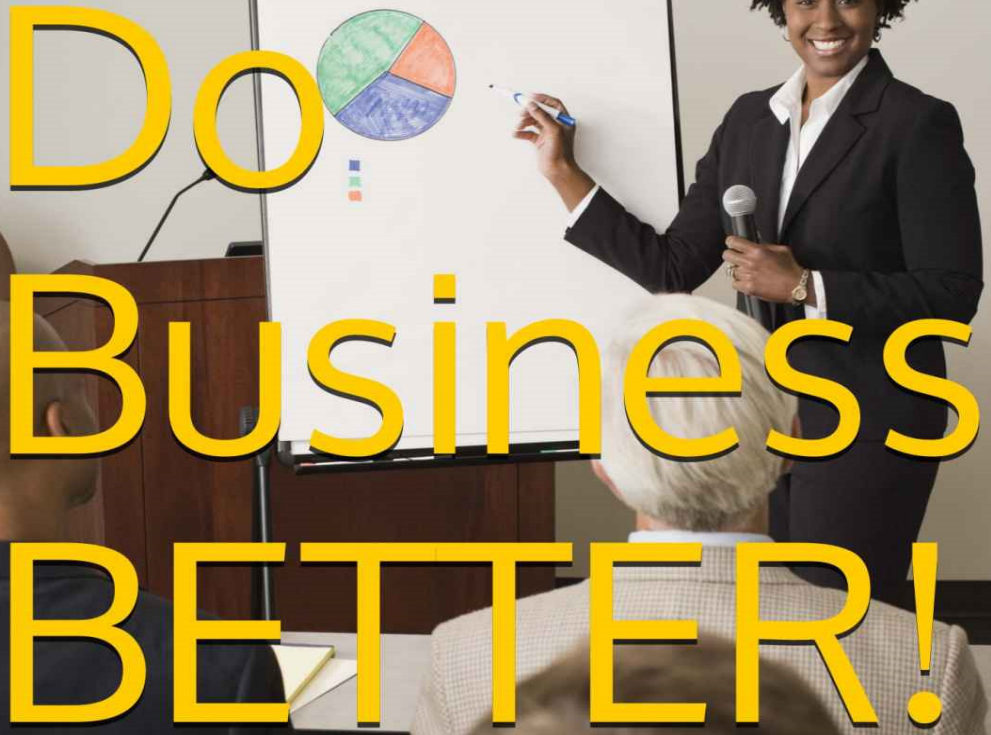


CORNELL D. GREEN

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark blazer over a white collared shirt, stands smiling and pointing with a blue marker at a whiteboard. The whiteboard features a pie chart with three segments: green, orange, and blue. Below the pie chart are three small colored squares (blue, green, orange) and a small red square. She holds a silver microphone in her left hand. In the foreground, the backs of several audience members' heads are visible as they sit in chairs, facing the presenter. The scene is set in a conference room with a wooden podium to the left of the whiteboard.

Do  
Business  
BETTER!

Why Small Businesses  
Fail - And How NOT To



CORNELL GREEN

Do Business BETTER!

*Why Small Businesses Fail - And How NOT To*



*First published by 21st Century CommunIT Solutions 2016*

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*Third edition*

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## #3: Marketing

A handful of **business cards** and a **no-frills website** are **no longer a sufficient** Small Business [marketing strategy](#)<sup>26</sup>. The word “**marketing**” typically brings to mind **expensive media campaigns**, **billboards** and the services of **highly-paid advertising**<sup>27</sup> **firms**. Clearly many Small Businesses have *neither* the **time** nor the **resources** (*money, personnel, expertise*) to take **this approach** to marketing, but that *doesn't let them off the hook*.

Many [Small Business](#)<sup>28</sup> owners and operators either **have prepared a business plan**, or know that they should. But many are *completely unaware* of the **need to prepare a marketing plan**. New clients won't find you just because you want their business, and even existing **customers and clients** **would benefit** from an **understanding of your full range of goods or services**, and a constant **reminder that they are available**.



Small Business **entrepreneurs** and “**solopreneurs**” are quite busy, especially in today’s economy. It’s easy to **consider a marketing strategy a “nice-to-have”**, rather than a “**need-to-have**” element of doing business. But consider this: why do well-known, **successful corporations spend millions of dollars each year on marketing?** Even though **we are already familiar with** the coffee shops, fast food restaurants and supermarkets we do business with, **they still expend a lot of energy reminding us** of their **brands**, their **offerings** and the overall “*feel*” of their **products and establishments**.

