

The DogSmith Training Center

Marketing Manual

2014

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MARKETING

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INTRODUCTION

The DOGSMITH marketing program was developed to achieve national brand name recognition for DOGSMITH SERVICES, as well as raise consumer awareness of the role that DOGSMITH plays in the pet dog training and care industries. The marketing program is designed to promote brand name recognition and consumer acceptance through the coordinated effort of both the DOGSMITH SERVICES and the DogSmith business owner.

This section of the manual will provide you with guidelines and procedures for developing and implementing a marketing program in your market that will effectively promote your business.

IMPORTANT

In this industry, most of your clients will come from referrals; specifically referrals from pet-related professional organizations like humane societies, rescue networks, veterinarian offices, consumers, and word-of-mouth referrals from past and present customers. Because of this, a good portion of your marketing dollars will be spent on marketing materials and promotional items to encourage these referral sources.

THE DOGSMITH MARKETING PROGRAM

The marketing program developed by DOGSMITH SERVICES has been designed to achieve the maximum name recognition and consumer acceptance for the entire DOGSMITH system and is an “Education-Based” marketing approach. The DOGSMITH SERVICES marketing program is geared toward what is termed in the industry as Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM). This means that our marketing is designed to emphasize the whole customer relationship and our aim is to build a long term relationship and loyalty with our customers.

Local Marketing Requirements

As a member of the DOGSMITH system, you will be executing certain marketing efforts in your local market on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. The activities and the quantity/frequency of those activities are specified throughout the remainder of this section of your Operations Manual.

What is Marketing?

Marketing is the social process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others - Kotler

Marketing is the management process that identifies, anticipates and satisfies customer requirements profitably -

The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM)

The right product, in the right place, at the right time, at the right price - Adcock

Marketing is essentially about marshalling the resources of an organization so that they meet the changing needs of the customer on whom the organization depends - Palmer

Marketing is the process whereby society, to supply its consumption needs, evolves distributive systems composed of participants, who, interacting under constraints - technical (economic) and ethical (social) - create the transactions or flows which resolve market separations and result in exchange and consumption- Bartles

Marketing is a continuous process through which we plan, research, implement, control, and evaluate our efforts designed to satisfy both customers' needs and wants and our objectives.

Marketing is everything you do to make your service attractive and available to potential customers and to satisfy customer's needs and wants. It includes EVERY discipline - sales, public relations, pricing, packaging, operations and distribution.

Marketing is part art and part science and integrates all aspects of your business together.

The Marketing Strategy Process

Marketing plans are constantly reviewed, revised and updated so the process is circular. All parts of your marketing plan must work together, support each other and complement one another. The steps of the process are:

1. Determine who and what your customers are.

What are your customer's needs and desires? Who is buying and using your services. How are they buying and using your services? Can your customers be segmented into groups by age, type of service used, type of dog or dog activity? Can they be segmented geographically?

2. Determine what your market is like.

What is the market?

3. Analyze your competition.

Who are they, what do they do better, what do I do better? How are they advertising? Who do they know, how are they networked?

4. Determine how you will deliver your services.

What are the available venues, facilities etc. where I can deliver my services, what will they cost, will customers come to them? What is the availability of contractors to deliver my services in my territory?

5. Develop a mix of marketing methods.

What is the optimum mix of marketing method to keep your mix as small as you can without sacrificing effectiveness?

6. Evaluate if what you are doing makes financial sense

What is the real cost of each effort and does it pay, is it profitable?

7. Revise, Review and then go back to step 1

Measure, calculate, analyze and consider what works and what doesn't work as well.

The Marketing Equation

Interrupt + Engage + Educate + Offer = Results

Interrupt:

Get **qualified** prospects to pay attention to your marketing. Accomplished by identifying and emphasizing your prospects key selling points.

A key selling point (KSP) or “hot button” is anything your prospect deems to be important and relevant to them. Good KSPs encourage your target prospects to begin searching for more information.

Engage:

If the "Interrupt" is based on good hot buttons, prospects will want more information. Make it clear to your prospects that the information is coming.

Educate:

Identify the important and relevant issues of concern to your prospects. Feel their pain, listen to their concerns. Then provide them with the information they need to make their buying decision. The information has to be easily and quickly read and understood. The more educated a potential customer is the more services you will sell. Most marketing

campaigns are aimed at making the sell now. These so called “now” buyers comprise the smallest percentage of consumers. **We are looking to build long term customer relationships which represent the vast majority of consumers.**

Offer:

Always minimize your potential customer’s fear by providing them with a low risk way to sign up for services. Give them all the information they need so they feel they are in control of their decision and they are not being “talked into anything.” Your goal is to solve their problem, not sell them something they don’t need or want.

RESULT:

Establish leads that will convert to long term customers.

What Are We Marketing?

We are marketing ‘solving problems.’ We are marketing helping our customers with what matters to them. We are marketing all of the DogSmith Products and Services that are listed on your DogSmith website. But each of these services and products are based on the trust and confidence DogSmith customers have granted us. So remember, we are marketing the “sizzle” and the “steak”. We are marketing the “peace of mind” of having a qualified, insured, bonded, certified pet sitter, not the actual pet sitting. We have to perform the pet sitting in the most professional and exceptional manner, but we market what the pet sitting represents to the customer – peace of mind, the safety, happiness and well-being of their pet.

How Do We Price Our Products and Services?

Because we are always developing new and customized services we do not include pricing on the website. In addition, you may have multi-tiered pricing and your pricing may vary from area to area within your territory. We recommend that you review your pricing annually or when you experience significant increases in costs. We try to position the DogSmith to be not the cheapest and not the most expensive but somewhere in the middle where we strive to be the best quality and a good value.

There are two fundamental ways of determining your pricing, Cost Based and Competition Based.

Cost Based Pricing:

To determine prices based on cost is commonly used and is simply determined by calculating all of your costs and then adding to that a fixed percentage as profit.

Advantages of cost-based pricing

1. Easy to calculate
2. Minimal information needed
3. Easy to administer
4. Tends to stabilize markets - insulated from demand variations and competitive factors

Disadvantages of cost-based pricing

1. provides no incentive for efficiency
2. tends to ignore the role of consumers
3. tends to ignore the role of competitors
4. ignores opportunity costs

Competition Based

Competition-based pricing sets prices based on a survey of competition and on three types of competitive products:

- Products have lasting distinctiveness from competitor's product.
- Products have perishable distinctiveness from competitor's product, assuming the product features are medium distinctiveness.
- Products have little distinctiveness from competitor's product. assuming that:

Competitive pricing is done based on these three factors. The DogSmith is predominantly a product/service with lasting distinctiveness from our competitor's services and we prefer using competitive pricing as the basis for establishing local pricing.

Competition analysis

The competition analysis you performed during your BARK pre-work and the spreadsheet you were provided to estimate revenue during your due diligence provide the tools and information you need to structure your pricing based on your competition.

Marketing Strategy

There are four methods we will want to focus our efforts to increase your business and profitability:

1. Find new customers – through advertising, community involvement, referrals, events, “networking” etc. Most of our marketing will be “education-based” where we give away “samples” (demonstrations, guides, introductory courses etc.) to encourage prospects to become lifetime customers.
2. Increase the average spend/sales per customer – “up-sell” your customers with higher quality services. If they choose the minimum pet sitting service, show them the value in purchasing the more inclusive packages.
3. Increase the frequency or quantity of your customer's purchases - selling your customers additional products and services (cross-selling), dog food, pet sitting, dog walking, doggy parties, etc. Follow up on services, measure your customers activities (why haven't they used you over Christmas, did they not go away or are they using the competition?)

4. Hold on to your customers for life – by being the most reliable, fair, ethical, professional, DogSmith Services. Not to be forwarded or copies

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effective business person on the planet, you will keep your customers for life. Measure your operations effectiveness and satisfaction through surveys, testimonials, talk to your customers and LISTEN. Maintain the relationship even when you are not in an active buying-selling transaction. It is far more expensive to earn a new customer than it is to keep an existing customer.

Finding new customers

Marketing Referral Sources

Pet Professionals – A Great Referral Source

The responsibility of caring for a family's pet is just like caring for any other member of the family, the critical factor is TRUST. Since many pet owners turn to their vet as a source of information and guidance concerning every aspects of their pet's life including diet, nutrition and training, veterinarians should comprise the backbone of your referral program.

Referrals from veterinarians will be of the highest quality since customers you gain through a vet referral will already be vetted (excuse the pun). These are customers who do not hesitate to spend on their pets and a level of trust is already established.

The tactics you use to establish a referral relationship will vary slightly from vet to vet depending on many factors. Your own vet should be your first stop. They value your business and establishing a referral relationship with your own vet can be as simple as letting them know about your business during the next routine checkup for your dog or cat.

For those vets you don't know, you can start by calling those in your area and asking them if they can refer a trainer/sitter. If they can't, then put them on your "visit" list. If they already refer their customers to another trainer they may still be worth a visit especially if the trainer they recommend doesn't offer the comprehensive services a DogSmith offers. You will have to approach these in a less direct manner. For example, you may simply offer to

take on any referrals that their primary trainer doesn't have time for or only offer "Dog Walking" services initially.

Visit each vet armed with the DogSmith 'vet pack,' business cards, brochures, socialization booklets, and a small gift of cookies or candy or something creative and memorable. The office staff is the key to referrals. The more the vet's staff appreciates the gift the better you will be remembered. Offer something free that they or their customers will appreciate like gift cards for discounted lessons. Cookies, candies and other treats are always a nice way of saying "thank you". And if given in a bowl or dish you will always have an excuse to stop by, renew your relationship and refill the bowl as well as restock your brochures and business cards.

Offering services such as puppy socialization courses or a group introductory class to the vet's customers can be a great way to gain direct exposure to potential customers and the vet benefits from having better behaved clients. You can also offer free consultations to the vet's clients on behavioral issues and provide free booklets on crate training, housetraining and other important topics.

It can also be advantageous to include a resume' of your dog training/pet care credentials. Be sure to ask them for their business card so you return the referral favor. Most vets will be quick to give you their information.

Some offices may be a bit unfriendly and aloof when they realize you are trying to drum up business, but don't let it bother you if the staff is less than friendly. Be patient, persistent and always friendly and professional. Don't take any rejections personally. You will find that some of the tougher initial "sales" will end up becoming your strongest supporters.

Once you've established the relationship please do not forget to regularly maintain the relationship by showing your appreciation with seasonal gifts and cards, thank you notes for specific recommendations and refer your clients to them – this is especially important when your customers have a veterinary question. As a professional dog trainer remember to always have your customers check with their vet for health issues.

Finally, be aware and be careful not to directly compete with the vet if they sell a line of food or offer kennel services as part of their practice. Emphasize whichever aspects of your business you feel will most appeal to the vet

and deemphasize any of your services that they may consider direct competition. Of course never openly criticize their dietary or behavior advice.

Perhaps the biggest part of your business comes from your territory's pet industry businesses and professional's referring clients to your business. In general your primary referral sources are:

- 1) Dog Clubs
 - a. Agility Clubs
 - b. Obedience Clubs
 - c. AKC sanctioned Dog Fancier Clubs
 - d. Fly-ball Clubs
 - e. Dock Diving
- 2) Dog Parks
- 3) Veterinary Offices
- 4) Pet Hospitals
- 5) Pet Groomers
- 6) Boarding Kennels
- 7) Pet Sitting Companies
- 8) Humane Societies
- 9) ASPCA
- 10) Private Shelters
- 11) Breed Rescue Groups
- 12) Doggie Day care
- 13) Catteries

- 14) Cat Rescue Groups
- 15) Pet Stores
 - a. Petco
 - b. Petland
 - c. Local pet stores
 - d. Specialized stores, birds, reptiles etc
- 16) Family Advocacy Groups for Dogs
- 17) Networking groups
- 18) Dog Events
- 19) AKC Sanctioned Dog Events
- 20) Pet Photographers
- 21) Pet Caricaturists
- 22) Pet Cemetery
- 23) Pet Cremation & Funeral Services
- 24) Pet Entertainers
- 25) Frisbee performers
- 26) Pet Boutiques
- 27) Pet Bakeries
- 28) Friends, Family, Colleagues, Associates

Dog Clubs are social clubs for dog owners. Members participate in dog obedience and other dog activities. They are a good source for information on dog events and exhibitions. Many dog clubs welcome professional trainers to join.

Dog Agility Clubs are clubs that focus on the sport of agility. They will be a good source for students who want to venture into the world of Dog Agility but first need to master some basic obedience skills. Agility clubs will recommend local dog trainers.

AKC sanctioned Dog Fancier Clubs. These are a more sophisticated dog clubs. Many of them offer elementary training classes conducted by members. They work towards achieving club recognition through member participation in sanctioned dog competitions in a variety of specialties. Any of a number of these are worth joining to access the local dog world.

Dog Parks – Dog parks are areas allocated for dogs to run and play off leash. Some of them are managed and operated through non profit organizations. Some are managed by local authorities. They are a good source for advertising and also offer locations to conduct group dog classes and private lessons.

Veterinary Offices – Offer pet care related services, boarding, grooming and medical care. Vets will often recommend dog trainers to clients with dog behavioral issues.

Pet Hospitals – Similar to Veterinary offices.

Pet Groomers – Offer pet grooming services, often also offer boarding and day care services.

Will refer problem dogs to trainers and help advertise training classes to their client base.

Groomers are often anxious to enter into joint ventures or share advertising.

Boarding Kennels – Offer pet kenneling, daycare and grooming services. Some of the more sophisticated businesses may have on-site trainers. They will sometimes contract with a local trainer who can use their facility and client base to conduct business. A boarding kennel may view you as competition.

Pet Sitting Companies – companies that offer in-home pet care. They are a good referral for Dog Trainers as they have access to their own client lists and are often asked by clients to recommend a local trainer but they will definitely consider you competition but don't discount the possibility of mutual referrals or some cooperative advertising. This will depend on the company and how they view you.

Humane Societies – Will be happy to refer business to a dog trainer, partner with a dog trainer to offer dog training group and private lessons. Dog trainers can integrate themselves into the Humane Society by offering behavioral advice for dogs that are being placed for adoption in terms of their suitability with children, other small animals and living accommodation size. Humane Societies are usually anxious to use the DogSmith resources.

ASPCA – The same as the Humane Societies.

Private Shelters – Private non profit, locally run dog rescue groups will often be a good referral for clients who adopt rescue dogs through their organization. They can add value to their adoption process by including some of the DogSmith services.

Breed Rescue Groups – Groups of people that focus on rescuing particular breeds of dogs. These groups are a good network within the animal community.

Doggie Day-care - Businesses that offer a dog day-care facility. Most dogs accepted into doggie day care facilities have to be well socialized and well behaved. Dogs that apply for day care and are refused are often referred to a dog trainer. Again, a good relationship needs to be established as they may view you as competition.

Catteries – Boarding facilities that specialize in cats. Many cat owners also own dogs. Catteries are a good location for placement of brochures.

Pet Stores - Small local pet stores not affiliated with the larger, national companies are happy to refer business to local trainers. They have more personal relationships with their clients and are happy to offer support services to existing clients

National Chain Pet Stores:

Petco – Large pet stores that do not offer in-store training like PetSmart does. They have community notice boards and allow local businesses to advertise through them.

