

# How Small Businesses Can Compete in a Corporate World

**Date:** August 23, 2010 10:52 AM

**Author:** [Andrea Watts](#)

**Source:** [Julie Weishaar](#)

**Tags:** [business](#), [internet marketing](#), [marketing strategy](#), [web development](#)

**Permalink:** <http://bit.ly/9ZQNsD>

Building your brand is the most essential component of gaining customer loyalty and [driving traffic to your website](#). As e-commerce grows, so does the mistrust of shopping online. For Internet consumers, certain brands are more trustworthy than others.

So the question is how do you [build brand recognition](#)? Many businesses don't even have the cash flow to build brand awareness with brand management and advertising. The greatest tool any business can use to increase their brand value, is Internet marketing and sales tools.

Here are some tips from an article written by [Julie Weishaar](#), a marketing professional.

## **A good image doesn't always equate to good service.**

Some retailers provide excellent service but don't communicate it in their image, and vice-versa. Branding is often misaligned with sales and operations. A small update to the company's online image, brand, or information design can communicate a luxurious, simple or fun shopping experience. Your brand sells the experience of doing business with you before someone does (just as a menu sells the food before someone orders it), so communicate clearly.

## **Show some trust toward the customer and the customer will trust you.**

Online, trust-building methods such as offering free samples, free consultations and assessments, helpful product reviews, and professional advice without pushing sales show honesty and trust in the customer's preferences. Amazon.com revolutionized online shopping by offering a public rating system for the products they sell, allowing anyone to post a review, whether positive or negative, as a way to help customers with their purchasing decisions.

## **Be alert and ready to help.**

You can show outstanding salesmanship online by offering multiple ways for a customer to contact you – e-mail, e-mail form and phone number. An extra bonus to your customers would be to add a live chat service to your Web site. Live chat allows customers browsing on your Web site to get questions answered immediately

without the hassle of sending emails or inconvenience of calling.

**Make it easy for the customer.**

Someone who showed interest once might still be a potential buyer in the future. Handing over a business card leaves all the work up to the customer to keep in contact! Be proactive by asking, "Would you mind if I added you to our mailing list?" On your Web site, ask in pop-in windows or offer freebies online in exchange for e-mail addresses to build up your database. [Permission e-mail marketing](#) is a great way to follow up with your potential customers and keep your name in front of them. This is better than general advertising because you are speaking to a captivated audience – your subscribers are already interested in you!

[Distributed by IntelBuilder Social Media Platform](#)