

## Marketing options

By [Lee Rossini](#)

This week's article will focus on some options that can be used to market your business. These include small seminars, speeches or presentations, round table discussions and articles. What these options have in common is that they are all designed to give something to the audience: new facts, knowledge or ideas. Regardless of the option chosen, the underlying objective should be to demonstrate the professionalism and competence of your business. These options encourage a human touch through the interaction between yourself and/or your staff and the audience.

Running small seminars is a highly effective method of attracting new clients. To ensure success, the group attending should be kept small and manageable with a maximum number of 20 to 25 people. This enables staff to personally interact with everyone who is attending and encourages two-way communication. It is not possible to engage with everyone when a seminar is too big. Guests should be personally welcomed at the door by yourself or senior members of staff. The content of the seminar should be very specific and address the concerns, needs or objectives of the audience. If you feel sufficiently confident in your knowledge, first prize would be to present at the seminar. Speaking on a topic you know well places you as an expert in the mind of the audience. Encourage the audience to ask questions at the end of the seminar. Make sure there is enough time to socialize as this provides you with an opportunity to chat to get feedback from prospective clients.

The next option is to hone your presentation or speech-making skills. There is a difference between the two. A presentation makes use of visuals and is less formal. A speech is usually more formal, and the speaker paints a picture with words instead of using visual aids such as a Powerpoint presentation. Speeches are given at school or club functions, award ceremonies or at business breakfasts whilst presentations are given at industry functions. Although different in tone and formality, both are useful options that encourage interaction with an audience. Ask the audience to fill in a questionnaire and to indicate whether they would like more information on the topic; if they would, email them the presentation, or an article or survey results on the topic. This demonstrates your competence and professionalism. Make sure you have business cards to hand out at the end of the speech or presentation for the audience members who would like to contact you.

A small round table discussion is an excellent method of gathering existing or prospective clients who share similar interests or concerns together. After addressing the group on an appropriate topic, open it up for discussion amongst the group. This encourages people to talk about their concerns and to hear that they may not be alone. Running small group discussions are very personable and provides you an opportunity to give clients information and to get to know them better.

Although writing articles is not a face-to-face means of communicating, they are a powerful option to demonstrate competence. Although there are numerous topics on which to write, if you are wanting to reach a target audience, the article must be written from their perspective. The article should provide information as well as possible solutions and lessons learned. If you write regularly for a publication, you can build up a bank of articles which can be used in a newsletter. If writing is not your thing, encourage other staff members, including paraplanners and other professionals, to write a certain number of articles every year.

The marketing options discussed above provide opportunities to brand yourself and your business in the marketplace as competent professionals. The benefit of using these options to market your business is the relatively low costs involved. Use one or a combination of the options as a means of engaging with a target audience; if done right, they will make a long-lasting impression in their minds.