Petland - Large pet stores that do not offer in-store training like PetSmart does. They have community notice boards and allow local businesses to advertise through them. Petland also has dogs available for adoption and may be willing to integrate your services into their adoption process.

Specialized stores, birds, reptiles etc – Good outlet for placement of brochures and referrals.

Family Advocacy Groups for Dogs – These groups are formed for a variety of reasons, including advocating for dog owner rights within a community. They may maintain newsletters and websites.

Networking groups – Local business network groups that invite a representative from each industry to work as a marketing referral tool for each member. These are generally more effective than joining a Chamber of Commerce though some are affiliated through the local Chamber.


Dog Events – Events put on by any of the above dog organizations or by county or city governments. These provide a great opportunity for you to participate with sponsorships, event booths, dog obedience displays, training orientations and educational demonstrations.

AKC Sanctioned Dog Events – Organized club competitions sanctioned through the American Kennel Club. These events sometimes look for sponsorship of trophies and ribbons and offer good advertising opportunities.

Pet Photographers & Pet Caricaturists – These businesses attend a lot of events. Many have studios or stores where they do private sittings for owners and their pets. These may offer a referral opportunity and location to display brochures as well as joint ventures or cooperative advertising.

Pet Cemetery & Pet Cremation & Funeral Services – These services have become very sophisticated. They offer a range of services from simple cremation of deceased pets to full featured chapel services for deceased pets. These may offer a referral opportunity and location to display brochures.

Pet Entertainers such as

 Frisbee performers

 Dock Diving

These may offer a referral opportunity and location to display brochures as well as the chance to co-sponsor events, partner advertising and joint ventures.

Pet Boutiques – Ranging in size and sophistication, these service providers offer everything from small pet related goods to clothing attire and pet furniture. They have clientele that spend more than average on their pets. Many have refined stores where brochures can be placed and are a good source for behavioral referrals.

Pet Bakeries – A retail location that sells everything from high end premium dog food to delicate daily cookie specials. Many will let you place brochures and can be a good source for referrals.

Family and friends -Your family and friends will be eager to help you and they will provide good practice for you. Ask them to keep an ear out for any of their friends or coworkers who are

in need or are thinking about dog training, dog walking, pet care or pet nutrition. A little effort on their part will go a long way in helping you.

Business Acquaintances- Other businesses are usually as eager to get their business name out as you are and so a wonderful business relationship can evolve. Letters to business acquaintances are more of a starting point to a great relationship. Look toward a long-term cooperative marketing campaign, partnering for events, share space on marketing collateral, etc. See the section on networking below.

Colleagues - Work colleagues, current or past, are people who know you and trust you. They know you are dependable and hard working. Therefore many of them are prime candidates to use your services and to spread the word about the professionalism, reliability, value and dependability of you and your new business. Rely on your established relationships to introduce your new business and services.

Your family-related organizations - If you and your family participate or belong to different organizations, clubs or activities, then you have a great network of possible customers or assistance spreading the word about your new business. These people know you and a previously established relationship exists. Take advantage of this and offer your services to people that already trust you and may need your service. It is often as simple as wearing logo'd apparel to start a conversation about the benefits of your services. Churches, clubs, organizations and local 'hangouts' are ideal targets. Remember to make them feel special by sponsoring events, activities or simply offer them a discount.

Referral Basics

The lack of marketing strategy is where most businesses fail. Both extremes can fail, either ignoring your customers and potential customers or constantly "pitching" to your customers and

potential customers – bombarding them with non-stop sales pitches.

We consider Referral Marketing the most cost-effective method for a small, service business to market their business. Many people confuse “referral” marketing with “word of mouth”.

Word of mouth advertising/marketing is passive whereby providing good reliable service your customers, friends, and neighbors recommend or refer your services to potential customers that they may know or be acquainted with. Word of mouth advertising/marketing is great but it does not give you the control over your marketing strategy.

Referral advertising/marketing is an active program whereby you establish AND maintain a referral network with current customers, former customers, related business owners, unrelated business owners, friends, family members, non profit organizations, local government offices and virtually anyone you have contact with, through which you inform them about your business in exchange for informing others about their business, reward them in some way for helping you (the reward may be as simple as recommending their business to others) or providing information of value for free (education, gift cards, discounts, assistance etc.). In short, referral marketing is about establishing and maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship with your customers and future customers.

Here are 5 of the fundamentals of referral marketing:

1. Make cultivating relationships your priority.
2. Make the time - schedule referral marketing time every day.
3. Establish and pursue strategies for keeping in touch, and keeping track

of how you keep in touch. In general our strategy is based on providing a level of free education and assistance regarding pet care.

4. Establish how you will carry out your strategy – we will use as many methods as we can from, emails, personal visits, press, mailings (greeting cards, seasonal cards, note cards, postcards etc.), mutual events etc.
5. Know what your message will be – the message is the key.

By creating and delivering quality information and messages to your referral network you will rise above the ‘sales’ hype that everyone is inundated with every day.

How Do Consumers Interact with Companies and Individuals?

The two ways most consumers interact with companies and individuals are:

1. Transactional and,
2. Relational.

Transactional relationships are focused on making the sale. Relational interactions are more long term oriented where you gain and maintain a customer for life. You, as a DogSmith small business owner, are far better equipped to establish and maintain relational interactions than your larger competition and relational interactions are the most cost-effective and profitable over the long run for small businesses.

Referrals are critical to our business. Potential customers rely heavily on the opinions and recommendations of their friends and family. If a satisfied customer of yours or trusted referral partner recommends your services to a friend or family member you have instant credibility with your new customer, and you have a new customer that you didn't have to spend any advertising

dollars to get.

To a certain extent good referrals will come automatically if you are providing exceptional service and building your customer relationship. Nonetheless you will also want to actively seek referrals. Some of the best ways to get referrals are listed below:

1. As we've mentioned several times in the manual, *under promise and over deliver*. Some companies call this the WOW factor. Be constantly looking for opportunities to 'wow' your customers. Sometimes this simply means doing what you've promised to do. Other times it means going above and beyond what is expected. Build and maintain a professional reputation. Return phone calls, behave professionally, be on time for meetings and appointments, do not gossip or criticize your competition.
2. Ask your customers for referrals and testimonials. Don't solicit compliments or put your customers in an awkward position but if your client is clearly pleased with your services simply and politely ask for a referral or testimonial or both. A simple "I am glad you are happy with fluffy's progress. Here is a gift card for a friend or family member who would like to teach their dog to behave like fluffy". But while being polite you need to be specific. The more specific you can be the more likely the referral will become a customer (it is no use to get a referral who is not a pet owner).
3. You can offer a discount on services as a reward for the referral. For example, if you are pet sitting for a customer over Christmas and they refer a neighbor you could profitably offer them a discount on their pet sitting during the same period since two clients are physically close together and easy for you to service both at the same time. You can also

reward your customers who give you a referral with gift cards, future discounts on services, cash or gifts.

4. You can also offer free demonstrations, introductory classes or seminars to groups or classes as a way to generate interest in your services.
5. Network on a regular basis and make sure everyone knows you are around and in business. Send birthday cards to your animal clients, reminders of important dates or any special occasion cards (<https://www.sloppykisscards.com/join.php>). Keep your social media sites up to date and interesting (more on this later). Keep your customers and clients informed via email of classes and new service offerings. Even if they don't use them, they may know someone who does.
6. Karma. Look for opportunities to refer your friends and family members to your customer's businesses or services.
7. Attend networking groups in your business community. These can be very effective. Remember, marketing is all about building long-term relationships. It takes time for prospects to know you and, more importantly, trust you. Studies show it can take up to 10 meaningful contacts with you before a prospect will hire you or refer you. This is especially true in a "trust" reliant service like pet care. So keep at it and be patient, but be consistent.
8. Joint Ventures and Affiliates. Establish relationships with other business people who share your customer base and business philosophy but offer a different service. Groomers, vets and retail boutiques are an example. You can refer clients to them; they can refer clients to you. Have your groomer affiliate give one of your gift cards to every

client. Your gift card adds value to the groomer's service while encouraging a new customer for you.

9. Track where your referrals are coming from so you know what works, what doesn't and where you can show your appreciation.

CREATING YOUR REFERRAL BOOK

Organizing your territory's referral sources and developing an efficient and effective outside marketing strategy is critical to your success.

Remember, any business and any individual can be a potential referral source for you. Even "everyday" businesses that aren't pet-related do business everyday with pet owners and everyone either owns a pet or knows many pet owners. Don't forget this. Your potential market is huge and you only need to capture a very small piece of it build a thriving DOGSMITH business for yourself. The secret is to "FOCUS" your time on the referral sources that will generate the most qualified referrals for you.

1. Through every resource you can find, such as the Yellow Pages, Internet, and your local pet resource books, assemble a "comprehensive and complete" listing of "every" potential referral source in your territory.

2. Input your territories referral sources into an excel spreadsheet
 - a. Your headings should be:
 - Type
 - Facility Name
 - Address
 - City
 - Zip Code
 - Phone Number
 - Contact Person

- Title
- E-Mail Address and Notes

b. A sample excel spreadsheet is included following this section.

Type	Name	Address	City	Zip	Phone	Contact	Title	Email
Dog Park	Walton Cnty Bark Park	102 JD Miller Rd	Santa Rosa Beach	32413	850 625 1094	Pat C.	Pres of Board	pat@barkpark.com
Vet	Panhandle Vet	1123 falling waters drive	Chipley	32428	850 285 2367	Dr. A Lindhol m	DVM	al@panhandlevet.com

3. Categorize your territories referral sources by the categories listed at the beginning of this section (i.e. dog parks, pet stores, rescue networks, etc.):

4. Call or visit every referral source you have listed and gather the information you need to complete the form. Make sure you get the complete name and position of your “contact person.” Your contact person will be the person that has the ultimate decision making power (the power to say “YES!”) to allow you to do what you want to do (i.e. set up a brochure stand, offer free Puppy classes, leave your business cards etc.).

5. Print out your “complete” territories referral list by category and get familiar with it.

Your contacts in these facilities will be instrumental in your success. As you analyze

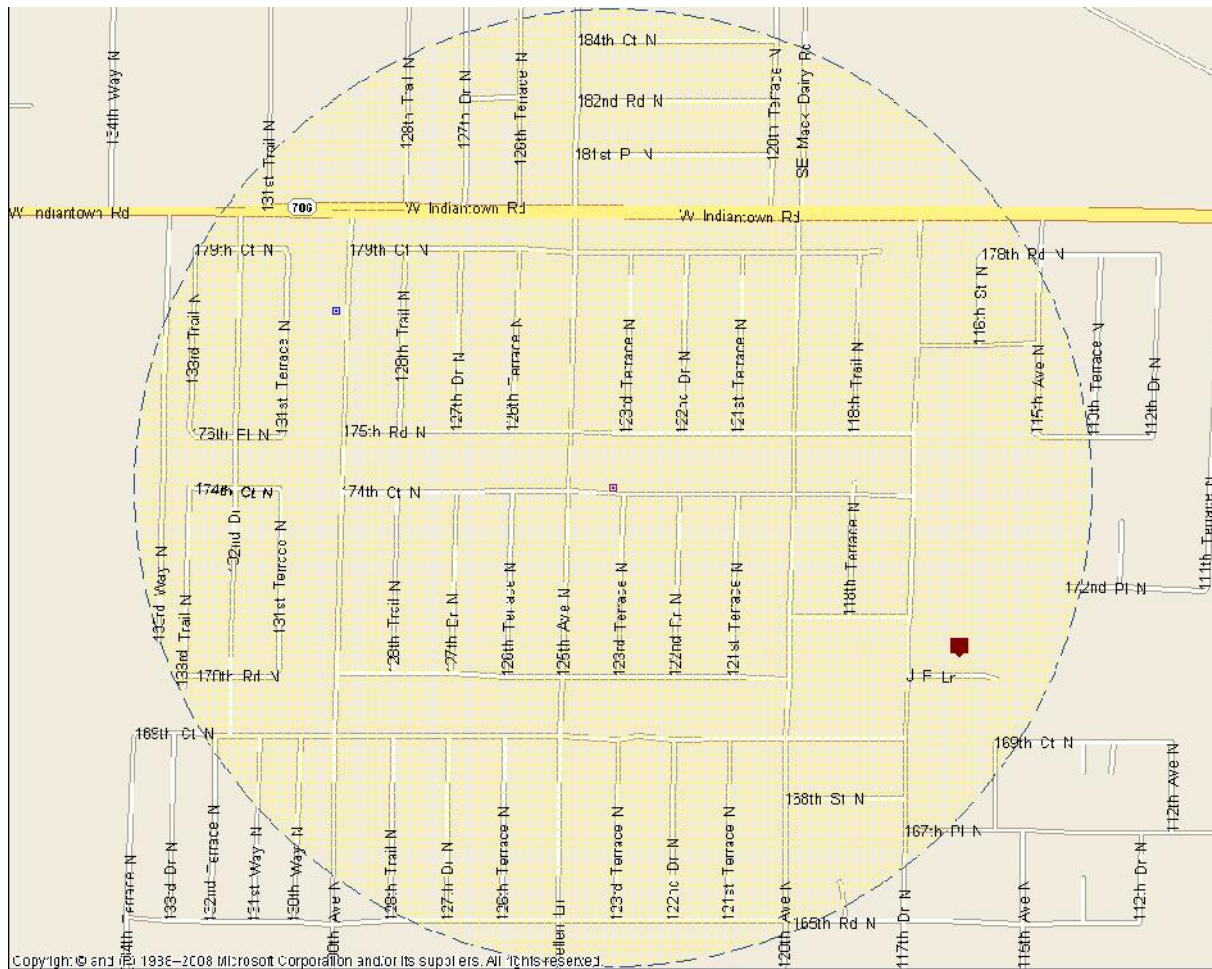
your reports, create an “A” list. Your “A” list will be the facilities with the greatest potential to refer quality business to your company. Initially, assume the more pet-related a referral source is, the more potential it has. This may change but it is a good starting point. Your goal is to develop an excellent “A” list. You will be focusing your time, attention, and marketing efforts with your “A” list contacts.

6. You may want to purchase Microsoft “Streets & Trips” (usually \$39.00 without the GPS feature) software program from Office Depot, Office Max or Staples

Or – Use Microsoft Outlook in conjunction with Windows Live

Or – Use Google Maps.
7. Import your Referral Source Data into your new software program so you can develop efficient marketing routes.
8. Using your Microsoft “Streets & Trips” software program prepare routes and directions for each referral source location by area and/or city and print out your maps and directions.
9. Place the excel spreadsheet, route sheets, and directions into a notebook with dividers for each location by area and/or neighborhood or city if you have multiple/large territories. Depending on how large your area is, you might want to divide the routes up into more than one notebook.

10. To start with, assemble twenty (20) Daily Marketing Routes (1 for each of the typical 20 business days per month). Schedule 10 referral source visits for each of the twenty (20) days to start. This means you should have two hundred (200) target referral sources to start your marketing efforts. Study each of your twenty (20) Daily Routes making sure the ten (10) locations you will visit are routed in the most efficient order. Gas is expensive and time is money so you want to schedule your marketing days the best you can. Twenty (20) routes mean you can visit your referral source contacts once a month. As your business builds you won't have the time to visit your referral sources as frequently but for now you need to contact as many as possible. You may also want to visit your "best" referral contacts twice a month or even weekly.



