

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### Page 2

Ideas to increase brand awareness for your small business.

### Page 3

How to identify social media influencers – for FREE!

### Page 4

Relationship Selling – How to get and keep customers.



“  
*The most successful entrepreneurs I know are optimistic. It's a part of the job description.*

~Caterina Fake

# IDEAS TO INCREASE BRAND AWARENESS FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

## LEARN TODAY!

In yet another challenging year, you should stay vigilant about increasing brand awareness while at the same time showing appreciation to your customers. If you are on a tight budget, consider teaming up with another local business to make a big splash! Here are some ideas to get your creative juices flowing: Of course, blast your event via email, social platforms, and signage.

- Make your store look festive with balloons, posters, free snacks, and giveaways. Not a brick-and-mortar business? Place digital coupons and special offers or on your home page.
- Send a personalized email to customers urging them to drop in for specials and to support other small businesses in the community throughout the week.
- Spread the word about discounts on social media; make it easy for your network to pass along your celebratory announcement. Use the hashtag #SupportLocalBusiness to increase your chances of being seen as people search locally for sales and deals.
- Use this calendar of holidays—including fun, quirky ones—to celebrate. Consider providing entertainment to increase store traffic, including activities for children like face painting. Buy a load of used children's books from your local thrift store and set up a reading corner to keep the little ones busy while their parents shop. Enlist a family member to provide childcare for a few hours.
- If you're an online retailer, now is the time to try sites like Etsy, Shopify, Big Cartel, IndieMade, Square Online Store, and Volusion. These are free or very low-priced platforms (\$5-15 per month) with reasonable transaction fees. Also, check out this [article](#) of site reviews.
- Use Zoom or another platform to hold a live event. Introduce a new product line, hold an auction, a cooking lesson, or organize a Family Feud (or another game.) For the latter, check this [site](#).
- Raffles are a fun and easy way to engage store visitors as well as people browsing your website. A scavenger hunt is another way to entertain current and prospective customers. Here is a [guide](#).
- If you provide entertainment, ask visitors to take pictures and post them on social pages, telling their network about Small Business Week.
- Partner with a local charity, giving it a portion of your sales. Announce your partnership to the local press to get free publicity for your business. Contact local bloggers and journalists to ask for press coverage of any event you might plan.

# HOW TO IDENTIFY SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS—FOR FREE

## USE THESE FREE TOOLS!

Are you stumped on finding online influencers to promote your business? Stuck on choosing content that will resonate with your customers and prospects? First and foremost, identify your audience or niche and on which social media platforms and/or industry sites they engage. Then nail down what you ask of the blogger or author: The opportunity to contribute a guest blog on a trending topic on their site? Or better: Permission to submit a pitch to them on a topic which, as an expert in your field, you identify as on the horizon? Or is your goal to offer the blogger a free product sample for a mention? We've sorted through a list of FREE tools to identify influencers as well as trending topics. Here are the standouts and WVF recommended tactics on engagement:

- **Google Trends:** A good platform to find what topics are trending among consumers and businesses. Create an editorial calendar, so you are not scrabbling to write content for your weekly (or more frequent) engagement. Start a conversation on social media or create your own blog, including helpful advice, intriguing questions, and an invitation to comment.
- **Hyper Auditor:** This is an Instagram tool that ranks bloggers by the amount of engagement they earn. It provides their username, main topic of influence, number of followers, and demographics. With this data, you can identify the influencers engaging with your target audience.
- **Discoverly:** If you have a contact who already has a connection with an influencer in your niche, then, by all means, ask to be introduced. Sounds too simple, right? You should always leverage who you know.
- **Tweetdeck:** This tool can help identify influencers by showing how many lists a blogger appears on—an good indicator of how influential he or she is in that community.
- **Social Crawllytics:** If you're looking for trending content and want to scoop out how your competitors are engaging with their audience, this is a great site to include in your outreach plan. It gives you 2,500 credits to use to find details on top authors, including the number of shares they've accumulated—another good indicator of their influence.
- **AllTop:** Mix up your toolbox with this interesting site which is created by actual people, not just an algorithm. It organizes blog posts by niche, making it easy to identify the topics your audience is currently interested in.
- **Klout:** Don't dismiss this tool as one that only follows celebrities. It scores influencers on a scale of 1-100, so a celebrity will likely rate a 90+. However, anyone with a 63+ rating is considered to be in the top 5% on the influencer scale. Depending on the uniqueness of your offer and your persuasiveness, you may garner the interest of someone with clout.
- **Hunter.io:** We like this one because it actually provides email addresses of active bloggers who might be willing to help in your brand awareness campaign. You can conduct 100 free searches per month.

# RELATIONSHIP SELLING: HOW TO GET AND KEEP CUSTOMERS

## THREE BENEFITS FROM RELATIONSHIP SELLING!



At its core, relationship selling is creating a connection with your customers or prospects, based on trust and a genuine desire to help them. And it's not just for B2B entrepreneurs or those selling high-ticket products with long sales cycles. All entrepreneurs can benefit greatly from listening and responding to customers' challenges and needs.

The art of successful relationship selling is based on honing the important skill of active listening. You should focus your undivided attention on what your customer or prospect is telling you—not formulating your pitch, defending your price, selling your features, or bashing the competition.

Instead, create value by positioning yourself as the go-to vendor, backed by

your expertise, empathy and eagerness to provide a solution to his or her problem. By actively listening, you will be attuned to a prospect's readiness to buy and plan your next level of engagement: Is it time to close the sale, negotiate terms or prices, offer a sample or trial period, or discuss customization of your product?

On the digital front, here are three ways to benefit from relationship selling...

1. Find where your customers and prospects hang out on social media. Join groups on the social media platforms relevant to your business. Listen to the conversations; then join in with helpful, informed comments as you start to make the connection between your expertise and your brand.
2. Participating on social media can often lead to uncovering outside interests of people—beyond the group description. What can you add to the conversation, especially if these interests match your own? Be authentic and start posting on the additional topics you uncover.
3. Build your own content library (articles, videos, photos, podcasts, etc.) which allows you to offer even more expert advice. And don't forget to include links to expert advisors and social media influencers in your efforts to provide the best knowledge bank for site visitors—your future customers.