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Top Ten Frugal Ways To Market Your Small Business

By Bonnie Jo Davis

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Most, if not all, small businesses are built on a budget. Available funds must be used to buy technology, additional phone lines and marketing materials such as business cards. In this article you will find ten low cost or no cost tips that will help you get your first customer and build your business.

1) Obtain free or low cost business cards at a company such as www.VistaPrint.com. Add an explanatory tag line to identify your product or service. While you are running your normal errands drop off a business card at every business you see such as drycleaners, restaurants, gyms, etc.

2) Have a new or rebuilt shopping center opening in your town? Attend the grand opening and chat with the business owners and staff and hand out your free or low cost business cards.

3) Create flyers with your phone number on tear off tabs and place them at the library, grocery store, coffee shops, etc. Carry a few in your car with push pins so you never miss an opportunity.

4) Hold a contest. People love freebies. When you're handing out business cards and designing flyers highlight your contest for a limited time. Anyone who books at least two hours of your time during the contest month is entered into a drawing for a gift basket. Put together an inexpensive gift basket with sample size coffee, a coffee cup, a business book or best selling novel, cookies and crackers. Put the names of the qualifying clients in a hat and have your child draw the winning name. Take a picture of the gift basket and your child drawing the name out of the hat, scan the pictures and put them on your website along with the name of the winner.

5) Write an article that would appeal to your target audience such as small business owners, add a four to five line biography with your e-mail address and web site address. Submit the article to websites and e-zines that cater to your target audience.

6) Create an informative presentation around your topic area and contact your local Chamber of Commerce and offer to speak at a monthly meeting.

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7) Create coupons offering a free or discounted product or a free hour of service for every two or three hours of paid service. Give them out to prospective clients and to organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce to use in contests and give aways. Give the recipient an incentive to buy your product or use your services by giving the coupon an expiration date.

8) Use the time you spend sitting in traffic to gain new clients. For less than thirty dollars you can purchase a sign for your car from www.iprint.com or www.webdecal.com.

9) Create a press release announcing the opening of your business or some other milestone event. Send the press release to editors at your local newspaper and to other free area publications.

10) Ask for referrals. Give your business card to your family members, neighbors, hair salon, etc. and

ask that they pass them on. Offer an hour of free service or a free product to anyone who refers a client who signs a contract for services and give them a link on your web site.

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Book Review: "Frugal Living for Dummies"

By Deborah Shelton

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deborah@fiveminuteparent.com Word wrap to 60, (220 words)

Book Review: "Frugal Living for Dummies"

Reviewed by Deborah Shelton

"Frugal Living for Dummies"

by Deborah Taylor-Hough

Publisher: Wiley Publishing, Inc.

ISBN: 0-7645-5403-4

Price: \$16.99 US

Whatever your reason for wanting to save money (job loss, suddenly single-income, another child on the way, rising college tuition costs), arm yourself with Frugal Living for Dummies for super saving success.

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This book details so much more than coupon-clipping. Some of the chapter topics include ideas for frugal family fun, thrifty cooking tips, ways to cut utility bills, setting a budget and lots of inexpensive gift ideas. And that's just the beginning! Frugal Living also provides icons in the margins that alert readers to important reminders, tips, super savers, special warnings, great ideas and handy checklists.

Each section is jam-packed with cost-cutting ideas for baby showers, back-to-school needs, dinner parties, gift giving, auto maintenance, home cleaning, dining out, laundry, family trips.... Basically, Deborah Taylor-Hough offers money-saving solutions for every aspect of your life.

Frugal Living for Dummies is an essential reference for your family collection. This book will make a practical and thoughtful gift for young couples just starting their lives together, college students on their own for the first time, single-income families, new parents, and anyone who needs

proven ways for cutting costs while keeping their sanity.

A must-have guidebook for the novice penny pincher as well as the seasoned dollar stretcher.

About the Reviewer: Deborah Shelton is a mother, freelance writer, and author of the brand new book, "The Five Minute Parent: Fun & Fast Activities for You and Your Little Ones." Visit Deborah's website for more family-friendly ideas: <http://www.fiveminuteparent.com>



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