



Chip's Low-Cost Sales & Marketing Ideas

1. **Exceed Expectations** – 80% of your business comes from 20% of your customers. Pamper them with exceptional customer service. Call them by name. Look them in the eye. Meet their needs. Solve their problems *speedily*.
2. **Generate Word of Mouth Referrals** – Don't be shy about asking for written and oral testimonials. An unhappy customer will complain about you to nine people; a satisfied one will tell just one other person. What are you waiting for?
3. **Build Your Network (and cut your ad budget)**. Meet your prospects in person and establish a relationship before making a sale. Join a committee or professional association. Write a blog or organize a meetup. Choose to be sure and steady in your activities and *not* controversial.
4. **Use Business and Social Networking** – Create your own Facebook or MySpace page, join Linked In, post a video on YouTube. Don't know how? Ask your kids.
5. **Create an Online Relationship with Customers** – Design a Constant Contact template, and communicate regularly by e-mail. Offer information, help and special deals
6. **Add Interactivity to your Web Site** – Encourage a dialogue with your customers. Give visitors a reason to come back often. Update your home page regularly with news, offers and sign-ups. For the best search engine return, select key words that people will use to find you. Harvest e-mail addresses constantly.
7. **Host an Open House** - Give prospects a reason to come to your door. Sponsor a Chamber after-hours party or ice cream social. Invite someone special as a draw. Don't depend on others to get a crowd; work the phones.
8. **Use Free Media** – Make business news by making something special happen. Give an award. Run a contest. Salute your umpteenth customer. Write a brief news release; e-mail it to community newspapers, radio stations and web sites. When writing a release, make it genuinely newsworthy not an advertisement.
9. **FREE-FREE-FREE - DISCOUNT-DISCOUNT-DISCOUNT** – Remember, the first sale is the first step toward the second sale. People expect special pricing and free tryouts. Post special offers online; include them in mailings. Surprise a customer with an unexpected bonus.
10. **Dress Up Your Communications** – Make your message stand out from the rest. Use fun graphics, snappy slogans and special colors. When sending mail, hand-write addresses and use special stamps instead of a meter strip.