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Increasing Business Growth by Using New Technologies

For many businesses, having a good marketing and advertising plan can lead to success or failure. With the advancement of today's technology, businesses now have more ways than ever to get their company's name out to the general public. Therefore, for companies who use these new technological advances in marketing and advertising, they will benefit in business growth while incurring minimal cost.

Within this research paper several marketing/advertising methods will be discussed such as podcasts, web sites, billboards, commercials, and radio ads. To begin, let us look at what "marketing" really is. According to Principles of Marketing on *KnowThis.com*, marketing is defined as "...the strategies and tactics used to identify, create and maintain satisfying relationships with customers that result in value for both the customer and the marketer." Marketing is about getting the name of a product or company into the minds of people. A company wants their name to come to the minds of people when they think of a product. However, this is only accomplished with a lot of hard work and a very good advertising and marketing campaign, which usually is very expensive. Therefore, here is a look at the first step to building a customer database – reasonably.

Since the invention of the internet, businesses have been able to reach customers from all around the world. No longer is a company suspended by geographic obstacles,

and with the advancements in search engines, finding a business or certain product can take only several minutes. How does a prospective business owner get his business on those search engines and out to the whole world? With a web site. Web sites are a way to take a business's physical store front and turn it into a "cyber store-front" for everyone around the world to see. When the internet first came out, web sites were something that not everyone could make, mainly due to cost and knowledge of coding. They were all done by code and at the time very few people knew HTML (the base code that, at that time, made up all websites). However, times have changed and now a business can have a fully functional website with several pages completed in one weekend with fairly low cost. Several online web site hosting services offer rates for businesses starting at five dollars per month ("Top 10 Hosts"). They also offer user-friendly website creation tools that allow a user to create the page without needing to know any code. Although, for the business that wants a more elaborate website, it will need to spend more money on the development of the site. In web design, a company gets what it pays for ("You Get...").

However, there are also several tips that a person can do to improve his website without incurring extra expenses. One is to have a site that offers its customers to join a company mailing list, and then send out a newsletter at least every two weeks. This is also a great opportunity to offer coupons for customers. An example of a coupon a company could offer would be one that offers a service or product for new customers or to current customers who bring in a new customer. Whether this is offered in a newsletter or directly off the main page of the website, it is a great way to entice new customers. Something else that goes along with coupons is to offer customers discounts on volume purchases, and for new customers, offer free samples or trial periods (Rincon).

Another way to improve a website is to hold periodic contests that either give away prizes or offer a free service. For something simpler, create a place where a link to bookmark the company's site can be placed, and then also submit the address of the site to the most popular search engines. This will help a company's website show up first when a user searches the internet for a certain product or service that that company offers. Finally, offline advertising of online marketing is a very good idea. Placing the website address on invoices and bills that a company sends out is a great way of doing this. Also, placing it on billboards and moving billboards such as the ones on taxis and buses in big cities works well (Rincon).

Now, once a company website has been established and has regular visitors to it, it may be time to step up to a method of marketing that has become popular only within the last year. This method is known as podcasting, and it has grown increasingly over the last year. Podcasting is a free do-it-yourself radio commercial that is transmitted through the internet. Once someone has created a podcast stream, listeners (customers or potential customers) can then subscribe to the stream, and each time a new podcast is created, the podcast will be automatically downloaded to the users' machine. Consider the following figures from the Pew Internet & American Life Project regarding how useful a podcast would be. Thirty percent of the people (from ages 18 to 28) that own an iPod or MP3 player have downloaded a podcast, which totals to six million U.S. adults. This shows that for a company looking to mirror its business on the World Wide Web, podcasting is a great way to reach people. Several ideas for a company to implement with its podcasts are: interview an expert in the industry, distribute free advice to entice customers to

invest in other services a company offers, offer training sessions are among other ideas. The key to creating good podcasts is to be creative with it (Mills).

Now, for those who wish to not partake in the experience of podcasting, there is also the option of creating an RSS feed. An RSS feed is a form of syndicating the content of a news article to subscribers through the internet (Pilgrim). Essentially, an RSS feed is a podcast in the written form. This allows an employer to keep his customers up to date on information and special offers.

For businesses that are using these features on their website and are starting to begin an online customer database, creating a privacy policy is a must. A privacy policy is something that not every business thinks of first, but it is imperative to have. It is a way of assuring customers that the service they are subscribing to will not distribute their personal information to other parties. This will "...build customer trust and protect gathered data" (Swanson). Depending on the site of the company, there are several methods for developing an online privacy policy. One option is to use a free service such as p3pwiz.com, or alternately a company can hire a copywriter or attorney to develop a sophisticated online privacy policy (Swanson).

After a business has a website created, it must now promote it. This is where some of the traditional marketing and advertising strategies come in to play. To start, here is a look at using the public radio to promote a website. While a website will reach people from all around the world, it is best to start attracting regional people to the website first. Then once traffic has picked up from a regional area, a business can extend its website advertising to greater geographical distances. Radio ads are a great way to get the word about a new website out to people. The sole purpose for advertising a business's new

website on the radio is to get people to direct themselves there. However, according to Bob Ruse, marketing manager for Federated Media Group, there are four things that must be met before this happens. The first is awareness, people need to be *aware* that this company has a new website. Also, they must be *interested* in it. It needs to catch their attention. Then once it has their attention, they will *desire* it. They will have the urge to find the time to make it to this new website. Therefore, the fourth and final step is action. After a person has been aware of the ad, become interested in it, and then desired to know more, they will take action and visit the website. By having a radio ad broadcasted, it is a very easy and relatively cheap way to promote something – in this case a website. However, every advertising method whether it be radio, television, or billboard, targets its own audiences. Therefore, once a business has had a radio ad running for a while, it may want to begin to reach people from farther distances. This is where television commercials are beneficial. They cost more than radio ads, but they can reach people in larger geographical locations. However, to listen to a radio ad costs a person nothing, but to watch a television commercial, somewhere someone is paying for that service. There are pros and cons to each, but the important factor is to realize that each is directed to a different audience (Ruse).

So far, radio ads and television commercials have been covered, so let us take a look at some other things, some that maybe a person might not think about. As mentioned briefly before, billboards are a great way to graphically “show off” a business’s website. While it is not a new advance in advertising, it still gets the job done. Another way to get the word out about a new website is to offer current customers the chance to advertise. For example, give away t-shirts that have the company logo and

website address on it. Or a business may want to hold a press release to promote a new product or service that the company will soon be offering. This also gives a chance to tell anyone watching to visit the company's new website to find out more information (Wickens-Orlando).

The important factor in any marketing strategy is to be creative. "All you need is to have a well-balanced marketing synergism..." (Wickens-Orlando). This is the key point in any marketing strategy. Everything a business does in promotion of their company must all work together. Each method of advertising must compliment the others. Creating a website promotes the physical building, and running a radio ad, creating podcasts, and giving away promotional merchandise all promote the website.

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