

30 BIG SMALL BUSINESS MARKETING IDEAS 09/10 EDITION

30 low-cost Marketing Ideas that can
do wonders for your business

Written by Michael Halligan
Managing Director of Engage Marketing
Twitter: @MikeFromEngage



This is a free resource provided by Engage Marketing, Melbourne's small business marketing specialists.

We're experts in how to get the most out of small business. We help you, the small business owner, afford that new boat that you started your business for in the first place!

We make a big difference to your life through developing marketing plans from start to finish, or simply working on elements of your marketing.

To receive a free short consultation (where we run over a few ideas that we have for your business) and proposal, call us on 1300 781 334 or visit our website at:

www.engagemarketing.com.au



THE CONTENTS

01 STRATEGIC MARKETING

Take the vacant position
Add emotion
Create a slogan
Strategic Alliance
Quality Service
Unique Feature

02 USING YOUR CUSTOMERS

Word of Mouth Plan
Gather testimonials
Group of followers

03 USEFUL CONTENT

e-book
newsletter
write an article for publications

04 ADVERTISING

Local leader Newspaper Ad
Street Banner
In-Store Signage
Online Directory Listings

05 DIRECT MARKETING

Personal Letters
Little Giveaways
Newsletter
Collect Contact Details

06 INTERNET MARKETING

Your Website
Search Engine Optimisation
Blog
Google AdWords
Be Social

07 OTHER

Community Sport Sponsorship
Create a PR Stunt
Chamber of Commerce
Free Demonstration
Free-Trial Offer

STRATEGIC MARKETING

1 **Take the Vacant Position in the Market**

OK so you're a mechanic. There are three competitors in your surrounding area. When customers think of one of them, they think budget. When customers think of another they think fantastic customer service. They don't really think about the third because it stands for nothing. Looking at the market, there is room for a higher-price, quality mechanic – the kind of mechanic that has the best equipment and leaves you knowing you won't have to come back a week later. There's no point in being average!

2 **Add Emotion to your Brand**

Research shows that our sight is the most ineffective sense in persuading someone to buy a product, yet its all most businesses focus on. Smell is much more powerful, with many international stores using certain scents in their store that have increased sales by as much as 30% alone. There are huge opportunities for retail stores to take advantage of emotional branding. Test and experiment!

3 **Create a Slogan**

Lets look at Apple for an example. Their tagline as they became big was "Think Different". This fit their marketing strategy perfectly as they wanted to target the portion of the market that didn't want to be using PC's like everyone else. Associate your slogan with your market position and use it consistently with your logo.

