


7 FREE MARKETING IDEAS

TO ECONOMY-PROOF
YOUR BUSINESS TODAY

101 THINGS



CRISIS ALWAYS OCCURS AT THE CURVE OF CHANGE.

Winston Churchill

How many times have you heard the words 'challenging', 'unprecedented' and 'unusual' recently?

This report outlines seven practical steps to boost your marketing in any economic downturn. I encourage you to think about them all and take action on at least a couple. The great news is none of them cost a cent and they have all been proven to work across diverse businesses and industries.

You'll discover not only how to adapt your business but also how to put yourself in the best position for the upswing which will occur as our economy recovers.

We are lucky in Australia to be less affected than other parts of the world by many economic slowdowns. Now is the time to prepare for recovery and upswing. Don't wait.

Right now, it's all about opportunity. As the saying goes, don't let a good crisis go to waste. Use this period to focus on your marketing and put some of the following free but highly effective strategies in place.

– Karen, Director – 101 Things

STRATEGY 1.

GOOGLE YOURSELF

Google yourself or your business – what do the results say? Would you even be able to spot yourself on the first page of Google?

The first thing to take a look at is your Google My Business profile. Don't have one? Set one up. It's a free platform and it only takes a few minutes to get started.

And guess what? Google loves its own platforms. So if you have an optimised Google My Business profile, Google will rank you higher in people's searches. Check out our optimisation checklist for tips.



People like to know what everyone else thinks of you, not just what you say about how great you are! Some of our clients get over 70% of their business just from leveraging this free platform. So it's incredibly important to invest in this area, particularly seeking customer reviews.

Another client has over 570 Google reviews and attributes over \$1 million in sales per annum to this free channel.

And don't forget about YouTube. As I have mentioned, Google loves its own products... and it owns YouTube. The key to doing well on this platform is adding lots of tags to your videos. Search YouTube for similar content to yours to get tagging suggestions. Add your videos to your website and Google will give you even more love.

First impressions are so important and so many people will discover your business by doing an online search. Make sure you are in control of what they see and that your online presence paints you in the best light possible.



STRATEGY 2. GET CONNECTED


Partnerships are the secret to success.

One of the brands I work closely with recently hosted a partnership-a-thon. It was essentially an online Zoom call to facilitate collaboration between their clients. They had 86 friendly faces on the call after inviting everyone on their database.

You may think you don't know a lot of people but you'd be surprised. As you get chatting to people, you will think of others they could work well with and be able to identify ways you could work with them as well. And the more people you meet, the more introductions can be sent your way.

It is really important at this point in time to be a connector. You'll see when you network this way that there are lots of revenue opportunities to build referral partnerships and other partnership opportunities. You will also be able to find new ways for your clients to generate business and income of their own (and they'll be really grateful).

Any business can host an informal connect-a-thon or partnership drive. All you need to do is find a time and send out some invitations. You can even divide people into breakout rooms on Zoom to facilitate smaller discussion groups.

A photograph of two women with blonde hair sitting at a wooden table, smiling and working on laptops. The woman in the foreground is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and has her hands on the keyboard. The woman behind her is wearing a grey and white striped button-down shirt. There are two laptops on the table, and a glass of iced coffee is visible on the right. The background is a white brick wall.

Between everyone who attended, we identified over 350 opportunities for introductions to each other and other businesses. #winning



STRATEGY 3. GIVE VALUE FOR FREE

During a downturn, the way you behave as a business will be remembered.

Do the right thing by your client base and add value to what they are already getting by creating helpful content.

How do you do this for free? A podcast is one easy way. One of my partners got all her expert contacts together, interviewed them on a podcast series then shared it on all her social media platforms. That's her way of providing extra value to her clients, in an easily digestible format, all in one place.

Think about how much value you can give away for free right now in the form of videos, blogs or podcasts. Here are a couple of quick tips on what to cover when you're creating free content for your clients:

- Top tips
- Mistakes you see clients make
- Case studies of how your clients have benefitted from your services
- 'How to' explainers
- Research-based updates
- Interviews with other professionals

Don't forget the power of storytelling!

We recently had a mortgage broker client who made a video of how she's helping her clients, in one case saving \$95,000 on the remaining term of a home loan. Just by telling a story and sharing it, she was able to generate new leads. And the cost of the exercise? \$0.

Do not be worried about giving away your IP. Your clients will still need you to execute on your knowledge. Despite the fact that they may think, "Oh, I can do that myself," in our experience, they will almost certainly still need your expertise.



Think about the types of businesses that sit alongside the services you provide. Then work out the details of an exciting partnership.

STRATEGY 4. BUILD YOUR REFERRAL PARTNER NETWORKS

Make more money with less effort.

The impetus behind this strategy is to sell one to many, not one-to-one. So instead of spending an enormous amount of time winning Lola's business and then winning Pat's business, and having to hustle to close each of those deals, go and speak to Brad, who offers a complementary service to yours, to a similar customer base. Together, Brad and your business can come up with a referral or partnership marketing strategy that allows you to reach more people with less effort by referring to each other when appropriate.

We've almost entirely grown our business through referral and partnership marketing. By working with similar (but not competitor) businesses, we're able to attract multiple leads every week that we don't have to go out and hunt and gather ourselves; instead they are warmly referred to us by our partners.

These leads come to us because our referral partners are effectively our volunteer sales force. Every time they run an event, we get leads. We don't have to do that hustle, so our cost of sale is reduced. It's also a huge time saver, effort saver, and energy saver.

STRATEGY 5. WRITE!

Take a page from this book!

Every single client I work with takes what they do for granted. If you could capture just some of the information and expertise you hold inside your head, whether it's the answers to frequently asked questions that you solve on every single business call, the case studies, the client stories, or the scenarios that you help with, and write those down into an eBook, you can create a really, really powerful marketing tool.

