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Uncover Your Hidden Markets

By Bob Leduc

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by: **Bob Leduc**

Want a simple, low-cost way to boost your sales? Just uncover the narrowly defined sub-markets hidden in your main market. Then create special versions of your advertising to focus on the specific needs of prospects in these hidden market segments.

1. How to Find Your Hidden Markets

Start by evaluating your existing customers. Look for groups of customers with similar characteristics you do not currently cater to in your advertising. Then create new versions of your sales message appealing to their specific needs. You will attract a lot more customers just like them.

For example, the owner of an accounting service marketing to small businesses noticed that many of his new clients were landscapers or insurance brokers. Therefore he created separate web sites highlighting the unique benefits his service provided to clients in each of these businesses.

The two sites looked similar, but their sales content was customized to appeal to the specific needs of potential clients in each market. Visitors to either site probably assumed he specialized in working with companies in their industry. Within 2 months he was able to increase the number of new clients from each group by over 25 percent.

Tip: You can also narrow the appeal of an existing web site without losing its effectiveness with your main market. Just create customized web pages for each market segment you want to target. Then add a link to each of these specialized pages on your home page.

2. Adapt to Your Customers and Become a Specialist

As you work with a lot of customers and prospects in a narrowly defined market, you gain special insight into how they think and what they need. You will be able to communicate with them as in

"insider" using their own special vocabulary and style.

Prospects and customers will think of you as being "one of us" ...a specialist who caters to their unique needs. They will want to do business with you because you understand their special situation and know exactly what they need.

As a specialist you also eliminate much of your competition ..even if their prices are lower. Most customers will pay a little more to buy from a specialist so they can avoid the risk of doing business with a competitor who has little or no understanding of their special needs.

Bonus: When you deliver results as a specialist you also establish yourself as an expert in your field. Customers will proudly refer other prospects to you. They appreciate what you did for them and are confident you will deliver the same results for others.

You can boost your sales significantly by using the two simple, low-cost steps revealed in this article. Just (1) identify the narrowly defined sub-markets hidden in your main market. Then (2) become a specialist catering to the unique needs of the customers in each of these sub-markets.

Bob Leduc spent 20 years helping businesses like yours find new customers and increase sales. He just released a New Edition of his manual, *How To Build Your Small Business Fast With Simple Postcards ...and launched *BizTips from Bob**, a newsletter to help small businesses grow and prosper. You'll find his low-cost marketing methods at:

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Discount Furniture To Make Your Home Unique

By Mark Woodcock

Furnishing and decorating your home can be a daunting and expensive task to undertake. It is not necessary, though, to spend thousands of dollars on high end furnishings and décor in order to make your home a unique showplace that represents who you are. All it takes is a little ingenuity, some detective skills, a good dose of creativity and thought, and a bit of money, and you can have fun finding

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furniture for your home. By seeking out different types of discount furniture, you will be recycling old pieces that are potential treasures, as well as keeping money in your wallet.

The first thing you need to do when you want to furnish and decorate your home is to figure out what you like. Do you like contemporary styles, pieces that are more modern with clean lines and no fussy fabrics? Or do you prefer a country or cottage style, with plush fabrics in woodsy or floral patterns? Or maybe you like the rustic look, with dark woods and leathers that will give your home a warm log cabin feel. Whatever your style is, you should scour magazines and the Internet to find just the type of pieces you are looking for, so that you have a basis to start from.

The next step is to find the discount furniture that is right for your home. You can try websites that sell reduced-priced home furnishings. Be careful, because you might find that the money you save in the cost of a sofa might be made up in the cost to ship it to you. You can also look out for sales at local furniture stores. Sometimes furniture stores are liquidating certain furniture collection to make room for newer ones. In addition, some furniture stores might have "scratch and dent" items. These items are sold as is and at a deep discount, and often the flaws are very minor. There are also furniture warehouses that specialize in scratch and dent merchandise, and the variety of discount furniture available at those types of stores is quite impressive.

Another great place to look for discount furniture is at consignments shops. If you can find a local consignment shop that sells furniture, you are likely to uncover some hidden treasures that might only require a few repairs. And the prices are sure to be reasonable, perhaps even negotiable. And if do it yourself work is your thing, there are abundant places to find old, used, and slightly damaged furniture sold at discounts. For example, searching flea markets and garage or estate sales might lead you to uncover collectibles, antiques, and rare furniture and décor items that can be restored for not a lot of money. These pieces will add a unique touch to your home. In addition, putting your own individual touch on the furnishing your restore or repair will give you a real sense of pride and accomplishment.

In addition to looking at flea markets, garage sales, and consignment shops for discount furniture, you can also find great décor pieces that can be added to your home to achieve a certain them or style. Paintings, pictures, gilded mirrors, vases, or any other type of knick-knack can be the finishing touches that you need to beautifully furnish your home.

You do not have to pay a fortune to furnish your home. By taking the time to seek out discount furniture, you can uncover some distinctive treasures, and even find new items at reduced prices. Taking the time to locate discount furniture will be easier on your wallet, and will help you make your home as individual as you are.

Mark is a director of 3 Internet Companies, is a published author and has written many articles on a widespread number of topics. All his articles may be reproduced provided that an active link is included

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