

Effective Marketing Strategies

Inexpensive Tools And Techniques For Small Business Marketing

We all know marketing is important, but all too often marketing activities are deferred in favor of working on current orders. However, when your current orders are complete, you will need new orders to keep your revenue stream flowing. Conducting marketing activities on a consistent basis helps ensure your pipeline remains full and your cash stream steady. In this article, we discuss how you can use ACT! by Sage contact management software to keep your marketing efforts moving, and how ACT! can automatically convert your prospects into Sage BusinessWorks Accounting customers. We also will explain how the fast-growing Internet phenomenon of social media can be used as a low-cost, highly-effective marketing tool.

E-Marketing With ACT! by Sage

ACT! includes powerful e-marketing tools that make it easy to both attract new customers and enhance existing relationships. A simple online editor makes it easy to create eye-catching e-mail marketing messages. Then, ACT! E-marketing helps you quickly identify your most interested prospects from your results, and produce a ranked call list so you know which to reach out to first. Once leads are qualified,



you can record detailed progress notes and schedule follow-up activities. Best of all, ACT! is easy to learn and use, so you can quickly become productive.

Automatically Convert Prospects To Customers

When you make a sale, it is easy to convert your ACT! prospect to a Sage BusinessWorks customer. An interface

allows you to map customer fields to the equivalent ACT! Contact data fields for data transfer and synchronization. Bidirectional data transfer ensures both databases are up to date. You even can allow your sales and customer service staff access to Sage BusinessWorks accounting information, such as customer order and quote entry, directly from within ACT!.

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Social Media Marketing

Social media—online communities where people exchange ideas, offer opinions, and stay connected with friends—is growing rapidly. Leveraging this important tool is not just smart, but is quickly becoming essential. With a successful social marketing strategy, you can expect to increase traffic to your Web site, locate new clients, establish strategic alliances, and attract media attention.

Many have the idea that social media is only for the young. In fact, according to statistics published by iStrategyLabs in July 2009, the 55+ age group is the most rapidly growing segment on Facebook, and the largest segment of users is the 34-54 age group. According to Facebook's published statistics, there are more than 5.3 billion fans of the more than 700,000 businesses that have active Facebook Pages. Through the effective use of social media, the Obama campaign was able to collect 13 million e-mail addresses, which then became contacts in their contact management system to be used for soliciting additional support.

Social marketing is particularly useful for small businesses because it can net spectacular results for very little cost. For example, a wedding photographer was able to generate over \$60,000 in business by spending just \$300 on Facebook ads that targeted women with a relationship status of *engaged* in their profiles. With these statistics, there is little doubt that there is a huge potential for developing your business through social media.

Getting Started With Social Media

The number of social media sites and methods can be confusing. A good place to start is with Facebook. From there you can expand into other social media

such as Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. As a business, you start by creating a Facebook Page, as opposed to a Profile used by individuals. Creating a Facebook Page allows businesses to collect Fans.

The personality of your Facebook Page should enhance the brand image of your Web site and other marketing efforts. "The pages that are most successful are the ones that really replicate the personality of the business," said Tim Kendall, the director of monetization at Facebook.

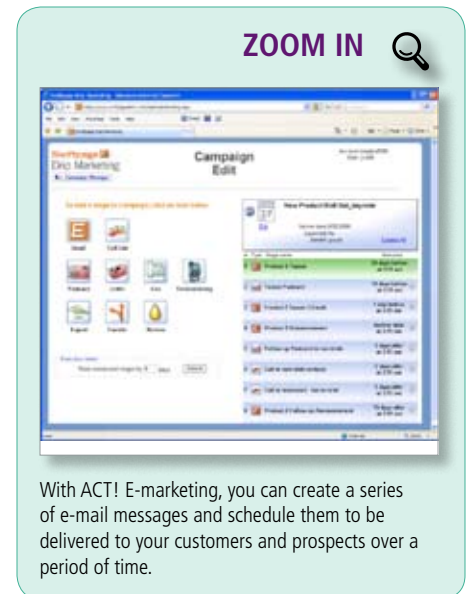
You can link your Facebook Page to your company's Web site. Ask friends and family to become fans of your business so you have a respectable crowd of supporters when you debut your page with customers.

