



What is marketing?

Free guide for pubs, clubs, hotels,
restaurants wine bars etc...



Spiral Marketing

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Produced by Spiral Marketing, a division of

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What Is Marketing?

Customers will only part with their money if they feel that you are satisfying a need which they have. But marketing is not just about providing products and services, it is about matching the benefits you offer to the changing needs and demands of your customers and ensuring that you are getting value in return.

If you Google “marketing” you will throw up a host of options. The Chartered Institute of Marketing defines marketing as “the management process that identifies, anticipates and satisfies customer requirements profitably.” In other words: the right product, in the right place, at the right time, at the right price.

You know the old saying – **“If you liked it tell your friends, if you didn’t, tell us”**.

If you treat your customers well, in ways which they will value, there is a better chance that they will come back to your venue time and time again.

If you treat them well, there is a better chance they will recommend your business to their friends – which will gain you more customers, more sales, and an even better chance of gaining more buying customers. Better and better all round!

Innovative marketing will attract customers’ attention to YOUR business and YOUR products or services.

Successful marketing will help those customers make a conscious decision to return to your venue.

Be Seen in All the Right Places

Think about where your target customers go and try to arrange to advertise by displaying leaflets or posters there.

For the youth market, use Twitter, Facebook, YouTube or other online resources.

For adults and young families it might be the local supermarket, the library, the gym, or the “mother and toddler” group.

For the senior market, target locations your potential customers visit such as libraries, doctors’ and dentists’ waiting rooms, church halls, community centres etc. or advertise in the local paper or free-sheet, perhaps with a promotional discount voucher.

Word of Mouth

This can be a very valuable marketing tool – and is absolutely free! Make sure all your customers leave you 100% happy and satisfied with the service you have provided to them, and they will become ambassadors for your venue.

Investigate the Competition.

Use a friend or a paid “Mystery Shopper” to call on other venues in your area to see how they operate. Check out their websites. What can you do to make your business stand out? Get hold of their advertising literature and compare their offering with yours.

Have a supply of small cards by the till as each customer completes their transaction with you, asking the customer to complete a short survey on their experience with your venue, and to fill in their details

(especially email address). Offer a small monthly prize as an incentive. This will not only give you valuable feedback on your success (or otherwise), but you will build up a database of email addresses, which you can use for promotional emails, newsletters etc.

Collect Business Cards

Copy those city centre restaurants and have a large glass bowl by the cash desk, to collect business cards (or hand-written contact details slips) from customers, with a monthly draw for, say, a free bottle of wine or champagne – this is another way of building a database for future marketing activities.

New Image Party

When you re-decorate your venue, hold a “New Image” party, inviting local press, radio, community dignitaries, neighbours, the general public and previous customers from your database, to show off your new premises, and launch new products or services.

Professional Brochure or Leaflet

With desktop publishing software available on every PC and laptop, there is no excuse for unprofessional looking publicity material. Have a nit-picking friend read through any leaflet/flyer/poster you propose to use, to check for grammatical, punctuation and spelling mistakes.

Error-free Website

The same applies to your website – your professionalism is in doubt right away if your website is riddled with typing errors, misplaced apostrophes, poor punctuation and grammatical mistakes. Don't assume your website designer will correct your text – he or she is an expert in computers not grammar. If you can't afford a proof reader, ask a fussy friend or relation to check it for you.

Community Visibility

Join fellow Business people at the local Chamber of Commerce, Business Clubs, Rotary Club, Round Table etc. Get involved in local charity events, so you gain a positive reputation for contributing to the community.

Get Involved in Local Events and Activities

If there is a community event in your town, make sure you are there to publicise your venue. If there is a local charity event, take part yourself (or sponsor someone else to do so) carrying/wearing your venue's name.

Local Media

Your local newspaper or free-sheet will be looking for stories with a local interest to fill their pages – offer to write an article, or give an interview on a topical issue related to your venue, and you will get publicity without having to pay a penny! The same applies to local radio stations.

Display Your Brand

Put an eye-catching sandwich board on the pavement outside your venue. You might not want to have the name of your venue painted on the side of your car, but why not have a poster in the rear side windows (where it won't block your view while driving) or customise a window blind that you can pull down when the car is parked.

Use your Premises to the Max

If you have a room which is available in the evenings or at weekends (or if you run a hotel, club, pub etc.) and there is any community event to be held in your town, offer your premises. Everyone who attends will be grateful to you for the use of the space, and you will have put your venue's name at the forefront of his or her mind. Make sure there are plenty of flyers for your venue lying around, for people to pick up.

Network

Join the local Chamber of Commerce, Business Clubs, Rotary, etc. so you get your name known and you have the opportunity to network with other professionals and local dignitaries. Make a point of exchanging business cards with everyone you meet, and use these contacts in the future. Where do the local business groups, women's groups, farmers, accountants, or police hold their meetings? If you can host functions at your premises, invite the decision makers, when it comes to where events will be held, to visit and try out your facilities.

