



Developing Marketing Materials for a Startup Business

Without customers your company is just a great idea, an innovative product, or a much-needed service. So developing marketing materials should be one of the top priorities for your startup business. Visibility puts you in the running for getting actual business.

“For long-term startup success, it’s important to create targeted, marketing messages, goals and plans prior to reaching out to potential, new customers,” states Melanie Rembrandt of Rembrandt Communications, LLC, a writing and public relations business.

And you shouldn’t be intimidated by the concept of “**marketing**.” We’re talking about an initial strategy for getting your company noticed and then producing some basic, **affordable and easily put together marketing materials** and pieces here -- not some 60-second TV commercial!

Decide on your marketing strategy

What’s one of the first things that people do when they create a startup? Buy stationery! But before you get anywhere close to that point, you should have your **marketing strategy** and targets down pat.

“Startups need to maximize their resources, and pinpoint their marketplace or they could waste money and manpower sending out flyers and e-mails right away,” says Domenic J. Locapo, a PR practitioner who also owns a bar in Lowell, Mass., with his brother. “Most people **analyze their marketplace** only after they’ve got their feet on the ground and have done some initial business.”

Plan for future needs in developing marketing materials

Laying out a scheme for your marketing materials should include a healthy dose of future planning. Are you going to be attending your first trade show within the year, for example? Then in addition to all the stuff you need to open for business, you’ll have to be thinking about a four-color brochure and an exhibit booth.

But don’t get too caught up in using your crystal ball. “Especially for a startup, messages are often changed or enhanced as you grow,” says Mike Garland, chief marketing officer of DataPreserve, a Scottsdale, Ariz.-based tech startup. “So I’d suggest looking only six to eight

months down the road and then reassigning marketing collateral needs and making amendments.”

Reflect what kind of company you are

The marketing materials that you produce will depend a lot on what kind of company you are. “A pizza joint may need only coupons, menus and a website,” says Shel Horowitz, a marketing consultant based in Hadley, Mass. “But a solar-energy business might need several brochures and spec sheets, a precis on state-funding initiatives, a payback analysis, a sheet for investors and some press releases.”

Once you’ve determined what kind of marketing materials you need, take advantage of our marketing materials checklist ([link to new page](#)).

Our Bottom Line

Marketing materials present the face of your business to potential customers and the rest of the world, so make sure they’re telling the story that you want to tell. Start with basic instruments such as **business cards and a website**, but make sure you have an adequate variety of materials so that you can tell your story in every important venue.

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