



Ten Unique Ways To Find New Business

Hello everybody and thank you for coming to our October Lunch & Learn Seminar. The subject of this Lunch & Learn is called “Ten Unique Ways to Find New Business”. The objective for this Lunch & Learn is to share ten new ideas regarding how to find new business and provide you with examples where appropriate. Before we began, “are there any questions”?

Okay now before we start I want to read a quote that I believe is perfect for this audience.

A mind is like a parachute. It does not really start working until you open it.

I feel this is an appropriate quote since many of these ideas will be new to you. The important thing each of you has to do is put these ideas in the context of your current business practices to determine if they will have a positive impact on your business.

Okay let's begin.

Idea #1 Contracts recently won press releases.

Companies frequently announce when they win a large contract. Contracts typically mean growth for these companies and contracts are often for extended periods. Also, press releases will always have contact information either at the beginning or at the end of it. So first, ask yourself what the company does and determine whether it is a good target for your product and service. Then, ask yourself what the company will need in order to perform the services stated in the contract. By taking the time to really examine what products or services this company will need in order to satisfy the contract, provides you with an opportunity to establish a relationship and sell your product or service. A good place to find current press releases is on the Internet. Two sites that specialize in press releases are www.businesswire.com and www.prnewswire.com. Another way to find businesses that won large contracts is doing research on government websites. A few good one's are www.onvia.com www.fedmarket.com www.bidnet.com

Idea #2 Attend Tradeshow Expositions.

In the past six months, how many of you have attended at least one tradeshow? More than likely, when most people think of trade shows, they usually think of themselves as either in a booth trying to make sales or as an attendee because the tradeshow is directly related to their industry. Well how about this; attend a tradeshow, any tradeshow with the sole purpose of networking with business owners and decision makers without actually soliciting business. For example, I recently attended a tradeshow for tow truck operators. The people sponsoring the tradeshow were companies that do business with tow truck companies, and the people attending the event were mostly tow truck owners and managers. My reason for attending was simply to network with as many decision makers as possible without actually soliciting for business unless expressly asked. Mostly I collected brochures and business cards and passed out business cards when appropriate. I also bought the tradeshow directory, which provided me with another resource of companies and decision makers. My favorite tradeshows are the food shows. At these food shows, vendors from all over the country are trying to sell everything from desserts, snack foods, wines, pastas and other exciting foods. The people attending are restaurant owners, gift professionals, retail storeowners and managers. I spend all day networking with the attendee's while at the same time sampling great tasting food. Now the best way to keep track of tradeshows coming to the area is by using a website called www.tsnn.com. This site lists every single tradeshow throughout the world. Simply do a search of all tradeshows being held in your city, county or state. You will be shocked at how many shows are held. I cannot stress enough how effective this type of event can be. Make this part of your marketing strategy.

Idea #3, Local Development Projects

A new development may be a housing community, shopping complex or office park. Often these projects are announced in the local newspaper in an effort to attract tenants. From my experience, the best way to take advantage of these opportunities is to be aware of new construction projects and keep a record of them. For example, say you see a new apartment complex or a new strip mall being built. Stop and try to find

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out when construction is suppose to be completed. Keep a journal or track it with Outlook or some other type of contact software program. When that project is finished, be sure to make sure your product or service is known within this new spending cluster. You can distribute flyers, visit them in person or use direct mail. Once you start using this strategy you will find yourself being very much aware of every type of construction project you see. Some obvious sales opportunities are printing, cleaning, delivery, landscaping, moving, insurance, storage and service repair. In Sacramento a great place to locate development projects is at www.saccounty.net/planning

Idea#4, New Business Listings

In every major city or county, there are several newspapers that publish new business listings. You can also go downtown and purchase the new business listings. I prefer to purchase either one or several of these papers. They do the same job as purchasing a list without the cost. If you sell a product or service to business owners, then this is an excellent resource. Another good idea is to simply contact the newspaper and see if they sell a mailing list. Many aggressive newspaper companies will sell a list at a very low cost. One example of a small newspaper that does this is www.sacgazette.com.

