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*Conversion-Driven Marketing*

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Free and Low Budget Marketing Ideas  
**for New Businesses**

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Some new business launches never have to worry about budget.

Or at least, that's a nice thought. It certainly isn't a reality for the thousands of new business start-ups that get going every year.

If you have already invested the tremendous amount of thought, energy, and sheer hard work required into getting your small business idea ready to roll, you won't be willing to trust the results to fate. The hard work of marketing your new idea is just as critical as the business itself. But without loads of cash to spend, most new business owners are looking for the most efficient and powerful ways to employ the limited capital they have.

***Before you begin, ask yourself these five questions to make sure your efforts will be on-target and worthwhile.***

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## **What are my top three business goals?**

If you're launching a new business you've probably spent many days and quite a few sleepless nights nailing down your goals for this new creature you're bringing into the world. When you sit down to draw up your marketing strategy, these goals should be written clearly at the top of your spreadsheet, legal pad, or bar napkin!

## **Have I clearly identified my target market?**

You should know everything you possibly can about the people or businesses that will be purchasing your service or product. You can't do a low-budget marketing plan if your net is cast too wide. Narrow the focus and target your efforts precisely.

## **Do I know where my target market "lives" online?**

If your target audience hasn't heard of Twitter and couldn't care less about Facebook, there may not be much point in spending time to open and work those particular social channels. Find where they are, and make a plan to build a presence there.

## **Do I have a strong and clear message I want to send?**

Your primary marketing message should be targeted to an urgent need felt by your audience. How can your business solve that problem or meet that need? Does your business name, tagline, and/or elevator pitch address that need quickly and clearly?

## **How will I know if my marketing is successful?**

Deciding what key performance indicators you are going to monitor can have a major impact on your success. Web traffic is often meaningless without further metrics like number of forms submitted, or widgets sold. Decide which metrics you will monitor most closely so that you can easily refine your plan as new information is gathered.

*Now you're ready to begin creating your low-budget business marketing strategy.*

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# Free and Low Budget Marketing Ideas for New Businesses

## **1. FREE: Speak about your passion.**

Find out what speaking circuits there are in your business industry and get on panels and forums where you can represent and talk about your business. Secure gigs as a keynote speaker or moderator at a seminar related to your product.

## **2. FREE: Utilize word of mouth marketing.**

Ask all of your friends, business partners, and previous clients if they've heard about your new business. Schedule social gatherings and events into your weekly calendar and ask people to spread the word. Ask business leaders for their advice -- you may find some free help coming your way. Volunteer to help organize a community event and network while you're there. Attend Chamber gatherings, trades shows, and other business networking events, and share your story with other business leaders.

### **3. FREE: Write articles and publish them.**

There are thousands of free article publishing sites online, and many more who also have print publications. Write regularly about your area of expertise and upload to multiple sites (including your own). Include a link back to your own website so that interested readers can find you.

### **4. LOW-COST: Create your digital presence.**

When first starting out, you might want to try several things online, then refine as you learn what works and what doesn't. For example, a basic website and shopping cart system might be just what you need to begin, but you should also consider which social platforms you need to have a presence on as well. Depending on your business goals and target market, you may want to run video channels, pay-per-click campaigns, and have specialized landing pages for particular segments of your market. Don't forget to set up analytics to measure everything. All the digital assets you create will have to be maintained, so budget the necessary time-spend into your week.

### **5. LOW-COST: Set up email campaigns.**

There are plenty of reliable providers of email services, and typically the charges are based on the number of people on your list. For a start-up, the costs can be relatively small, so you can definitely use this in your low-cost marketing mix. Set up a regular newsletter that offers significant value to your client base, and keeps them aware of new product and service additions to your offerings.

### **6. LOW-COST: Run a contest or event.**

Contests can be a great way to generate interest in a new business, although they can take a fair amount of time to plan, coordinate, publicize, and conduct. The best contests are directly aligned with your business offering and deliver a significant prize. The work you put in can pay big dividends in brand awareness, client engagement, and social proof.

### **7. FREE: Ask for reviews.**

As you begin to gather customers and fans, invite them to give your business a review. Send them links to places where their review could be posted (Google listings, Amazon, etc., depending on your product) and with their permission, use positive reviews as social proof on your own website, landing pages, videos, newsletter, and other promotions.

*Don't forget to measure your key performance indicators for each part of your marketing mix; this way you will be able to increase your efforts in the best possible areas while minimizing wasted time.*



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*Need help putting together and/or implementing a killer marketing strategy for your new business? Contact us today!*

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