

12 WAYS TO INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF YOUR BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION

1. **Define your audience.** Do you know who you are trying to reach and effective ways to reach that audience? If you don't know, ask your customers how they prefer to be contacted – through local newspaper ads? Emails? Direct mail? Coupons? In-store displays? Narrow your focus to your specific audience and choose tools and media that make you most visible to them.
2. **Determine your news.** Do an inventory to determine what news you have to share. Write and distribute press releases to media about your news including new hires, staff promotions, awards, new products or services, local angles to national stories, special events, special involvement in the community and human interest stories.
3. **Beef up your Web site.** Make sure you have the information your customers and clients most need on your site. Include the keywords in a descriptive title for each page to create an identity that is found by search engines.
4. **Get others to increase your visibility on their Web sites.** Share reciprocal Web links with complementary businesses and organizations.
5. **Place your URL on all company materials.** No business card, letterhead, email signature, literature, signs, company vehicle, promotional gifts, etc. should go without your Web domain name. Do an audit to determine any missed opportunities for publicizing Web address.
6. **Use social media.** Become knowledgeable about and use social media including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and blogging among many alternatives. For a list of “*50 Social Sites That Every Business Needs a Presence on*” visit www.insidecrm.com/features/50-social-sites-012808 Design your social media presence to target your potential customers. You don't need to be on every site.
7. **Sponsor a community service project.** Call local agencies to determine community need and the best use of your volunteer time and/or money.
8. **Distribute an e-newsletter.** Capture the email addresses of your customers, ask permission to contact them and send them a regular e-newsletter. There are a variety of affordable e-newsletter systems available online.
9. **Be a news source and always ready for an interview.** If you are an expert on a certain topic, make sure local media know that. Keep your facts handy. Always have a recent, professional digital portrait available.
10. **Become a public speaker.** If your expertise lends itself to presentations create a program that you can offer to local organizations or a seminar. Make sure that it is substantive, not promotional. This is not a sales talk.
11. **Write articles.** Start with a “Ten Tips...” article in your area of expertise. Submit it to the appropriate newspaper, hand it out to customers or use it on your Web site.
12. **Network. Network. Network.** There is no substitute for participating in networking opportunities provided by local groups such as the Chamber of Commerce or other professional organizations. Make sure you have a dynamic elevator speech.

If a do-it-yourself plan isn't appealing or feasible for your business or organization, consider hiring a professional consultant or agency to help you determine your communication goals and objectives, audiences and messages, and the best ways to become more visible. A targeted promotional plan will help ensure that you are visible to your customers and to your community.