

Top 10 Marketing Tips for Small Businesses

When you run a small business, you need to get the word out to really begin to see customers coming through your doors. **Marketing** is crucial to the success of your business, and that covers a range of different things. From digital campaigns to customer service, every aspect of what your customers can see of your shop helps to make up their mind about whether they want to buy from you.



There are varying degrees of costs to marketing strategies, but that doesn't mean they need to break the bank. There are some crucial ideas that small businesses must implement.

Whether you're just starting out or looking for some ideas for a refresher, we've listed our top 10 tips that will help you see results from your campaigns.

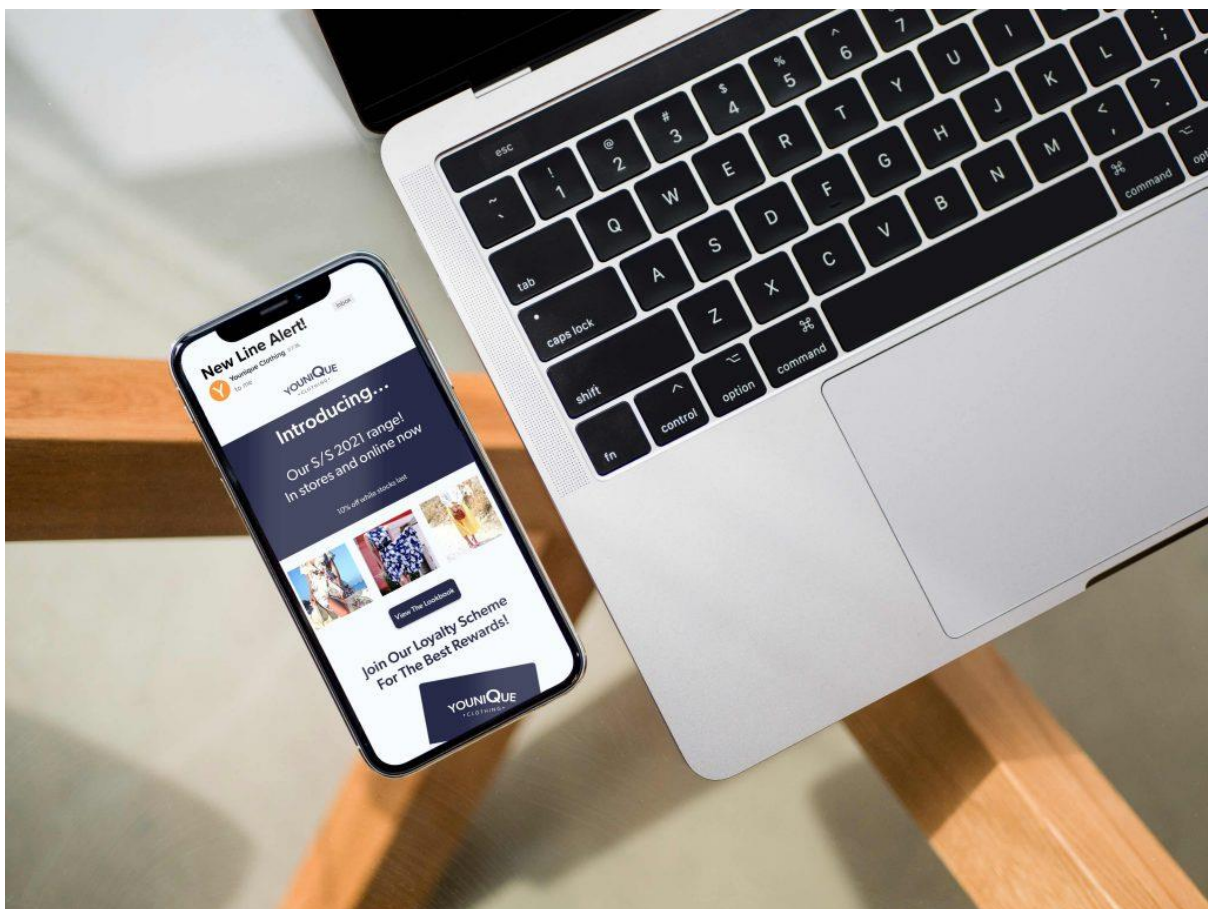
1. Utilise Email Marketing

As we all know, life can be unpredictable. You might be facing times where your shop isn't open and you can't see your customers, so it's important to know how you can work around that. Email marketing is a great tool for your business, as you can send messages to your customers whenever you want, direct to their hands.

