



Business Builder

Tips & Techniques to Help Your Business Grow

Make Your Message Contagious

Wouldn't you like to have a business that was all the "buzz" in town? Something so spectacular that people who just left your store couldn't wait to describe the experience to a friend. You've heard of the computer virus- now meet the virus of marketing. Basically, it's a business message that attaches to its host and then spreads to other customers in an epidemic called incredible sales. Do it properly, and "viral marketing" can be a very good thing.

So, are you prepared to turn your new business into the next urban legend? That juicy piece of gossip that people can't live without? Then try these steps:

1. **Pursue the Cool People.** Rosie O'Donnell almost single-handedly started the "Tickle Me Elmo" craze and helped Toys-R-Us sell millions. To spread a viral message, you just need to get the right person to "sneeze" what you do.
2. **Give People Something to Talk About.** Fill the burning needs of your customers. People talk about the unusual, the scandalous and the radical. If your store or product is just mundane, people won't share it with others.
3. **Make It a Tight Little Package.** This is all you desire in your viral blurb: easy to explain and instantly understandable. Always stand out in a way that customers will want to share. And be so easy to remember ("It's called 1-800-Flowers") that your message never gets lost on the tip of a tongue.
4. **It's Like the Measles in Kindergarten.** Your viral message will spread best if you "sneeze" in the right direction. Spread the word in the trendy places- wherever your customers are found.
5. **Pay It Forward.** "Thanks so much for your business. Share this coupon with a friend, and she'll receive a complete facial for 20% off. To receive the free gift, please sign below." You want to thank a customer that you've never met and get them to spread the word to others. Make the buying experience one they won't forget and they will share it with a friend.

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