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Title:
The power of the underestimated: Word-of-mouth Marketing

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832

Summary:
Word-of-mouth marketing is rarely the focus of a new businessperson seeking to gain more clients. Everyone wants to start an affiliate program or pay someone far too much to "manage their add campaign".

However, many of the biggest businesses choose to use word of mouth marketing instead of a pricey campaign. Google (gmail) and Amazon are two prime examples that I will explain later.

Keywords:
Marketing, Word of mouth, Online Marketing,

Article Body:
Word-of-mouth marketing is rarely the focus of a new businessperson seeking to gain more clients. Everyone wants to start an affiliate program or pay someone far too much to "manage their add campaign".

However, many of the biggest businesses choose to use word of mouth marketing instead of a pricey campaign. Google (gmail) and Amazon are two prime examples that I will explain later.

Expensive research has taught these companies that people believe their friends more than they believe billboards or commercials and so it has been proven to be one of the best marketing methods around.

Word of mouth is probably both the most successful kind of advertising and the most profitable. People naturally talk to each other and spread ideas, names and opinions. This article aims to show you how to use this to your advantage, how to make money from word of mouth.

1. Business Cards

There are many places online where you can order large quantities of business cards. If you use them to introduce yourself with people who aren't already friends and family then you are already spreading your businesses name.

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It may feel contrived and a little cheesy but it works. Few people rip up business cards. They usually end up deposited on a kitchen table ready to be picked up when someone who runs your kind of business is needed.

Also, they bring your business into conversation. You don't need to promote it, just give them the card and you are increasing your brand recognition.

2. Tell-A-Friend Scripts

Online you often see on the side of websites a link called "tell a friend". This makes it so much easier to tell a friend about a website and therefore far more people do.

BY adding one of these links to the side of your website you are immediately increasing your ability to market though word of mouth. You are making your website word-of-mouth friendly and so you are likely to be talked about more, become better known and make more money.

A free "tell a friend" script can be found here:

http://www.javascriptkit.com/script/script2/tellafriend.shtml

All you have to do is copy and paste the script from that site somewhere in your websites html. Maybe at the bottom of the page. Try and pick somewhere near the rest of your links so that it isn't ignored. There we have it! Instantly better marketing.

3) Invite a Friend Offers

This is a strategy that many of the most profitable websites with the best marketing strategies online have used and I am about to explain it to you for free.

All you do is that you offer a discount for every person who invites a certain number of friends to your website. This is a bit like an affiliate program only you pay them with a discount that does not affect your profits much rather than actual money.

This however is harder to set up. If your website runs a "membership" sign-in system then it will be easy to just get your web engineer to add this script.

If however you plan to run a more basic website set-up (like me) then this still

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is fairly easy. When you are setting up your shopping cart software (if you read my guide on it then you will be using the free one offered by Paypal) then just customize it to allow "comments" while ordering.

Tell people that if 5 people "comment" or mention their name and email address while ordering products then you will give them a 40% discount on their next purchase. This will form an incentive for people to use word of mouth to grow your business and thereby increase your customer base and potential profits.

4) Email, bulletin board and other signatures

Whenever you write anything online, sign it with your website address if you have one. This includes emails.

A prime example of how this has worked for one company is hotmail. At the end of every hotmail email it advertises the free service that they provide and so they had to do less marketing because word of mouth gave them free advertising.

5) Buzz

Buzz is the modern term for when you do something exciting, edgy or different and people begin to talk about it - a lot.

While it is very difficult to tell you how to create a buzz for your product or website, I can tell you that you always need to be thinking out of the box.

Again, many very large and profitable businesses use this technique simply by doing something strange as seen in Burger King's "Subservient Chicken" campaign. To promote their new chicken sandwiches they created a website with a man in a chicken suit that would obey the commands that you typed. This was unusual, unique and interesting and so created "Buzz."

I wouldn't recommend doing things like that all of the time but when you are thinking of how to grow your business it is definitely something worth considering.