

Marketing Decision Making Guide

Helping Small Businesses Choose the Right Marketing Methods



01

Understanding Your Business

What is your
business
identity?

Who is your
target
audience?
(age, location, habits)

What type of
business are
you?
(good vs. service)
(local vs. online)

What is your
marketing
goal?

02

Foundations to Marketing

Online Presence

Your online presence is often the first impression customers have of your business. A professional website, active social media pages, and accurate business information help customers trust your company and find your services more easily.

Customer Retention

Keeping current customers is just as important as gaining new ones. Strong customer service, loyalty programs, and follow-up communication help businesses build long-term relationships and repeat sales.

Content Marketing

Content marketing helps businesses connect with customers by sharing useful, entertaining, or informative content. Social media posts, videos, photos, and customer stories can increase engagement and build trust with audiences.

Budget Planning

A marketing budget helps businesses decide where to spend money effectively. Planning ahead allows businesses to focus on the strategies that provide the best return on investment while avoiding unnecessary spending.

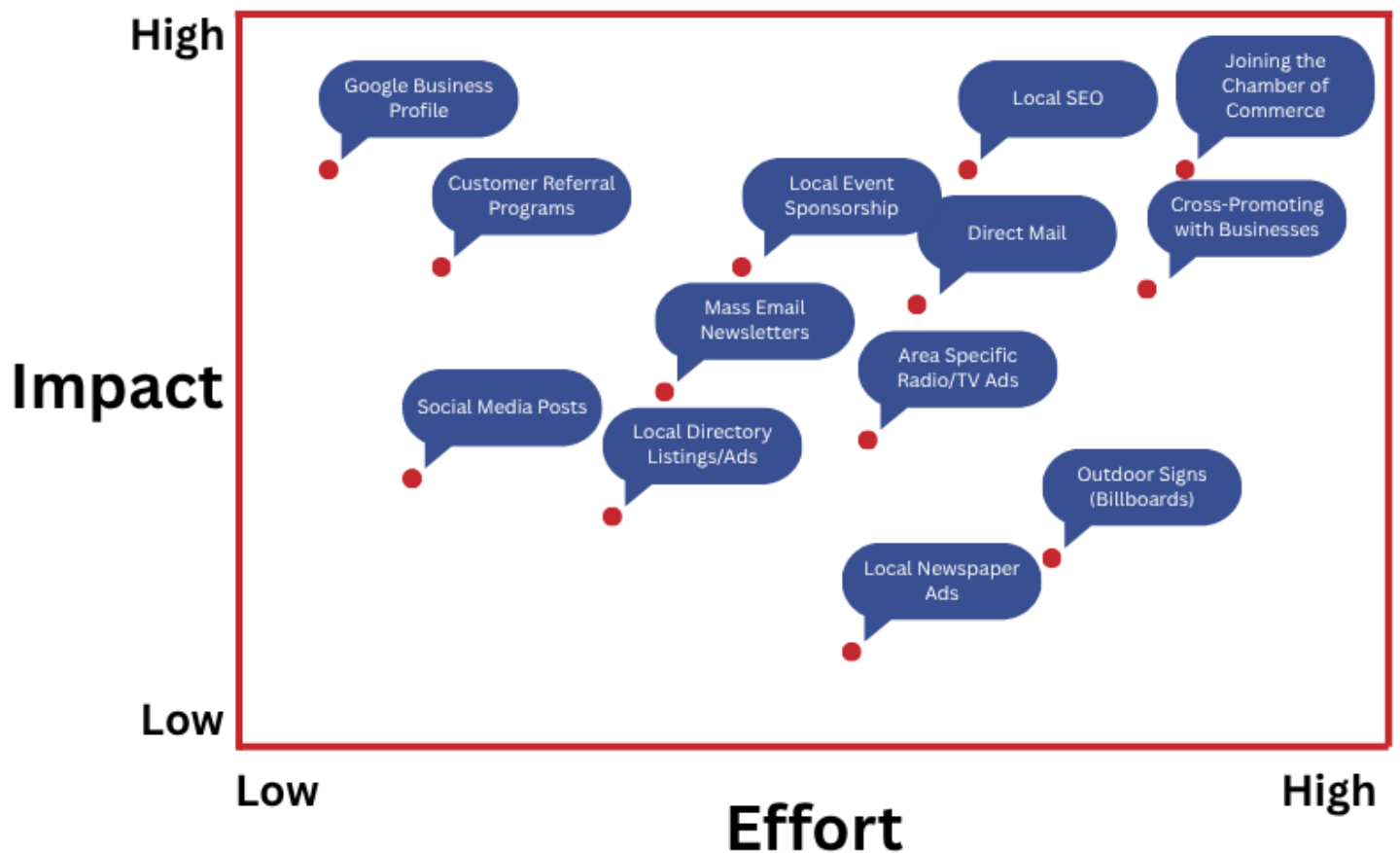


Advertising Methods

Method	Description	Cost
Google Business Profile	Helps people find your business on Google and Maps. It shows your location, hours, and reviews.	Low
Local SEO (Website Optimization)	Helps your website show up when people search for local businesses online.	Low-Medium
Social Media Posts	Lets you share updates, photos, and promotions to reach customers online.	Low
Mass Email Newsletters	Sends updates and deals directly to customers through email.	Low
Local Directory Listings/Ads	Puts your business on sites like Yelp so more people can find you.	Low-Medium
Area-Specific Radio/TV Ads	Promotes your business to a local audience through radio or TV commercials.	High
Direct Mail	Sends flyers, coupons, or postcards directly to people's homes.	Medium
Joining the Chamber of Commerce	Helps your business connect with other local businesses and gain trust.	Low
Local Event Sponsorship	Supports community events to get your business name seen locally.	Medium
Cross-Promoting with Other Businesses	Works with other businesses to promote each other and reach new customers.	Low
Advertises your business in a		

