

# Ten Things to Do for Your Business (and Marketing) in 2008

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There's no doubt that reflection on the year past and developing your plans for the future are in the forefront of your mind as a new year dawns. Here are ten straightforward business and marketing ideas that you can use right now to help you stay ahead in 2008.

## 1. Review, update and optimize your Web site.

That news release from 2006 will be going on two years old. How about the people noted on the Web site? Are they still there? Have new team members come aboard? It's time to acknowledge the changes in your business. Optimize your site—people are looking for your products or services. Make it easier for them to find you.

## 2. Get smart about new media opportunities.

Do you know what a Web widget is and why you might want to consider using one? E-mail marketing, mobile marketing, social networking—can you leverage these to help your business grow? How about video on your Web site? Don't make assumptions that things are too expensive or cannot be done until you really check them out.

## 3. Create a company newsletter.

Send it out to your clients and business partners two, three or even four times within the year. Print it and/or e-mail it and include staff photos as well as occasional bios of employees. Highlight new product and service offerings, industry developments and trends—make commentaries on these to highlight your expertise and point of view (what my PR friends call "thought leadership"). Have guest columnists contribute for even richer content.

## 4. Get younger—and smarter.

If you do not have a pipeline of energetic and bright young people in your organization you are missing out on new trends and allowing complacency to undermine your future success. Reach out and bring in new young blood, train them, mentor them and learn from them.

## 5. Work with your team on better communicating with your clients.

E-mail should be used to exchange points of fact and confirm information. When it is appropriate to call a client—do it. When it is appropriate to go see them, don't be lazy; Get out there and get in front of them—don't wait for an invitation that may never come.

**6. Evaluate new products and services you can and should be offering your clients and prospects.** Change defines business today. If you are standing still you are falling behind. What are competitors doing that's new? What are they missing and how can you fill that need?

**7. Network more and get involved with industry associations.** Yes, I know you are too busy. Do it anyway. Meeting new people spurs new ideas and business relationships.

## 8. Educate yourself and your team.

If you are a company leader, join a national organization like Vistage ([www.vistage.com](http://www.vistage.com)) or a local group like Long Island's Execuleaders ([www.execuleaders.org](http://www.execuleaders.org)), or consider executive coaching for you or some of your top managers (check the International Coach Federation at [www.coachfederation.org](http://www.coachfederation.org) for coaches near you). For others in your organization encourage continuing education in areas of interest to them and your business. Not only will you all benefit, you will show you care about personal and professional growth.

## 9. Take time to think about what is most important to do next.

It's so easy just to deal with the fire that is burning brightest. Expedience is great but not always the path to creative solutions and new ideas.

## 10. Exercise your right to exercise and don't skimp on sleep.

Since we all live in a 24/7 world down time is harder to find. For your own health and well-being value your physical condition and you will work and play with more energy and effectiveness. Don't sacrifice sleep. It has a way of catching up with you at the worst possible time.

Take some time and see if you can add a few ideas to my list. Even if you can only implement a few of these recommendations you'll be on the road to developing a fresh attitude and healthy approach for a really big year.