81% of small businesses rely on email campaigns as their primary marketing strategy, and it generates an average of 3800% return on their investments.

It's not just retailers that benefit from email marketing. 49% of consumers said they like to receive promotional emails from their favourite retailers on a minimum of a weekly basis, and marketing emails are likely to influence a consumer's purchase decision.

To see the full benefit of email marketing strategies, you should optimise your campaigns according to a number of different factors. If your audience largely consists of one gender, the way you format your design, and the time of the day you send can have a big impact on the metrics you measure. Subject lines and CTAs can also help improve the amount of opens you see.



To learn more about how to optimise email marketing to benefit you, read our easy-to-follow guide [here](#).

2. Set Up A Loyalty Scheme

Setting up a customer loyalty scheme is a great marketing strategy for small businesses. Not only does it help to improve customer retention, it also allows you to collect valuable consumer data so you can see where your business may be struggling. You can also use the information to influence buying behaviour.

Customer retention is crucial for small businesses, and it's 5 times cheaper than marketing to attract a new customer. Small retailers estimate that between 70 and 80% of their revenue comes from repeat customer, and the probability of selling to an existing customer is significantly higher.



There are different types of loyalty schemes that you can implement depending on the type of your business, but all schemes can help you achieve good customer retention rates.

And with data reports readily available within your loyalty system, you can easily access a wealth of information at the click of a button.

3. Build Customer Relationships

The core of customer retention is how successfully you can build strong relationships with your customers. From their initial awareness of your products or services to their post-purchase experience, you must make sure they receive the highest level of service possible.

The **customer loyalty ladder theory** covers all types of customers throughout different stages of their journey with your business. Getting each customer as high up the ladder as quickly as possible is crucial, as it means your relationship will be much more resilient if they have a negative experience.

There are several different steps on the loyalty ladder and three different thresholds, each with their own implications. It's important to use the theory whilst planning retention strategies, as it can help you to maintain a lifelong relationship. Having a loyalty system can also help you to swiftly move customers through each step.

4. Utilise Free Tools

There are plenty of free tools available that you can use for all stages of your marketing. Free design software like Adobe Spark can help you easily design graphics for use on free platforms, like Facebook or Twitter.

Social media can be great for mass marketing or one-to-one techniques. If you're running a sale or promotion, posting about it on social media with a punchy graphic can help you to draw in both existing and new customers. For a small additional cost, why not promote your posts with your platform of choice's advertising tool? You can set your own budget and targets, so you're fully in control.



Building a presence that people recognise is also a great marketing technique. Commenting on posts – about your business and also about general topics – and liking pictures that your customers have tagged you in is a good way of interacting even when your customers aren't directly in front of you. Customers also like to feel as though their support is recognised and appreciated.

5. Host A Giveaway or Competition

Hosting a giveaway or a competition on social media can be low cost with a high reward. The prizes you offer don't need to be extravagant – you can

simply offer one or two free products, or a complementary service. It's more than enough to pique the interest of potential customers.

The rules you set, such as sharing to their profile or tagging friends, will also spread word of mouth to a much wider audience. It's likely that you'll reach several soon-to-be customers for only a couple of free products and a few minutes of your time.