Directories

Make sure your business is listed in every free directory you can find.

"Happy Hour"

If certain times of the day, or certain days of the week, are particularly slow for you, consider offering discounts, special packages of products or services, or "2 for the price of 1" at those times. Offer discounts or a free cup of tea to pensioners on certain quiet days.

Artistic Branding

Brand your venue clearly, with good signage outside which is visible to passers-by, and carry the branding through to a uniform for yourself and your staff. If you don't feel up to designing a good logo yourself, ask the local art college to set the task as a project for the students. You could offer to display some of their art-work on your walls in exchange. You could even sell the art work for a small commission. This will brighten up your premises, help the students, and give your customers a changing décor to enjoy.

Display News Articles

If an article about you or your venue appears in the press, make copies and frame them well. Hang them on your walls, send them out with your brochures and hand a copy to anyone who comes in for information. Keep several copies, so you can replace them when they look a bit tatty – don't leave yellowing newspaper cuttings on display or it might look as though nothing good has happened for your business in a long time!

Make Friends With an Editor

Find out who edits the business section of the local newspaper. Offer to write an article for the paper, on a current business topic associated with your industry. Advertise in the same issue. That way, your name and details attached to the article will quickly link with your advertisement in the mind of the reader.

Turn A Negative Into a Positive

Las Vegas, Nevada, had gained a reputation as a "sin city". After a failed attempt to promote itself as a family resort, tourist revenue was slipping. To combat the decline, the city started marketing itself as naughty but nice with the slogan "What happens here, stays here!" and revenue hit new highs.

Use YouTube

Post a short video about your venue on YouTube. Make the video interesting and, ideally, amusing and try to appeal to as many people as possible. As well as attracting potential new customers you can gain visibility for your brand across a wide audience.

Use Twitter

Whether you are already a Twitter user or not, you can capitalise on this rapidly growing communication medium to assist you in your marketing efforts. Just type “**Twitter marketing**” into Google, or any search engine, and it will return dozens of websites offering you advice (free or for a fee) on how to market through Twitter.

Use Facebook

As Facebook now has a membership in the hundreds of millions, it must not be overlooked as a source of potential customers. To start, search online for “**Facebook marketing strategies**” and you will pull up a host of links to free advice and specific “social network applications” to help you.

Visible Vans

Make sure your car and van have highly identifiable logos/pictures/photos on the sides and back so everyone recognises you as you drive around. Have you ever followed a van down the road and smiled at the corny slogan or play-on-words on the back? Well it certainly grabbed your attention, didn't it, and I bet you can remember the name of the business, though you might have forgotten all the boring ones you saw.

Pack a Post-It

Carry a pad of brightly coloured post-it type notes advertising your business wherever you go. (They can be hand-written if you can't afford to get them printed.) Stick them up in unusual and unexpected places – inside the doors of lavatory cubicles or on the urinals; next to the lift buttons in shops or offices; if you write on the back of the notes you can stick them on car windscreens in car-parks, so the driver will see the message when they get in the car.

Create a Club

Offer your customers the chance to join a free online “club” and send out regular newsletters announcing your latest product or service, offering special deals on slow-moving lines, or giving loyalty bonuses to club members. You might run a competition, with one of your products or services as the prize; you could offer an incentive for the best “bright idea” from a customer on how you could improve your business. The customers will feel special, you will be able to collect information about them, you might get some good ideas from them, and you will have a ready-made mailing list for product or service promotions.

Spring Clean your venue

Really tidy up – get rid of all that junk, throw away the posters peeling off the walls, wash down all the surfaces and vacuum all the floors. Your customers will really notice the difference! Promise yourself to do this regularly from now on.

Befriend a DJ

Local radio stations are always in need of interesting items to fill their programmes. Make friends with the local DJs and presenters, make their lives easier by supplying them with interesting material about your local business, the people you employ, the work you are creating, the good works you are involved

in, etc. The same applies to local newspapers or free-sheets – they always need good interesting material, which can act as free publicity for you, without you having to buy advertising space.

Try Guerrilla Marketing

This is a term to describe unconventional marketing tactics, particularly those with low cost or no cost, which rely on time, energy and imagination rather than a big marketing budget, so they are ideal for the cash-strapped small business in a difficult economic climate.

Leave your business card in unexpected places

Pop one inside every book in an appropriate section of the local library; when you visit the doctor or dentist's surgery, leave a business card inside each magazine in the waiting room.

Give a free product/service to the stylists at your local hairdresser's or barber's – they will tell their clients all about this crazy person who gives things away.

Email subject

If you're emailing customers, make the subject line's catchy. Ask the question, would you open it?



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