4 **Strategic Alliance**

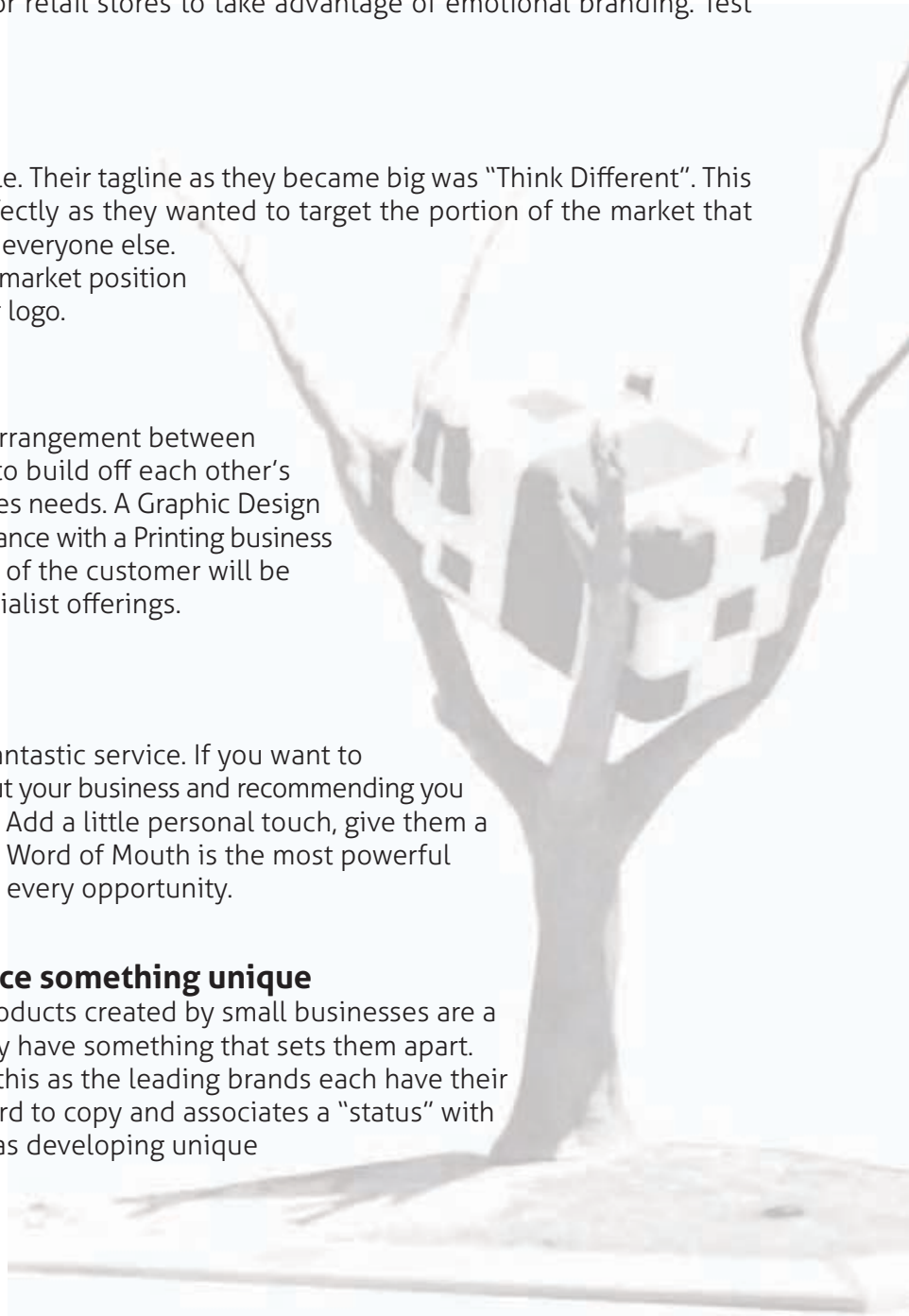
A strategic alliance is a formal arrangement between two companies. It can be used to build off each other's strengths to meet your businesses needs. A Graphic Design company can have a strategic alliance with a Printing business for example, as often the needs of the customer will be enhanced through the two specialist offerings.

5 **Quality Service**

People only talk about bad or fantastic service. If you want to have your customers talking about your business and recommending you to their friends, treat them well. Add a little personal touch, give them a gift or discount for their loyalty. Word of Mouth is the most powerful form of marketing so foster it at every opportunity.

6 **Give your product or service something unique**

Some of the most successful products created by small businesses are a hit because they're unique. They have something that sets them apart. The fashion world is known for this as the leading brands each have their own hallmark. It makes them hard to copy and associates a "status" with your brand. It could be as easy as developing unique packaging.



USE YOUR CUSTOMERS



7 **Word of Mouth**

Word of Mouth is muchhh more powerful than traditional marketing methods. Our goal is to have the customer wanting to say good things about your business. From that point we want to make it easy for them to tell their friends and colleagues.

Offer staff incentives and competitions to remember customer names. Create trust and be seen as more than a business. Once you have their trust give them a tangible marketing tool to make it easy to tell others.