Local Newspaper Ads	local newspaper to reach community readers.	Medium
Outdoor Signs (Billboards)	Shows your business message on large signs to get attention from drivers and passersby.	High
Customer Referral Programs	Rewards customers for telling friends and family about your business.	Low

Advertising Methods Impact v. Effort Matrix



This Impact vs. Effort Matrix shows how much impact each marketing method may have compared to the amount of work or cost it requires. Methods higher on the chart may produce better results, while methods farther to the right usually take more time, money, or effort to use.

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Build Your Strategy

Sample Marketing Plans

Low Budget

This plan is best for businesses looking to increase local awareness while spending very little money.

- Recommended Advertising Methods:
- Google Business Profile
 - Social Media Posts
 - Customer Referral Programs

Medium Budget

This plan helps businesses improve their online presence while building stronger community connections.

- Recommended Advertising Methods:
- Local SEO
 - Mass Email Newsletters
 - Local Event Sponsorship

High Budget

This plan is designed for businesses trying to reach a larger audience across multiple demographics and markets.

- Recommended Advertising Methods:
- Area-Specific Radio/TV Ads
 - Outdoor Signs (Billboards)
 - Direct Mail

Measuring Your Success

Metric	Why It Matters
Website Traffic	Shows how many people are visiting the business online and whether marketing is bringing attention to the website.
Social Media Engagement	Measures likes, comments, shares, and interactions to see how customers are responding to content.
Customer Reviews	Measures likes, comments, shares, and interactions to see how customers are responding to content.
Sales Growth	Shows whether marketing efforts are helping increase revenue and attract more customers.
Customer Retention	Measures how well a business keeps repeat customers and builds long-term relationships.

Common Marketing Mistakes

Mistake	Cost To Your Business
Not tracking results	You may continue using methods that are not effective
Inconsistent social media posting	Customers may forget about the business
Ignoring customer reviews	Negative reviews can hurt reputation
Trying too many strategies at once	Time and money may be spread too thin
Not understanding the target audience	Marketing may not reach the right customers
Giving up too quickly	Some marketing methods take time to work