



The 2018 Guide:

# HOW TO FIND (AND KEEP) NEW CUSTOMERS

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# Learn all the key strategies to attract (and keep) new customers.

These ideas have come from my own research, reports from dozens of business researchers and data-backed predictions based on micro, small, and small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs).

There are thousands of ideas out there, and they all fall into the following 13 categories. Not every industry or business will be able to use every idea, so some measure of success depends on how well you can implement the others!

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**Finding new customers is one of the top 5 challenges of all small business owners.**

And it's been increasingly challenging for the past five or six years.

To understand why, let's review recent economics:

- Potential customers lost as much as \$4500 in spending power in the recession and relatively few have gained it back.
- These households have adjusted, but businesses who depended on them have struggled.
- This created even more of a challenge for new businesses since there's increased competition for the same audience.



*But there's more.*

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Since the mass market has less discretionary spending ability, some targeted the mass-affluent (\$100k to \$249k). But even this demographic was affected by economic shifts.

Every income group has different interests, needs, and buying behavior than business has been used to.

*This means businesses have to re-find their segment of relatively new markets.* where they are, what they buy, how they make purchasing decisions, and how much they spend.

It takes research to answer these questions, and then to develop a strategy to attract the right market.



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**In 2018, certain areas will be essential to small business survival and success.**

These include:

Internet & social media strategies,  
identification and analysis of trends,  
demographic insights,  
defining new markets,  
branding & marketing strategies,  
CX strategies, and  
competitive strategies.

This guide gives you 13 ways for your small business to approach all these areas!



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## Where do you start?

Addressing some of these areas requires some in-depth skills and tools that most business owners don't have. That's where a consultant like me can help.

But there's a lot you can handle on your own.

**Let's go!**

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1. Check your website, be sure contact and product information is up to date, and be sure the page format is mobile friendly. If you can, use a unique landing page (and URL) for special promotions.

2. Offer new customer promotions. E-commerce shopper research shows that more than two-thirds are more likely to be loyal to businesses offering promotions, *and are more likely to recommend friends.*

*(And interestingly, half of online shoppers say they'd be willing to pay full price for items at stores that offer discounts. So they may not take advantage of your gesture, but they still appreciate it!)*



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3. Don't neglect your existing customers. Reward them for their loyalty. Ask for referrals and thank them when you get them! There are loads of ideas available online for ways to implement these systems.

4. Ask for online reviews. 70% of customers will leave a review if you ask. If you have a brick and mortar location, put a sign in the window to encourage customers to look you up and leave a review.

About 65% of people decide whether to purchase or not after reading as few as 6 reviews online – which means you don't need a lot. Showcase your best ones on your website!



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5. Develop business allies. These are other businesses you know and trust, who aren't competitors but who operate a related business. For example, if you're a landscape designer, possible allies might be an interior decorator, a hardware store, and/or even a local realtor. As a "dream team" you have greater advertising ability, not to mention cross-referrals.

6. Capitalize on CX (customer experience). If you sell products, take a lesson from big retailers. Stores like Nordstrom are focusing less on individual products and more on big-picture merchandising (like an accessorized outfit instead of a table of shirts) and shopping experiences (offering complimentary beverages).



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7. Add valuable content in person if you have a brick-and-mortar. Home Depot has done this for decades. Now the yoga clothing store Lululemon offers yoga classes and Williams-Sonoma offers in-store cooking classes. This option not only enhances the customer shopping experience but also improves the human relationship between you and your customers.

8. Fine-tune your email list. Saks is bringing back personal shopping experts for customers who become clients through an app, while online brands are adding personal stylists. A more affordable option is simply to track customer preferences and only send them personalized offers. You could also offer personalized subscription services.



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9. Do your own market research. Search for keywords on social media channels to find out if potential customers are using relevant keywords on that channel – and help you decide how much it’s worth to reach out to them there.

10. Attract influencers. This is a long-range plan. It means finding people on social media who a) have large active audiences and who b) share posts about your product or service or industry.

You can’t just approach an influencer and ask them to put in a good word for you! Why should they? They don’t know you. Instead, become an active listener. Engage. Build trust and a relationship. Yes, it takes time. Months! But this time next year, you might find it was a smart investment.



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11. Another long-range plan: create your own hype. About a month before you want a customer boost, sponsor a local event, lead some kind of activity for a scout troop, or speak to a civic organization. This will take more advance planning! But it gets your name out there to potential customers, and you can use the publicity in on social media to create customer interest without advertising.

12. Don't forget content. Plan to engage on social media. Likes are fine, but your goal should be different. On Facebook and Instagram, you want to increase actual engagement, like comments. On Facebook specifically, you want other emoji responses and even shares. On Twitter, you're looking for responses and re-tweets. Plan your posts so they naturally invite these types of responses.



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13. Finally, advertise on social media, but cautiously. First, of course, you'll be doing this where your customers and brand followers are most likely to be.

Then, remember you need a return on your investment. This could happen if your promotion leads to an increase in sales. It can also happen if the end result is more interested brand followers!

Take a look at the caution on the next page. To avoid problems, go back to content. Be mindful of your goals and create content people naturally want to engage with. Organic numbers are much more valuable...not to mention, free!



## A note of caution about Facebook boosts and ads

You should calculate your “relation ratio” before you begin. This is a very rough indicator of how likely your followers are to engage with you in any way. You start with your average *organic* reach over the past 30 days, and divide it by your total number of followers. Below 0.4 is standard for Facebook these days.

Now, if you boost a post or run an ad, it can be seen by a wider audience, thereby giving you a slightly higher reach. That’s a good thing...*if* you get a correspondingly higher engagement rate.

But if the audience doesn’t engage at a higher rate than you normally see (or worse, if someone marks your ad negatively), Facebook’s algorithm will punish you by re-calculating *and then limiting the reach of your next several posts*. Only a fraction of your normal audience will see them and your relation ratio will drop to nearly zero.



## Thanks for reading!

You've just read about 13 key ideas that will pull customers in. Where do you start?

Start with what you can do quickly and easily.

Then get creative. Search out what your competitors are doing, and take it up a notch.



And don't be afraid to ask for help or feedback along the way!

- *Adina*

P.S. I'd love to connect and hear your thoughts! Find me at



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