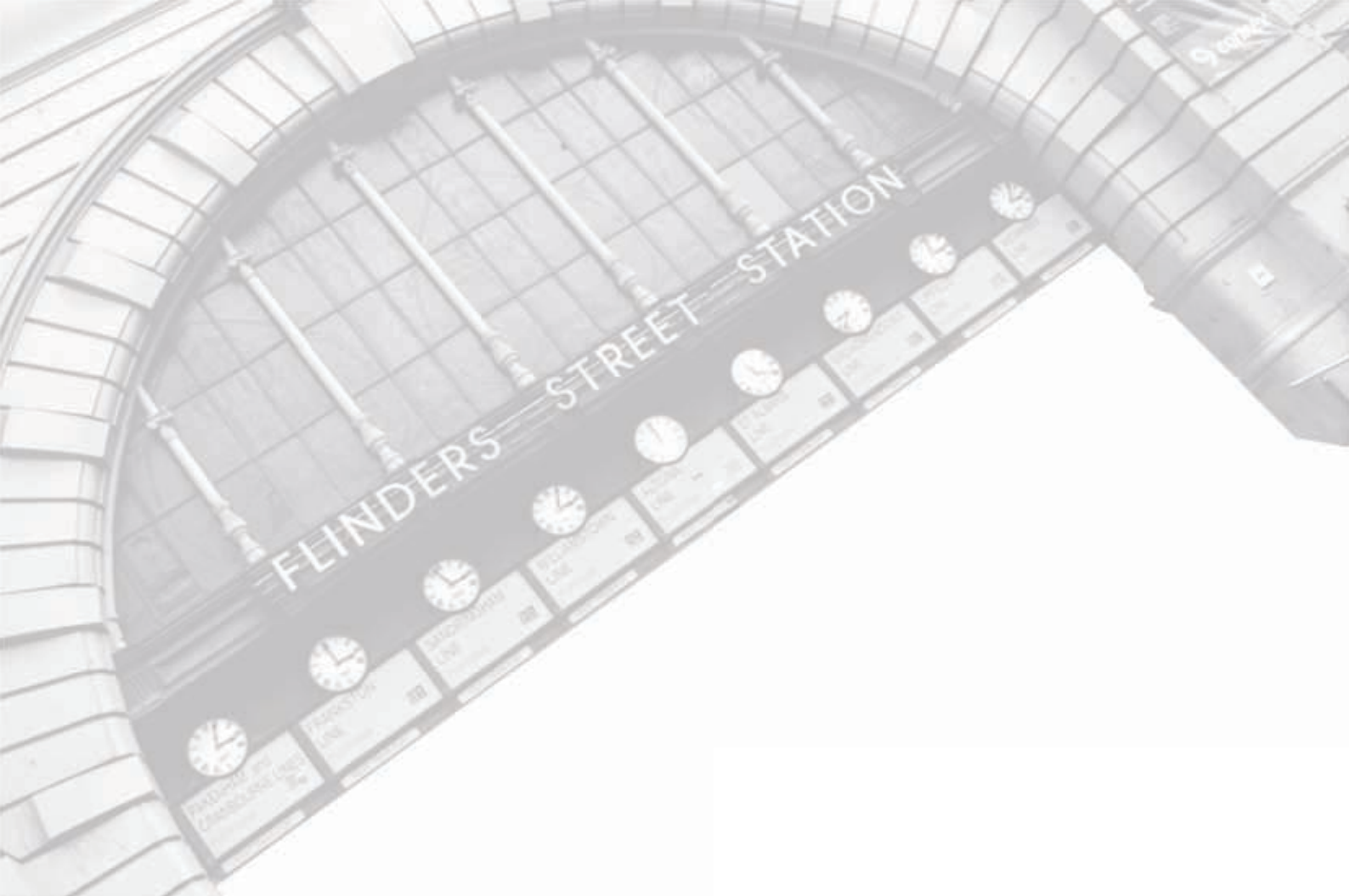
8 **Gather Testimonials**

Ask some of your most loyal customers for a testimonial that you can use in marketing material. People tend to trust a lot more when someone else promotes it.

9 **Create a Group of followers**

Give people a reason too follow you. Think of all the women that follow Tupperware, which in all honesty sells a boring product, yet they have followers. Other companies create clubs to facilitate customers. Allow them to feel unique, proud and special. They must relate to you and connect with your brand.

For example a pub could create a "Tuesday night parma club" offering a free beer with a Chicken Parma meal. The regulars would start to get to know each other, keep coming back, stay longer, spend more and introduce others to the club.



USEFUL CONTENT

10 **E-Book**

Think about how many business owners have this e-book saved on their computers or printed out. If you're a service or information business, we can't recommend this enough. At the end of the day, everyone loves free knowledge. If you're not keen on an e-book, you can develop free or productised podcasts, books, videos or audiobooks to show that you are experts in your field.

11 **Write an Article for a Newspaper or Magazine**

A bartender writing an article and giving out some cocktail recipe's in a dining magazine is going to create a lot of buzz for their bar and build themselves up as an expert. Writing an informative and useful article for your industries newsletter or publication with a note of what business you're from can have a great effect.

