

4 Unexpected Ways to Attract Customers

Author : Barry Moltz

Date : September 19, 2015



Seeking creative ways to attract customers that help you stand out from the crowd? Here are some unusual tactics used by small businesses.

It can be difficult for any small business to stand out among the crowd of competitors and attract new customers. Everyone seems to be using the same tools—websites, blogs, videos and social media—to power their marketing and sales efforts. How can your small business find a unique edge?

Here are some creative and unexpected ideas that can work.

1. Combine Online and In-Home

Websites by **design** are two-dimensional tools that help consumers shop for three-dimensional products. How can an online retailer overcome this disadvantage? For instance, think of how stressful shopping for an engagement ring can be for online customers who can't actually hold the ring before they make the purchase. To solve that problem, jewelry store [Fourmine](#) found a way to combine the best of online and offline shopping. Customers visit the website and select their three favorite styles. They're shipped realistic replicas of these ring styles to preview at home for three days at no charge. This way, customers can experience the quality of the jewelry, understand the craftsmanship and find the style they love.

While seeking creative ways to attract customers, it's important not to do something offbeat just to be crazy. Your customer outreach should ultimately fit your brand.

2. Practice “Parketing”

If your business requires company vehicles, you can make them do double duty as a billboard for advertising. Bright pink branded cars are one way [Nurse Next Door](#) tries to attract customers. Every location of the business is required to have at least one. The company told me these branded cars have consistently remained their top referral source. While this may not be not a new tactic, Nurse Next Door uses its **branded** car inside a new strategy that combines parking and marketing: “parketing.” It parks the pink vehicles where potential customers will be. For example, on Monday morning, the cars will get parked along major routes to the financial district. On Sundays, they may be parked near a local theater with a matinee targeting seniors. They often give a valet an extra \$20 to park the car out front instead of being hidden away.

3. Make It Private

Some small-business owners provide services that customers don't want to talk about publicly. On-demand text therapy app [Talkspace](#) launched a two-day pop-up experience to demonstrate how easy and painless it can be to connect with a licensed therapist via texting. The company installed two 7-foot, see-through domes that looked like a therapist's office in front of the Flatiron Building in New York City. Pedestrians were asked to enter the domes, seated on the couches and given an **iPad** to begin a session with a Talkspace therapist. The company, which now has more than 100,000 users, told me they consider this a pivotal point in their growth.

4. Build a Memorable First Impression

Many times a small-business owner may need to “act the part” to get customers. [Lori Cheek used a fake flashing toy microphone](#) to interview partygoers on the streets of New York and draw attention to her dating app, [Cheekd](#). But remember, while seeking **creative** ways to attract customers, it's important not to do something offbeat just to be crazy. Your customer outreach should ultimately fit your **brand**.