When you are ready, invite customers to become fans. You can use ACT! E-marketing to invite customers to your Facebook Page. Then, engage your fans by posting comments on their pages and encourage them to pass the word about your fan page and company. Keep content fresh. Tell fans about specials and events, and regularly add photos, comments, and other useful information.

Because Facebook members complete profiles with information such as hometown, employer, interests, and education, it is a tailor-made tool for targeted marketing. You can create an inexpensive Facebook ad, and as you do so add demographic criteria and keywords and see how many Facebook users fall into your target audience. When the responses come flowing in, you will be ready to handle them with ACT! by Sage contact management.

Relationships are at the heart of a successful social marketing strategy. You may find your time spent on Facebook feels less like marketing and more like customer service. When people ask for information,

even if unrelated to buying your product, you will need to respond to keep them engaged. Listen to what people are saying, the good and the bad—you may pick up ideas on how you can improve your business. With ACT! 2010 you can embed your customer's Facebook or LinkedIn pages directly into their contact record. Use this tool to keep up with what is going on in their lives, so that you may add a personal touch in your communications.



With ACT! E-marketing, you can create a series of e-mail messages and schedule them to be delivered to your customers and prospects over a period of time.

Remember to put the relationship first, and you will be well on your way to a successful social marketing strategy. Social media is a great way to get the word out about your company and products, and capture information about potential customers. ACT! is a great tool for managing and leveraging the results of your social marketing efforts. And the ACT! Link to Sage BusinessWorks allows you to connect sales and marketing seamlessly into your core business processes.

Please give us a call for more information about ACT! by Sage 2010 or for assistance implementing the ideas discussed in this article. ✨

Your Payroll Processing Automation Options

Managing payroll is often one of the more challenging processes for small businesses. If you write checks by hand, you have the burden of manually looking up the proper taxes to deduct and remembering to make your payroll tax deposit on time. The high cost of errors, with the penalties and interest government agencies charge, can be daunting, and keeping track of ever-changing rates and regulations is time-consuming.

With Sage BusinessWorks Accounting, you can automate your payroll with either the Sage BusinessWorks Payroll module, or with a Web-based service, PayrollOnline. Let's take a closer look at these payroll processing automation options.

Sage BusinessWorks Payroll Module

The Sage BusinessWorks Payroll module gives you the most flexibility and control in payroll processing. Using the Sage BusinessWorks Payroll module can lighten the burden of payroll immediately. Automatic tax updates are sent from Sage, so you can feel confident you are calculating deductions properly. The Print-N-Sign feature makes filing returns a snap, and Sage BusinessWorks accumulates your payroll tax liabilities and lets you know when it is time to make a deposit. After each payroll, the Payroll module automatically posts the proper entries to the General Ledger module. And with the Payroll module, Direct Deposit is included, allowing you to deposit paychecks directly to employee bank accounts, while saving your employees a trip to the bank. Sage BusinessWorks automatically produces an ACH-compliant file to send to your bank.

With the Payroll module you have the ability to store complete employee

information. Above and beyond pay rate information, you can track accrued vacation and sick hours, review dates, and dates of hire and termination. You can attach an image of each employee to their file, and use custom fields to track and report on birthdays, certifications, salary history, or any other special information your company may need.

The Payroll module also offers flexibility in how you pay employees. It supports hourly, salaried, commissioned, and piece-rate pay types; you can use standard time cards for employees who are paid the same amount each pay period; and for service employees you can automatically adjust pay if tips do not bring an employee up to the minimum wage level. You also can calculate workers' compensation deductions and print the workers' compensation report.

PayrollOnline Service

If you would prefer to further simplify your payroll processing activities, PayrollOnline may be the solution for you. With PayrollOnline, experienced professionals process your payroll for you.

PayrollOnline was developed by payroll industry specialists, CompuPay. Staff at CompuPay gather your year-to-date payroll data and load it into the PayrollOnline payroll system for you. They will then guide you through your first payroll. You can even customize the Web page to make entering payroll faster.

