

## **Growing Your Business: Easy and Inexpensive Business Development Ideas**

Whether you are selling services or products, one of the most critical parts of your business's financial health is attracting new clients, customers, or patients. Some businesses spend little on their marketing budget, while others spend a significant amount of their revenues in this area. Many times, focusing on marketing is a sore subject not from a monetary standpoint, but from a time limitation. Business development does take time, dedication and focus but is a key component to success. Please consider implementing some of these suggestions during the new year.

### **Existing Clients/Customers/Patients**

*Do they know you are looking for more business? When was the last time you asked for a referral? Sometimes your customers don't send you more business because they don't know you are interested. Let them know you are interested in more great customers like them and consider rewarding them when they do so.*

*Show your existing customers that you care about them. Sending thank you notes, greeting cards around the holidays or for their birthdays, and hosting an annual open house are all great ways to stay in touch with your current clients and show them you care.*

### **Social Media**

*There are over 1.1 billion Facebook users, 600 million Twitter users, and 250 million LinkedIn users. Does your business have a presence on these networks? If so, how regularly are you interacting with them? Pushing out content to users of these networks is a great way to stay connected to your existing clients and put your business out in front of potential prospects.*

### **Testimonials**

*If you are like me, when you buy something online, you check the customer reviews for the product and the seller. Posting testimonials from your existing customers on your website or elsewhere can have a large impact on those considering your business. Be sure to obtain permission from your customers first before posting.*

### **Referral Network**

*Many types of business rely on referrals from outside sources. Do you have a solid network of professionals outside of your business that actively refer to you? There are many professional and business organizations around that exist for this very purpose. Joining these groups and getting to know others is a great way to start building your network. Find a few individuals that you connect well with and go to lunch outside of the group meetings to learn more about them.*

### **Articles and Presentations**

*Writing articles in local publications or trade specific journals is a great way to get in front of your desired audience. It also positions your business as a leader in the market.*

*Presenting seminars to existing customers and prospects is another excellent method to increase awareness of your business to the community. Often times, partnering with another business catering to similar customers can increase the effectiveness of the session.*

“Dig your well before you are thirsty” is one of my favorite quotes from Harvey McKay. It sums up the business development philosophy quite well. Business development takes time, energy, and patience but the end result is very rewarding.