**Marketing is not advertising**, although advertising is a component. **Advertising** is about what **goods or services you offer, price and availability**. According to Wikipedia, “**Marketing is used to identify the [customer](#)<sup>29</sup>, to satisfy the customer, and to keep the customer.**” While Small Businesses **may not have the budgets** of large corporations, **they have a greater need to focus on acquiring new customers, and retaining existing ones.**

**McDonald’s or Walmart can survive a considerable decrease in [clientele](#)<sup>30</sup>** (not that they would *enjoy* it). For a Small Business, **losing even a few clients can spell disaster**. Since they don’t enjoy the *regional* or *national* visibility of major firms, they cannot depend on the *product* or *brand* recognition that brings in customers at random.

Look to as many **free or low-cost resources** as possible to promote your business and market your offerings. Social media, such as **twitter**, **[Facebook](#)**<sup>31</sup>, **[LinkedIn](#)**<sup>32</sup> and such are not just for kids: they can provide **a range of exposure** once available only via **television** or **radio advertisements**. Low-cost “real world” techniques, such as **focused flyer distribution, bulletin boards** and well-designed **business cards** are not to be overlooked.

**Email marketing sites** such as **[ConstantContact](#)**<sup>33</sup> and **[Mailerlite](#)**<sup>34</sup> are hidden treasures: **Mailerlite** allows you to create **mailing lists of up to**

**1,000 addresses**, and send up to **12,000 messages each month**. With templates, automation (that goes *far beyond* sending a scheduled sequence of messages) and video tutorials available, it's a **secret weapon** I recommend as an **indispensable** Small Business **marketing resource**.

You still **need a strategy**, which requires more detail than can be provided in a blog post. **These tips**, however, can help point you in the right direction:

- Determine the **focus** of your offering
- Identify the **value** proposition to the customer
- Maintain a **consistent message**
- Develop a **memorable catchphrase** or **tagline**

Remember: marketing is about **the impression you make** in the **mind** of the *existing* or *potential* client or customer. **Business** is about *relationships* – **marketing** starts the *conversation*.

## Related articles

- [Survival Tips for Solopreneurs](#)<sup>35</sup> (inc.com)
- [Don't Look Now, But Small Business Is On The Brink Of Something Big](#)<sup>36</sup> (businessinsider.com)
- [42 Ideas for Your 2021 Small Business Marketing Strategy](#)<sup>37</sup> (blog.hubspot.com)
- [Allocating Resources to Help Small Business Grow](#)<sup>38</sup> (blogs.constantcontact.com)



# Marketing: The WHY - You Sell to Those You Serve

“People buy what They WANT - NOT what You Sell”

## ◆ It IS All About Me

**M**arketing is **not**, primarily, **about selling**.

Marketing answers the question “What’s in it for Me?” (see the **WHAT** section of “**Clients**”, chapter 4). Marketing spreads **awareness** and **understanding** of your *brand* and brand *values*, and informs the public how your brand *satisfies* their **wants** and **needs**, and *speaks to* their **values**.

## ◆ Make Your Mark(et)

Marketing is **not ADVERTISING**.

It isn’t about your **PRODUCT**, or Your **COMPANY**. It’s about the **VALUE** *you offer to your* **MARKET**. It is the *initial exchange* in the **ongoing conversation** that is **SALES**. Marketing is not the *style*; it’s the **substance**.

Logos, typefaces, color schemes, snappy sales copy and eye-catching multime-

dia content are merely *elements* of an **effective marketing campaign** - they are the *bricks*, not the **building**. An effective marketing campaign tells your **brand story** (see the **WHY** section of “**Location**”, chapter 7), then provides evidence that your business *lives up to* your brand story.

### ◆ Start the Conversation

Marketing is **not PROMOTION**.

You promote your business to those who have *already bought* from you. Marketing is the **value-based conversation** that LEADS to the “**buy**” choice (see the “**BTI Pyramid of Business Fundamentals – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sales Conversation**” graphic in the Introduction chapter, “**Two Years of Steady Referrals Almost Ruined My Business**”).

Promotion is *reminiscing after the fact*, to ensure that your brand remains “**top of mind**”. MARKETING must *engage the prospective buyer* in the *initial conversation*, speaking to their **interests and values**. It must be as if we **read their minds** and *wrote the perfect script* to engage them.

# Marketing: The WHAT - Self-fulfilling Profit, See?

“Don’t ask ‘How much can I make?’ - ask ‘How many can I SERVE??’”

