

TOOL	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	BEST PRACTICES
<b>A</b> Referrals, Word of Mouth and Testimonials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inexpensive</li> <li>• Strongest form of promotion</li> <li>• Helpful for limited budgets</li> <li>• Is built on trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It can work against you</li> <li>• Lack of control, timing</li> <li>• Testimonials can take time to collect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve customers with integrity to build referrals</li> <li>• Encourage satisfied customers to tell their friends</li> <li>• Don't be afraid to ask for referrals and testimonials</li> <li>• For testimonials, ask simple questions about how you solved their problem. Then, word their response into short paragraph. Ask permission to use their name and consider a photo also.</li> </ul>
<b>B</b> Social Networking: Facebook, Twitter LinkedIn, Pinterest Instagram, Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inexpensive</li> <li>• You appear to be the expert</li> <li>• Can reach a broad audience</li> <li>• Creates brand and image awareness</li> <li>• Fairly convenient</li> <li>• Builds on relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be intimidating</li> <li>• Takes time to plan and follow-through</li> <li>• Must be well-written and professional</li> <li>• Timing can be an issue</li> <li>• Can't control comments or negative feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform, entertain, inspire or educate</li> <li>• Create a persona or voice that represents your business and is authentic</li> <li>• Determine goals and objectives in advance</li> <li>• Have a plan, be consistent</li> <li>• Consider using scheduling on FB</li> <li>• Consider boosting some of your posts</li> <li>• Be creative and innovative</li> <li>• Respond quickly to messages/feedback</li> <li>• Evaluate statistics and adapt</li> </ul>
<b>C</b> A Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open 24/7/365</li> <li>• Able to show lots of information</li> <li>• Fairly easy to change and update</li> <li>• Provides a professional image</li> <li>• Potential to reach global audience</li> <li>• Allows for online sales</li> <li>• Gather information and generate leads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be expensive to start</li> <li>• Takes time and planning up front</li> <li>• Likely requires professional assistance</li> <li>• Too easy to ignore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs to look professional and should take advantage of search engine optimization</li> <li>• Consider getting professional help</li> <li>• Use high quality images and graphics</li> <li>• Provide strong text and descriptive content</li> <li>• Know your audience, speak to them in their language</li> <li>• Show contact information on all pages (footer or header)</li> <li>• Evaluate Analytics and adapt</li> <li>• Keep it fresh and current</li> <li>• Use correct spelling and grammar</li> <li>• Make sure all links work</li> <li>• Organize in logical format</li> <li>• Design with a consistent image/brand</li> </ul>
<b>D</b> Traditional Advertising:  <b>D1</b> Print-newspaper, magazines, specialty publications  <b>D2</b> Broadcast, radio  <b>D3</b> Broadcast, television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tight control of the message</li> <li>• Tight control of the look and feel</li> <li>• Can reach a large number quickly</li> <li>• Many creative options</li> <li>• Can re-purpose other promotional efforts</li> <li>• Consider publications with a focus on your target</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can get expensive</li> <li>• Requires repetition</li> <li>• Difficult to determine best mix and frequency</li> <li>• Requires professional help to produce quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember TOMA: Top of Mind Awareness</li> <li>• Incorporate AIDA: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action</li> <li>• Focus on the benefits and value you provide</li> <li>• Use photos and high quality graphics</li> <li>• Make consistent look and image to create brand</li> <li>• In print, make it stand out</li> <li>• Understand what your customers read, listen to or watch</li> <li>• For broadcast, run-time is important</li> <li>• For broadcast, provide clear, simple message</li> <li>• <b>Does it pass the SO WHAT test?</b></li> </ul>