Don't worry about selling it on Amazon or finding a big publisher: you can start by using your eBook as a giveaway. Share your eBooks on social media, via email or on your website. Distributing this type

of content gets people interested in learning more about what you do. But instead of telling them, you're showing them.

Talk out the answers to your most commonly asked questions. Record and transcribe your voice then tidy it up and you'll have an eBook within a week.

We're polishing four eBooks for clients at the moment.

Some clients are also repurposing their previous eBooks and updating them to make them relevant in today's environment.

Give it a go!

For an entire week, write down the main question that you solved on every client call, and at the end of the week you'd have the content for an eBook!

Even if you had a minimum five phone calls, that's five case studies. You can write ten pages and pull it all together with some nice graphics for free or for a really low cost if you enlist the help of a writer and graphics specialist.

You can also use Rev or Otta, a transcription service. Record conversations into your phone and get the dialogue transcribed back to you.

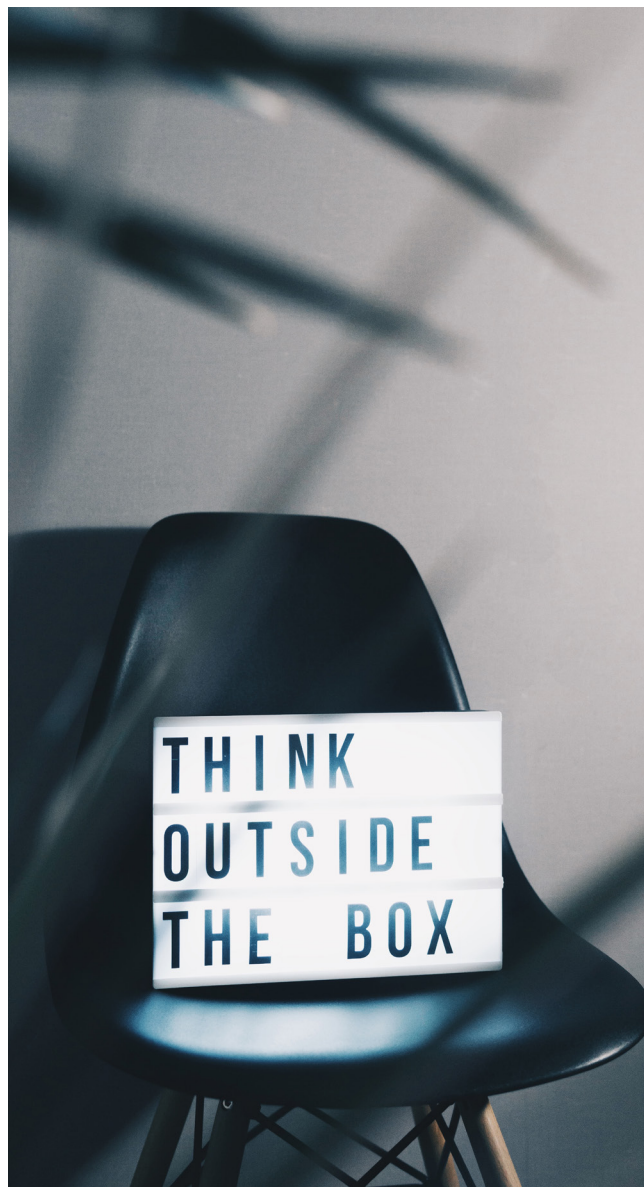


STRATEGY 6. LOOK OUTSIDE YOUR OWN INDUSTRY

I was inspired recently by a real estate agent who was giving away a complimentary online Pilates class. During COVID, the agent teamed up with a Pilates instructor who was already conducting online classes. He was able to give away those complimentary passes for free to his entire database because he offered the instructor value – access to his database, predominantly in her local area = brand exposure.

He got amazing kudos for giving his clients something free, and she now has an even bigger audience, with no exchange of money.

There are so many brilliant ways to pivot and get creative right now. I really encourage you to look outside your own industry for inspiration. Check out what other business owners are doing and repurpose their ideas to suit the way you operate.



STRATEGY 7. ZIG WHEN OTHER PEOPLE ARE ZAGGING

What doors have your competitors left open?

Many businesses go into hibernation mode when things get tough.

Could this be an opportunity for you to step into the spotlight?

Consider that FaceBook ad spend has died down, you can currently get more for your marketing dollars while everyone else is holding back. This initiative isn't free, I'll give you that, but the next suggestion is.

Why not enter to win an industry or business award... given the prevailing market sentiment, you may be one of only a handful in your category instead of hundreds. Many are free to enter, however if you're not confident about writing your entry, find a marketing specialist or copywriter who can help frame you as best of breed.

Finally, look out for Government grants that might be on offer. We have helped numerous clients win digital grants to support their marketing and online growth.

START TODAY!

Marketing your business is not a finite process. There are always new strategies to test and new methods which will resonate with your audience.

Any economic downturn forces us to think differently. If you need to reach a new set of customers, marketing is more essential than ever. And if you are slowed down, the one silver lining is that you may finally have a few hours to focus on marketing and put some foundations in place.

The great news is your strategies don't have to break the bank. And they don't have to be locked in for years. Try something new and see if it works. If it does, do it again. If it doesn't, there's always something else to try.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karen Hall is the Founder and Chief Doer at 101 Things.

Karen brings with her over 20 years of marketing experience for global brands and now helps small to medium businesses build their brand collateral and leverage their online marketing assets to generate leads and growth.

Winner of the 2020 Australian Enterprise Awards for Most Innovative Marketing Consultancy in Sydney, Karen is regularly called on to present at marketing and business events around Sydney and beyond.



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