

Short On Cash? Need A New Computer? Try Barter!

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By Marketing Basics

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So, what's barter? Barter is the exchange of goods and services without the use of cash. It is the oldest form of commerce, and today more and more businesses are discovering or rediscovering the awesome power of barter.

Here's how barter works: When you need a product or service for your business, instead of paying for it with cash, you instead pay for it with your otherwise unsold products or services, meanwhile allowing your business to expand without additional cash outlay. It is estimated that over 65% of the Fortune 500 companies engage in barter to one extent or another.

But don't get the impression that barter is just for big business. Local companies trade among themselves all the time, for products and services to reduce cash outlay, and to promote their businesses. For example:

A garage owner can barter his auto repair services for legal services with a local attorney.

An attorney can trade his services for office supplies, auto repair, business lunches and plumbing service.

A restaurant owner can trade his service for kitchen supplies, grocery products, new carpeting, and plumbing service.

A plumber can trade his service for auto repair, advertising, legal services or a home entertainment system.

And it goes on and on. With barter, you're limited only by your imagination.

So, how does one business approach another business about the possibility of bartering?

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The easiest way is probably to go through your local barter exchange. Just look in the yellow pages under "Barter and Trade Exchanges."

If you don't have a barter exchange where you live, no problem. Just pick up the telephone and call a company you're interested in bartering with.

Who knows, you just might be pleasantly surprised at the response you receive!

Barter: It's Not Just for Doctors Anymore

By Angie Dixon

Time was, in the country, the local "doc" was as likely to get paid with a couple of chickens as a couple of dollars. Doctors these days won't stand for that, of course, but while some people have moved completely away from barter and stayed there, others have embraced it wholeheartedly.

Today I worked on a barter deal with a web designer to do search engine optimization on my web site in exchange for some articles. I HATE doing SEO, and I LOVE writing articles. This person needs articles written and is good at SEO. It's a good match.

Later in the day I put together a mailing designed to entice a massage therapist into bartering for my coaching services. I have a lot of pain in my back and shoulders, and a massage would do me good, but I really can't afford monthly massages. If this works out, I will work an extra three hours a month in exchange for massages, hopefully every two weeks.

Barter isn't for everyone or every situation, but it does have some advantages for the home-based business. You can usually get something you need, you can save your cash for other things, which you also need, and you get a "customer" who's willing to give you referrals and testimonials.

How do you know if you should barter? If you have a skill or product people want, if you have the time or extra product to spare, and if you are willing to put in the effort looking for people to barter with, it might be a good idea for you.

Where do you find people to barter with? Check Google for barter directories and barter sites. Many Work at Home Mom sites have barter sections. If you don't find what you're looking for, go find someone who does or has what you need, and offer a barter deal. Sometimes they'll go for it, sometimes not. My SEO deal came through a barter site. My massage therapy plan is strictly my own. But I'm betting out of 60 massage therapists in my city, one will be interested.

If you don't have time or extra product, or if you're uncomfortable trading your products or services for other people's, then barter might not be right for you at this time. Keep it in mind for the future, though.

If you can get it, barter's a good deal. You often get more than you could afford to buy or would put money into, and you expand your business as well.

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Angie Dixon helps small business owners get their acts together. She is a personal development coach specializing in helping people integrate their home and work lives so they feel less stretched and more balanced. Get her FREE EBOOK on balance at

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to discover how coaching can change your life, contact Angie at

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