12 **Newsletter**

See No. 25 in Direct Marketing.

ADVERTISING

13 **Your Local Leader Newspaper**

While we wouldn't be betting your whole budget on those little ads in your local paper, they're very suitable for tradey's and those that sell to mothers. Just don't get them to design it or you'll blend in like crazy.

14 **In-Store Signage**

Use posters and in-store banners to promote specials, your value proposition, or what makes you different.

If your finding that your getting a lot of people who are right on the edge of buying, making an enquiry or coming into your stores and walking out without a sale, experiment with your in-store signage, easing their fear or providing the final hook that reel's them in.

15 **Street Banners**

Lets take a big franchise as an example. What can they do to market themselves when they're seemingly restricted in what they can do? A franchise on a popular highway put up a quote of the day banner outside their business, changing it each day of the year.

Their sales increased remarkably as people going to and from work each day looked out for their quote, developing a connection with the business.

16 **Online Directory Listings**

There are a number of free online directories for every industry, giving you the odd free sales lead. They can also help you be found in search engines (see No. 18 in Get the most out of the internet).



GET THE MOST OUT OF THE INTERNET

17 **Your Website**

These days, a website is your most important tool in not only finding new customers, but fostering loyalty in your existing customers. Cafe's can have a place to build on customer loyalty outside of the cafe itself. Manufacturing companies can showcase their capabilities and make an impression on bigger companies. These days, basically every business has a website. A good website will get more enquiries, make more sales, drive more foot traffic and basically help to make you richer!

18 **Search Engine Optimisation**

"Howcome if I search that, they're at the top of page1 and we're not?" Search Engines such as Yahoo & Google are the primary method for a consumer finding exactly what they want. SEO specialists exist to increase your search engine ranking. We recently took a client from page7 of search results to the top of page1 worldwide.

19 **Blog**

What better way to position yourself as an expert in your industry than write a blog on industry topics. Odds are that you'll get people finding your blog in search engines too! Creative companies can use blogs to showcase their work as well as useful links; A clothing company can blog, posting funny YouTube videos to keep customers connected. We as a small business marketing agency blog about small business marketing ideas. What creative way can you think of to blog and interact?

20 **Google AdWords™**

If your website isn't set up to be ranked highly in search engines, spending a bit of money on AdWords (the ads you see on the right of Google search results) might be the right answer as your ad is guaranteed to be shown, according to how much you're willing to spend, while you have complete control. Best of all, your right there at the point that people are searching for exactly what you offer.

21 **Be Social**

The internet is full of conversations ready for your voice. As marketing experts we talk to hundreds of business owners and make hundreds of leads just by talking on internet forums, facebook and blogs about their marketing problems and through offering them free advice. These have lead us to new clients.

Facebook provides a lot of opportunities to companies selling to the 18-35 year old range, but it is merely a tool for you to interact with your customers. A mindset of embracing talking to your market will give you so much more in word of mouth sales and only cost you your time. Being social on the internet can create word of mouth and buzz that money can't buy.

DIRECT MARKETING

22 **Personal Letters**

Receiving letters can be annoying because lets face it, most of them are poorly written. They talk about themselves the whole time. The customer doesn't care about you. The customer cares about what you can do for them. When writing personal letters, make them targetted, unique and specific. Show them the value in them reading your offer and be sure to include plenty of calls to action so that they don't just end up in the bin.

23 **Little Giveaways**

Why should footy clubs and insurance companies be the only one to give out stickers? Apple's been giving out stickers of their logo for years that can be seen stuck on car windows, on their products and even on their competitors products! This is suitable for companies that want to create followers of their brand.

Businesses that offer essential services can use magnets, but be smart with them. They're a great tool and can help you leapfrog the compeition if you're right there when they want something. Ask unrecognised faces if they've been there before. If they say no, give them a magnet and say thankyou for trying your business out.

24 **Newsletter**

Keep in contact with your customers by sending them a newsletter, either by paper or email. This is a fantastic way to notify of how you've improved your quality, released a new product offerings you have or promote a sale or special. Email Newsletter systems can be designed and set up for next to nothing. We've developed an email marketing system that lets you (or us if you like) manage your list and send emailers out while realising just how cost-effective email marketing is.

