

2.5 Online

Advertising

Putting money into your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is important. If someone hasn't seen your truck/trailer/van on the road, they'll probably find your company by searching your services online. Think about how you found the last few companies you've hired?

Increasing your online presence can also be done by using free online listings. Some yellow page sections are free, but to be listed as an advertised company can come with a large monthly price tag. There are many other free online directories, so take some time and put your company information into them. They might have a stronger presence online than you do even with some SEO input, so a "graffiti removal company" search could bring your business up through their site. No matter how people find you, it's most important they they do find you.

We all know of some hard copy listing directories because they were popular in the past, but are they still relevant or needed? Don't be too quick to put your money into clever sales pitches to buy directory space that isn't comparing themselves to the reality of how people navigate these days. Google is a much stronger brand than a phonebook.

There isn't a wrong answer to how to reach your customers, but once you know who they are and what they have in common, it will start to become more clear on how and where to reach them most effectively. If something isn't working for you, pivot and try something new once you've seen a commitment through. For example, if you pay for an advertising service/space, expect it to take some time to gain traction. It might even be that the people who are seeing it just don't have a building with graffiti on it, but when they do, they'll hopefully remember your company and give you a call. This is what makes advertising a tricky aspect of any business. You need large time lapses to get a fair read on what works and what doesn't. If you advertise for 5 months in the winter and then none in the spring/summer, you aren't giving the advertising space a fair chance. If you're going to pay for a potentially large campaign with a company, expect to start it 2-3 months before the typical spike of graffiti in the spring and carry it on throughout the summer. Placing an ad for only a week in the summer shouldn't expect to be very effective even though it can be a very busy month of people painting graffiti.

Website

Once people have found your website through good SEO tools and inputs, your social media efforts, or because you called and introduced yourself, it's important to have your website reflect what it is you offer.

Your website should be geared towards who you are, what you do, how you can help them, and how they can contact you. It doesn't have to be a complicated or elaborate site to let people know you demand quality, are qualified to do the work you're quoting, and have photos to prove it. It also doesn't have to be an expensive site and if you can save some money at the startup of your company by doing it yourself, then go for it. There are hundreds of self building websites available online that can even help you at an inexpensive rate if you aren't comfortable with this side of the business. Know your strong points and accept them. If you aren't into building it, save your time and put it towards getting sales for graffiti removal jobs instead.

Email

As you set up online, make sure to use your company name as your email address. Often people will use a free email that was promoted by their telecom service provider as their TLD. This doesn't show that you have put a lot of stock into your own company and it locks you into staying with that service provider, or whatever type of company it is. For example, if you were to name your company ABCD Graffiti Removal (which we don't recommend because ABCD won't rank you higher anywhere online like hardcopy did because it was sorted alphabetically) and you chose to use gmail or Telus as your email provider too, then you'd have an email such as abcdgraffitiremoval@gmail or @telus. If you were to need a second email, what would it look like? Or if you were to change service providers after 3 years and had to change your email, how would you do this with all of your customers? It might not be the hardest task you'll ever face, but it does look much more professional (and it will be easier) if you have your name/department/position in the email, such as info@abcdgraffitiremoval, tech@abcdgraffitiremoval, or mjohnson@abcdgraffitiremoval, at the start of your company www.abcdgraffitiremoval.com.

Whatever you do with your website is up to you, but make sure you have one. Even if people aren't going to be seeing a website often or you think businesses have been working without them for years, you don't want to be left in the past or seen as a business that doesn't keep up on new technology, or even transparency. A company with a nice website and up to date social media activity could win more jobs than the next one who isn't paying attention to the details.

Module 9 will allow you to complete your Marketing Plan
in the Marketing Plan Template attachment.

+ MODULE 2 EXERCISES

1. Start putting your Marketing Plan together with the Marketing Plan Template.
2. Create a marketing budget based on your marketing plan in the Marketing Budget Template.

+ ATTACHMENTS

Marketing Plan Template
Marketing Budget Template

+ LINKS

Canadian Legal Business Name Search

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/business/start/choosing-a-business-name-1.html>

U.S. Small Business Administration

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/launch-your-business/pick-your-business-location>

Australian Securities & Investments Commission

<https://asic.gov.au/for-business/registering-a-business-name/>

European Business

https://europa.eu/youreurope/business/running-business/start-ups/starting-business/index_en.htm

Fiverr

[fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com)

Bluehost

www.bluehost.com

Wix

www.wix.com

Facebook

www.facebook.com

Instagram

www.instagram.com

Twitter

www.twitter.com

YouTube

www.youtube.com

LinkedIn

www.linkedin.com