

It's Okay To Promote Yourself – In Fact, It's Necessary. Here's How To Do It Better



Here's what to do if you aren't a natural marketer.

If you ever heard the expression “Pride goeth before a fall” or you were ever scolded by a teacher or a parent for “thinking too much of yourself,” chances are promotion of yourself and your business is a challenge for you.

There's a problem with that: You can't grow a business if no one knows about you.

“Nice” people don't brag. “Nice” people don't boast. “Nice” people don't talk about their successes, their industry standing, their awards or what they and their company can do to make the prospect's life that much better. After all, who wants to be seen as arrogant?

One of the worst adages wrongly applied to business is, “Good things come to those who wait.” Ba-humbug!

So you wait for the phone to ring. You wait for that handful of previous customers to tell their friends. You wait for the Magic Business Fairy to come turn your business from “barely-getting-by” into a NASDAQ listing. *Ain't gonna happen.*

A young friend started an online clothing store just two

months ago. Yesterday, she complained, “I’ve got cute stuff, a great website, a perfect shopping cart, fast shipping. I ran a one-day-only 50 percent off sale, but I didn’t even get one order!” I said, “That’s because you don’t have traffic. Get traffic, then you get sales.”

Traffic, customers, prospects and money come when you promote yourself, not by magic! Start intelligent promoting today.

If you don’t fiercely believe in your company, and share your positive message over and over and over and over again, including your own part in its quality products or service (especially if your business is still mostly you!), your sales will never get any better than they are today.

You have to get out there and shout it from the rooftops!

For example, there are millions of people on social media. If you write a blog or a book that no one is reading, it is not a “lead generator” for your business. If you have a sign and a great location but very little foot traffic, you are not marketing your business. In 2016, an astonishing 787,000 books were published in the USA, most self-published. The average sales? 117 copies in two years!

Throwing something into the world and crossing your fingers is not a marketing strategy.

Here are three real, practical, hands-on steps you can and should do today to promote yourself and your business effectively – and fast.

1. Get over it

If you want to have insecurities about whether or not it is proper or right or even holy to be a self-promoter, nurse those worries on your off hours. No fewer than 40 hours a week, pretend like you have the best product or service in the history of the human race ... and do your best to live up to

what you tout from this day forward.

Fake it 'til you make it, Baby.

2. Ditch whatever isn't working

The blogs no one is reading? Fugeddaboutit. The big fancy Sale sign in your window? Stick it in the stockroom. Going to all those dull networking breakfasts and handing out your business card? Try a toaster waffle at home next time. Stop doing what isn't working so you have time to figure out and focus on what will bring in business.

3. Figure it out fast

As Tony Robbins often says, "Success leaves clues." What are your competitors doing? If you can't afford their ad budget, then what similar thing could you do to divert just a small percentage of their revenue into your cash register?

No clue? Could you hire a marketing consultant to give you a hand – even for just a few hours? Make sure the person you hire has actually helped at least two other people achieve what you want to achieve! *When new speakers or authors hire me to help them get more speeches or sell more books, I literally force them to check out my long list of successful clients so they know I can do what I am promising.* Check the person out before you pay them (especially "social media experts"!) When you get their good advice...take it! Most people don't take the advice they get...and pay for. This is what keeps psychologists and diet book authors in business.

Not the type to do corporate espionage or won't hire a consultant? Read books! All the knowledge in the world is there. I strongly recommend [*The Ultimate Guide to Platform Building*](#), of course, but there are many other niche books on everything from Facebook marketing (so people actually read

your blogs!) to networking (my author-client Judy Robinett wrote [How to Be a Power Connector](#)) to podcasting (Stephen Woessner's [Profitable Podcasting](#) is the best I've seen so far). Decide what you want to do, what you can do easily and what matches your customer's way of finding out about businesses like yours, learn how to do it, and begin. It's really that simple.

If what you're doing now isn't working, educate yourself so you can do it right and get the best results.

It's OK that you can't afford to do everything, or don't have time, the interest or the talent. Do what you like, check if it is working, and do more of it. Or hire people to show you the best way to achieve it, or even hire someone to do it for you. There have never been so many great, easy ways to promote a business or a person! A little belt-tightening pain now could mean a huge payoff later.

Bonus step

Still feeling a little shy about self-promotion? Imagine that your business is your beloved child. You want your child to get into Harvard, right? Or to star in the school talent show? Or to ace the MCATs? Even though for most small businesses, the owner is the business, suspend your enmeshment long enough to imagine your business as separate from you. Imagine that it is someone you deeply care about and want to help. It's no longer about vanity or ego. It's about love and faith and all that good stuff. After all, whatever your business does, it's purpose is to help the world in some way, to solve a problem your customers want solved.

