

7 Tips to Improve Your Small Business Marketing from Andi Jarvis



When it comes to marketing your small business it's not always easy to find the time to dedicate to a sustained campaign. However, making a few small changes and setting aside some regular time can help businesses to start seeing a difference sooner rather than later.

Andi Jarvis, the Founder of Eximo Marketing, holds an MSc in Marketing and has extensive experience delivering both digital and traditional marketing campaigns for a wide range of clients. As a regular conference speaker and guest lecturer, Andi delivers Lunchtime Learning sessions facilitated by the Cathedral Quarter BID (Business Improvement District). Andi shares his seven practical and easy-to-implement digital marketing tips for small business owners:

1. Focus on your customers

It might seem like an obvious tip, but many people can get distracted from their main goal with vanity metrics and chasing after the next "big thing" in marketing. Andi is a firm believer in making sure your marketing efforts are focused on the most important thing to your business – your customer: "Marketing is about getting the message to your customer in a way that they understand, through a channel that has their attention, to get them to take the action that you want them to take" said Andi.

2. Spend what you can afford

The marketing channels and methods available to you to help you reach your customer are always evolving. From print to radio, and from social media to video, there are many tools available to help you share your marketing message. For small businesses especially, this means maximising your marketing opportunities while spending what you can afford.

Andi explained: “Lots of companies ask me how much they should be spending on Facebook adverts, on creating a video for their brand, the simple answer is spending what you can afford. If you can afford to hire a videographer to create a professional video, then go for it. If you can’t, use the tools available to you to make your own.”

3. Use the tools available to you

There are so many tools and resources available now that you don’t need to be an expert to use. One of Andi’s favourites is Canva: “For good quality images and graphics, it helps to use a graphic designer” he said, adding: “If you have a flair for design, that’s great, and tools like Canva can help you create images for social media, your website, etc. If you can use it, make the most of it. If you have the budget for a designer, spend it.”

4. Make your content F.A.B.

People make purchase decisions based on the Features you tell them about, but this information is usually incomplete or too technical. Explain the Advantages and Benefits as well to engage customers and aid their purchasing decision. Andi’s top tip? Tell the story backwards:

Andi said: “Talk about the Benefits first, then the Advantages for the customer, before listing the Features that make the Benefits and Advantages possible. Humans engage with narrative, so tell your customers the story of how your product will benefit them. There will be fewer benefits in comparison to advantages and features, but they are important to identify.”

5. Don’t forget about the dinosaurs

A typical Facebook post has organic reach of around 7% of the page’s total likes. Email has an average open rate of 15-25%. Direct mail can be more expensive but also very effective. Not sure which to use? Go back to asking a key marketing question – where are your customers? Andi’s advice is: “If you are considering direct mail, target current customers first and spend what you can afford. Useful mail sits around the house for a week or two and gets undivided attention when it is being read. Why not try a blended approach? Stats show social and email campaigns improve following a direct mail campaign.”

6. Always have a plan

Andi explained: “If it’s important for your business to drive new customers and increase sales, why do you only give it a couple of minutes attention, or post sporadically on social media?” Some form of planning is better than no planning at all. Get a 12-month wall calendar and plan out your marketing campaigns in advance.

7. Customer reviews and testimonials are key

Make it your mission to collect customer feedback and use it in your marketing. Facebook and Google offer user-friendly review options, and for those in restaurants, travel, or tourism, TripAdvisor is still top.

“91% of customers trust a review more than a salesperson” said Andi.

“Got a bad review? Think of it as invaluable feedback that you otherwise wouldn’t know about your business and use it to make your business better. Taking proactive action and responding positively to a negative review is an opportunity to gain a loyal customer.”

Want to hear even more top marketing tips from Andi?

Check out the full recording of his session on the Cathedral Quarter website: <https://www.cathedralquarterbelfast.com/whats-on/lunchtime-learning-7-tips-to-improve-your-marketing>

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