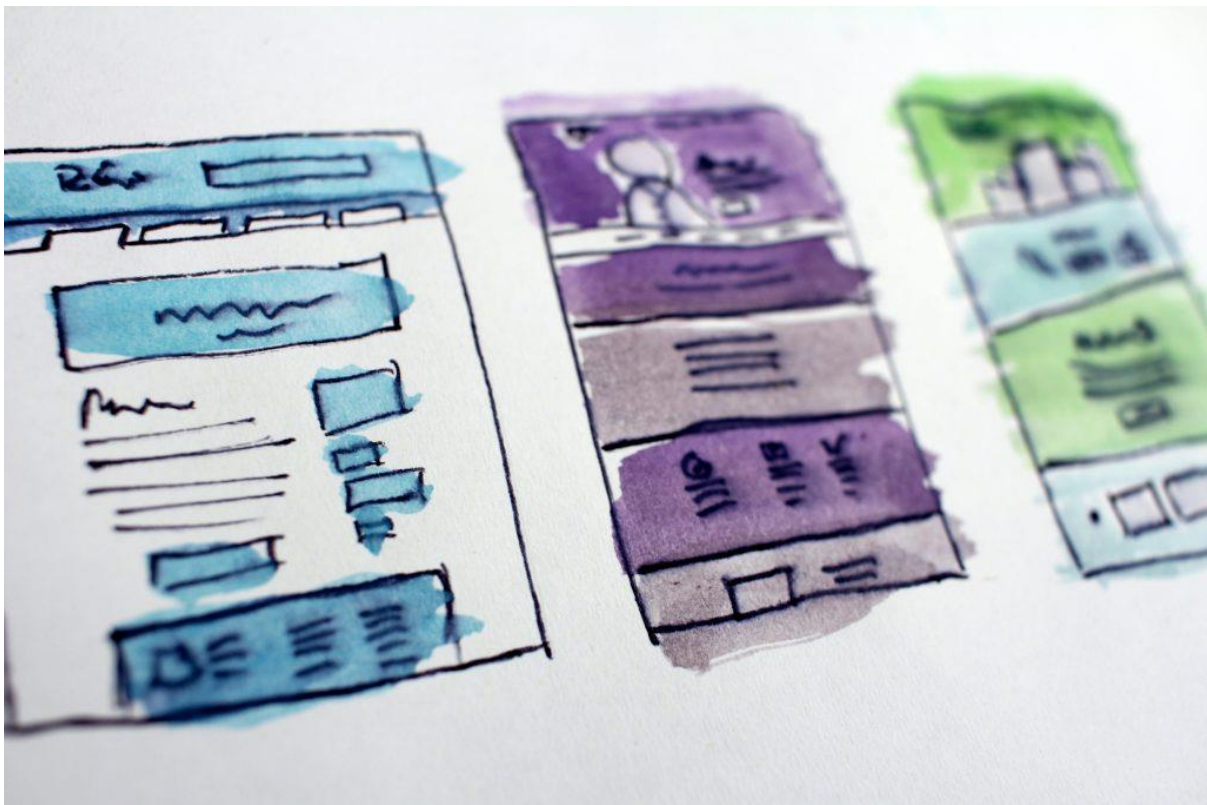
6. Have A Website

This may seem like a simple tip, but it's one that many small businesses seem to skip over when they first open their doors. Even if you don't have an online shop, it's important to still build a website. It helps to gain visibility for your business to customers in your local area.

Implementing SEO strategies – such as targeting keywords and building links – can be a crucial element to reach success. You can even start a blog with high-quality content to help your keyword targets and build trust and authority in your brand.

Ensure your website is optimised for mobile use. A large portion of your website's visitors will be viewing it on a mobile or tablet device, and a lack of responsiveness will lead to a high drop off rate.

However, it's important to note that not only does poor mobile viewing affect your customers, it will also negatively impact your visibility on search engine results pages.



7. Build Customer Reviews

One simple, easily manageable marketing technique is to build customer reviews. You can do this on your own website or on a third-party reviews platform, and it will help to convince potential customers to finish their purchase journey.

You can invest as much of a cost as you want, but it's important to build only reviews that are legitimate. If you are an e-commerce business looking to reduce the risk of fraudulent reviews, set up a service where you only send requests to people who have ordered from you.

It's also important to **reply to the reviews** your business receives. Research shows that 53% of customers expects a business to respond to negative reviews within a week, but 63% say that they have never received a response to their review.

If you see a negative review, it can be easy to brush it off and forget about it, but make sure you formulate a well-worded response as it can be the difference between a potential customer actually making a purchase with you. 45% of consumers say they're more likely to visit a business that responds to negative reviews.

