduct client surveys and ask what you can do to serve them better. Let your prospects in on the results and show how you have improved your offering going forward.

55. Last, but not least [on my soapbox]: Just because you have a small business, does not mean you have to play small. That means:

- Do not tell your clients that ‘I work for myself, it’s just me alone’ or ‘I’m just a one-man show’ in every other sentence.
- Set up your voicemail with a professional greeting and don’t answer from the bus or in a noisy area.
- If you don’t have a fax machine and cannot afford one, arrange with a colleague or friend to receive your faxes. Or better yet, investigate an online fax service which allows you to receive faxes via email.
- Set boundaries with clients, even if you are desperate for business, you have to draw the line in the sand. It’s not worth it to sell yourself short.
- Be on time for meetings!