

How Should I Spend My Marketing Dollars in

2011?

Clearly online! However, don't forget the tried and true technique of offline marketing. Word of mouth is massively important, which goes hand-in-hand with sales and courtesy training for your whole business. We have many great suggestions along these lines, which are available in our small business resource section of our website. Don't forget to clearly paint your name and the services you offer on your vehicles. Be very discerning about any offline advertising which you're currently using. Much of offline advertising that worked in the past is quickly fading away. Google Trends shows that the search term "Yellow Pages" is rapidly fading away. In many states the phone companies have petitioned to no longer deliver the White Pages. Most of America is online and using it! Today over 200 million people access Facebook with mobile devices (that's 20% of the current user base).

So what marketing should I do to put my business online?

First, you must have a professional and informative website. This is your business card to the world. There is no 2nd chance for a 1st impression! New customers are rapidly seeking information about your business and your website is the first place they will start.

Next, you should develop a comprehensive online marketing program consisting of your website, online advertising, social media, email and search engine optimization (SEO).

Building online presence continues to be key focus for small businesses:

- Company websites seem to be the top technology investment in the next two years, with small businesses either adding new features/functionality to their existing websites or building one from scratch
- The ability to showcase their products and services online to attract new customers is 2nd in the hierarchy of technology investments
- Social media investments rank 3rd in small business investments to be made in the next two years

- University of Maryland study

Online Spending for Small Businesses in 2010

In a November 2010 report by eMarketer, a well known research consolidation company, data from Zoomerang and GrowBiz Media, providers of information and services to help organizations reach the small and midsize businesses, concluded the following:

	eMail	Social Media	Website	Online Advertising	SEO
10%	22%	20%	18%	16%	14%
20%	9%	6%	12%	5%	3%
30%	6%	3%	7%	3%	1%
(1) At least 30%	37%	29%	37%	24%	18%
(2) At least 30%	76%	81%	65%	80%	78%
40%	1%	2%	5%	1%	1%
50%	3%	1%	4%	2%	1%
60%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%
70%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%
80%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
90%	3%	1%	5%	1%	1%
No Spend	52%	63%	43%	69%	78%

Source: eMarketer, Zoomerang and GrowBiz Media

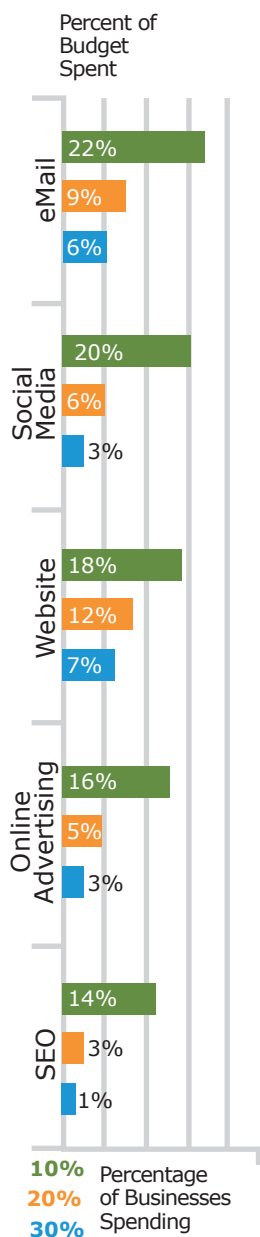
- (1) Percentage of total
- (2) Percentage of the number of companies doing any marketing (does not include no spend category)

Surprisingly, a large percentage of all small to mid-sized business (SMBs) didn't spend anything on the categories below! This leaves a huge opportunity for businesses that spend money on their online presence.

If you're marketing your business online you're a winner in the game!

Websites: In 2010, 37% of small businesses spent up to 30% of their marketing budget on their website. If we subtract the number of companies not paying at all for a website, this number jumps to 76% of companies spending on a website this year. The tilt toward investment in websites continues, as 17% of respondents said they planned to increase budgets for their website in 2011—the highest percentage planning to increase any budget line item.

Online Advertising: In 2010, 29% of small businesses spent up to 30% of their marketing budget on online advertising. There are many ways this could have been spent including banner advertising, paid search, paid inclusion or advertising on local directories, etc. We suggest that you try Google paid search marketing with us. The results can be seen immediately, giving you the ability to immediately determine if this type of advertising is correct for your business. As part of this program, we will build a search engine optimized website for you and all changes are free. Our graphics experts and editors will make sure you have a highly professional website. Just call in and send materials and we'll do the rest for you.



Social Media: Social media is rapidly becoming a mainstay of online marketing. According to a recent study from the University of Maryland, 24% of small businesses did some sort of social marketing in 2009 doubling from 12% in 2008. According to the eMarketer study above, this number has now risen to 37% in 2010 and 13% of this group intends to increase their budget for social media on social marketing. However **50% of small business social media users say it takes more time than expected.** A main concern of SMBs is the amount of time involved in supporting a social media marketing program. Social media takes a long term and focused commitment and continuous communication with your followers. Our experts can assist you in developing your social marketing campaigns and coupled with our automated posting software and an account executive, we can develop an extremely cost-effective program.

Email: In 2010, 37% of small businesses spent up to 30% of their marketing budget on email, a similar amount to those spending on their website. A closer look shows that only 10% of SMBs are aggressively using email. Email is an excellent way to keep in touch with customers and to maintain customer loyalty, but most SMBs have trouble acquiring email addresses from their customers. We suggest that you aggressively seek emails from your customers. You can use these to invite these customers to your Facebook business page. In the long run we expect Facebook postings, and messaging and Tweets will become very competitive to email marketing. But both will survive.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): The least amount of money spent online was for search engine optimization (SEO) and small businesses using SEO don't intend to increase funding in 2011. A great website in combination with social media marketing is more likely to improve organic search results per dollar spent than paying for SEO for a small business. SEO dollars should be carefully spent.

What should I do about my current off-line advertising?

According to the eMarketer study above, most SMB's are still heavily relying on traditional methods including word-of-mouth marketing, 70% said they used in-person networking and 50% use customer referral rewards. We encourage you to evaluate all of your current off-line marketing and advertising. For most small businesses, marketing leads arrive via the telephone. We encourage you to spend time training your people to be effective when speaking to customers, judiciously use your answering machine and if you can't return a call within 5 minutes, seriously consider using an answering service. A recent MIT study found that if a lead is not responded to within 5 minutes, the probability of closing it falls by 22 times.