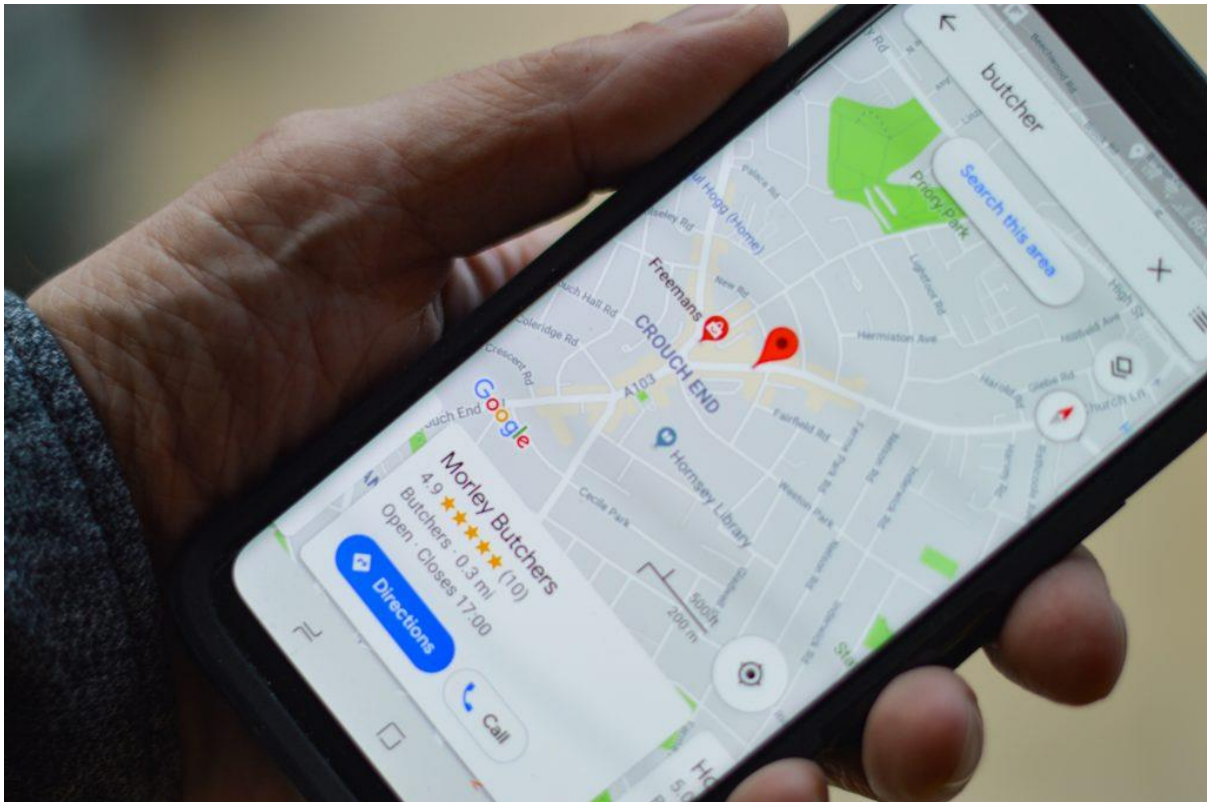
8. Personalise Customer Interactions

Personalised customer interactions can boost your relationship with your customer greatly. This covers a number of different things – for example, simply personalising an email's subject line or opening sentence result in a 26% increase of opening rates.

You can also use the consumer data collected by your customer loyalty scheme to send automatically triggered emails on special occasions such as birthdays. Offering a limited time discount for your customer's birthday feeds into both urgency and personalisation and is likely to increase the possibility of an impulse transaction.

9. Use Google My Business

Another free tool you can use for your marketing is Google My Business. It helps you to manage your online presence on Google, and you can display helpful information to your customers such as your opening hours, website, street address and more.



Once you've input your business's address, your shop will also be visible on Google Maps for people who are trying to find you. Google My Business can also act as a free reviews platform, so you can build up your business.

According to Google, businesses that build their profile by posting regular photos receive 42% more requests for directions on Google Maps, and 35% more clicks to their website than businesses that don't post photos.

You can also use the tools Google My Business provides to gain insights on how your customers find your business. You'll be able to see how they search and where they come from, and how many people call your business directly from the number displayed on your profile – just to name a few.

10. Use Offers and Promotions

Promoting your products, when done correctly, is a low-cost solution to marketing your products. Well-designed graphics and slick copy advertised on social media means your promotions or offers can reach a high number of people, who may then tell their friends and family. This covers things like flash sales, lifestyle discounts, or loyalty scheme events just to name a few.

Sales campaigns are beneficial to both customers and customers, as long as you ensure you have a balanced return. Whilst it is important that the offer has a financial incentive for customers, you must still see a profit from your sales.

The biggest reason that makes promotions so effective is the sense of urgency they create amongst your customers. If you only have sales on your products twice per year for a short period each time, customers will recognise that they need to act quick, or they'll miss out. For you, it speeds up the sales cycle meaning you'll complete transactions quicker – and getting customers further up the loyalty ladder in a shorter timeframe.

If you're interested in a loyalty scheme for your business, speak to Reward-It, the experts of independent loyalty schemes. From setup to maintenance, we're here to help you get the most out of your loyalty rewards system. Call us today on 020 8266 1600 to speak to a member of our experienced team or drop us a line at sales@reward-it.co.uk and someone will get back to you shortly.