



Marketing for Small Business Woman

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Recently, we published an article embracing and supporting future female entrepreneurs. As promised, this is the second and last chapter that complements the first by talking about issues to be addressed at the moment you decide to establish your small business.

The first topic to address is selecting the name of your company and the brand name of your product. Be aware that the name of your company will not necessarily be the same name as your product or products. For instance, the 3M Company (formerly known as the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company) manufactures the product known as Post it. However, before you name any product or company, make sure that your selections are available as domain names so you can establish web portals and links. It would be a pity to launch a product and print business cards featuring the names of your new business and product only to realize the names belong to someone else in cyberspace or that perhaps the domain name is for sale for thousands of dollars.

Equally essential to selection of your domain name is the importance of looking for your business and product name availability in the most common social networks. Since your product name is your brand, make sure that the name flows, is easy to spell and pronounce and is short and catchy.

After you establish your domains, create an email account. It is quite common to establish an email account using the word 'information' or 'info' along with the domain name (i.e. information@dondeyquien.com). But, this type of email address has been known to become problematic in that it tends to attract spammers who will bombard you with unwanted junk mail many of which contain viruses.

The hosting company that will harbor your website usually features an anti-spam tool called Spambox. However, this tool is evolving and may still have loopholes. As an effective alternative, I recommend opening an email account using Gmail since Google has tough spam filters. You can always import your Gmail account into Microsoft Outlook if that is your email platform of choice.

Establishing your Gmail account opens the doors to a host of amazing Google tools all for free. Consider Google Analytics and Google Business for example. Before you get scared off at the thought of learning how to navigate through all of this automation, know that all of these tools are very easy to implement. Google Analytics will help you understand from where your web traffic is coming. Establishing your business on Google with a virtual location will provide recognition and allow customers and clients to find you and trust you.

It is not a good idea to establish your business address using your home or apartment address. Go to Mail Boxes Etc, any UPS Store or even the United States Post Office or any other similar entity in your country and rent a mail box for your business. Cost varies from \$15 to \$35 per month. If you live within the United States, you can register your business online through the State Division of Corporations of the state where you live. For instance, in Florida the department is called Sunbiz.org. Depending on the type of organization of your business you will pay a fee ranging from \$70 to \$180 dollars per year. The next day you can visit the IRS website to obtain your free business tax identification number or employer identification number.

By the way, you are not required to have employees and you do not need the help of an attorney. For purposes of communications you can obtain a Skype phone number to use for your business. You can forward your incoming Skype calls to your cellular phone and speak to callers without exposing your personal phone number. Setting up a Skype phone costs around \$80 annually. You can always get a monochromatic set of 100 business cards for free through Vista Print.

If you do not have easy access to the internet or don't have a computer, speak to your phone carrier and engage in an unlimited data plan. T-Mobile offers great options and requires no contract. If you cannot afford the latest Samsung or iPhone cellular, you can always purchase a secondhand unlocked device at a discount through Amazon. Lastly, there are websites where you can pitch for capital that will help you get started and defeat some initial low budget expenses such as GoFundMe.

The next step is to establish your social media accounts of choice: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, a blog and a Google Plus account. After you have established the exposure avenues for your company, your product and yourself the real marketing begins. These tools are only as effective as you make them. These pages will not impact your marketing efforts without diligence, patience and discipline. You must infuse information such as thoughts, comments and articles on a regular basis. They are free and will certainly act as your sales engine contributing to organic growth since no financial investment is needed.

The world of social media can be a new and exciting place for the novice just getting her feet wet. It can also be a bit intimidating if you're not accustomed to it. Once you've learned how to navigate through platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook and learned the lingo so to speak, you will soon discover opportunities a few keystrokes away. I don't want to get into more detail but rather direct you to the internet which is chalk full of education and direction about Tweeting, blogging and the like.

Every day there are new tricks and options and this is how your brand can build up strength. Once you gain some momentum with your new business management care will prove to be quite beneficial. You can always talk to us about implementing a web platform designed to manage your business in a virtual manner and implementing customer relationship tools that will always keep you connected not only to them but to their referrals. Customers are your field soldiers that will always talk about you and your products, spreading the good word. Social networking is the perfect medium in which to showcase what you do. In today's marketing era consumers want to buy products with a sense of familiarity about the company. In this anonymous world, people want to identify with the person behind the product. This includes the production process of your product, ingredients, materials, your philosophy and the owner of the company -- you.

Luis E. Woolley