To keep up your spirits, start collecting testimonials today. Ask for Yelp or Amazon or OpenTable reviews, collect written testimonials, or video tape happy customers telling you how much they love your business. When you're feeling a little low, watch them or re-read them and boost yourself up again.

You're doing good in the world. You deserve to be paid for it. You deserve to share those testimonials (with permission, when appropriate) with your prospects. You earned them!

P.T. Barnum once said, "Fortune always favours the brave, and never helps a man who does not help himself." You don't have to become P.T. Barnum, although he made a heck of a lot of money by being a relentless promoter. You just have to stop doing what isn't working, summon your courage and try new things.

This article was first published on [Entrepreneur Magazine](#) on August 20, 2018 by Wendy Keller

[New Fund For Small Businesses To Be Developed](#)



Driven by the Departments of [Small Business, Science and Technology](#) and the [National Treasury](#), it was announced during the 2018 budget speech that entrepreneurs could unlock funding for their businesses through a new funding initiative.

What is the new Fund?

Minister of Small Business Development, Lindiwe Zulu, explains where the fund stands and how it will work:

“The Fund will be operational during 2018/19 financial year but the planned disbursement of the funding will be the beginning of 2019/2020 financial year.”

She says R1 billion has already been transferred to the Department of Small Business Development from the national fiscus.

“The Department of Small Business Development together with National Treasury and Department of Science and Technology are working with the [Government Technical Advisory Centre](#) (GTAC) to develop the architecture of the Fund where issues around the management of the Fund will be considered,” she explains.

Who will the Fund be for?

“The Fund is targeting high growth businesses as our research on the ecosystem shows that there is a lack of funding of enterprises that are at an ideation and early start-up phase,” Zulu explains.

Her department together with the other participating arms of government, will identify areas of collaboration across research, mentorship and training of enterprises on financial management.

“The work that is being undertaken now will assist government to decide on how the fund will operate, but the government is conscious of the economic environment and would not look at setting up a completely new structure that will add to operational costs,” she says.

Addressing parliament on the fund, the minister said the financial mandate of the fund will be informed by the exercise that is being conducted through GTAC.

“Government is looking at having this fund as a soft loan

which will provide affordable finance to small businesses and the emphasis will be more on ensuring that the Fund is sustainable rather than profit maximisation,” she explains.

How to apply for funding

Contact the following departments if you would like to access a portion of R2.1 billion:

Department of Small Business Development

- **Address:** 77 Meintjies Street, Sunnyside, Pretoria
- **Tel:** (+27) 861 843 384
- **Email:** sbdinfo@dsbd.gov.za for information on the department and its services.

Department of Science & Technology

- **Address:** DST Building (Building no. 53) (CSIR South Gate Entrance) Meiring Naude Road, Brummeria
- **Tel:** (+27) 12 843 6300
- **Email:** Isaac.Ramovha@dst.gov.za or zama.mthethwa@dst.gov.za for information and brochures about the department's scope and funding.

National Treasury (GTAC unit)

- **Address:** 40 Church Square, Pretoria
- **Tel:** (+27) 012 315 5944 or (+27) 012 315 5645
- **Email:** info@gtac.gov.za for information from the Government Technical Advisory Centre who will manage the small business fund for National Treasury.

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[SARS outlines its position on Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies](#)



The South African Revenue Service (SARS) will continue to apply normal income tax rules to cryptocurrencies and will expect affected taxpayers to declare cryptocurrency gains or losses as part of their taxable income.

In a [statement](#) released on Friday (6 April), the revenue service said that the onus is on taxpayers to declare all cryptocurrency-related taxable income in the tax year in which it is received or accrued.

Failure to do so could result in interest and penalties, it said.

“Increased attentiveness and speculation regarding the future of cryptocurrencies has prompted calls for SARS to provide direction as to how cryptocurrencies should be treated for tax purposes,” it said.

“However, as indicated in this media statement, there is an

existing tax framework that can guide SARS and affected taxpayers on the tax implications of cryptocurrencies, making a separate Interpretation Note unnecessary for now.”

Legal position

In South Africa, the word “currency” is not defined in the Income Tax Act (the Act).

Cryptocurrencies are neither official South African tender nor widely used and accepted in South Africa as a medium of payment or exchange.

