

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.

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