TOOL	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	BEST PRACTICES
<b>E</b> Direct Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tight control of message</li> <li>• Can be highly targeted</li> <li>• Different messages to different audience</li> <li>• Control of timing</li> <li>• Flexible and creative options</li> <li>• Can include lots of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very competitive</li> <li>• May require a strong mailing list</li> <li>• May be expensive for large volumes</li> <li>• May have short shelf life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrow your target audience</li> <li>• Match the message to the audience</li> <li>• Make it stand out: strong headlines, quality graphics</li> <li>• Be creative with size and materials</li> <li>• Maintain brand and image</li> <li>• Consider EDDM (Every Door Direct Mail)</li> <li>• Consider cooperative mailings</li> <li>• Consider a tracking method</li> <li>• Provide a compelling offer</li> </ul>
<b>F</b> Product Literature Brochures Flyers Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tight control of message</li> <li>• Tight control of look, feel, image</li> <li>• Many creative options</li> <li>• Flexible in sizes, message can be tailored for different uses</li> <li>• Can be used in print and digital versions</li> <li>• Easy to display</li> <li>• Longer shelf-life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires a delivery channel</li> <li>• Little control in some environments</li> <li>• Limited reach</li> <li>• May become obsolete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain professional appearance</li> <li>• Maintain brand and image</li> <li>• Design message for specific audience</li> <li>• Keep it well organized</li> <li>• Be creative</li> <li>• Start with the end-use in mind</li> <li>• Choose a format that best represents your business</li> </ul>
<b>G</b> Specialty Promotional Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May have a long shelf life</li> <li>• Lots and lots of options</li> <li>• Can create and spread brand awareness</li> <li>• A “gift” can create excitement</li> <li>• Can be used for multiple events, occasions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A poor choice or budget item may offend</li> <li>• Requires a plan for distribution to be effective</li> <li>• Can be expensive to accommodate min. orders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select quality items</li> <li>• Maintain brand and image</li> <li>• Use high quality images and graphics</li> <li>• Know your audience, what would they like/use</li> <li>• Consider what will be appreciated</li> <li>• Have a plan and specific use</li> </ul>
<b>H</b> Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great visibility</li> <li>• Conveys professional image</li> <li>• Lots of options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be expensive to start</li> <li>• Must be well-maintained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek professional assistance</li> <li>• Consider size, visibility, legibility, location</li> <li>• Maintain brand and image</li> <li>• Start with the purpose of the sign</li> <li>• Use a compelling color with high contrast</li> <li>• Rule of thumb, 10 feet per inch of letter height</li> <li>• Be bold and concise</li> </ul>
<b>I</b> Email Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hits a target audience</li> <li>• Inexpensive</li> <li>• Able to control message</li> <li>• Able to control image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with CAN-SPAM Act</li> <li>• Needs to have a plan</li> <li>• Needs to have consistency and follow-through</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comply with CAN-SPAM Act</li> <li>• Create messages that fit the audience</li> <li>• Inform, educate, entertain</li> <li>• Create compelling subject lines</li> <li>• Make the message concise but compelling</li> <li>• Personalize when possible</li> <li>• Write an effective header: unique, specific, urgent</li> <li>• Include call to action</li> </ul>

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<b>J</b> Open House or Special Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compelling selling tool</li> <li>• Can generate high interest</li> <li>• Increase awareness of what you offer</li> <li>• Thank or show appreciation to customers</li> <li>• You appear to be the expert</li> <li>• Variety of reasons to hold:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Announce, celebrate, introduce</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be expensive</li> <li>• Timing is everything</li> <li>• Requires advance planning</li> <li>• Requires a way to measure and review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider your audience needs and desires</li> <li>• Provide a value for their time</li> <li>• Have a strong reason for the event</li> <li>• Serve food and refreshments</li> <li>• Consider door prizes or gifts</li> <li>• Make it fun</li> <li>• Know what you want to accomplish</li> <li>• Plan well in advance</li> <li>• Collect contact information/leads</li> </ul>
<b>K</b> Trade shows, Fairs Exhibit Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate influence of interested people</li> <li>• Shows industry/professional presence</li> <li>• Collect direct feedback from customers</li> <li>• Creates awareness</li> <li>• Generates leads</li> <li>• Ability to network with other professionals</li> <li>• Ability to connect with current customers</li> <li>• Opportunity for face-to-face communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be time-consuming</li> <li>• No control of quality of show or number of attendees</li> <li>• Difficult to measure effectiveness</li> <li>• Can be expensive to get started</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate fees and time investment</li> <li>• Maintain professional image in appearance and with materials or hand-outs</li> <li>• Create a compelling and attractive display</li> <li>• Gather information and leads</li> <li>• Follow-up on potential customers</li> <li>• Know what you want to accomplish</li> <li>• Use business literature, provide a take-away</li> <li>• Remember the value of first impressions</li> </ul>
<b>L</b> Press Releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inexpensive</li> <li>• Creates TOMA</li> <li>• Offers a professional image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May never run</li> <li>• May not get read</li> <li>• May not be timely</li> <li>• Difficult to measure effectiveness</li> <li>• Must be well-written</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be NEWS-worthy</li> <li>• Introduce, announce, educate</li> <li>• Have a strong headline</li> <li>• Get to the news first</li> <li>• Include a quote when possible</li> <li>• Know what you want to accomplish</li> <li>• Keep it simple, speak to the reader</li> <li>• Re-purpose in other media</li> </ul>
<b>M</b> Coupons, bounce-back offers, Loyalty or reward programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generates interest</li> <li>• Can promote up-selling</li> <li>• Can promote cross-selling</li> <li>• Attractive to price-sensitive consumers</li> <li>• May create repeat purchases or visits</li> <li>• Can introduce new product or reduce inventory</li> <li>• Inexpensive</li> <li>• Can be used in print, on location, or in digital media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must provide a compelling offer</li> <li>• Decreased margin on product offered</li> <li>• Lower perceived value of product/service</li> <li>• May chip away at regular customer base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the audience</li> <li>• Create a compelling offer</li> <li>• Track and measure effectiveness</li> <li>• Consider frequency</li> <li>• Gather name and contact info when offering via social media</li> <li>• Consider ways to encourage repeat visits and purchases</li> <li>• Consider cooperative coupon efforts</li> <li>• Use to encourage referrals</li> </ul>