Marketing Referral Sources

Always look professional but not overdressed and wear logo'd apparel when marketing referral sources. Provide your referrals with your business cards, service brochures and any marketing "give-away" ('fridge magnets, bumper stickers, tee shirts, pen etc.) items you think appropriate.

Qualify Your Referrals

When trying to determine how to spend your marketing time, you need to work smart and qualify your referral's potential. For example, after you have made an appointment to meet with a humane society director, you need to plan out what you want to accomplish during the meeting, because it

will be very different than what you intend to accomplish at, for example, a pet store. While your ultimate goal would certainly be for The DOGSMITH to become their first choice in recommending or using a pet care service, your initial goals will be to market yourself effectively. In order to accomplish this, you must use your time wisely. During your initial meeting with a potential referral source perhaps the most important questions you can ask are (based on meeting with a rescue group or humane society):

1. What are the most common reasons dog owners leave their pets with you?

2. How many dogs get brought back after adoption?

3. What are the most common reasons they are returned?

4. So, proper dog training could, most likely, significantly decrease the rate of dog returns and increase adoption satisfaction for new owners?

5. Do you think it would make sense for your organization to promote free puppy training classes as people adopt puppies?

6. When older dogs are adopted, what about discounted training options to help ensure the months after adoption go smoothly?

Remember; always speak in terms of how your services will benefit their organization, their business, or their customers. That's what they care about. Understand their needs, feel their pain.

Then offer to solve their problem. Free puppy classes sound great to you, but to them, they only matter if they increase adoption retention and decrease adoptee returns or help their customers perceive them as adding more value.

A typical visit to one of your referral sources will look something like this:

1. Make an appointment to meet with your referral source (if possible).
2. Shake their hand and give them a DOGSMITH brochure, your business card and an appropriate promotional item (pen, sticker, fridge magnet etc.).
3. Try to become their 'business friend' by talking about things outside of the business such as children, current events, weather, etc.
4. Be respectful of their time and try to get them to smile during your short meeting. Remember, you want them to look forward to your visits so do whatever you can to ensure they do.

Remember, good relationships take time, so don't push it. All of our marketing efforts are geared at establishing long term relationships, not quick, one-time sales. Be patient.

5. Extend your hand and tell them thank you and good-bye. Tell them you would appreciate any referrals and that you will work very hard to provide the area's best service.

Within a few months, you will have your referral source book and daily routes down pat. You will have met with your initial list of Two Hundred (200) referral contacts and, based on relevant facts and observations, organized your list into an "A" list, "B" list, and possibly even a "C" list. You will have your daily marketing routes organized to maximize your marketing efforts and minimize travel time and expense. You will be on your way to developing long-term relationships with the most promising contacts and, most assuredly, have gotten business from a number of them already! Congratulations, you are on your way to becoming a successful DOGSMITH business owner.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Maintaining a respected, positive image and leadership position in your community is another, and perhaps the best, means of promoting your DOGSMITH business. Your business is a local business, and good standing in the community is essential to you and your business. To help promote a positive image for your DOGSMITH business, consider the following:

- Become involved in your community¹.
- Sponsor events, fun-runs, “dog-daze”, bark parks etc.
- Participate in community development programs and organizations.
- Be active in the chamber of commerce².
- Support the schools by buying marketing in the yearbook, newspaper etc.
- Advertise in local business directories.
- Choose your shelter/rescue partner and work closely with them.

Notes:

1. Though it is essential you play a leading role in your community remain aware that many pet related issues can be quite divisive and emotionally charged in a community and you will need to exercise some skill remaining neutral on issues while at the same time being available to offer advice and assistance.

2. Many marketing professionals will advise that joining your local “chamber” is essential. This is a decision you will have to make yourself but we advise that you not join your chamber immediately. Our experience shows that most areas have multiple chambers (city, county, regional) and they are very often not focused on small service businesses. Their emphasis is sometimes on simply recruiting new members and the cost to you can be significant, especially if there are more than one in your franchise area. So move slowly on this and wait until you get to know your business community and your needs then investigate potential chambers thoroughly. Then you can make an informed decision on whether to join or not after determining the benefit to your business.

NETWORKING

Many of us are not natural ‘networkers’. But you don’t have to be a “networker” to be truly effective at marketing your business. You simply have to believe in your business and you have to show up prepared to offer advice to those that need it.

"80 percent of success is just showing up" — Woody Allen

By just showing up to an event or meeting with your business cards, marketing collateral, logo apparel, some ‘give-aways’ and a willingness to answer questions you will make contacts. Don’t put any pressure on yourself to make a sale. Remember, marketing is about building relationships and it’s a necessary part of doing business. Just tell yourself that you are there to meet a few people and be friendly and open. One of your goals is to simply become known in your community. Do not be the movie stereo-type ‘glad-hander’ who charges up to everyone saying, “Hi, I’m Bob of Bob’s pizzeria” and then stick a business card in their hand. Treat networking more like dating, don’t come on too strong but get the other person interested.

Local Chamber of Commerce

Most conventional business advice includes joining your local “Chamber”. As noted above, you are not required to join a chamber of commerce. Because your DogSmith territory may likely extend into several chamber jurisdictions, joining them all can be expensive whereas joining only one may not give you the benefits you desire. We suggest you wait and, over time, if you decide there would be a benefit to your business then carefully evaluate their services and potential benefits to you against the cost. Ask other DogSmiths on their experience with Chambers.

Better Business Bureau

Again, most conventional business advice includes joining the BBB. You are not required to join the Better Business Bureau. Much like the Chamber of Commerce, wait until your business is established and evaluate the benefits against the cost of belonging to the BBB.

Remember: Your networking goals shouldn't differ from your general marketing goals. You want to create relationships that will result in new business.

MARKETING MEDIA

With time, you will get to know each local media representative and the characteristics of the medium each represents (TV, Radio, Print, etc.); however, these representatives are salespeople, and they will try to sell you larger ad spaces, more radio time, more frequency, etc., than you may need. They may offer special promotions, bulk packages, or space contracts; that is their job. It is up to you to learn the limitations of each medium and determine if the audience/subscribers match **your** target audience. Occasionally, you may wish to consider a medium because it reaches a target audience that might expand your market. Always keep both your actual needs and the "needs" the sales people promote in proper perspective.

Contact DogSmith Services for advice, opinions, or sample materials as needed. The following pages provide information on various media that may help you in selecting your media mix.

Media Available to you – not all are appropriate or effective in the pet care industry:

Newspaper ads	Posters
Sweepstakes	Contests
Door-to-Door	Card decks
Webinars	Seminars
Radio ads	Television ads
Banners, including internet	Signs
Events and specialty shows	Yellow Pages
Articles, print and internet	Classified ads
Newsletters, print and email	Charity events and sponsorships
Networking	Infomercials

Billboards	Take-one boxes with flyers, brochures or business cards
Magazine ads	Special events
Sales letters	Flyers
Email	Movie ads
Ezine ads and articles	Postcards
Doorhangers	Press Releases
Brochures	Gift Certificates and Cards
Word-of-mouth referrals	Websites
Road signs	Business cards
Catalogs	Air banners
Speeches, seminars, lectures	Window displays

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Various Media

Every dollar is precious to your business and you literally want to get the biggest bang for your buck. Your marketing and advertising campaign should result in greater sales, more profits and a thriving business.

Before you choose which media to use ask yourself the following:

- Who are your target customers?
- What is the best way to reach your target customers?
- Is the best way affordable and will I get a good return on my investment? (return on your marketing dollar investment is a theme we will go back to repeatedly)

Here are some advantages and disadvantages of various advertising media.

Newspapers - Newspapers are one of the traditional mediums used by businesses, both big and small alike, to advertise their businesses.

Advantages

- Reaches a huge number of people in a given geographic area – but these numbers are falling
- Flexibility in ad size, color, black and white, location
- Flexibility in text, graphics etc.
- Newspapers are often passed from person to person
- A newspaper's ad section can often advise you on what works and what doesn't.
- The placement deadlines for alterations are sometimes helpful if you need to make last minute changes.

Disadvantages

- Expensive
- Newspapers carry a lot of ads, inserts, special editions so your ad may be lost.
- Sometimes the graphics are not very good.
- Unlike bus benches or billboards, newspapers are thrown away at some point.
- You are paying for your ad to be seen by a lot of people who have no interest in your services.
- Your competitors easily see your ad.
- Newspapers are dying.

Magazines - Magazines can be more expensive than newspapers but many are targeted at a more focused market.

This can be effective for the DogSmith.

Advantages

- You can target your market.
- Subscribers keep magazines longer and read them more thoroughly.
- Ad quality can be superior to newspapers.

Disadvantages

- The ad can't be changed as easily and quickly as with a newspaper.
- More restrictions on where you ad appears in the magazine.
- Usually more expensive.

Yellow Pages – In addition to the traditional Yellow Pages your phone company sends you there are many specialized directories designed to target groups. There are also talking yellow pages, internet directories, cell phone services, local listings, regional listings, industry listings and other related “yellow page” like services. Normally one or more of these directories is important to the DogSmith marketing.

Advantages

- Wide usage in some demographics
- Your customer goes to the directory so you aren't 'selling'.
- The buying decision is often already made when a customer uses a directory.
- Reasonably inexpensive
- You can easily track and measure response rate
- Easy to update

Disadvantages

- All ads, yours can get lost
- Your ad is with your competitor's
- Restricted designs

Radio – This can be effective for the DogSmith but depends on many factors.

Advantages

- Widely listened to.

- You can focus on your target market to a certain extent because of the variety of specialty stations and formats.
- Ads can be very creative and the station will often help
- Rates can be very negotiable.

Disadvantages

- You are paying to advertise across a very wide area to many people either out of your territory or who aren't interested in your services.
- Ads are easily forgotten as someone is driving in their car.
- Usually multiple exposure to your ad is required before they "stick" with a listener.
- Radio listeners are generally doing something else, driving, working, etc.

Television – Primarily for building brand awareness rather than building prospects this is not a primary marketing tool for DogSmith.

Advantages

- Television reaches a lot of people on a national or regional level instantaneously.
- Cable TV allows more opportunities to focus on your target demographic.
- TV is effective at building brand awareness.

Disadvantages

- Multiple exposures are required for your ad to 'stick'.
- Ad scheduling is complicated
- Popular and effective ad time slots are expensive and sell out fast.
- Ads are of limited length.
- Expensive.

Direct Mail - Direct mail, sending informational and educational marketing collateral directly to your target demographic can be very effective.

Advantages

- Your ad and information is tailored specifically for your target audience.
- Cost-effective since you limit who does and does not get your mail.
- You can personalize letters.
- You generally have more room and greater opportunity to provide more details.
- Conversion rate is easily measured.
- You have more control over your message.
- More difficult for your competition to see your ad.

Disadvantages

- It's considered JUNK mail.
- The success of direct mail depends on the quality of your mailing list.
- Expense varies depending on what you are sending and the number of addresses in your target area.

Telemarketing - Telephone sales can be an effective system in some industries but isn't really effective for the DogSmith. Certain aspects of telemarketing can be used to optimize your personal sales campaign when contacting referrals.

Advantages

- One on one.
- Easy to qualify your prospect.
- Cost-effective.
- Measurable.
- Good opportunity to educate your prospect.
- Set-up cost can be minimal

- Efficient compared to sales calls.
- Good way to maintain contact with existing customers or provide assistance and advice.

Disadvantages

- Unpopular with the public.
- Calls are easily screened
- Not as effective or appropriate for DogSmith services.

Specialty Advertising - This kind of advertising includes guerilla marketing, events, referrals where you distribute educational information, brochures, puppy socialization guides and goodies like key chains, clickers, tee shirts, hats, etc.

Advantages

- Flexible
- You can market directly to your most qualified prospects.
- Your 'goodies' get passed around and used giving your business name retention.
- Quality goodies can be relatively inexpensive.
- Many goodies are valued by recipients.
- People love getting small gifts for free.
- You can attract prospects at events just by selectively passing out goodies.

Disadvantages

- Targeting your market can be difficult.
- Can be expensive in large numbers.
- Sometimes your message is overlooked
- If done unprofessionally or haphazardly you may detract from your image rather than build it.

Yellow Pages

Yellow page marketing can hit the very hottest of prospects. These people do not necessarily need to be educated in the value of your service. They are actively searching for your services. You don't have to expend as much energy getting their attention or selling the general benefits of your products or service. Be focused, be precise and be as large as you can afford.

Investigate your area and see which of the various Yellow Page Directories are the most used and popular. Ask friends, family, coworkers and other businesses who they use. As other businesses if their listing has helped increase their sales or customer traffic.

Your Yellow Page directory should have a phone number in it for advertisers. If you don't know who publishes the Yellow Pages in your area check out the following resources:

Yellow Pages Publishers Association (YPPA)

820 Kirts Blvd. Suite 100 Troy, MI 48084

(810) 244-6200

<http://www.yellowpages.com/>

Association of Directory Publishers

105 Summer Street Wrentham, MA 02093

(508) 883-3688

<http://www.adp.org/>

Or call your local Chamber of Commerce for direction.

NEWSPAPERS/ INSERTS/MAGAZINES

DOGSMITH SERVICES will provide you with newspaper marketing and artwork; however, you should keep the following guidelines in mind when buying newspaper marketing space.

One disadvantage of newspaper marketing is the over-exposure to people who may not be interested in, or who are unable to take advantage of, your services. You are paying to market to people who will never use your services. Also, to reach target audiences in several communities, you may need to run the same ad in several newspapers, increasing your costs.

Before purchasing newspaper space, ask yourself:

- Who reads the paper? What are the ages, net worth, and educational levels of the readers? Do these characteristics correspond to those of the typical DOGSMITH client?
- Is there a particular section of the paper that is more likely to be read by readers who could become new clients?
- How much will the ad cost? Can I get discount rates for repeat insertions?
- Is there a particular day the ad will work best?
- Where else might I spend this money to generate more business?

In placing a newspaper ad, consider the following:

Size

The size of the ad, in relation to sizes of other ads and the format of the publication, can determine how well the ad will be seen and read. Use DOGSMITH sample ads

to help you determine the size of your ad.

Position

The best position for an advertisement is "above the fold" (on the top half of a page) or towards the front of an issue. However, be wary of special placement costs.

Remember, too, that a well laid out ad will attract attention wherever it is located.

Color

Color is eye catching, but it can be expensive. Use caution when opting for special production techniques.

Shading

The next best thing to color can be shading in or reversing part of the space in your ad. Ask your representative to have his/her department produce a few sample ads integrating these techniques into the ad.

Cost

Is the ad you have prepared too expensive? Some publications may be able to offer a package of repeat appearances at a discount so your ad will get more exposure. In general, the more local the newspaper the better return you will get on your advertising dollars.

NEWSPAPER INSERTS

As an alternative, an insert in the local newspaper, especially the Sunday newspaper, can be an effective way of getting a message to the people you want to see it.