As such, cryptocurrencies are not regarded by SARS as a currency for income tax purposes or Capital Gains Tax (CGT). Instead, cryptocurrencies are regarded by SARS as assets of an intangible nature, it said.

“Whilst not constituting cash, cryptocurrencies can be valued to ascertain an amount received or accrued as envisaged in the definition of “gross income” in the Act,” SARS said.

“Following normal income tax rules, income received or accrued from cryptocurrency transactions can be taxed on revenue account under “gross income.

“Alternatively such gains may be regarded as capital in nature, as spelt out in the Eighth Schedule to the Act for taxation under the CGT paradigm.

“Determination of whether an accrual or receipt is revenue or capital in nature is tested under existing jurisprudence (of which there is no shortage),” it said.

SARS said that taxpayers are also entitled to claim expenses associated with cryptocurrency accruals or receipts, provided such expenditure is incurred in the production of the

taxpayer's income and for purposes of trade.

SARS added that gains or losses in relation to cryptocurrencies can broadly be categorised with reference to three types of scenarios, each of which potentially gives rise to distinct tax consequences:

1. A cryptocurrency can be acquired through so called "mining". Mining is conducted by the verification of transactions in a computer-generated public ledger, achieved through the solving of complex computer algorithms. By verifying these transactions the "miner" is rewarded with ownership of new coins which become part of the networked ledger.

This gives rise to an immediate accrual or receipt on successful mining of the cryptocurrency. This means that until the newly acquired cryptocurrency is sold or exchanged for cash, it is held as trading stock which can subsequently be realized through either a normal cash transaction (as described in (2) or a barter transaction as described in (3) below.

2. Investors can exchange local currency for a cryptocurrency (or vice versa) by using cryptocurrency exchanges, which are essentially markets for cryptocurrencies, or through private transactions.

3. Goods or services can be exchanged for cryptocurrencies. This transaction is regarded as a barter transaction. Therefore the normal barter transaction rules apply.

Value-Added Tax (VAT)

In the 2018 annual budget review, Treasury indicated that the VAT treatment of cryptocurrencies will be reviewed.

Pending policy clarity in this regard, SARS will not require VAT registration as a vendor for purposes of the supply of cryptocurrencies.

5 ways to clamp down on the cost of your next IT project



When I was the Financial Manager of an IT services company, I worked alongside the Operations Executive and the Managing Director. We had a good, controlled financial and cost management process in place. We

were also aware of our clients' (mainly CIO's and senior IT managers) needs to do more with less.

The increasing pressure on organisations globally to generate value for key stakeholders, shareholders, customers, employees and the environment have forced senior management of divisions to look at managing costs more efficiently. Our ability to connect globally 24/7 has placed added demands and strain on organisations to shift to information technology (IT) solutions which enables agility to perform essential service processes.

However, due to the enormous costs associated with IT, never before has it been more crucial for IT Managers and Chief Information Officers to have good, controlled divisional financial and cost management processes in place. There is increased emphasis on project delivery agility, shorter delivery time for customer service needs as well as pressure

to do more with fewer resources. It is essential that due diligence is exercised in every step of the IT investment and cost management processes to ensure that the value driven ecosystem is serviced.

Furthermore, it is important that top-level executives who require IT intervention are supported by the CIO's initiatives and vice-versa. They should focus on five core issues to make sure that IT is managed effectively and efficiently.

1. Identify a clear ROLE for the IT budget

Work together. Unless senior management agrees on a clear role for IT, there will always be the potential for IT costs to spiral out of control. IT professionals are challenged with fewer resources and companies are constantly looking at cutting back costs.

2. Keep VALUE in mind

Focus IT spending where it delivers the most value. IT managers need to be able to show how their IT investment will meet the company's strategic objectives and, in turn provide a return on the IT investment. If the project goes off the rails completely, don't be afraid to close it down! It is okay for your ego to suffer in the short-term rather than for your career to suffer in the long term.

3. OUTSOURCE intelligently

Those responsible for IT at the top levels should consider renegotiating outsourcing deals to improve commercial terms. Conduct a due diligence review across the entire IT services portfolio to establish whether there is a benefits case for expanding current levels of outsourcing, shared services or offshoring agreements.

4. Take a ride on the CLOUD

Moving select IT capabilities to the cloud can save valuable monetary and people resources. In this way, it can be used to drive innovation by spending more on Research & Development,

improving productivity, optimising communications and delivering efficient customer service.

5. Audit IT

Look at the overall needs of the IT department – per computer head to avoid unnecessary license, software and hardware purchases. All applications in the organisation must be rationalised to create value and add to the strategic objectives.

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