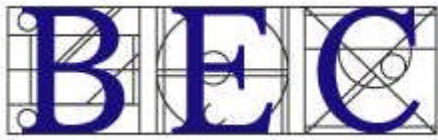


24 Free or Low Cost Marketing Tips

1. Your best source of business is your existing customer base. Begin immediately contacting them by phone or email with a free inspection of their plumbing, heating, air conditioning or electrical systems. These can be either residential or commercial accounts.
2. Dig up all the old quotes from the last year or so and call them. If they are still actively in need of your services, offer a discount if you can do it now, or if you are really busy with air conditioning because of the hot weather, offer a discount to do it in the next 30 days.
3. Select a neighborhood that you have done a substantial amount of work in already, or one you believe is in need of a substantial amount of work, create a flyer on your computer, print it in house or at one of the office supply companies. There are often coupons in the Sunday paper with discounts on printing. Hire your son or daughter's Boy Scout or Girl Scout troop (or other group) for \$50-\$100 to distribute the flyer as a fund raiser.
4. One of my clients has had success with a small A-frame sign in front of his plumbing shop with a monthly special. Literally thousands of people drive by his shop regularly and see that special.
5. Write a press release to your local newspaper on a current topic (the cold weather, the hot weather, green plumbing). Google free press release information for details on how to submit a press release.
6. Send your press release to the local television and radio stations. The local "public" cable station may have a talk show you could appear on. Perhaps you can get an interview as "the expert".
7. Have your techs put a door knob hanger (or mailbox hanger) on several homes around each service call they make.
8. Have your CSR, dispatcher, service manager or yourself call each customer 2-3 days after a service call as a quality check (you must have a written questionnaire) and offer a special that may be appropriate for that customer.
9. Print up a flyer with special for your techs to give to customers. Place items that are good add-on sales items and spiff the tech for each sale.
10. Introduce yourself to the home center, lumber yard, and hardware employees in the plumbing and heating departments. Leave them some cards they could pass on to potential customers. Spiff the employees (as long as there isn't a corporate policy prohibiting this).
11. Get off your butt and visit your commercial, institutional, and industrial accounts. Provide them with a coupon to save on their next service call.
12. Visit your larger accounts and provide a free survey of their systems and offer solutions for them to save money or improve comfort.
13. Be active in civic groups. Get to know more potential customers in your community.
14. If you see a competitor's truck at a commercial location, stop by several days after and give them a card. Perhaps they will need a second quote on a larger job.
15. Check an old copy of the telephone directory for plumbing/HVAC companies that have gone out of business. Call the phone company and see if you can get their telephone number.
16. Put together a short 20-30 minute presentation for civic groups, senior groups, condo associations on green plumbing/HVAC. Offer it as a program at no charge.
17. Check your service records for customers you have not heard from in several years. Call or mail them with a special on a service call.
18. At your commercial accounts, offer a discount for the employees' personal use.
19. Leave some business cards with a discount on the back, at your barber, hairdresser, doctor, party store, dry cleaner and other establishments that you frequent.
20. Set up a website. You can do this for just a couple of hundred dollars a year. Hosting sites will have templates you can use to get on the web quickly and cheaply. Register your website with Google to increase traffic. As you market your company, put the website on every printed piece.
21. When you send a check to a vendor, put in a note saying "We are your customer, help us by being our customer". Provide a coupon

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the vendor's office staff can use or pass on to others.

22. Provide business cards to your employees with their name and a title. Provide a discount on the back of the card. Have them pass out the cards to friends, neighbors and potential customers for your company.
23. Meet with other service tradesmen in non competitive services and exchange a handful of business cards. Their customers will ask them for referrals to plumbing/HVAC company.
24. Meet with your banker, attorney, accountant and ask them to refer you when it is appropriate to their clients.
25. An additional one, perhaps the best. Have a nice professional sticker made up and be sure to sticker every job you do, send them to customers, leave them an extra to put near the telephone, hammer your techs with the importance of repeat customer business and how customers will call back from a sticker.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of free or low cost marketing ideas. There are many more. Spend some time working on your business instead of working in your business. It will pay off!!

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