MAGAZINE MARKETING

DOGSMITH SERVICES INC recommends that you limit magazine marketing to publications that target the "pet-owning" market or your specific demographic.

All marketing is, of course, subject to the final approval of the DOGSMITH SERVICES INC

corporate office.

DIRECT MAIL

Direct mail is one of the most effective ways of getting a message to the people you want to see it.

Direct mail provides you many advantages in marketing your services, including the opportunity to present information about DogSmith Services in a creative and visually appealing manner.

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING DIRECT MAIL PIECES

Before you begin preparing a mailer, you must make some decisions:

- Who do you want to reach? What is your "market"?
- What benefits and features should you emphasize?
- What action do you want the reader to take? (e.g., Send in a return questionnaire and be entered into a drawing for a nice prize.)
- Who is your competition? What do they offer? (e.g. discount, free service, gift)
- What is your budget? How much can you afford to spend on printing and mailing costs?

Develop a mailing list.

Many different kinds of mailing lists are available for purchase or rent; they are based on anything from net worth to interests to geographical regions. However, these lists can also be quite expensive, and you may be restricted to using them only once. You may find it makes more sense to develop your own lists. We do often use a Direct Mail Postcard Service that also provides the mailing list all for an affordable price.

The USPS has some good resources and advice on direct mail you can find at www.usps.com/directmail/welcome.htm.

SPECIALTY MARKETING

Specialty marketing calls for the imprinting of the DOGSMITH SERVICES INCSM name, address, logo, slogan, etc., on items such as calendars, notepads, pens, etc., to increase the visibility of your business' name. These items can be given to area pet professionals as free gifts. Once referred to as "gimmick marketing," specialty marketing has attained a new level of professionalism. The quality of goods has improved and the public has demonstrated its interest in these items. A changing and growing selection of specialty items are available through The DogSmith Services or we can help you design your own and get the best price possible.

As always, make sure that you have the approval of the corporate office before investing in specialty marketing.

Guerrilla Marketing

Guerrilla Marketing refers to any marketing efforts that are low cost and rely more on your time, personal energy and creativity than on money. Some examples:

- Hang 8.5" x 11" tear-off flyers on bulletin boards
- Door Hangers – in targeted neighborhoods
- Put out brochures stands, pens, business cards, key chains &/or magnets placed and/or give to vets, groomers, car washes, pet stores, pet friendly hotels, cleaners, and other local companies and establishments you frequent/in your area
- Business cards, postcards, post-it notes, magnets or door hangers on car doors or other unique places
- Networking groups – BNI, Rotary, Lions Club, others
- Call competitors and make friends / trade referrals /
- Park your vehicle in a well seen area with magnets or vinyl lettering
- Frisbees, balloons, any sort of give-away

- Put out our post-it notes everywhere (mailboxes; trashcans!)
- Temporary tattoos!
- Hold a contest – get PR, get prospects...
- Give out T-shirts / training gear, toys – organizations, events, etc.
- Partner with other service businesses / cross-promote / share ad space
- Go door-to-door knocking and selling
- Grocery store carts / benches
- Car wash-related – mirror hangers, biz card board
- Biz card holder on side of vehicle
- School or sporting events sponsorships / ads
- Stand on a street corner or at an event in a dog suit or sandwich board and hand out goodies and brochures.
- Print 1,000 flyers (about \$105.00 including shipping from the critter care print store). Make a deal with a local pizza delivery company (or the delivery person) for \$100 or so, to glue a flyer on the top of each pizza box he/she delivers. So for \$205 you will have 1,000 flyers delivered. Our experience shows that you will gain an average of 7 new customers using this process. That is less than \$30 per customer. Assuming each customer has an average LV (lifetime value) of \$300 (and that is a very low estimate) your marketing ROI is 1000%. Try to find those returns on Wall Street!

Some web-oriented guerilla marketing ideas

Give something away –

Your joint ventures with your shelter or humane society is a great way to give away an introductory lesson, seminar etc. How you give these away is great opportunity to build your referral and/or email list. Offer free seminar/class if your prospect signs up for the DogSmith newsletter or if they respond to a postcard.

Have a drawing

This works particularly good at events where for a chance at a prize prospects can drop their business card into a fishbowl you have on your table.

You can develop a mailing list from the business card and market to these prospects directly.

Referral Email Marketing

Make sure you collect the email addresses of all your current customers. If you don't have their email address you can try to come up with a non-intrusive way to get it. Here again, offer them something in exchange for their address. You can hold a raffle at an event. Each prospect who wants a chance at winning the raffle prize signs up with their email address.

Flyers

Team up with a local youth group, scout troop, or church group and offer to sponsor them in exchange for distributing door hangers on homes in the local area. The flyer can offer a free introductory lesson or offer three dog walks for the price of two.

Run an opinion survey or issue vote

Animal shelters raise funds by charging for votes on photos for their annual calendar. You can try promoting a “safe, fun” non-controversial issue like, “Are cats better pets than dogs – vote here” where the prospect has to enter their email address in order to vote.

Partner for Email referrals

Partner with another business you know and respect and are willing to refer to your customers in exchange for them referring to your website. You can send referral emails to your customers and they can send referral emails to yours. Only partner with businesses that you truly believe will benefit your customers. The quality of the list is key.

SEO

Search Engine Optimization increases your rank on search engines.

Deal of The Day Websites

A great no cost method of advertising and attracting new customers is to run special deals on one or more of the ‘deal of the day’ web services such as [Groupon](#), [Coupaws](#), [Living Social](#), [Buckaroo](#) and others depending on your geographic location.

Conclusion

All it takes is a little creativity, energy and effort to draw attention and visitors to your business and your website. You could spend as much money as you have, and more and buy a lot of commercial advertising but we believe you should always “Reach for your head, not your wallet” to optimize your return on your marketing investment. The most effective, low cost,

methods of drawing traffic to your business and your website are easily accomplished with your time, energy and creativity.

PUBLICITY

Publicity, or "free" marketing, is the most economical, and often the most effective way to promote your business. Consequently, it should be used whenever possible.

One of your first opportunities to receive free press is your Grand Opening. The opening of a new DogSmith business will be considered news in most communities. To notify the media of your opening, submit the press release provided by The DOGSMITH SERVICES INC corporate office. Local newspapers usually welcome information about new community developments as "fillers" for local newspaper business/finance sections. So do not hesitate to promote your enterprise through the use of press releases whenever it seems appropriate. The DOGSMITH SERVICES INC corporate office can assist you in placing effective news releases.

As your business grows and as various seasons come around or you reach new milestones always keep in mind the opportunity for press. Events, donated services and "national" (e.g. national dog bite prevention week) days/weeks are all good subjects for a press release on your business.

At your request The DogSmith Services Inc. will draft a press release for you or you can submit one for approval.

Speeches/Seminars/Presentations

DOGSMITH SERVICES suggests that you take advantage of every opportunity to market your DogSmith business to the community. This includes presentations to local community groups, organizations, schools, dog clubs, scout groups etc. You can also make presentations on your own, and present a particular topic, such as pet health and nutrition, dog bite prevention or “how to choose the perfect pet”. Always provide enough information in the venues to establish your expertise but do not give away too much professional advise, you’ve worked hard to attain your knowledge and skills and you have a right to be paid for it. Just by advertising your seminar well in advance provides you with valuable advertising.

Approach local organizations and ask if they will sponsor you as a speaker, or invite you as a guest speaker. Such groups include:

- Scouting Groups
- Dog Clubs
- Rescue Groups
- Parks
- Animal Shelters
- Schools

Once you have arranged for a speech or presentation, make sure that you prepare adequately. When possible, preview the site before you make your presentation. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the lighting adequate?
- Is the room comfortable, with adequate seating?
- Is there a table or podium for you to work from?

- Will you need a microphone or other equipment?
- If it is appropriate to serve refreshments, will you need permission?

After you have decided on a topic, and have arranged with a group to be a guest speaker, or have made arrangements to make a presentation on your own, you must prepare your material. Always keep your audience in mind, and tailor your presentation to the particular group that you are working with.

Advertise your upcoming presentation, and if you are speaking to a club or organization, ask if they will help with marketing through their organization.

Finally, when you arrive to make your presentation, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Arrive early so that you are prepared
- Dress professionally and appropriately
- Turn off cell telephones and beepers during the presentation
- Have your materials organized and know what you are going to say
- Bring brochures and informational material to distribute
- Bring specialty marketing items if appropriate
- Be familiar with your audience and the special interests of the group
- Be enthusiastic, but not overbearing
- Allow time for questions

Email List Maintenance

Email can be a terrifically effective and inexpensive way to reach out to your referral contacts and community and to reinforce your message. The average office worker checks his or her business email between 5-10 times per day. Unlike a mail piece, which can be discarded before it's opened; your email will more likely be opened and read. The key to any email campaign is DogSmith Services. Not to be forwarded or copies

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your database of email addresses and the special message you are presenting.

How to build an email list

Make sure that as you go about building your business and making new contacts keep all of the business cards and contact information from individuals and companies that you meet. Enter this information into a contact management software application such as Microsoft Outlook. When you begin to develop and manage your database you should categorize your email lists in the following categories:

1. Friends and Family
2. Local businesses
3. Referral Sources
4. Pet Sitting Clients
5. Dog Walking Clients
6. Pet Care Clients
7. Pet Food Clients

Categorizing your email groups allows you to target your emails so that they can have the most impact. A particular contact can have more than one category assigned to them. Some months your email focus points will be the same for several groups, while in other months you will be focusing on different topics. For those you have served before you can always send a newsletter type of email updating them and thanking them, while referral sources would receive seasonal announcements. It is good to occasionally send an additional email mid-month to increase interest. Emails are also good for feedback on your performance.

Your emails can be casual, announce new developments and thank loyal customers. Mix your

emails up. Remember to use the DogSmith signature on all of your email communications.

Check the DogSmith Brand Standard Manual for the correct email signature format.

Here is an outline of what every email should have:

1. **INTRODUCTION** – HI I'm
2. **DID YOU KNOW** – This is the special section that you would discuss something important to that party. A possible problem, an announcement, a pet care tip, toys or equipment, etc. Think about what is happening in your area relating to weather, season, activities and trends and then apply that information to this section. A helpful tip can be a great way for your clients to remember you. You must make it interesting. Keep it short. A paragraph or two at most.
3. **THANK YOU** – Thank everyone for their help. Even if the person never helped you they will see that you are moving forward and that you appreciate those who have. You may even want to congratulate some of your clients on significant achievements and awards. Sometimes these nice touches make a great impression and solidify your business relationships.
4. **ASK FOR BUSINESS** – This is important. You will need to ask for business. Tell them that your business has been doing great and would love to provide this superior level of service to their clients. Identify some of the services you offer. Thank them for their referrals in advance and again after they give you one.
5. **CLOSING** – Wrap it up! Keep the email short, educational and fun. Tell them where to reach you for more information.

Like any other type of marketing, if you overuse email, you can cross the line between admirably

persistent to just plain annoying.

Email response rates vary from industry to industry and vary greatly from franchisee to franchisee. People who contact you because of an email usually have been exposed to other marketing as well. Email is free, and should only take you a couple of minutes each month. It's well worth the effort. Email has the potential for both short-term and long-term branding effects. Your main goal should be to faithfully broadcast to your list once a month.

Internet Marketing

Internet marketing has aspects and uses elements from all of the so called "traditional" marketing outlets and methods. The name of the game for a majority of our internet marketing is to drive traffic to your website or to your phone. We do this by optimizing search engine results, (SEO) and offering something educational and free in exchange for the prospects email address. We also try to take advantage of all of the available free listing and advertising sites like Google Local, Yahoo Local, Merchant Circle, etc. We will cover some of this in our section on Social Media Marketing.

Always differentiate

In everything you do, communicate, advertise and market, make sure that what makes you and DogSmith different is emphasized and our core values are reflected in your message.

Traditional Internet Advertising Methods

There are numerous opportunities to pay for ads on various websites, search engines, banner ads etc.

Promote your Expertise

Find and become involved in forums, expert sites, blogs and social media where people are interested in dogs, animal rescue, dog training, pet care, and pet nutrition. Don't get "preachy" but comment, answer questions, and help people find the information they need. This will help you build your reputation and if you always include your website URL with your name and email you will drive traffic to your site. As your reputation grows your "listeners" will snowball from "word of mouth" marketing. Other sites will seek you out to swap links and partner with referrals.

RSS "Really Simple Syndication" or "Rich Site Summary"

RSS is a type of standard data format that allows you to automatically send/receive frequent updates from websites such as blogs, news headlines, audio, and video. An RSS document (referred to as a "feed", "web feed", or "channel") provides a summary of the text, plus data on the feed such as when published, who wrote it etc. RSS feeds are great for the author of the content because it allows you to automatically update your "listeners" and RSS is great for the receiver because they get automatic updates of content that interests them.

Examples for your business:

- Create a nutrition or training "tip of the week"
- Feature a "pet of the week"
- Create a feed for all of your training class schedules

 Blogging

Blogging is an easy way to increase your on-line presence and drive traffic to your website.

When you blog keep two things in mind, your target audience – The pet owning public – and

what will increase your web presence so search engines find you. This is true of everything you do on the internet. The little things that will help people find your blog include:

Titles

Your blog will do better with search engines if you include your main keyword of your posting in the title. And try to put it first. For example if you are blogging about your first Dog Training puppy class an effective title might be:

Dog Training for your new puppy so he will be well socialized. You can check the quality of your keyword at www.seqmoz.org.

Tagging

Always “tag” at least one keyword in your post.

Links to Other Sites

Links to your other sites (facebook, twitter, website etc.) and to affiliate and partner sites will greatly increase your SEO.

Social Bookmarking

Social bookmarking is a way to store, organize, search, and manage bookmarks of your web pages using metadata (data about data of your website). In a social bookmarking system you save links to your web pages to increase your internet visibility. You ‘tag’ your bookmarks to enhance a search engines ability to find them.

Some bookmarking sites include:

30daytags.com

Blinkbits.com

Bloghop.com

Bloglot.com

Blogmarks.com

Blogpulse.com

Smarking.com

Spurl.com

Social Media Marketing, Social Networking and Video Marketing

Social media/networking should be part of your marketing plan so you can leverage the power of these sites to drive traffic to your website and increase awareness and interest in your services. Sites like youtube.com, facebook.com and linkedin.com are a great opportunity for you to network your business. Social media and social networking are sites designed for individuals and businesses to share information. A massive amount of information is exchanged every minute through the many social media/networking sites at no cost to members. Some of the more well known sites include Facebook, Youtube, LinkedIn, Wordpress (Blogsite), Flickr (photo sharing), Twitter (micro-blogging tool).

From individuals to large corporations, everyone is using social sites to keep in touch, generate leads, find jobs, do market research, drive traffic to their website, promote products, etc. Social media/networking should be part of your marketing plan so you can leverage the power of these sites to drive traffic to your website and increase awareness and interest in your services.