With PayrollOnline, you simply enter your payroll online through a secure Web site, review the net-to-gross totals, and approve your payroll. Within minutes you can review your reports and checks. CompuPay can print and deliver paychecks to you, or you can print them from your desktop printer. There is even an employee self-service system that allows

employees to go online and review their information.

When you opt for PayrollOnline, all federal, state, and local payroll tax preparation, filing, and payments are handled for you, and there is a penalty-free guarantee to protect you from payroll-related fines. The PayrollOnline service generates appropriate journal entries for posting to Sage BusinessWorks.

CompuPay maintains changes to tax rules and rates; files and delivers W-2s at year end; remits federal, state, and local tax collections; prepares and submits federal, state, and local payroll tax returns; processes all payroll checks and reports for you; and guarantees there will be no penalties as long as funds are available for payment. So if you prefer to leave all the worries of payroll to someone else and have more time to focus on your business, consider PayrollOnline.

Give us a call for assistance in determining the right payroll solution for your organization. ✨

((Tips & Tricks))

How To Set SDI And SUI Rates In The Payroll Module

Because SDI (State Disability Insurance) and SUI (State Unemployment Insurance) rates vary from one company to another, the rates in Maintain Tax Tables are used only as default values for newly created companies.

You can record the correct SDI and SUI rates for your company under the Taxes / Activate States option. Enter the amounts as percentages. For example, enter 1.9% as 1.9.

Note: Sage BusinessWorks calculates percentage-based taxes, including OASDI, Medicare, SDI, SUI, and FUTA, based on year-to-date taxable pay, rather than the taxable pay for the current pay period.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

System Compatibility For Sage BusinessWorks Accounting 2010

With the release of Sage BusinessWorks Accounting 2010, the System Compatibility document has been updated. In this article, we review some of the changes and discuss the importance of checking this document any time you make a change to your computer network or software.

New computer operating systems and hardware (platforms) are coming out all the time. One of the things your Sage ClientCare plan covers is the cost of program changes that Sage needs to make to be sure that the software will be compatible with new platforms. Because these changes are made for each new Sage BusinessWorks release, they will not always be exactly in sync. Thus, it is very important that you review the System Compatibility chart before you buy a new computer or upgrade your operating system.

Server And Workstation Support

With Sage BusinessWorks 2010, Microsoft Windows Server 2008 and Windows 7 workstation software now are fully supported. However, support is only for the 32-bit version of these operating systems. Currently Sage BusinessWorks does not support 64-bit operating systems, such as Windows Small Business Server 2008 (64-bit only).

Windows Server 2008 Benefits

Windows Server 2008 could be called Microsoft's green release. One focus of

the release was to create a more energy-efficient server. Power Options now include Advanced Settings that allow you to control power management for various components, including processor, hard drive, and display. There also are many usability enhancements. Setup is streamlined so it takes a fraction of the time to get Server 2008 up and running compared with Server 2003, and there is a new automated storage backup with wizard-based setup and management. To keep your system safe, Server 2008 includes a stronger firewall with more advanced inbound and outbound security rules.

Windows 7 Benefits

There are lots of bells and whistles with Windows 7, such as the ability to create and share movies, but there are practical benefits for running Sage BusinessWorks as well. Pin and Jump lists make it easier to keep the programs and files you use most at your fingertips. There also is greater ease in resizing and arranging open windows on your desktop, as well as an enhanced Windows Search feature that allows you to find a specific file, program, or e-mail in a few seconds. Sharing printers among multiple PCs is simplified as well.

Check Compatibility

It is important to remember to check the system compatibility information for Sage BusinessWorks, not just when you are planning your upgrade to the latest

release, but also when you make any other change to your network or software configuration. Beyond operating system compatibility, the System Compatibility document also lists supported remote access configurations, such as Citrix, GoToMyPC, and Terminal Server, and compatible versions of integrated products, such as ACT! by Sage and F9. You can find the current System Requirements document on the Web at <http://www.sage-businessworks.com/products/system-req.aspx>. Please call us with your questions. ✨

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