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Marketing Tips for  
Small Firms

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# Marketing Tips for Small Accounting Firms

## Making Time for Marketing During Busy Season

By Hugh Duffy

When it comes to marketing during busy season, the common issue with smaller firms is having little to no time. During crunch time, it is a challenge to serve the needs of clients while also managing overall firm operations. As a result, marketing initiatives become just additional items on the endless to-do list. The reality is that if firms are to continue to generate quality leads, this way of thinking will not work. For practitioners that

want to continuously improve the quality of their clientele and improve their practice, marketing must become a habitual activity.

The following tips provide practitioners with proven marketing tactics that require very little lead time to implement.

**Grassroots Marketing**—Shotgun the firm's message and image locally and consistently. While tactics may vary depending on the size of the practice, grassroots marketing efforts include signage, sandwich boards, local bulletin boards, e-mail networks, Craigslist postings, car signage, and staff incentives to bring in clients. Some firms cringe at such tactics; however, they are just temporary.

**Create a Referral Program**—Proactively encourage existing clients to recommend services. Create a sweepstakes or other "rewards" incentives for clients who refer new clients to you. Remember, word of mouth is powerful. And many existing clients may be active on Twitter, Facebook, or even blog.

**Develop a Top 20 Hit List**—Develop a list of the 20 "best prospects" who have considered services over the past year. Personally reach out to these individuals and persuade them to consider services again. Send a letter, then a follow-up e-mail, and finally a phone call to meet. Seek to close a couple of Top 20 clients over a 60-day period.

**Take Full Advantage of Web site Marketing**—The Internet offers a huge opportunity to market a firm's services to

thousands of prospects and educate existing clients about the range of services you provide. If you have a Web site that is well constructed and search engine optimized, it is much easier for the public to find you and is an effective way to attract new business.

**E-mail Newsletter**—Even during the busy tax season, firms want to stay top-of-mind with existing clients and draw in prospects. E-mail newsletters represent an excellent way to drive people to the firm's Web site. With integrated e-mail newsletter solutions readily available, firms can develop a monthly newsletter quickly and easily.

Marketing is key to a successful firm, and should be a priority even during busy season. By incorporating these five proven tips into a sound marketing program, firms will be pleasantly surprised by the results.



**About the Author:**  
Hugh Duffy is co-founder and Chief Marketing Officer for Build Your Firm ([www.buildyourfirm.com](http://www.buildyourfirm.com)), a leading practice development firm

dedicated to the accounting industry. Build Your Firm works with small accounting firms providing accounting marketing, practice management, and Web site development services. He has 25 years of marketing experience and holds an MBA degree in marketing from the University of Rochester. He can be reached at [hugh@buildyourfirm.com](mailto:hugh@buildyourfirm.com) or 1-888-999-9800, ext. 151. ☪

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