

Marketing Your Business

Marketing can be one of the most time consuming, expensive, and frustrating endeavors some businesses will go through but the payoff will be beneficial. There are ways to market your business with little cash in hand and still make an impact.

Here is a list of inexpensive ways to market your business:

1. Business Cards – Every customer likes to have your information on hand and you will look more professional with a business card.
2. Magnet for your car door – This is a new trend that has come over the last decade or so. Instead of spending thousands of dollars on a car wrap with your information on it, go with a downscaled version of a door magnet. These are cheap and can be easily removed. Learn more at www.vistaprint.com
3. Door Hangers – You can pay a company to print these for you or you can buy a box of blank ones ready to print and do them yourself. Either way this can be a highly effective way to get the word out that you are a legit business offering a service
4. Word of Mouth – This can be possibly the most effective way to market your business and costs next to nothing to do. One of the best ways to retain clients is to offer a discount service if they refer a friend or family member to use your business services. This not only helps you gain customers but it helps retain the ones that you have. You treat your customers well, they will treat you well back.
5. Mailers – This can be a little more expensive but can also be effective. It is said that 85% of households that receive a coupon book such as Valu-pak will open it up and go through the coupons. What better way to gain customers than with a print ad with your specials and information on it. Offering specials seems to allow many people to become interested.

Those are just some of the ways that you can market your business on a budget. I would have to say that the most effective ways to market are usually the least expensive. If you are spending \$350/month to get a good yellow pages listing for your area but are only receiving 2-3 jobs a month from it you may not even be breaking even. This is when you need to rethink the way you are marketing. If you find that you still aren't gaining the amount of customers that you would like you might want to try another method. Here are some more pricey methods but they may help you get your business off the ground.

- Servicemagic.com – Costs approximately \$14-\$16 per lead. Someone calls service magic for a service and is then given 3 choices of businesses who are registered with them. It's your job to convince the potential customer why you are better.
- Pay-per-click campaigns – If you have a website that is not ranking well you may want to try Google Adwords to get some traffic to your site. These are the kinds of pages that show up

under the sponsored links section on a google search. You will have to pay everytime someone clicks on the link to your site but this can get you business. Average costs per click is anywhere from \$0.20-\$1.50 depending on the keywords.

- Just-carpet-cleaners.com: Costs anywhere from \$5-\$25/month depending on what membership you have. People can search for carpet cleaners in their area.
- Ethicalservices.com: Three options, Free, \$29/month, \$119/month. Only for ethical companies. You must sign a contract stating you are an ethical company. (no bait & switch tactics)

That wraps up what you need to know to market your carpet cleaning business. Below are a list of useful links you can check out to better market your business. I wish you the best of luck with your new business endeavor.

Marketing Your Website

The most often asked question is “why am I not #1 on Google?” There are many answers to this question but the reality is that being #1 on Google has many factors and Search Engine Optimization is not an overnight success story. If it were, people wouldn’t be paying hundreds of dollars a month to get good rankings on Google.

Your rankings are determined by the following:

1. The Age of Your Site
2. Title
3. Description
4. Keywords
5. Content
6. Links within your website
7. Links to your website

So with that said, there are ways to get you ranking better but it’s going to take a little effort on your part. Rotovac offers target optimized websites which means the website itself is optimized for your area of service but that doesn’t necessarily mean that you are going to rank well. The best advice I can give someone who has a website is to take the time to get yourself known on the web. If you don’t take this time to join directories or post your website on other sites, you will struggle with getting your business seen on the web.

Some Advice That Will Help You Be Seen

Content, content, content. I can't stress this enough. Your content is what your potential customer is going to see so make sure it's worth looking at. Sites that contain content that is irrelevant or hard to find will cause the customer to go somewhere else. Because you are using the Rotovac you already have an advantage over the next guy who is just using a wand. Use this to your advantage by marketing yourself with pictures and testimonials of how much better your cleaning is than the next guys.

If you leave the same content on your homepage for years on end you will see that your rankings will drop into the abyss of Google and other search engines.

When writing good content you want to take the following precautions that may hurt your rankings:

- Don't repeat a keyword such as "carpet cleaning" over and over again. This will rank you lower
- Think about words your users would be typing into Google and make sure you include those in the content of your site
- Use text instead of images to display important names, content or links. Google doesn't recognize text in images.
- Don't participate in links schemes designed to increase your rankings or Pagerank.

Things to do to better your rankings:

- Change up your content from time to time so Google can index new content.
- Join some directories and put a link to your website on them
- Craigslist – A reasonable price to pay for search engine results and potential customers.
- Ask local businesses around your area to add your website address to their website as a link.
- If you feel like spending money, get an SEO company to optimize your site more.
- Add yourself to Google maps and Yahoo local.

I know that many people rely on their website to drive all of their business but the reality of it is that you have to go out and market yourself. Marketing takes work but the benefits will be phenomenal. In this next section I will go into marketing your business.

Helpful Links:

Directories:

www.justcarpetcleaners.com

www.craigslist.com

www.servicemagic.com

www.merchantcircle.com

www.insiderpages.com

www.yellowpages.com

www.house-cleaning-services.com

www.carpet-cleaners.net

www.dexonline.com

Website Services:

www.rotovac-hosting.com

<http://adwords.google.com>

<http://www.google.com/local/add/businessCenter?gl=us&hl=en-US>

<http://listings.local.yahoo.com/>

Printing Services:

www.vistaprint.com

<http://www.3000doorhangers.com/>

<http://www.logodesignguru.com/>