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Marketing Help for the Self-Employed

For self-employed individuals, marketing can seem like a daunting task, especially where cost is a critical concern. But, there is hope! Online marketing can be an effective way for your VR customers to connect with their potential market and for almost no cost.

Here are some helpful hints for these self-employed individuals looking to build brand awareness through online marketing.

Get Online | Helping SE customers to get their business online is the first step to successfully marketing their business. Setting up a clear, easy-to-navigate website gets this started. Because [nearly 98%](#) of consumers research products and services online, it is extremely important that a business establishes this online presence. Much of this consumer 'research' results in a purchasing decision being made. In fact, according to recent study, [89% of consumers](#) who were surveyed reported that they use the Internet to make a purchasing decision. Setting up a website can be a straight forward, low-cost, and fairly simple process. For example, Google's [Get Your Business Online](#) initiative makes it easy. Sign-up is free, resulting in a beautiful, fully-functional website with a custom domain name, as well as free web hosting for an entire year.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES |

For more, check out our SMLS [Target Marketing](#) and [Marketing Communications](#) booklets

Be Social | Once they have a basic website, the next step is to establish a consistent presence on social media. There are a few things to keep in mind when looking to market any business via social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, which are all outlined in our [4 Solutions for Effective Social Media Marketing](#) article. While this represents a certain level of effort, there is no denying how effective and low-cost social media marketing can be. According to a study by Fleishman-Hillard and Harris, [nearly 50%](#) of participants surveyed currently 'follow' or 'friend' a brand on social networking sites. This is mostly due to the fact that consumers want to connect with a business or brand, and social networking sites offer a simple solution to this need.

Email Campaigns | An email outreach marketing campaign can represent another cost-effective way to gain recognition within the local community. Email campaigns should never just be about promoting a business. Instead, they should be about educating the general public about the industry which the business serves. For example, for a self-employed home inspector, a great way to gain new customers is by emailing a monthly newsletter outlining the latest trends within the housing market, as well as providing some kind of specialized, useful advice. The newsletter might feature an article titled, '6 Signs You May Need a New Roof.' This showcases the business' expertise and offers helpful advice to their audience base.

Using these three outreach tools to build brand and develop customers can be an effective and inexpensive marketing strategy for any business of any size, including a part-time self-employed operation. However, it is important to remember that in order for these strategies to produce the desired results, it will take time and commitment to keep it going.

For more information, visit: <http://www.buzvr.org/>

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