CAUTION: Studies show that if you use your social media/network presence to simply try to make sales, you will fail. Social media/network sites are about “socializing” so your efforts should be directed at making connections with people. Once you’ve connected with others, especially those with similar interests, you will find many opportunities to promote your business naturally and effectively. To start, establish a Facebook business account and a LinkedIn account. Then start inviting your friends, family and colleagues to join you and let them know what you are doing. Post information about your grand opening and short descriptions about training successes. Update often. Don’t forget to include email and website details in your personal description so others know how to contact you.

Marks and Logos

For specific guidance on using Marks and Logos please see the DogSmith Brand Standard Handbook.

DOGSMITH SERVICES INCSM trade names and trademarks ("marks") distinguish DOGSMITH services from those of other businesses. DOGSMITH SERVICES INCSM marks are, therefore, very valuable because they help the public recognize each business as a source of high-quality professional pet care.

Please remember -

- Do not use the marks or "DOGSMITH SERVICES INCSM" when using a corporate or other business name. (See "Your Status as an Independent Contractor")
- Notify DOGSMITH SERVICES INC immediately if you become aware of any other business using DOGSMITH SERVICES INCSM marks or similar words or symbols.

OBTAINING APPROVAL FOR MARKETING CONCEPTS AND MATERIALS

When you develop your local marketing program and prepare marketing materials, or have them prepared for you, you must submit your plans to the corporate office in writing, with samples of the marketing materials you propose to use. Write all pertinent information on a Request for Marketing Approval (sample follows) and send it to the corporate office or include the same information in an email to us.

DOGSMITH SERVICES INC will review your materials and indicate their approval or corrections of their use within 5 days of receiving them. If you do not receive a response from DOGSMITH SERVICES INC within a reasonable time from your submission, you should consider the materials **NOT** approved.

REQUEST FOR MARKETING APPROVAL

TO: DOGSMITH SERVICES INC

DATE: _____

FROM: (Name) _____

(Address) _____

(Telephone) _____

(Franchise #) _____

1. I propose to use the following marketing materials:

Paste up for print ad

Final script for radio or TV (with audio or visual inserts)

Direct mail piece

Other: _____

Attached is a copy of a proposed ad in its finished form.

Please review these materials to confirm that they meet the standards of DOGSMITH
SERVICES INC

- [] 2. I plan to conduct the following promotional activity. (Provide a full description, including specifics regarding time, materials, and costs.)

CORPORATE OFFICE RESPONSE

APPROVE DENY

1. Marketing Materials:

Comment:

2. Promotional Activity:

Comment: _____

Authorized Signature _____ Date _____

ORDERING MARKETING MATERIALS

One of the services you can expect from DOGSMITH SERVICES INC is the preparation of effective, well-designed pieces of marketing that have been proven effective.

As a DOGSMITH SERVICES INCSM franchisee, you have two options when ordering any marketing materials from DOGSMITH SERVICES INC:

Order “generic” materials

If you prefer, the corporate office can send you camera-ready print materials. You may then take the material to a printer, newspaper, etc., and arrange to have the correct message(s) printed or inserted. Printed collateral, banners, signs and other material can all be ordered through <http://crittercareservices.interfirm.com>. Apparel, logo tablecloth and a variety of logo items can

be purchased through DogSmith Services. Assistance with developing or altering any of the art for particular products can be obtained by contacting RickIngram@DogSmith.com.

Produce your own materials

You may wish to prepare your own direct mail piece, newspaper ad, or radio spot announcement.

But before you spend any time or money on your own production, you must get approval from the corporate office for both the advertisement and the placement schedule.

Consequently, DOGSMITH SERVICES INC suggests you first give very serious consideration to using its marketing and promotional materials. With these materials, you will be certain to consistently maintain the DOGSMITH SERVICES INCSM logo, theme, style, and message—which will benefit you and all other franchisees. While it is never our intent to deter any franchisee’s initiative in generating new and effective marketing or promotional material, you may find it makes sense to use the professionally developed materials available to you.

HOW TO PLAN AND EXECUTE A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

Events are a very important part of your overall marketing plan. They can yield immediate results and are very helpful in creating awareness of our brand, products and services and establishing relationships. In addition to participating directly in an event, you can also help by volunteering at a rescue booth or share a booth with them to help staff their booth while you promote your own services. The quality and professionalism of event managers varies greatly from first time volunteers to very experienced professionals so be flexible when dealing with event management. You may find professionally managed events to be regimented and a bit inflexible with arrival and departure times, parking and general access. Some events can be on the other extreme, disorganized and chaotic. Keep yourself well organized, manage your time, and be prepared for either extreme. You will need to determine a few things prior to signing an agreement to participate in an event:

Determine:

1. If you will be provided with table and chairs
2. If your booth is inside or outside
3. The size of your booth or booth area
4. The floor surface you will be on. If you will be on pavement or other hard surface outdoors you need to be prepared to anchor your shelter using weights instead of stakes. Gallon water jugs, concrete or exercise weights can all be used to anchor your shelter.
5. If there's a back to your booth or if there's something you can hang your banner from (primarily for indoor events).
6. The number of attendees and dogs that are expected, ask about the history of past events.
7. If there is going to be a radio station airing live from the event

8. If there are goody bags or other free packages that all attendees will receive so you can put a gift card in. Most event organizers are anxious to add value to the registration bags they give to attendees so logo gifts, like pens, and gift cards are always welcome.
9. Where you are authorized to park when setting up your booth and at what time that area will be closed to traffic
10. If there is an available electrical outlet nearby (if you want that) and how long your extension cord would need to be.
11. If any “competitors” will be there.
12. If there is going to be any raffles or live / silent auctions that you can donate something to like a shirt, hat and / or gift certificate good toward any of your service.
13. If you can have a dog at / in your booth.
14. If you are allowed to sell items (if indeed you plan on selling something like products or T-shirt).

The appearance and quality of your booth is essential to present a professional impression. A basic event booth setup should include:

1. 10'x10' event shelter – this can be used inside as well as outside. These can be purchased for around \$100.00. Do not get the very cheapest as they are difficult and slow to erect and take down. As your business grows and your attendance at events increases you may consider one of the more expensive, durable tents with a logo'd top.



2. A table, minimum 6 feet across. We recommend a folding type (the legs fold and the table top folds in half) to making transporting it to events easier.
3. A clean table cloth or table skirt with DogSmith Logo. These are available for about \$36.00 - \$180.00.
4. Hangers, stands, balloons (logo of course) Vertical banners on stands in front of your booth. More and more, event managers are restricting or prohibiting the use of balloons so ask first.
5. DogSmith Banner, at least 3 feet x 8 feet. Mount this across the back of your shelter to maximize exposure.
6. Items to sell (for a low price) include DogSmith t-shirts and other DogSmith apparel when available. The goal here is not to necessarily turn a profit as it is to advertise your business and draw prospects to your booth.
7. Have event attendees fill out our short contest form to enter to win a prize (\$50 gift certificate or T-shirt or similar semi-valuable item) or raffle a goody basket filled with dog treats and toys. The goal here is to build a dog-owning email or mailing list that you can use to market your services.
8. Have a cute, well behaved dog at your booth to attract people over to you.
9. Have samples of DogSmith doggie retail items, toys, dog food and treats on the table and sell them or give them away depending on the item.
10. Put out a few of each of your brochures and have some spares available if the need arises.
Don't forget paper weights to keep your brochures secured when the wind picks up.
11. Put your business cards out on the table in a business card holder
12. Wear your DogSmith Uniform so you project a professional friendly image

13. Be prepared to give your business card (a postcard is even better or a bumper sticker) to the MC and/or radio DJ that could give you some free plugs, give them any gift that has high perceived value.
14. Give away Frisbees and key chains (when available).
15. Business cards tied to dog biscuits or fake dog poop (know the ingredients of the treats in case someone asks due to dog diet restrictions). The fake dog poop is incredibly popular at events and draws people, especially young boys, to your booth.
16. Beware of the “shoppers” that wander through events collecting anything that is free but have no intention of using or buying anything. If you have some promotional items that are on the expensive side (like a Frisbee), don’t set them all out on the table. Place a few out on the table keeping the main supply secured and give them to pre-qualified ‘hot’ prospects.

Get involved as an active sponsor of the event. The organizers will appreciate the help and you can offer services and activities that add value to their event. Activities you can offer to event coordinators include:

- A doggie obedience demo with your own dog (if they are demo standard)
- CGC testing once you are an official evaluator
- Short fun obedience classes (5 minutes) that people can attend – give them a taste by teaching a quick trick or get them to do something they’ve never done before.
- Organize, help and be a judge on any dog events they may be including such as owner-dog look alike contests, best trick competition, obedience competitions etc.
- For Kids, hold a “pooper scooper” contest and give great prizes. Limit the age of eligible contestants.

What you don't want: This booth looks cluttered and sloppy



This booth is more organized and professional but would look much better with a logo tablecloth and the banner hanging from the back.

DogSmith at Watermelon Festival



THE DOGSMITH LIST OF POTENTIAL MARKETING & ADVERTISING OUTLETS

There are almost limitless outlets for marketing and advertising. Although you should not be afraid to experiment with your marketing and advertising methods and outlets, never undertake any method without the means to measure its effectiveness. There are also almost limitless ways to measure your marketing but most are not practical or necessary when you are starting out.

There are at least 3 metrics (methods of measuring) you should use:

1. CLV – customer lifetime value. The CLV is simply the average amount of money you earn from a customer. So if your average customer spends \$600/year and stays a customer for three years the CLV is \$1800.
2. ROI – Return on investment. This is very important. Once you've given your marketing campaign enough time, measuring the cost of the campaign against the return in terms of customers and income will tell you a lot. ROI is simply your profit from a marketing campaign less what the marketing campaign cost you then divided by the cost (to give you a percentage). As an example we will use the "average" customer from the CLV calculation. If the "average" customer is obtained through a \$500 marketing campaign then my $ROI = (1800 - 500) / 500$ or 260% which is exceptionally good. Remember though that this is a simplified example, I have not included overhead expenses, your time and other costs that would increase the investment amount.
3. Cost of new customer – this metric goes by many names depending on the industry. This is a quick rule of thumb but is an easy way to monitor general trends. If a marketing campaign costs you \$500 and you get two customers from it your cost per customer is \$250. The DogSmith strives to keep the cost of new customers under \$50 but your initial

customers may cost a bit more.

There are two factors that you should always keep in mind when considering how and where to advertise and market, 1) Return on Investment (ROI) and 2) your personality and preferences.

Anyone can generate \$500,000 in business by spending \$1,000,000. Always consider your return.

Here is a list of outlets to use to advertise your business. We do not recommend all of these and some we recommend you not use but they are included here for your information:

Internet:

1. Contact every person you know via email, phone, snail mail, and let them know about your new business and the services you offer.
2. SuperPages.com & YellowPages.com and similar sites.
3. Dog training focused directories: Free sites: Craig's List, Monkey Ads, etc.
4. Reciprocal links on DogSmith site
5. Create reciprocals links with local businesses, pet and friend's businesses
6. Register your business with Google Local, Yahoo Local and MSN local / maps; others
7. Blog about your business – we recommend Wordsmith.
8. Buy banners / buttons / paid links on sites
9. Pay per click programs like Google Adwords, Yahoo, Bing
10. Personal bio & pic on website
11. Social Networking – FaceBook, MySpace, Ning, LinkedIn, Friendster, Digg, Orkut, Twitter, Classmates, Xanga, Ryze. There are too many her to list.

12. MagicYellow.com
13. ShowMeLocal.com
14. www.reallocalpages.com
15. www.scooble.co/submit_business.cfm
16. [Coupaws](#)
17. [Groupon](#)
18. [Living Social](#)
19. [Buckaroo](#)
20. [American Towns](#)

Print:

1. Local magazines family and/or pet oriented magazines and booklets
2. Clipper, Ad Pages
3. RSVP, Valpak, Money Mailer
4. Yellow pages
5. Newspapers / Weekly periodicals – classifieds, inserts,
6. Restaurant placemats
7. Direct Mail – postcards, letters, flyers.

Roadside:

1. All-Over Media
2. Bus Benches, Stops, Shelters
3. Buses – side / back / inside

4. Billboards
5. Road Signs
6. Vehicle Vinyl Lettering, **dollar for dollar probably the best advertising money you can spend.**
7. Vehicle magnets – many! Great to get friends and family to advertise your business
8. Dog Park signage / sponsorship
9. Taxi cabs, buses, trolleys
10. Stand on side of waving signs, wear a sandwich board or a dog costume
11. Adopt-a-road in your territory
12. Advertise on side of city trash cans if available
13. Gas Station advertising.

Other Guerrilla / Grass Roots:

1. Hang 8.5” x 11” tear-off flyers on bulletin boards
2. Door Hangers – in targeted neighborhoods
3. Put out brochures stands, pens, business cards, key chains &/or magnets placed and / or give to vets, groomers, car washes, pet stores, pet friendly hotels, cleaners, and other local companies and establishments you frequent/in your area
4. Business cards, postcards, post-it notes, magnets or door hangers on car doors or other unique places
5. Networking groups – BNI, Rotary, Lions Club, others
6. Call competitors and make friends / trade referrals /
7. Park your vehicle in a well seen area with magnets or vinyl lettering

8. Frisbees, balloons, any sort of give-away
9. Put out our post-it notes everywhere (mailboxes; trashcans!)
10. Temporary tattoos!
11. Hold a contest – get PR, get prospects...
12. Give out T-shirts / training gear, toys – organizations, events, etc.
13. Partner with other service businesses / cross-promote / share ad space
14. Go door-to-door knocking and selling
15. Grocery store carts / benches
16. Car wash-related – mirror hangers, biz card board
17. Biz card holder on side of vehicle
18. School or sporting events sponsorships / ads

Press:

1. Press Releases – email, fax, snail mail, drop off, post online
2. Call / email radio and other media include announcements
3. Trade services at big outdoor events
4. Donate your time / services at shelters and humane societies
5. Contact all local non-profit / no-kill shelters and introduce your new business and ask to be contacted regarding any large events they might be having

Big Media:

1. TV / Cable
2. Radio
3. Insertion of brand in TV and/or film

Miscellaneous:

1. Vertical banner
2. Tent
3. Public Speaking
4. Donate gift certificates and shirts to non-profit organizations
5. Register with the local 411 information service – (this can be expensive)
6. Contact local mobile groomers/pet stores and make friends, offer mutual referrals and send them postcards to hand out w/ gift cards on them!
7. Chamber of Commerce; others
8. Sponsor events / barter
9. Follow up with past clients for new services
10. Ask everyone for referrals

Events:

1. Put up vertical / horizontal banners
2. Tablecloth & Tent
3. Register to win / give-aways / freebies / contests / prizes/raffles
4. Put out Life's Abundance samples
5. Yard signs / road signs

Commercial / Apartments/Condos:

1. Join local Apartment Association / CAI - use as a powerful resource for mailing lists, networking & leads
2. Postcards
3. Emails
4. Drop off info at their offices
5. Industry magazines / events
6. Presentations to big management groups
7. HOA newsletters (email) / websites / sponsorships /
8. Referrals
9. There are numerous free websites for posting, advertising or blogging. Some are better than others but you want to post, advertise and be present on as many as possible to raise your search engine optimization (SEO – the likelihood of your business being found by a search engine).

