

Drive Sales & Grow Your Franchise *with* Effective Local Store Marketing

By Linda Duke



Local Store Marketing is aggressively focusing your marketing outreach efforts in the 3-5 miles radius of your business to reach your potential customers most cost effectively, thus making your brand stand out in your community. Customers want a sense of individuality and a unique experience. By implementing local store marketing tactics which interact with your customers within the 3-5 mile radius of your business, where they live and work, will engage them and make your business an important part of community.

Getting out into the community and building your brand by talking with people, building trade area relationships and having your business actively involved in the community. This process should begin from the moment you sign your lease. If you do not live within 3-5 miles of each specific location and understand all the specific variables of the trade area, you will need to actively engrain yourself in obtaining full knowledge of your community, your competitors and your potential marketing partners.

Local Store Marketing is the most effective marketing because it...

- » Makes an impact on the 3-5 mile radius around your business.
- » Makes a difference in your community.
- » Builds the brand through customer experience.
- » Differentiates your business with unique promotions and events that tie into the brand.
- » Communicates your message to local and regional media.
- » Focused on customer frequency and loyalty.
- » Creates an entertainment venue to engage guests and increases repeat business.

Local Store Marketing goals:

- » To create awareness and initiate trial with all potential customers in your neighbourhood.
- » Enhance your store's image in the community.
- » Increase customer loyalty.
- » Build brand awareness.
- » Grow store traffic.
- » Develop involvement within the local community.

Some Local Store Marketing Tactics:

Local store marketing can be approached hundreds of different ways depending on the tactics that you choose and it is one of best ways to get customers into your business with the least amount of money. Local store marketing tactics to consider:

- » Holidays.
- » Store openings.
- » Community involvement (fundraisers, charity drives).
- » Anniversaries.
- » New products.
- » Brand-themed events (i.e. IHOP's Pancake Day). »

Where to start:

- » Make contact with local community associations, schools and non-profit organisations.
- » Keep up-to-date with current events to identify potential partners.
- » Determine a joint promotion such as a fundraiser.

Percentage of proceeds all day:

Celebrate a non-profit day by donating a percentage of total sales for the entire day to a local charity. No need for fliers to be brought in, but it is a good idea to promote the event with signs and press releases and have the non-profit partner set up a table at the entrance with logo table cloth and brochures for their cause to show support.

Host a toy drive during the holidays and partner with Toys for Tots or other disadvantaged children's organisations in your community.

Hosting a community clean up is a great way to demonstrate to your community that you care about where you live. Partner with a non-profit and work together to clean up a park, beach or dirty city block near your store. Provide helpers with necessary clean up materials, snacks and drinks while your group helps to beautify your community. This program provides your business with the opportunity to meet others and restore natural beauty to your local community.

Customer Appreciation Weekend:

Any business' most important asset is its customers. It is very important to recognize your customers and acknowledge you value their business. Hosting a customer appreciation weekend in which you invite loyal customers to thank them for their patronage will keep your most value asset in tack.



Extreme Pita hosted a VIPita Party for their guest appreciation weekend. The event drew a great crowd and included a local radio remote, a raffle for a mountain bike (donated by their Dr. Pepper vendor) and had pita samples, and offered complimentary neck massages along with other activities to thank their guests.



Gift bags, balloons and signs help promote fundraisers.



Rubio's restaurants partner with Boys & Girls Clubs and other non profits to host a fundraiser at each new grand opening.

Six Steps to LSM Planning

1. Determine Objectives - What do you want to do?

Your business' neighbourhood is called the Trading Area. Familiarise yourself with your local business situation (i.e. where is the nearest competitor, what is their price?).

The information gathered from the Trading Area will help you identify local marketing needs and opportunities.

2. Determine Strategy - How are you going to do it?

Any good plan has a strategy, a road map if you will, of how to get the plan done. In this case, your strategy details how you will achieve your marketing objectives.

Use a Planning Calendar to map out your promotions. Contact your city hall, chamber of commerce for community events calendars that might create instant marketing opportunities for your business and assist in the planning process. Review this plan with your management team.

3. Secure Materials - What do you need to help you do it?

Plan ahead. Plan ahead. Plan ahead. And then allow enough time to order and receive marketing materials.

4. Implement Program - Are you ready?

And now the most important step of them all...it's time to manage the details and follow through. It is very important that you get your team involved so that everyone is excited and informed about the program and is prepared for additional business.

5. Track & Evaluate - How do you know if it was effective?

Know where you stand-Daily and Weekly. Daily reports of the LSM results will help you monitor the success of each promotion you implement. Consistent tracking from program to program will help you identify quickly those local store marketing strategies that are the most effective.

Whenever possible, solicit feedback from your customers and staff about your promotions.

6. Log Results - Did it work and if not why?

Know what works and doesn't work. Results from past promotions provide valuable information that will help you plan future programs.

Local Store Marketing

Plan: Do your due diligence; determine your Local Store Marketing promotions and tactics, and programs or events to test.

Create: Timeline, materials and tools.

Communicate: Meet with GM's, area managers and staff to determine what has worked in the past, and gather information regarding store area, customer profile, etc. Write your press release—what is the news?

Coordinate: Put together a communications plan for the LSM activity and communicate to staff and coordinate with partners.

Train: Provide training for execution and implementation of programs.

Test: Create a test program. Analyse, test and adjust to enhance the program.

Execute: Local Store Marketing promotion plans per store and area.

Evaluate: Measure results and determine next steps. ■



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