25 **Collect Customers Contact Details**

As a general statement, newsletters and personal letters are hard to send without people's contact details! Offer a competition, discount, free item or access to members only sales in exchange for their contact details. Database marketing can be very effective and can be used in a variety of ways.

OTHER GUERRILLA MARKETING TACTICS

26 **Community Sport Sponsorship**

Community Involvement in business is an effective way to create brand loyalty for local businesses involved in tight-knit communities. Rather than just handing over money and expecting benefit, create an event or promotion based on the club or team.

27 **Create a PR Stunt to go create “buzz”**

To start with, it's all about the story. You have to be worth writing about and the only way to be worth writing about is to be remarkable. What would it take for your business worth writing about?

28 **Join the Chamber of Commerce**

The chamber of commerce is a good way to meet other business owners and develop business relationships for the point of a strategic alliance, or talk to them about what you could offer their business. Of course, this requires a few hours a month of the owners time and is for networking purposes, typically only suitable for B2B businesses.

29 **Offer a free demonstration or consultation**

Buyers always have fears, whether it be buying a forklift or an ice cream. Plenty of products and services would be able to remove this fear through demonstration. Due to the cost involved, this is typically reserved for high-priced items.

30 **Free Trial-Offer**

Often you need a special offer to convince potential customers to take the jump and try your product, otherwise they may keep putting it off and you'll miss out in months of them using your product and recommending it to your friends. Try giving a free trial to people who have previously expressed interest but never made the sale.

We're using...

- the vacant position in the market
- Emotion in our brand
- a slogan
- a strategic alliance
- quality service
- a unique feature
- a word of mouth plan
- testimonials
- a group of followers
- eBooks
- a newsletter
- an article for a publication
- local leader newspaper ads
- a street banner
- In-store signage
- online directory listings
- our website
- search engine optimisation
- blogging
- google adWords
- social marketing (blogs, forums, Facebook)
- personal letters
- little giveaways
- a newsletter
- customers contact details
- community sport sponsorship
- public relations stunts or stories
- the chamber of commerce
- free demonstrations
- free-trial offers

A word on marketing

We recommend taking notes as you read through this book before filling out the checklist. We don't claim these to be the best ideas out there as the best ideas are the creative ones that are thought up specifically for your business. This book is primarily designed to get you thinking about your marketing, what you can do and what difference quality marketing and extra sales would make to your life.

As effective as these marketing tactics can be, they should always be carefully considered in relation to your overall marketing strategy. Some of these tactics may not be appropriate for your business.

We are the small business specialists of Melbourne and have experience not only in these tactics, but hundreds of others as well. There are literally hundreds and thousands of guerrilla marketing tactics that could be working for you.

We produce marketing plans for Australian small businesses and we're fantastic at it! Our marketing plans outline the most effective options in a detailed action plan, formulated on top of a marketing strategy that aims to put you in a position where you can afford the new car or boat that you started the business for in the first place.

If you have any questions, or would like a *free proposal on how Engage Marketing could form a marketing plan that makes your life easier*, please give us a call on 1300 781 334 or visit www.engagemarketing.com.au/buythatboat



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Halligan

This eBook has been written by Michael Halligan (Marketer, Entrepreneur & Managing Director of Engage Marketing).

A relatively young marketer, Michael brings fresh ideas to small business. Starting in Marketing at a small Melbourne business at the age of 18, he turned the home-based business into a million dollar company that boasts Boeing & the U.S. Air Force as regular clients.

Michael personally designed & built a new website, increased the website search traffic, implemented an email marketing system, created direct mail campaigns and designed a new set of marketing materials as part of a carefully developed marketing strategy, all whilst he was studying in RMIT University's prestigious 'Entrepreneurship' program.

Following his successes, Michael left to work in numerous Melbourne-based small businesses, testing and refining marketing theories and techniques before co-founding Engage Marketing in 2009 where he works directly with Small Businesses around Melbourne.

Today his goal with Engage Marketing is to "help Small Business owners to afford the new car or boat that they started the business for in the first place".



Michael Halligan

**Marketer & Managing Director
Engage Marketing**

www.michaelhalligan.com.au
mike@engagemarketing.com.au

Mobile: 0422 968 188

Twitter: @MikeFromEngage

Engage Marketing
PO Box 2542
Ringwood, Vic 3134

www.engagemarketing.com.au
1300 781 334

@MikeFromEngage (Twitter)