Social Media Marketing

Here are examples of some sites available:

Twitter.com	Facebook.com
LinkedIn.com	Youtube.com
Digg.com	Del.icio.us
Reddit	Myspace
gBookmarks	Wordpress
Newsvine	YIBookmarks

Mixx	Stumbleupon
Live	Technorati
Blogger	Furl
Friendfeed	Xanga
Diigo	Simpy
Dealspl.us	Funp
Buzzup!	Blinklist
Propeller	Typepad
AddtoBx	Current
Oknotizie	Slashdot
Fark	Kirtsy
Faves	Care2
Mr.Wong	Blogmarks
Livejournal	NAG
Meneame	Orkut
Fresqui	Sphinn
Friendster	Yigg

Your Personality

Most marketing advice does not account for the business owner's personality. We believe acknowledging your own personality preferences and strengths are critical to an effective and ultimately profitable marketing plan. The absolute best marketing method is of little value if your personality discourages you from effectively implementing it. So we recommend you build on your strengths and within your marketing plan emphasize what you enjoy doing and

what you are good at. If public speaking is one of your strengths, put an emphasis on marketing methods that take advantage of that. If you enjoy writing about animals and pets, emphasize writing articles, blogging or posting on websites.

UNDERSTANDING BUYING BEHAVIOR

Buyers have needs. When a prospect reaches the point at which they need to satisfy their need we say they are motivated to take action. Wants are the precise way that we choose to satisfy our needs through our motivated behavior.

Maslow's approach was to consider the hierarchy of needs and that everyone is in search of actualization. He believed that people may try to satisfy the needs within the hierarchy simultaneously. This recognizes that buyers have different levels of needs and different buyers have different needs. A mother with a family will have different buying needs and behavior to a single successful business man age 25. The needs of each person are different therefore the motivations and wants will be different. Maslow would describe this as the young man having personal needs; the mother would want to satisfy safety needs and social needs for her family.



WRITING YOUR MARKETING PLAN

As we prepare to write your Marketing Plan please keep in mind the following guidelines:

1. Narrow your market focus by describing your ideal customer in the narrowest and most detailed terms.
2. Emphasize what we do better.
3. We emphasize education - based marketing and advertising. Focus on education. Make certain all of your marketing efforts reflect our core message.
4. Make sure all of your marketing and advertising effort is geared toward creating prospects, not just quick sales. You must find ways to educate before you sell. Figure out all the ways you can get your education - based messages to your target demographic.
5. Earn media attention. Create a list of journalists who cover your industry or community, and build relationships with each by becoming a reliable resource of information. Plan out an entire year of new items you can promote by season or event.
6. Expect referrals. Make every customer and contact a marketing and referral contact.
7. Live your business life by your marketing calendar. Create your marketing calendar for the year indicating what has to be done every month and every week but review, adjust, update and revise daily.

When small business marketing fails, it's because the small business owner breaks non-negotiable laws of small business marketing.

Focus on your market and what you do well

Small business owners sometimes attempt to be all things to all people and never really establish

any brand or become known for specializing.

You must narrow your market focus in order to grow. Regularly review your client mix. What some business owners find is that they have several types of clients that make up most of their business. Or you may find that a certain service or product accounts for most of your profit.

Emphasize Our Difference

Many buyers assume all businesses in a certain industry are alike, so they use price to make their choice. This can be especially true in the pet care industry where most consumers don't understand the difference between training techniques or the importance of qualified pet sitters. This is why we emphasize "education" based marketing. Continue to ask your clients why they do business with you. You may learn how your customers see you and what makes you different in ways you may not realize. Use what you learn in your marketing and advertising.

Educate

People do not like to be sold to. Your advertising and marketing must offer them useful information that speaks to their needs. All follow-up marketing must continue to show why The DogSmith is unique and how you can solve their problems.

Use examples of how you've solved customer's problems. Get testimonials from satisfied customers.

Prospects

Knowing who your target demographic is the only means you know who is most likely to use your services. Advertising is aimed at turning your target demographic into true prospects.

Remember, our primary goal is to create prospects, then sales. Most of our efforts are geared toward building "lists" of prospects.

Measure

Measure the effectiveness of your marketing efforts and advertising. Sometimes an advertisement only needs a slight change to make it much more effective. Test and measure everything. If you don't you won't know what works and what doesn't thereby wasting your money.

Under Promise, Over Deliver

Don't lose sight of your current customers as you try to gain new customers. We are all aware of the many national companies who offer great deals to attract new customers but ignore long-term good customers. Don't be one of these. As you build your reputation and your business grows, look for new and different ways to serve your existing customer base. You have built trust and confidence with your existing clients, so expanding your services keeping their needs in mind is the simplest and most profitable way to grow. As you meet more and more of their needs, they will see you as an essential resource.

Referrals

Emphasize value, professionalism, and dedication with your customers and you can greatly increase your business by getting referrals from them. Each time you get a new client, tell them how much you value referrals and ask them if they can provide some. When they know that referrals are important to you they will help.

USING YOUR MARKETING PLAN

Your marketing plan is to be a living breathing tool for you to use and to keep you focused on marketing your business. It is not a corporate plan designed to be presented to your boss. But your plan should be based on the following questions you need to regularly ask yourself:

1. Where are you (your business) now?
2. Where do you want to go from here?
3. How do you get from here, to there?
4. What do you do to get from here, to there?

Planning –



Why plan? –

You plan in order to provide yourself with a road map that not only describes objectives, strategies and tactics, but helps you concentrate energies and financial resources on what's important. Planning reduces risk, makes the most efficient use of resources, and helps evaluate success.

"Cheshire Puss, she began, rather timidly, as she did not know at all whether it would like the name: however, it only grinned a little wider. Come, it's pleased so far, thought Alice, and she went on. Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?"

That depends a good deal on where you want to get to said the cat.

I don't much care where, said Alice.

Then it doesn't matter which way you go, said the cat.

... So long as I get somewhere, Alice added as an explanation.

Oh, your sure to do that, said the cat, if you only walk long enough"

“If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there. If you know where you are going, the road doesn’t matter”

-Lewis Carroll

What's in your marketing plan? – A marketing plan describes what it is you are setting out to accomplish, how you will do it, and how you will know when you've done it. Defining marketing objectives is the most important part, because when objectives are clearly stated, strategies and tactics often suggest themselves.

How to use your marketing plan – A marketing plan shouldn’t be a one time exercise that you create and then put in a drawer. We recommend you craft a plan for the fiscal year but update it weekly and review it daily. A marketing plan should be a working document constantly being adjusted, revised and updated. Use it as your guide, to keep you motivated and to allocate resources.

Drafting your plan – Much of the preliminary information needed for your plan was gathered as assignments in your BARK manual. The 3 “P”s are the general outline of any plan, Product (what you are going to do or use), Price (what will it cost in time and money) and Place (where is the product going to be deployed). For example, product = business card ad, price = \$45.00 per

month, Place = business section of local paper for 1 year.

These three elements must be clearly defined, as well as your target audience. You must understand and have a good grasp of these before you implement your fourth “P”, Promotion.

All of your marketing activities, advertising, public relations, events, media distribution and other promotional activities grow out of your marketing plan.

Your plan will include:

Situation Analysis – A review of current target market conditions, product attributes, current beliefs and attitudes, problems and opportunities.

Brand or Product Positioning – Defines the brand or product in terms of a single, easy-to-understand, tangible customer benefit and forms the framework for all ongoing marketing communications activities.

Objectives – Define what you want to accomplish with your marketing activities. Your objectives should directly support your overall business objectives. For example, if your marketing plan says you are going to “distribute door hangers in the Cloverdale neighborhood,” then your macro-goals need to include creating awareness in that neighborhood.

Strategies – Define how marketing will be used to achieve the objectives, by deciding what mix of advertising, public relations, direct mail, events, the Internet and/or literature will be used to optimize audience impact.

Tactics – These are the actual working pieces of the plan – the specific ads, media used, public

relations activities, direct mail programs, web presence, literature pieces, events, promotions, etc.

Budget – A good marketing communications plan will make the most efficient use of available resources.

Evaluation – A way to measure whether the objectives are met should be built into every marketing plan. (This can only be done if the original objectives are measurable.)



Internet Business Listings

Long Listing

Listing Title: The DogSmith® - Your Neighborhood Pet Care Expert

Listing Main Description:

A DogSmith is a certified Dog Trainer and Behavior Counselor. DogSmiths offer private and group lessons, "Board and Train" packages and "Latch Key" training. Training curriculums are available for puppies, teen dogs, grumpy dogs and older dogs. Behavior change programs are available for dogs requiring behavioral modification. The DogSmith offers a selection of day care and dog walking services, lunch and dinner time daily breaks, dog park romps and pet shuttle services. Service plans are customized to meet the needs of each client. At the DogSmith we believe that caring is not enough. To provide professional pet care you must be properly trained, and certified. You have got to know what you're doing. *Every* DogSmith is certified, insured and bonded.

Listing Categories *if you have a choice, if not the standard option is Dog Training or cross post in several categories:*

Dog Supplies Dog Services Dog Breeders Dog Training, Dog Rescue, Pet Sitting, Dog Walking, Pet Supplies, Pet Products, Obedience Schools, Pet Waste Cleanup

Contact name: Your Name
Email: Your email
Telephone: 888-364-7648
Local Number: 000-000-0000

Key Search Words:

Dog Training, Dog Walking, Pet Sitting, Pet Care, Dog Obedience, Puppy Training, Puppy Walking, In Home Pet Care, Pet Foods, Holistic Pet Foods, Pet Products, Dog Schools, Puppy Kindergarten, Doggie Day Care, Doggy Day Care, Dog Play School, Best Friends, Pet Care

Provider, Pet waste Cleanup.

Short Listing

Listing Title: The DogSmith® - Your Neighborhood Pet Care Expert

Listing Main Description:

A DogSmith is a certified Dog Trainer and Behavior Counselor offering a selection of Dog Training, Dog Walking and Pet Sitting Services. *Every DogSmith is certified, insured and bonded.*

Listing Categories *if you have a choice, if not the standard option is Dog Training or cross post in several categories:*

Dog Supplies Dog Services Dog Breeders Dog Training, Dog Rescue, Pet Sitting, Dog Walking, Pet Supplies, Pet Products, Obedience Schools, Pet Waste Cleanup

Contact name: Your Name:

Email: Your email

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Local Number: 000-000-0000

Key Search Words: Dog Training, Dog Walking, Pet Sitting, Pet Care, Dog Obedience, Puppy Training, Puppy Walking, In Home Pet Care, Pet Foods, Holistic Pet Foods, Pet Products, Dog Schools, Puppy Kindergarten, Doggie Day Care, Doggy Day Care, Dog Play School, Best Friends, Pet Care Provider, Pet waste Cleanup.

Marketing Tasks

To sell a product or service the first thing you have to do is create awareness, then you generate a need.

People buy when they are aware of its existence and they recognize it solves a problem for them.

Building Awareness – What follows is an outline of a typical plan for building awareness of your new business.

Personal Visits to Direct Sell and Leave Collateral, at least two times each month

1. Vet offices
2. Bark Parks/Dog Parks
3. Groomers
4. Dog Clubs
5. Pet Stores
6. Doggie Bakeries
7. Home Owner Associations
8. Retirement Homes/Communities
 - Solve a problem they have

Dog Rescue Groups, Shelters

1. Visit with decision makers
2. Leave training and pet care information
3. Sponsor events
4. Offer free seminars
5. Ask for reciprocal links to website
 - Solve a problem they have

Local Magazines/Websites

1. Offer to do a tip of the week on a website or pet column
2. Offer a copy of our DogSmith Monthly Dog Training & Pet Care Column

Internet Presence

1. List on every free internet source in your area

Events/Parades

1. Sponsor events with prizes and or informational packs
2. Host events in different counties
3. Ask for local authority endorsement so you can advertise based on a specialty
4. Ask people for their business – close the deal

Pet Care - 20 visits a day at a smaller yield are more profitable than a few a day at a higher rate

1. Actively recruit pet care technicians in each area
2. Invest the time to train your technicians, review manual, set exam, conduct home visit consultation and two visits with them.
3. Do press releases on them joining the team
4. Provide them goals and collateral to drive business
5. Up-sell services to include specialized training
6. Recruit pet care technicians who just want to take pets into the home
7. Hold an open day training seminar for up to 6 pet care technicians

Training Schedules

1. Schedule one group class in each county, advertise to fill it
2. As demand increases put on more classes
3. Focus on driving results from the class so you get word of mouth referrals
4. Do seasonal specials to attract new comers

85 Ideas for Marketing Your Business

1. Email / text / call / mail every person you know about your service
2. SuperPages.com & YellowPages.com
3. Dog Training Focused Directories: Free sites: Craig's List, Monkey Ads, etc. (see big list on pg 2)
4. Reciprocal links on DogSmith site
5. Create reciprocal links from: local, service, pet and friend's businesses, cleaners, donut shops, restaurants, schools, neighbors, etc.
6. Register with Google Local, Yahoo Local and MSN local / maps; others
7. Blog!
8. Article submissions
9. Email campaigns
10. Banners / buttons / paid links on sites
11. PPC programs like Google Ad words, Yahoo, MSN
12. Personal bio & picture on website
13. Social Networking – Face Book, MySpace, Ning, LinkedIn, Friendster, Digg, Orkut, Twitter, Classmates, Xanga, Ryze,
14. MagicYellow.com
15. ShowMeLocal.com
16. Print:
17. Local Magazines family and/or pet oriented magazine and booklets
18. Clipper, Ad Pages
19. RSVP, Valpak, Money Mailer
20. Yellow pages – be careful of the cost adding up – multiple sections
21. Newspapers / Weekly periodicals – classifieds, inserts,
22. Diner placemats
23. Direct Mail – our postcards and/or others like Opportunity Knocks or SendoutCards.com
24. Road:
25. All-Over Media
26. Bus Benches, Stops, Shelters
27. Buses – side / back / inside
28. Billboards
29. Road Signs – know the local regulations and codes
30. Yard Signs
31. Vehicle Vinyl Lettering
32. Vehicle magnets – many!
33. Dog Park signage / sponsorship
34. Taxi cabs
35. Stand on side of road holding signs or sandwich boards (maybe wearing a dog costume)
36. Adopt-a-road in your territory
37. Advertise on side of city trash cans
38. Other Guerrilla / Grass Roots:
39. Hang our 8.5" x 11" tear-off flyers
40. Door Hangers – in targeted neighborhoods
41. Put out brochures, pens, business cards, key chains &/or magnets placed and / or give to vets, groomers, car washes, pet stores, pet friendly hotels, vacation property managers, HOAs, Property Management Companies, cleaners, and other local companies and establishments you frequent in your area
42. Business cards, post cards, post-its or door hangers on car doors or other unique places
43. Networking groups – BNI, Rotary, Lions Club, others
44. Call competitors and make friends and trade referrals.
45. Park your vehicle with lettering or magnets in a prominent area
46. Frisbees, balloons, other "give-aways"
47. Put out our post-its everywhere
48. Temporary tattoos.
49. Hold a contest – get PR, get prospects...
50. Give out T-shirts / training gear – organizations, events, etc.
51. Partner with other service businesses / cross-promote / share ad space
52. Grocery store carts / benches
53. Car wash-related – mirror hangers, bulletin boards, cross promote
54. Business card holder on side of your vehicles
55. School or sporting events sponsorships / ads
56. PR:
57. Press Releases – email, fax, snail mail, drop off, post online
58. Call / email radio and other media – drop off gifts or treats
59. Trade services at events
60. Donate your time / services at shelters and write a press release
61. Contact all local non-profit / no-kill shelters and

introduce your new business and ask to be contacted regarding any large events they might be having

