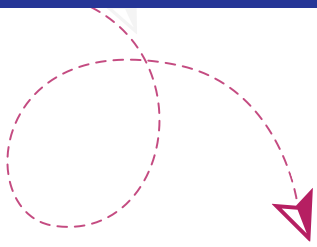


30+ Effective Strategies to Help Your Small Business Drive Leads





When it comes to running a small business, finding new leads is always a challenge. Whether you're a startup or an established business, the key to sustainable growth lies in continually expanding and maintaining your customer base.

No matter if you're a real estate investor, a lawyer, financial advisor or other professional – a comprehensive marketing strategy begins with getting more leads (more eyeballs on your work, and on the results you provide to your target audience)! You have to first CAPTURE their attention!

A successful marketing strategy must have all three of these elements working together to be effective:

- your who (your market),
- what you are saying (your message) and
- how you are getting that message out there (your method)

You may also notice that I do not talk about paid ads or setting up complicated funnels – I only focus on simple, organic marketing strategies.

Let's explore 30+ effective strategies to help your small business attract and engage with fresh leads. As you're reading these strategies, remember that effective marketing doesn't end in capturing the leads; it's a 5-step process (capture, engage, cultivate, convert, wow).

1. Define your niche.

Before diving into prospecting, clearly define WHO you are looking for (your target audience). Understand their demographics, preferences, and pain points to tailor your approach. This will be critical for developing effective marketing messages.

Niching down can be a scary strategy for small business owners. Here's a series of podcast episodes on debunking the myths and more support (Episodes [63](#), [64](#), [65](#)). Why your small business needs to niche? ([here](#)).

2. Build personal connections.

Foster personal connections with your customers. Engage in genuine conversations, learn their names, show interest in their needs and make your customer feel valued.

I wrote about this topic in this blog – 3 Common Prospecting Strategies ([here](#)).

3. Provide excellent customer experience.

Deliver exceptional customer service (wow them) to create a positive experience for your customers. Satisfied customers are more likely to refer your business to others.

Check out this blog: Are your clients getting the Disney experience? [here](#)

4. Leverage follow-up.

Foster personal connections with your customers. Engage in genuine conversations, learn their names, show interest in their needs and make your customer feel valued.

Are you committing these 7 deadly follow up sins? ([here](#)).

5. Leverage social media

Harness the power of social media to connect with potential customers. Focus on no more than two social platforms where your target customers spend time online. Engage in meaningful conversations and share valuable content. Your goal is engagement!

Let's connect on LinkedIn – [here](#).

6. Optimize your website.

Ensure your website is optimized for search engines. Include your location in title tags, meta descriptions and headers. Create landing pages for all products and use lead magnets. Ensure your website is mobile-friendly and has a responsive design. This will improve your online visibility, making it easier for prospects to find you.

When was the last time you updated your website? Here are a couple of my blog posts that can help you know which elements are important for a client-attracting website:

- Smart Ways To Save Time And Money On Website Design ([read here](#))
- Core Components For A Client-Attracting Website ([read here](#))

7. Content Marketing.

Create high-quality, relevant content that addresses the needs of your target audience. Blog posts, videos, podcast, and infographics can establish your authority and attract prospects. Write blog post or articles about local topics to demonstrate your connection to the community.

Here's a blog post on the subject of content creation:

- Creating Awesome Content To Position Your Brand As An Authority ([read here](#))

Have you listened to my Work Less PROFIT More business podcast?

You can find it on your favorite listening platform or [here](#).

- Repurposing Content to Get The Most Bang For Your Buck with Guest Lee Midlane ([listen here](#))

8. Networking events.

Attend industry-specific networking events and conference. This provides an opportunity to connect with industry peers, potential clients, partners and speaking opportunities.

When I lived in the city, I used to attend lots of networking events and always felt uneasy because I never knew what to say. Here's the blog on that topic ([here](#)).

9. Partnerships and collaborations.

Form strategy partnerships with other businesses that complement yours. This can open up new avenues for prospecting and opportunities to co-market or bundle deals.

Over the years, I've been fortunate to partner with a podcast editing agency, a website development agency, a real estate investing educational platform and many others!