## ◆ Who Do You SERVE?

“**Market**” defines both the *people* you seek to serve and the *messages* you use to connect with them. Your “**marketing**” doesn’t just **speak to your audience** of potential customers - it *creates it*.

Profit is the **result of selling value** at a price that is *affordable* to the buyer, and *leaves YOU money* after you’ve covered ALL Your costs. **Trying** to “*be profitable*” is **doing it backwards**. Focusing on money will *never work* – it’s what I refer to as attempting to “*pick people’s pockets*”. **Think like a buyer** instead of like a *seller*, and consider the following when preparing your marketing strategy:

- **WHO** wants what you’re offering?
- **WHY** do they want it? How badly?
- Can they get what you offer **somewhere else**? From *someone else*?

- Have they **ever bought** what you offer *before*?
- **WHY** should they buy it from YOU?

You should **answer ALL of these questions**. Creatively of course – answer them in your “**brand conversation**”. That’s what **Marketing** is: a *conversation based on value*. Though you may use the same media (audio, video, printed flyers, etc) as *Advertising*, **Marketing** is *not about selling* your product. In fact, Marketing is **not about your product**.

**Marketing** is about You **beginning the value-based conversation** between you and Your potential buyers. Effective Marketing speaks *in terms of the BUYER’S values* – their “**desires** and **requirements**”. Always remember: **Marketing** starts the *conversation*, NOT the *sales pitch*.



# Marketing: The HOW - Create the Crowd You Cater To

“You have no market ‘waiting for you’ - You have a market waiting for you to CREATE it”

◆ Nothing grows until you plant it

A *basic misunderstanding* about Marketing is that *your buyer community* – your MARKET – is “**Out There, Somewhere**”, and all you have to do is find the right combination of **magic phrases** and **captivating images** to *open* their eyes, *capture* their attention and *win* their business.

Wrong, wrong, WRONG! A **profitable market** is not something you *discover*, or stumble upon by luck: you *create your market* yourself. Effective marketing is not a *request* to **surrender cash** but an *invitation* to **receive value**. It’s about the **value** you *provide* and the **needs** and **desires** you *fulfill* on behalf of the **market** you seek to *serve*.

## ◆ Time to Market

**NOBODY** ever wakes up *eager to give you* their hard earned money. **No one cares about you**, your *business* or you *need* for cash, fame or a sense of fulfillment. I don't write this to offend you or discourage you – my aim is to manage your expectations, and set a realistic view of Marketing I **wish I'D had** when I first went independent.

While it's true that *none* of your potential or existing customers are losing much sleep worrying about YOUR worries or concerns, EVERYBODY has **wants & needs**, and Effective Marketing seeks to *satisfy* these – IN THAT ORDER. Your Marketing – Your Brand Story – must speak to these **wants** and **needs** so that your customers and clients recognize not that THEY are YOUR Market, but that **YOU are the fulfillment** of their desires and the solution to their requirements.

## ◆ Speak THEIR Language

Marketing is NOT SELLING. Don't talk *functions, features, product specifications* or *price*. You're *not selling anything* yet. People buy **BRANDS**, not **PRODUCTS**. They don't buy *sneakers*: they buy **Nikes** or **Adidas**. They don't buy *cars*: it's a **Mercedes**, a **BMW**, a **Land Rover**. Starbucks turned a "cuppa Joe" into a full blown **social experience**. These brands have invested a lot of time, money and creativity not just describing a particular *shoe, vehicle* or *beverage*; "Just Do IT!" has *nothing* to do with what you put on your feet, but **EVERYTHING** to do with why you'd choose Nike of another brand of sneaker.

What is it about **your brand** that people can relate to? More to the point, how does *your brand* **relate to your customers**? Can you sum up in *a few sentences* what would *intrigue* a stranger enough to **continue talking with**

**you** about your brand? Again - your **BRAND**, not your **PRODUCT**? For example, *my* business - **CommuniT Solutions** - helps solopreneurs and Small Business owners **save** time, **make** money and **grow** their customer base.

**How** does it do that? Well, if **that's the question** that just popped into your mind... do you see how ***that would compel you*** to have a conversation with me? If that *doesn't* intrigue you or inspire you to keep talking, **that's ok...** it just means you're probably **not my customer**. Keep this in mind - the purpose of Marketing is **not** to get EVERYONE to talk with you; it's to ***start the conversation*** the RIGHT PEOPLE, and get **them** to talk with **you**.

And KEEP them talking with you, **until they choose** to say "YES", and begin a **business relationship**.