62. Misc:

63. Banners

64. Event Tents

65. Public Speaking

66. Donate gift certificates and shirts to non-profit organizations

67. Register with the local 411 information service – can be expensive

68. Contact local mobile groomers/pet stores, offer referral \$ and send them

marketing collateral to give to their customers

69. Sponsor events / barter

70. Follow up with past clients.

71. Ask everyone for Referrals.

72. Events:

73. Put up vertical / horizontal banners

74. Table cloth & Tent

75. Register to win / give-aways / freebies / contests / prizes

76. Put out Life's Abundance stuff

77. Yard signs / road signs

78. Communities:

79. Join local Apartment Association / CAI - use as a powerful resource for mailing lists, networking & leads

80. Emails

81. Drop off info at management offices

82. Industry magazines / events

83. Presentations to management

84. HOA newsletters (email) / websites / sponsorships

85. Referrals

86. Some Free Websites to Advertise On

These sites change regularly so we will add to and subtract from as needed

- Classifieds.yahoo.com
- Freedoglistings.com
- Enjoythecity.com
- Petloversnation.com/
- Entertainment.com/discount/home.shtml
- Freedoglistings.com
- Puppy Sites
- Greenpeople.org
- Petdoors.com
- Craigslist.com
- Azzizzle Service Auction Site
- Showmelocal.com
- Getitsellit.com
- www.petco.com/petco_page_pc_petyellowpages_nav_152.aspx
- Yelp.com
- Domseticsale.com
- Hoobly.com
- Insiderpages.com
- Backpage.com
- Truelocal.com
- Looboo.com
- Advertisingsuperpages.com
- Mydogdating.com
- Olx.com

- Sell5.com
- Oodle.com
- Pennysaverusa.com
- Justclicklocal.com
- Geebo.com
- Local.com
- Lycos.oodle.com
- Angieslist.com
- Scooble.com/submit_business.cfm
- Hotfrog.com
- <http://www.bringfido.com/resource/post/>
- http://www.cardinalpet.com/_vti_bin/shtml.dll/pettrainers/trainer_form.htm
- <http://upcoming.yahoo.com/>
- <http://resources.petfinder.com/listing/guide/services>
- Doggies.com
- AdsInUSA.com
- Lead generation sites like petsitting.com (lead generation sites are sites that you only pay for prospects they refer to you)
- <http://www.americantowns.com/>

Personal FaceBook

Each of you should have your own personal FaceBook page, you should also have a DogSmith Group page where you can network socially. Your face book page should be named, example for Catherine, DogSmith Emerald Coast.

Can you please insert into your face book page the DogSmith Newsletter sign up box, the more people we can get signed up for our newsletter the better access we have to promote products and services to your customers. Here are the instructions:

Code for DogSmith Newsletter Sign Up

```
<!-- BEGIN: Benchmark Email Signup Form Code -->
<script type="text/javascript"
src="http://www.benchmarkemail.com/code/lbform.js?mFcQnoBFKMRCsg8CHs2%252FVOoN
bCMYivkXDvYcvxS8tiY%253D"></script><noscript>Please enable JavaScript <br /><a
href="http://www.benchmarkemail.com" target=_new style="text-decoration:none;font-
family:Arial,Helvetica,sans-serif;font-size:10px;color:#999999;">Bulk Email</a> by
Benchmark Email</noscript>
<!-- END: Benchmark Email Signup Form Code -->
```

How to add a newsletter signup form to your Facebook fan page

Sep 09 2009, 09:19 AM

It is now possible for you to add visitors to your Facebook Fan Pages onto your Benchmark Email Contact List. All you have to do is use the Signup Form! This allows you to tap into potential customers/leads/audience and send them regular email campaigns via your Benchmark Email account.

To add the Benchmark Email Signup Form to your Facebook Fan Page:

1) First visit your Page

- a) Click on the “**Ads and Pages**” link in the footer toolbar of your Facebook page.
- b) Click on “**Pages**” link from the top menu.



- c) Click “**Edit Page**” on the page where you want to insert your Signup Form.



d) Click on “View Page” to view your Page.

2) Next, add the "Static FBML" application to your page

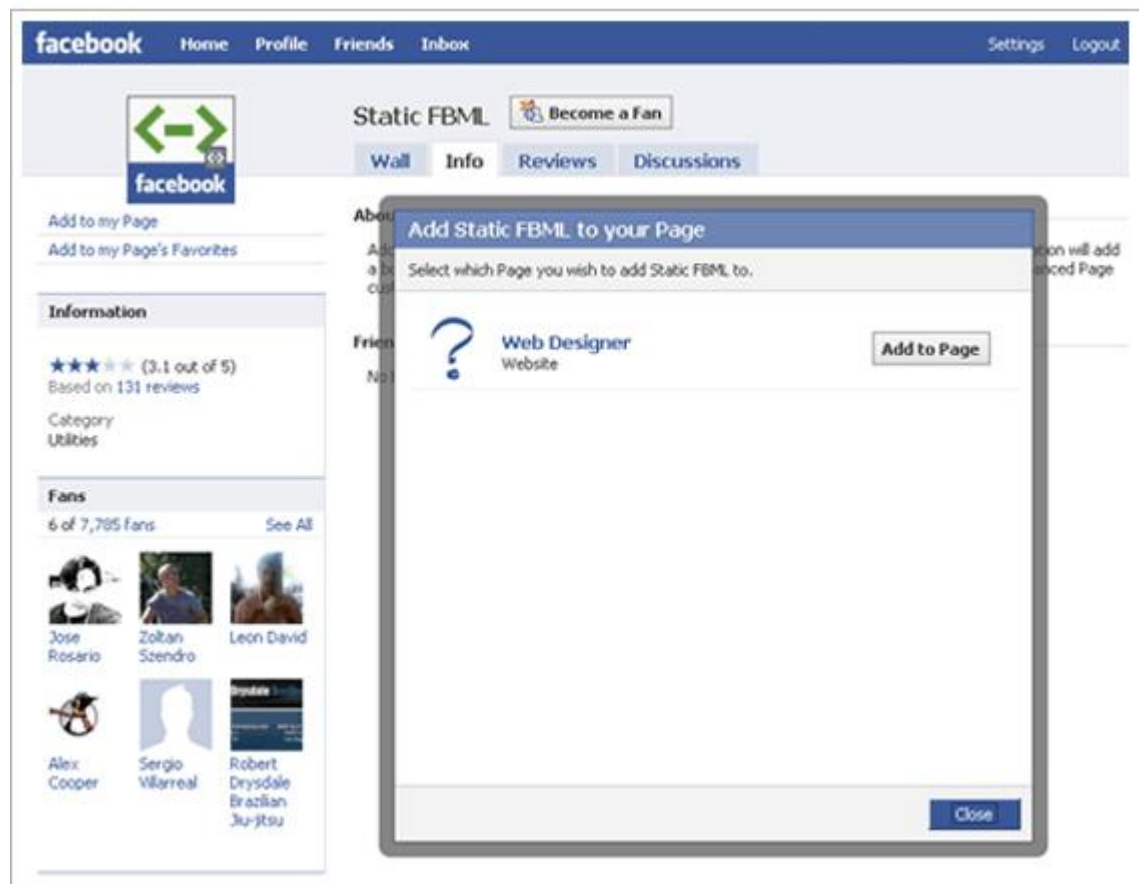
a) Click on the "Application" icon in the footer toolbar and select "Browse More Applications."

b) Search for "Static FBML."



c) From the search results click on the icon for the application . This will take you to the details page

d) Click on the “Add to my Page” link from the left menu, and then click on the “Add to Page” button in the popup.



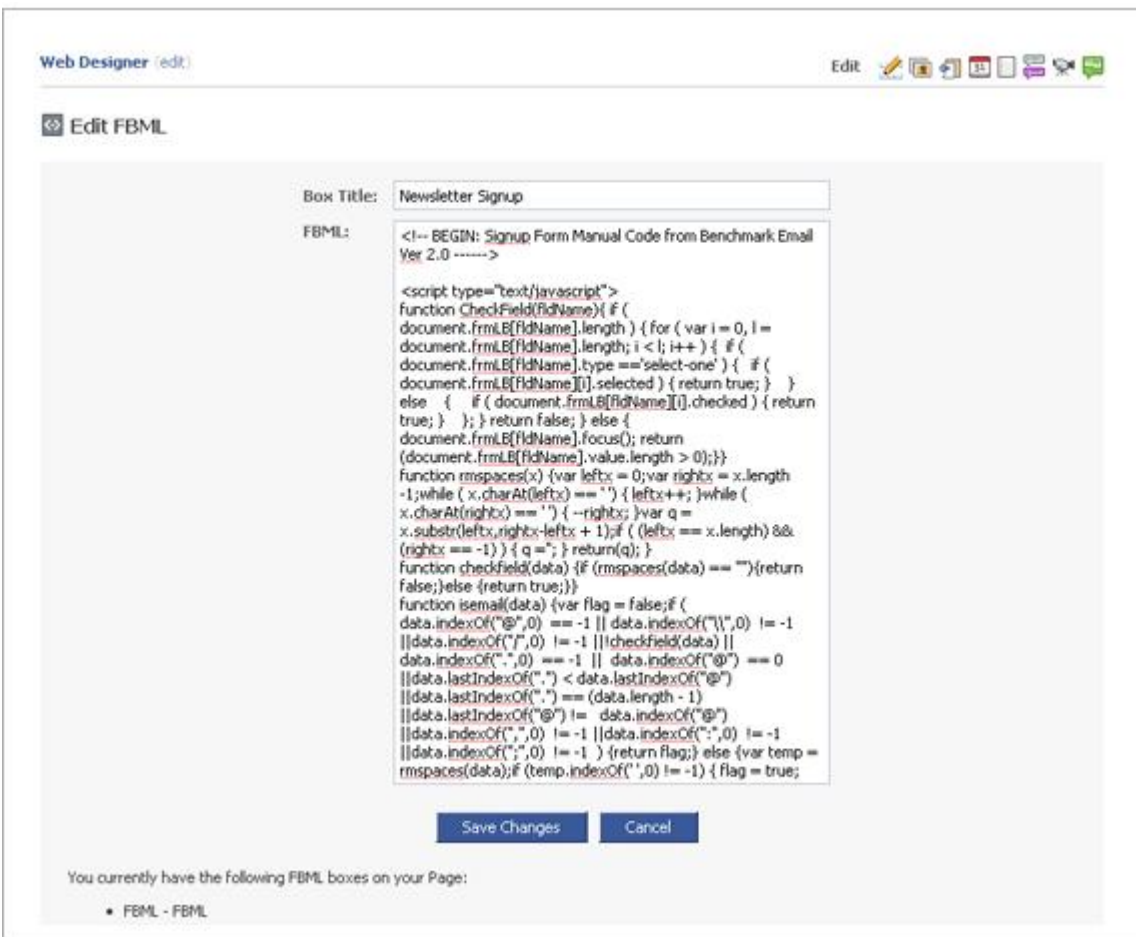
3) Now configure the Static FBML Application in your page

a) Visit your Page and click on "Edit Page" from the left menu.

b) Click on the icon placed to the right of the Static FBML Application listing and then click on "Edit."

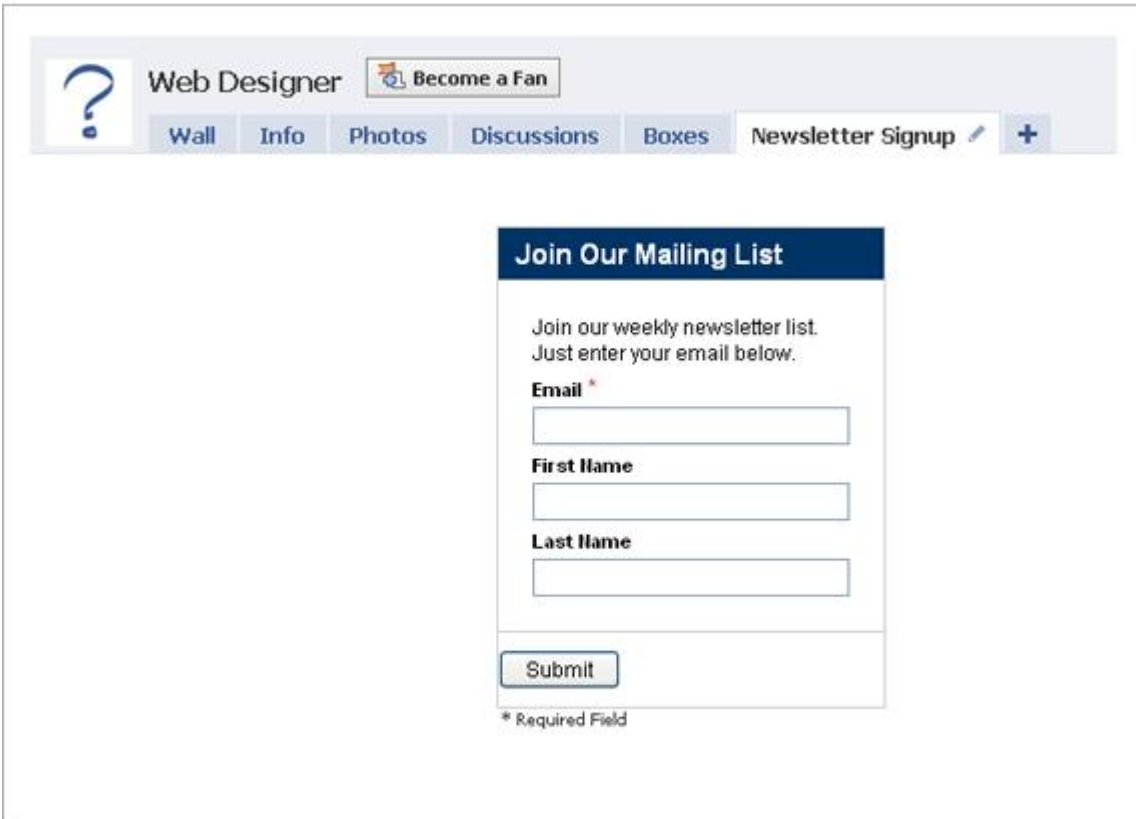


c) Paste your Benchmark Email Signup Form Code in the FBML text area and click on "Save Changes". You need to paste the **Raw HTML version** of your Signup Form Code.



Your Signup Form should appear as a Tab on your Home Page. In case it is not visible, click the "+" icon in the top

navigation list, and select your Signup Form from the list.



