

Entrepreneur Press




People Want Referrals

People don't want to go to the telephone book to pick a lawyer. People don't want to pick a real-estate agent from the Yellow Pages--or an accountant, or a chiropractor, or an insurance agent, or a dentist, or a mechanic. People want referrals! Historically, the only problem has been linking the people who need services or products with the people who provide them. A structured word-of-mouth campaign begins by acknowledging that there's a segment of the public that wants you and your service as badly as you want their business.

People from all walks of life want referrals--not just the business community, but the general public as well. Few people want to choose a dentist, for example, from a printed advertisement. People want to have more personal information before making such selections because whenever you choose a professional exclusively from an advertisement and have no other source of information, you may be taking a big risk as to the quality of service you will receive. With referrals, the risk is greatly reduced. Someone else has done business with that person and is recommending that professional to you with confidence.

Small Business Tips

"Good PR is the telling of a good story. The better the story, the better the acceptance by the public and the better the PR. Of course if the story is especially appealing to those



that could be your clients, then you could have a PR homerun."

"You must set up a plan. Get a list of your target market. Send them brochures. Use the telephone and make an appointment with the decision maker."

"If your business is one where your customers can recommend other customers, offer your present customers some special gift or discount if someone they specifically recommend buys your product or service."

"Loyalty programs make sense for growing businesses. A successful reward program will result in increased sales, lower marketing costs, and invaluable information collected when customers sign up and through subsequent transactions."

"One of the best ways to get prospective clients to buy from you is to introduce them to other satisfied customers. Because you can"

"Your logo should work as well on a business card as on the side of a truck. It should be scalable, memorable and distinctive. Icons are better than photographs, and your logo should be reproducible in black and white for faxes, photocopies and ads."

"Package both an electronic and hard copy version of your product and its benefits."

"Customers who feel like you have their best interests at heart will actually appreciate your persistent concern."

"Ads that grab and hold a prospect's attention are those that immediately communicate a benefit that answers the question, What's in it for me? Features aren't always memorable--benefits are."