10. Email marketing.

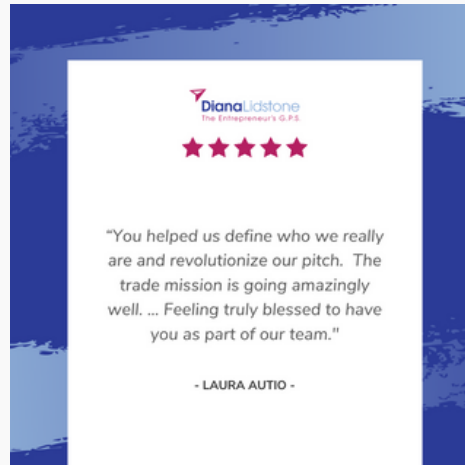
Develop targeted email campaigns to cultivate & nurture leads. On average, email marketing is the most overlooked strategy and yet it provides the highest return on investment (according to BDC, a 4200% ROI). Email can provide valuable information and promotions to keep prospects engaged. You can also leverage email marketing to solicit existing customers to make reorders. Remember to have a sales funnel for all of your offers and lead magnets.

One of my Top 5 popular podcast episodes talks about email marketing [here](#).

11. Customer feedback.

Pay attention to customer feedback and online reviews. Use positive testimonials as social proof and address negative feedback to improve your offers or train your staff.

Here's a testimonial example:



12. Host webinars and live events.

Showcase your expertise by hosting your own webinars and live events. These not only position you as an authority but also attracts prospects interest in the topic. You may find that you can record popular webinars or masterclasses and use them as part of a marketing funnel.

As a speaker, for many years, I hosted my own live events in Montreal, Ottawa & Kingston. These events grew my email list and filled my group programs.



13. Utilizing search engine optimization (SEO) strategies.

SEO helps improve your online visibility, making it easier for potential customers to find your products or services. Conduct a thorough keyword research to identify the terms and phrases your target audience is likely to use when searching for products or services similar to yours. Stay updated on SEO trends and implement strategies to enhance your website's search engine ranking.

Here's a bonus video to help you get started on SEO [here](#).

14. Use local SEO.

If your business caters to a local audience, optimize for local search. Include location-specific terms in your content, meta tags and headings. Use tools like Google Keyword Planner or SEMrush to discover relevant local keywords. Create location-specific landing pages if your business operates in multiple locations.

15. Create a 'Google My Business' profile.

If you're a local business, claim and optimize your Google My Business profile. Include local keywords and encourage customer reviews. This will help your business appear in local searches.

I'd be so grateful if you would leave a review on my page [here](#). Thank you!

16. Run contests and giveaways.

Everyone loves free stuff. Engage your audience by running contests and giveaways on social media or your website. This not only attracts attention but also helps in capturing leads to build your email list.

If you didn't know it already, I have a full page of free gifts and resources for small business owners just like you. Check them out [here](#).

17. Offer free strategy session.

Magic can happen over the phone or via Zoom. Use a scheduling link to offer free 30 minute audits or strategy sessions to get to know prospects and pitch them on your services. This can attract individuals who are genuinely interested in your products, programs or services.

Want a complimentary Business Freedom Strategy Session – [apply here](#).

18. Build a loyalty program.

A loyalty program not only encourages repeat business but can also motivate customers to refer others in order to gain additional rewards. Your goal should be to make it worth their while to participate.

19. Create a referral program.

Generating referrals in a small business involves building strong relationships with existing customers and creating a positive reputation that encourages them to recommend your products, programs, or services to others. Formalize how customers will receive incentives for referring others. This could be in the form of discounts, loyalty points or exclusive access to promotions.

I've even seen this work for an online accounting program! So use your imagination for your industry or specific niche.

20. Ask for referrals directly.

Don't be afraid to ask satisfied customers for referrals. If they've had a positive experience, they are often willing to recommend your business to friends, family or colleagues.

21. Highly referral success stories.

Showcase successful referral stories on your website, social media or marketing materials. This provides social proof and encourages others to follow suit.

22. Network within the community.

Attend local Chamber events and network with business leaders to build relationships within the community. Word of mouth in local circles can be a powerful source of referrals. However, with most marketing strategies, be sure to re-evaluate the effectiveness of each. Sometimes, you might find yourself attending multiple networking events for several months or years and never get a client or even a speaking opportunity.

