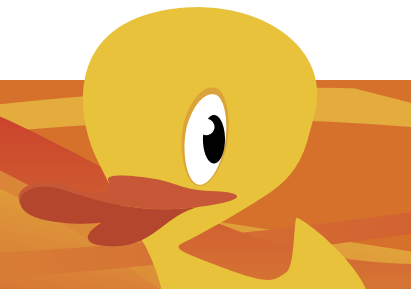




duckie design  
Creative Solutions



318 Indian Trace | #245 | Weston, Florida 33326 p. 954.599.3398 f. 954.349.9429 [www.duckiedesign.com](http://www.duckiedesign.com)

The following is a list of tips that all businesses can benefit from! Whether you are on a tight budget or have marketing dollars set aside, the following can help your business get the edge over your competition! You probably know that basics. Your business needs a logo, letterhead, website, company brochure, and business cards. But then what? Here are 10 Bright Ideas for small businesses.

### **1. Follow Up!**

Did you know that it costs about 5 times more to get a new customer, then it does to retain a current one! So, follow up with new customers. Develop a schedule to help you reach out to your new customers. You can offer a discount on a future sale, send a thank you card for their business and suggest they refer you to others, or enroll them in a reward/loyalty program.

### **2. Create A Mailing List** (and input the info into a database program)

Make sure you obtain customer information every chance you get. This is so important and probably the one thing that I see businesses often overlook. Create a form that your employees can fill out to collect your customers name, address, phone, email, birthdays and other information (i.e. type of product purchased, spending habits, etc...)

### **3. Email Marketing**

Email ads sent to your customers can be an extremely effective marketing tool. You can easily and very quickly promote sales, send newsletters and just keep your customers up to date. We can design HTML ads for you and send them to your customer list through Constant Contact (a low cost email marketing company). And if budget is an issue, Constant Contact also provides do-it-yourself free templates to use.

### **4. Consider Car Magnets or A Vehicle Wrap**

Vehicle advertising is another great way to promote yourself. For under \$100, you can print car magnets that easily apply to your car door and can be removed at any time. Vehicle wraps, which can cost as much as several thousand dollars, make a billboard out of your car or van. They can be designed with vibrant graphics and slogans and be used on part or all of your vehicle. They are also easily removed without damaging the vehicle's finish.

### **5. Cross Promotions With Area Businesses**

Sometimes the simplest things can be very effective. Look around your community and seek out other businesses that compliment yours. Help each other out, offer each other's customers discounts. Swap literature and you'll cover more of your market that way.

### **6. Partner With A Charity**

Promote your business and at the same time raise money for a good cause. Find an area charity and offer to work with them on fundraising. You can offer to host events or provide services or products, in return for mentions at their events & in public service announcements or for ad space. And it's great networking, too!

### **7. Promote Your Business & Products With Signage**

Use signage creatively and wisely, inside your business and out, to direct customers, introduce new products, announce promotions, etc... Look at your signage needs overall, not individually. They should all work together. And don't overlook the importance of outdoor signage. Colors, design, materials and position should be carefully considered.

### **8. Establish A Gift Card/Loyalty Program**

Gift cards are attractive to retailers for many reasons. Research shows that a large percentage of consumers spend more than the original face value of their gift card. Many consumers spend almost twice as much! Gift cards can also be used as a great marketing tool. They can be easily printed with colorful graphics and messages that coordinate with your company's brand. You can use them in conjunction with a loyalty/reward program and track usage and customer's spending habits. And one of the most attractive benefits of gift cards for retailers is that a large percentage of cards will never be redeemed.

### **9. "Free" Can End Up Costing You A Lot!**

Here's an example of when "Free" is going to cost you. Let's say you decide to advertise in a few local newspapers or magazines. Most likely, the publications will offer to design your ad for "Free". Sounds great. Here's why it's not. That "Free" ad and the others will end up looking completely different, thereby not helping you establish your brand. A small investment in a professionally designed ad will help you deliver a clear message while maintaining a consistent look and that will help your advertising dollars go further. The more consistent the message and brand, the better the results. So a small investment upfront will actually pay for itself and then some in the long run.

### **10. Print T-Shirts**

Here's another, often overlooked, great source of promotion! With today's technology, you can affordably print t-shirts that promote your business. This is a great option for both retail and service businesses. You can use silk screening, embroidering, and ink jet printing processes. And if you only need a few shirts, iron on transfers can do the trick. Make sure you take advantage of the real estate on the shirt and use a well designed graphic image or message to further enhance your brand.