

MARKETING

When you're a small business owner sometimes it seems impossible or overwhelming to even think of the concept of marketing. Marketing? How can I afford to do that? I am not some big public company.

Marketing in its simplest form is raising awareness of your company. When thought of in these terms, it may not seem so daunting. You should not be surprised to know that you are probably marketing without even knowing it. For example, if you have ever attended a business event with the intention of meeting new people...you are marketing.

I remember when I was looking for my first job out of college. I was working in a deli in an office building and the owner gave me permission to wrap my resume in the sandwiches. I got a few interviews and landed a job. I did not even know what marketing was...but I was doing it.

I have three simple suggestions to get you on the right path.

- *Go to a networking meeting or trade show.* They offer inexpensive and multiple opportunities to get the word out.
- *Devise an e-newsletter campaign to inform, not sell.* People love to buy, but hate to be sold. You are the expert, right? Well, let everybody know it. Provide good content and people will keep read each time you publish it.
- *Start a blog.* There are many free services for this. Even if you don't think you're the best writer... provide killer content and you can build a following.

Donna, marketing does not have to be costly. Small business owners need to be creative and find uniqueness to their business and highlight it. Often it is not even the product or service itself, but rather the process or people in the business that can make the difference.