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook page for a user named 'Web Designer'. The page header includes a profile picture (a question mark icon), the name 'Web Designer', and a 'Become a Fan' button. Below the header is a navigation menu with tabs for 'Wall', 'Info', 'Photos', 'Discussions', 'Boxes', and 'Newsletter Signup'. The 'Newsletter Signup' tab is selected. The main content area features a dark blue header for a form titled 'Join Our Mailing List'. The form text reads: 'Join our weekly newsletter list. Just enter your email below.' The form contains three input fields: 'Email *', 'First Name', and 'Last Name'. Below the fields is a 'Submit' button. A small asterisk note at the bottom of the form indicates '* Required Field'.

Posted in: [Lists & Signup Forms](#)

50 Social Sites That Every Business Needs a Presence on

By Inside CRM Editors

If your business limits its online presence to advertising banners and blogging, it's missing out. The Internet provides powerful networking opportunities that allow users to effectively target their audience by logging on to social sites like LinkedIn, Digg and more. Take advantage of these tools by asserting your company's presence online and reaching more potential customers, business partners and employees.

Social-Media/Social-Bookmarking Sites

Share your favorite sites on the Web with potential clients and business partners by commenting on, uploading and ranking different newsworthy articles. You can also create a member profile that directs traffic back to your company's Web site.

1. [Reddit](#): Upload stories and articles on reddit to drive traffic to your site or blog. Submit items often so that you'll gain a more loyal following and increase your presence on the site.
2. [Digg](#): Digg has a huge following online because of its optimum usability. Visitors can submit and browse articles in categories like technology, business, entertainment, sports and more.
3. [Del.icio.us](#): Social bookmark your way to better business with sites like del.icio.us, which invite users to organize and publicize interesting items through tagging and networking.
4. [StumbleUpon](#): You'll open your online presence up to a whole new audience just by adding the StumbleUpon toolbar to your browser and "channel surf[ing] the Web. You'll "connect with friends and share your discoveries," as well as "meet people that have similar interests."
5. [Technorati](#): If you want to increase your blog's readership, consider registering it with Technorati, a network of blogs and writers that lists top stories in categories like Business, Entertainment and Technology.

6. [Ning](#): After hanging around the same social networks for a while, you may feel inspired to create your own, where you can bring together clients, vendors, customers and co-workers in a confidential, secure corner of the Web. Ning lets users design free social networks that they can share with anyone.
7. [Squidoo](#): According to Squidoo, “everyone’s an expert on something. Share your knowledge!” Share your industry’s secrets by answering questions and designing a profile page to help other members.
8. [Furl](#): Make Furl “your personal Web file” by bookmarking great sites and sharing them with other users by recommending links, commenting on articles and utilizing other fantastic features.
9. [Tubearoo](#): This video network works like other social-bookmarking sites, except that it focuses on uploaded videos. Businesses can create and upload tutorials, commentaries and interviews with industry insiders to promote their own services.
10. [WikiHow](#): Create a how-to guide or tutorial on wikiHow to share your company’s services with the public for free.
11. [YouTube](#): From the fashion industry to Capitol Hill, everyone has a video floating around on YouTube. Shoot a behind-the-scenes video from your company’s latest commercial or event to give customers and clients an idea of what you do each day.
12. [Ma.gnolia](#): Share your favorite sites with friends, colleagues and clients by organizing your bookmarks with Ma.gnolia. Clients will appreciate both your Internet-savviness and your ability to stay current and organized.

Professional-Networking Sites

Sign up with these online networking communities as a company or as an individual to take advantage of recruiting opportunities, cross-promotional events and more.

1. [LinkedIn](#): LinkedIn is a popular networking site where alumni, business associates, recent graduates and other professionals connect online.

2. [Ecademy](#): Ecademy prides itself on “connecting business people” through its online network, blog and message-board chats, as well as its premier BlackStar membership program, which awards exclusive benefits.
3. [Focus](#): Focus is a business destination where business professionals can help each other with their purchase and other business decisions by accessing research and peer expertise. Most importantly, Focus provides open, quality information for all businesses that is freely available, easily accessible, and community powered.
4. [YorZ](#): This networking site doubles as a job site. Members can post openings for free to attract quality candidates.
5. [Xing](#): An account with networking site Xing can “open doors to thousands of companies.” Use the professional contact manager to organize your new friends and colleagues, and take advantage of the Business Accelerator application to “find experts at the click of a button, market yourself in a professional context [and] open up new sales channels.”
6. [Facebook](#): [Facebook](#) is no longer just for college kids who want to post their party pics. Businesses vie for advertising opportunities, event promotion and more on this social-networking site.
7. [Care2](#): Care2 isn’t just a networking community for professionals: It’s touted as “the global network for organizations and people who Care2 make a difference.” If your business is making efforts to go green, let others know by becoming a presence on this site.
8. [Gather](#): This networking community is made up of members who think. Browse categories concerning books, health, money, news and more to ignite discussions on politics, business and entertainment. This will help your company tap into its target audience and find out what they want.
9. [MEETin.org](#): Once you’ve acquired a group of contacts in your city by networking on MEETin.org, organize an event so that you can meet face-to-face.
10. [Tribe](#): Cities like Philadelphia, Boston, San Francisco, New York and Chicago have unique online communities on tribe. Users can search for favorite restaurants, events, clubs and more.
11. [Ziggs](#): Ziggs is “organizing and connecting people in a professional way.” Join groups and make contacts through your Ziggs account to increase your company’s presence online and further your own personal career.

12. [Plaxo](#): Join Plaxo to organize your contacts and stay updated with feeds from Digg, Amazon.com, del.icio.us and more.
13. [NetParty](#): If you want to attract young professionals in cities like Boston, Dallas, Phoenix, Las Vegas and Orlando Fla., create an account with the networking site NetParty. You'll be able to connect with qualified, up-and-coming professionals online, then meet them at a real-life happy-hour event where you can pass out business cards, pitch new job openings and more.
14. [Networking For Professionals](#): Networking For Professionals is another online community that combines the Internet with special events in the real world. Post photos, videos, résumés and clips on your online profile while you meet new business contacts.

Niche Social-Media Sites

Consider linking up with one of these social-media sites to narrow down your business's target audience. You'll find other professionals, enthusiasts and consumers who are most likely already interested in what your company has to offer.

1. **[Pixel Groovy](#)**: Web workers will love Pixel Groovy, an open-source site that lets members submit and rate tutorials for Web 2.0, email and online-marketing issues.
2. **[Mixx](#)**: Mixx prides itself on being "your link to the Web content that really matters." Submit and rate stories, photos and news to drive traffic to your own site. You'll also meet others with similar interests.
3. **[Tweako](#)**: Gadget-minded computer geeks can network with each other on Tweako, a site that promotes information sharing for the technologically savvy.
4. **[Small Business Brief](#)**: When members post entrepreneur-related articles, a photo and a link to their profile appear, gaining you valuable exposure and legitimacy online.
5. **[Sphinn](#)**: Sphinn is an online forum and networking site for the Internet marketing crowd. Upload articles and guides from your blog to create interest in your own company or connect with other professionals for form new contacts.
6. **[BuzzFlash.net](#)**: This one-stop news resource is great for businesses that want to contribute articles on a variety of subjects, from the environment to politics to health.
7. **[HubSpot](#)**: HubSpot is another news site aimed at connecting business professionals.
8. **[SEO TAGG](#)**: Stay on top of news from the Web marketing and SEO (search-engine optimization) industries by becoming an active member of this online community.

General Social-Media Sites

The following social-media sites provide excellent [opportunities](#) for businesses to advertise; promote specials, events or services; and feature published, knowledgeable employees.

1. [Wikipedia](#): Besides creating your own business reference page on Wikipedia, you can connect with other users on Wikipedia's [Community Portal](#) and at the village pump, where you'll find conscientious professionals enthusiastic about news, business, research and more.
2. [Newsvine](#): Feature top employees by uploading their articles, studies or other news-related items to this site. A free account will also get you your own column and access to the Newsvine community.
3. [43 Things](#): This site bills itself as "the world's most popular online goal setting community." By publicizing your company's goals and ambitions, you'll gain a following of customers, investors and promoters who cheer you on as you achieve success.
4. [Wetpaint](#): If you're tired of blogs and generic Web sites, create your own wiki with Wetpaint to reach your audience and increase your company's presence online. You can easily organize articles, contact information, photos and other information to promote your business.
5. [Twitter](#): Is a social networking and microblogging service that allows you answer the question, "What are you doing?" by sending short text messages 140 characters in length, called "tweets", to your friends, or "followers."
6. [Yahoo! Answers](#): Start fielding Yahoo! users' questions with this social-media Q&A service. Search for questions in your particular areas of expertise by clicking categories like Business & Finance, Health, News & Events and more. If you continue to dole out useful advice and link your answer to your company's Web page, you'll quickly gain a new following of curious customers.
7. <http://www.americantowns.com/> AmericanTowns is a virtual "town square," plugging you in to the information and resources related to your city, town and neighborhood. Whether it's town issues and community activism or school calendar events and sports schedules,

Free Website Listing

<http://resources.petfinder.com/listing/guide/services>

<http://www.pandahi.com/>

Doggies.com

AdsInUSA.com

http://www.scooble.com/submit_business.cfm

<http://www.google.com/support/accounts/bin/answer.py?answer=97703&hl=en>

Make sure you have created full Google and Yahoo profiles on yourself. You can even give yourself a unique domain name:

My profile URL is

<http://www.google.com/profiles/Becomeadogtrainer>

Google Blogger is a great tool to get good SEO. It's free and easy to use. Can you all open a Google Blogger Account? Give your blog the name of your territory it will help people find you on the internet.

Make sure you post in one of the gadgets your name and phone number on the left hand side you can use any copy from the DogSmith official blog www.dogsmith.wordpress.com to populate your blog or from any marketing materials or the website.

If you use any of Niki's articles, please cite appropriately.

It is best to post two times a week. The web crawlers look for new activity each day.

You should regularly check/search for your business on Yahoo, Google and Bing. If you are not coming up in the top five then you need more internet presence to drive business. Search on your name, your business name and then services. Examples below:

Niki Tudge

DogSmith

Dog Training Bonifay

Pet Sitting Bonifay

Dog Obedience Panama City

Below is the Google Blogger link Niki uses, because it is a Google tool it ranks higher than the official DogSmith Blog and is more easily found.

<http://dogsmithtrainingcenter.blogspot.com/>

If you need help getting it set up schedule a 20 minute call with Niki.

Summary of Internet Marketing

1. Facebook page
2. Google and Yahoo business profile
3. Google blogger account
4. Free website advertising minimum of ten postings Google and Yahoo local listing, BARK assignments, and Craig list using long standard ads for Dog Training and Pet Sitting.
5. Merchant Circle
6. American Towns

Sync face book with twitter

SELLING

Selling is not hard if you believe in the service you provide and LISTEN to Your Prospects

Selling is not as difficult as some may believe and depends on characteristics that are not commonly considered typical “salesman” traits. The stereotypical “salesman” is an extrovert, showman and maybe a little dishonest. None of these are needed to be an effective

seller. What is needed though is the ability to listen to your customer, a sensitivity to their needs – whether they recognize them or not, under promise and over deliver, and always do what you say you will do.

People only pay for what they want, so give them what they want. The best way to make a sale is to discover your potential customer's motivation and offer the service that satisfies it. Every potential customer has needs, plans, goals and motivations. Look for their motivation.

Once you've identified their motivation offer them the service that meets it. Present your service as a solution to their problem or an answer to their motivation. Are they motivated to have an agility dog or are they simply looking to exercise their dog? If they ask for a service you don't offer don't tell them 'no', inquire why they need that service. You, as the expert, can offer them a better alternative from what you offer that will fulfill their need.

ut never try to sell them any service until you understand their motivation and needs and never argue with their reasoning. It is better to listen, acknowledge their concern and then suggest a solution.

Never try to deceive or mislead a potential customer. Look for the win-win solution to their needs. Never try to "talk" anyone into buying a service. If you talk a customer into buying a service they will cancel at the first opportunity.

Be honest at all times. Your ethics, principles and honesty are your greatest assets as a business person. This will be recognized by those you do business with. Remember, much of the value in what we offer is the trust and confidence placed with the DogSmith to take care of our customer's loved ones.

You're not going to successfully sell to everyone because not everyone wants or needs your

services. By listening and quickly determining whether someone is a likely prospect you will increase your sales percentage and save yourself time and money. And don't forget to look to current customers first for sales of new products and services. Selling new or upgraded products and services to existing customers is far more profitable than finding new customers.

Taking a Sales Call

Most of your private consultation business will come by email or phone. If you receive an email ask the client for a phone number so you can call them. Once you get the client on the phone you need to gather as much information as you can in about 5 minutes. Never dispense professional advice out over the phone, as a professional you have a level of liability. Your goal with the initial call is to seal a confirmed appointment.

Key Questions to ask

1. Do you live in the area? Check the client is within your franchise area, or in an area that you are prepared to service. Don't waste time gathering information to learn later that you cannot help them.
2. How were you referred to us? This will let you know the clients level of 'buy in' to you and your service as well as giving you important marketing information.
3. What is your dog's name age and breed? Note this for your record. The age and breed will give you some insight into the caller and their level of frustration. You are also developing a rapport with the client.
4. Who else is living in your home? This information will enable you to prioritize the importance of getting to the home and helping the client, particularly if there is a danger of the dog being relinquished or a danger to a family member.
5. What can I help you with today? Ask how you can help, get the caller to clarify the main issue. Do not take a detailed history, just determine enough information to answer a) is this within your competence level, b) is there the potential for any danger to yourself
6. Ask how long this has been a problem and why they are now asking for help? This will give you a lot of information about how serious they are and their level of commitment and potential compliance.
7. Does the dog live indoors or out?
8. Has the dog ever bitten anyone?

DogSmith Phone Skills

Return calls the same day if you receive the call before 5pm. The businesses that secure the sale are the ones that return calls promptly.

Be professional,

1. Don't judge a client based on their answers

Example, My dog barks constantly when he is tied up on our patio so we used a bark collar and it has not worked.

Answer. We have lots of different ways to help you resolve this problem, if the bark collar is not working then please don't use it anymore and when we meet I can get you on the right road.

2. Difficult calls can also involve a difficult owner. Unless there is verbal abuse respond positively and politely to the client

Securing the Appointment

Explain to the client in a short and professional manner what you do, where you do it and how much you charge.

Example:

DogSmith's are certified, professional dog trainers and behavior analysts. We make an appointment to visit you and your dog in your home so we can show you & work with you to manage your dog's behavior and achieve your goals. We charge \$80.00 per hour and a session does not go over the one hour, if so we do not charge you the additional. When are you available for us to meet with you? (secure date and time)

I am going to email you or can you go to our website and complete the private training form and

client Informed Consent form.

Common Client Questions

1. Q -How much do you charge?

A- Where do you live, ok that's a nice area, and what kind of dog do you have. A Spaniel, oh what a great breed. What is his name and how old is he? So Peter is 5 years old. What specifically can I help you with? (Now you are back in control of the conversation, you can gather your information and then quote your price when you have developed a rapport).

2. Q- I get that you are “positive trainers” but I don't want to just throw food at my dogs. Do you use shock collars?

A- Why don't you tell me your specific problem and I will tell you if it is something I can help you with. At this point you need to determine if this is a client you are prepared to work with and if they are open to looking at different ways, skills and tools.

We have several presentations on marketing and sales which will be presented as part of your training.