Idea #5, Birth, Engagement & Wedding Announcements

You can find these events in the local paper. As you know in every city there is at least one or two dominant newspaper. These papers are extremely valuable for locating business leads. The reason birth, engagement and wedding announcements are great business leads is because anytime a life-changing event happens in our lives, we need to spend money. Just think about it, a new baby means new opportunities for insurance, financial planning, day-care, and delivery services. Engagement and wedding announcements means real estate, insurance, financial planning and travel. It

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also means big-ticket items such as appliances, cars and furniture will be bought. The thing to do here is contact them by direct mail. I would send them a very nice greeting card congratulating them on the birth, engagement or wedding. Then in the same card I would include a personal letter expressing my desire to help them with whatever your product or service happens to be.

Idea #6, Association Lists Published on Websites

Before we began talking about idea number 6, I must warn you. 30 minutes of research may turn into 2 hours of research in the blink of an eye. It never fails. I tell myself I am going to locate the membership directory for one specific association and I end up spending hours researching several organizations. Now that I have officially warned you, let's begin. For every industry, there is an association. For every special interest group, there is an organization or association. By visiting the websites to these associations, you will find its members listed. Now let me warn you. If I were to pick 10 associations out of a hat, at least half of them will not list its members online for everybody to see. Or, they are listed, but hidden within the site, and you have to become a treasure hunter to find the information. The thing you have to do is decide what industry you want to target, develop a list of people to reach, and then develop a strong strategy aimed at getting the response you're seeking. To get you started, here are a few websites that do list its members information online.

www.marketingsource.com/associations/state/ca

www.calautobody.com

www.nari.org

Idea #7, Hoover's Online

Hoover's Online offers free access to its database of both public and private companies. Its basic profile is called a capsule and gives you a quick overview of what the company does, contact details and the names of key people. You can search by name and industry. This is a very quick way to find decision makers of larger companies. If a major part of your business entails doing business nationwide with large companies, then investing in a Hoover's subscription will worth it. However, Hoover's does not list small businesses.



Idea #8, SBA Opportunities

The Small Business Administration offers online access to business opportunities. If you are a small business, you may promote your products or services with the SBA. They also have contracting opportunities that are just right for small businesses. I also strongly suggest everyone make contact with the SBA office closest to your business location and personally get to know them. The person in charge at the Sacramento office is Gilda Perez. She's the economic development specialist and her number is 916-930-3707. The website is www.sba.gov.

Idea #9, Networking Groups

Networking groups are an excellent way to grow your business. These groups meet usually once a week and their overall goal is to do business with group members and to receive referrals from each other. Finding the right networking group is a lot like finding a good friend. Some you will like a little and some you will like a whole lot. If you're not part of a networking group, I encourage you to seek out several and go to a few meetings. The one that feels right, become a member and stick with it.

Idea #10, Attend Association Meetings

In idea number 6 I talked about using the Internet to find decision makers. In this idea, I am going to talk about attending these association meetings. No, I am not talking about associations that relate to your industry, rather I am speaking about associations that have nothing to do with your industry. For example, one of my target markets is real estate agents. I make it a point to attend some of their meetings or functions. Now at these events, my goal is not to make a sale, but to simply put a face to my company name. I also make sure to gather as many business cards as possible, but again my number one goal is to introduce myself and establish a rapport with as many people as possible. So in your case, simply identify a market you want to target. Then find out

who the director or chairperson of the association is. Call them and explain that you would like to attend a meeting and discuss possible membership. You also want to ask them if they allow guests 2 or 3 minutes to introduce themselves and if you can handout information. Based on how receptive the person is, you may be allowed to do all these things, or none of these things. Again, your goal is not to make a sale at these meetings, rather you want them to learn about you and how you can be of help to them.