23. Educate customers on your referral program.

Use a newsletter, your employees and social media to communicate your referral program to customers. Make sure they understand how it works and the benefits they can receive by referring others.

24. Host customer appreciate events.

Organize events or promotions to show appreciation for your customers. This strengthens your relationship with existing customers and creates opportunities for them to refer others. This acknowledgment reinforces positive behaviour and strengthens your relationship with them.

One of my very first clients, a financial advisor, held an annual dinner for his clients at a zoo! Despite the significant investment, he told me it solidified his customer base and brought him new clients! What 'out of the box' event could you host that would bring you new leads?

25. Use other peoples' stages to showcase your expertise.

Become known as the business leader who speaks both on live stages or virtual stages. Being interviewed on industry podcasts is a great opportunity to showcase your expertise.

If you're a business leader who has a podcast or event and you'd like an experienced guest speaker, I'd love to connect with you. Please email me at: diana@dianalidstone.com. Thank you.

26. Start your own podcast.

Podcasting is a great way to cultivate and nurture your potential customers. Many of them will binge listen to several episodes at a time. Your voice will be in their head at various times during their day.

There are specific strategies to implement with your podcast so that you actually learn WHO is listening to your episodes and how to get them onto your email list.

Have you listened & subscribed to my Work Less PROFIT More podcast ([here](#)).

27. Create a quiz.

These days quizzes are very popular in all types of industries! Quizzes can be short and informative – like what's your personality? Or they can be much longer and provide insight into your customer's current problem.

Check out my Business Freedom Scorecard [here](#) where you can discover the #1 challenge that's holding your business back.

28. Share your advice and expertise on Reddit and/or Medium.

Social media isn't the only place to share your content and expertise. The wider the range of places that you are seen, the more likely you are to be found by your ideal target audience.

29. Guest blog.

Similar to speaking on other people's stages, or podcasts, guest blogging takes advantage of getting your expertise into someone else's email list! One of the best ways to do this is to offer that they can guest blog on your email list.

30. Guest teach in someone else's group.

Teaching showcases your subject matter expertise. However, teaching your subject in someone else's group (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) is very similar to speaking on someone else's stage. You become seen as an authority to a new group of people. One way to capture those leads is to offer a complimentary strategy session, a free gift or a lead magnet each and every time you speak.

31. Improve your landing/sales pages on your website.

Optimizing your website's sales pages is a sure way to get more leads. It's been one of the most challenging lead generators for me personally. Study successful landing pages and notice that they usually have a very similar format. In fact, they follow a template - check out my landing page for Differentiate to Grow ([here](#)). It's a template that I use over and over again. Do you have a template for your landing/sales pages?

32. Add or update an FAQ page on your website.

Frequently asked questions (FAQ) are a great way to overcome objections and save time answering the same question frequently. The answers could be in video format if that is easier for you and would be simpler for your customers.

33. Create relationships with the press & ask to get featured.

Truthfully, it's not that difficult to get invited to local television shows – you just have to ask and have a pitch ready that is newsworthy. For instance, I was on Rogers Television Ottawa during Women's Month because I was holding a women's business event. It gave me the opportunity to speak about the event and showcase my book.



What monthly themes could your business contribute valuable content for local media?

34. Sell your book on your own website.

Being an author is obviously a way to increase your authority and visibility. However in order to generate leads, it's important to use your book to gather those leads.

One way is to sell your book on your website and have it delivered by a 3-rd party.

Another way is to 'gift' a pdf version of your book on your website like I've done here with my best-selling book, SHIFT INTO RICH: Navigate the 9 roadblocks to small business success [here](#).



Diana Lidstone

A sought-after business coach for small business owners who want to stop being Chief Everything Officer and transform their business into a self-running engine, Diana Lidstone is a best-selling author, award-winning speaker and podcast host. After almost 40 years as an entrepreneur, she is best known for her straight-talk, no BS and the simple business and marketing strategies that bring her clients more joy, profit and freedom. Her podcast, Work Less PROFIT More business podcast offers tips and strategies for small business owners who want a sustainably profitable business without burn out.

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