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**100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment**  
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**Walking Talking Advertisements**

**By Will Dylan**

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So you've made a sale. Great!

Now what? You're not just going to sell your new customer a product and let them walk away, are you?

Not when you're marketing on tight budget! You now have to use the customer in front of you to build your business, and you do that with a successful referral program.

Referrals work. Word of mouth advertising is still the most powerful form of advertising available, and it's getting ever MORE powerful in 2004. The largest companies in this country have cut their advertising budgets over the last 10 years and directed that money towards generating positive PR and good word of mouth (a.k.a. "buzz") for their products. (Most marketing people who are paid to buy and sell advertising would rather you didn't know that, but it's a verifiable fact).

So how do you build a successful word of mouth program for your business?

Just ask.

Offer your customers a discount on their next purchase if they refer a new customer to you. A lot of companies do this already, but amazingly, not many of them publicize it. If they remember, they mention it to you on your way out the door. Well I say you make damn sure your customer knows before they leave your store or your website that you want their business, and you want them to talk about your product or service to their friends as well.

Think of your local mechanic. They might have mentioned to you at some point that if you refer a friend, they'll give a small discount next time around. But they could do much better than that, couldn't they?

## Walking Talking Advertisements

If I owned a garage (and believe me I never will because I can barely hold a wrench let alone use one), I'd make sure that after every transaction I told my customers that if they refer a client to me, and that client brings their car in for any kind of repair at all, I'd give them a free lube oil and filter on their next visit. That's a retail value of about \$20. It would cost me about \$10. If you were in the auto repair business, wouldn't you buy a new customer for \$10!?! The same logic applies to online sales or any other retail model you can think of.

Just give your customer a reason to make the referral. Deliver good service, charge a fair price, and make it worth their while to send a friend your way. (By the way, the referral program also helps to bring the original customer back in to get their free oil change, so it's really like getting 2 follow up visits from just one referral.)

What about the plumbing business? Here's a quiz for you. Name 2 plumbers in your area.

I'll wait.

Couldn't do it, could you? Most plumbers are independent businessmen and women. They don't have big advertising budgets, and they only service a local area. So you can imagine that a plumber, who sees 4 or 5 or maybe 6 clients a day would be well served by offering a referral program. Turn those 6 clients into 12 by having them each refer a friend who has a plumbing problem.

Now you're saying that this is not possible. You only call a plumber when you need one, so what good is a 10% discount off your next plumbing job? It's not like the mechanic who does regular maintenance on your car. You might use a plumber once, and then never again. How would a plumber come up with a referral program?

I'm no plumber, but here's my idea. You refer any client to me who has a job of \$100 or more, and I'll install a brand new kitchen faucet for you at no charge. The faucet won't cost a plumber much, because he's got the inside track on deals in the industry. So a nice \$80 faucet at the store probably costs him \$40. And he can put it in about 15 minutes or less. Now who wouldn't want a nice new kitchen faucet, installed free! All they have to do is mention you to their friends. If one of them calls, you make \$100 less \$40 for the faucet, and gain another client for the future. Do that for a few years and watch your business grow exponentially.

In small business you can't outspend your competition but you can outsell them by employing your own customers as your sales force using a good word of mouth referral program. With almost no upfront cost and a huge potential upside, it's well worth the time invested in creating a good referral program for your business.

Will Dylan is the Author of "Small Business, Big Marketing" a powerful e-book for small businesses available at no charge through his website

. Will also offers

affordable news release writing services.

## Why Use Walking Sticks?

By Gabriel Adams

If you've ever been out hiking on a trail, or even walking along a back road, you've probably seen people using walking sticks. Walking sticks (also known as hiking sticks or poles) are long poles or sticks used to help a hiker keep their balance and for many other duties while in the great outdoors. Some people may wonder if a walking stick will help them out while climbing mountains or hiking trails, and the answer is unequivocally, yes!

Walking sticks are very commonly used by hikers in areas of Europe with mountainous terrain, such as in the Alps. The stick or pole can help you to balance while you're walking in areas that can be slippery or hard to get footing on - such as shale, mud or sand. You can dig into the material with your walking stick and then use it almost as a third leg so you don't slip. You can also use a walking stick to help your knees and back, as you can either prop yourself on it to rest, or use it as a lever to help pull yourself uphill when hiking. Among other uses for walking sticks can include using it as a place to prop up a blanket for a makeshift tent, or even as a way to push aside tall grass or brush so you can pass through these areas more easily.

A good height for a walking stick is between 4 feet and 5.5 feet, depending on your height and the way you plan to use your stick. Walking sticks can be made of all sorts of wood (some people even use broom handles), but an important necessity for a good walking stick is a handle or strap. Hiking poles, which are a type of walking stick, are generally made of metal and may have a spike or cleat at the end for digging into the ground. No matter which type of walking stick you choose for your hiking needs, you can definitely benefit from the use of a stick.

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