

Increase your customer base

There are three ways you can increase your customers:

1. Contact existing customers regularly and look for referrals.
2. Contact previous customers to offer add-on services, such as maintenance or new lines.
3. Seek new customers through use of the internet and business lists.

Clarify the offer you are making to customers

- What's unique about your product or service, and how do you present this?
- Do you know what you are really offering your customers from their viewpoint?
- Do you know your target audience – their needs, preferences and behaviours?
- How many competitors offer the same service or product?
- Do you know what could or does make your product different from similar products?
- Do you emphasise this difference in your marketing and can your business systems support it?
- How can you go about exceeding your customers' expectations of the product/service you are offering?

Options

- Product offerings – new models ,updated models, new fashions.
- Pricing structure - a discount, special price or a one-off offer, value add to the product through the provision of warranties, guarantees or other intangibles.
- Promotions – Christmas, Easter, Valentines Day, birthdays, etc.
- Distribution – home delivered free, free home quotation, discount for pick up from your store.

Getting started

You should undertake market research. You need to know what your product or service offers – both tangible and intangible elements. You need to find out who your competitors are by looking in places such as the Yellow Pages or on the internet.

You also need to know your customers – do a profile of your typical customer. For example, look at what they buy, when they buy, how they pay, where they come from, how they travel to you, how they receive their goods, how they found out about you, how they keep in touch with you.

Tips

- People typically have a three month memory of advertising or promotions, so it's important not to have lag times. Maintain regular promotions and advertising.
- The more information you obtain about your customers, the better you will be able to direct successful promotions to your customers.
- Invest in a computer and run a database on your customers – this can provide great opportunities to learn more about them.



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Further information

The following fact sheets provide further information on these issues:

- Marketing plan