

An economic recovery is on the way in 2010. Here are some strategies to best position your company to take advantage of the upturn.



The Recession Is Over Are You Ready for a Rebound?

From Counselor Magazine

The Recession Is Over:

An economic recovery is imminent. Financial analysts are regularly pointing to positive indicators that suggest the worst may be over.

In fact, surveys show that business confidence is increasing for the first time in two years, the real estate market is showing signs of life, recent manufacturing indices prove a resurgence in productivity, and the Dow Jones Industrial Index has surged nearly 50% from its 52-week low back in March.

For those who have struggled in 2009, this is welcome news. However, after everyone breathes a collective sigh of relief, there is work to do. Coming out of the recession, we have a unique opportunity to hit the gas and accelerate our businesses.

During this pregnant pause, business owners need to take the opportunity to give their business a thorough check-up to make sure that they are poised for success. "When the recovery gets underway, it is amazing how you can go from bust to boom in a matter of days or weeks," says Lisa Anderson, head of LMA Consulting Group.

Sara LaForest, co-founder of Kubica & LaForest Consulting, says, "Far too often, small to medium size businesses fail to take an objective and dispassionate view of their operations, or they focus on one component of the business, such as sales. We believe in simple, evidence-based questions to help businesses build awareness of their current state and determine how to best position themselves for future success."

Here are five questions that you should ask yourselves when trying to analyze your business and prepare it for an upturn in orders in 2010:

- 1. What's working and how do you know?**
- 2. What's not working and how do you know?**
- 3. What do you want to achieve, and what do you need to avoid, eliminate and safeguard?**
- 4. What could you be doing to better prepare and best position your company for the ongoing recession and imminent rebound?**
- 5. What are your next best steps to sustain the business now and position it for a rebound?**

How To Sell During A Rebound

Ways to get salespeople up and running quickly when the business turns around.

From Counselor Magazine

For many, finding new business has been tough. However, with signs pointing to a recovery, the purse strings are about to be loosened. When this happens, salespeople need to be ready.

For starters, revisiting dormant clients is a must. Sure, their budgets were frozen. But are they now? "You have to get the piece of the pie when the dollars become available," says Mark Richeimer, director of marketing of Sumar Promotions.

Revisit your database of past prospects as well, says H. David Hennessy, professor of marketing at Babson College. "Identify those that did not buy because of poor timing," he says. "Ask for an appointment to explain how you can help them." He adds that if a buyer you used to work with left a previous workplace, track them down at their new business. Remind them of the products and services you provide.

Also, salespeople need to work their referral network now more than ever. As budgets thaw, buyers will begin asking around. "We are really just trying to dig deeper into the customer base we have. We market more and more to them to try and give them good service," says Rob Howard, vice president of Pinnacle Advertising, "We try and get referrals from them. It's a lot easier than going in cold."

Of course, value has become a rallying cry for



"Do not speak in terms of price," he says, "but the value you and your firm provide."

Drew Stevens

marketers amid the recession. This is a term that distributors should be embracing as well, because even when the spending returns, buyers may remain cautious. Thom Singer, author of Batteries Not Included: 66 Tips to Energize Your Career, says, "In any economy, relationships matter in sales.

In small businesses, relationships matter even more. So, always provide more value than they expect." This can be recommending other people in your network that can help customers or just providing a little extra product or service.

Drew Stevens, author of The Ultimate Business Bible: 12 Strategies for Million Dollar Revenues, believes that businesses

need to be selling themselves on the value they provide. "Do not speak in terms of price," he says, "but the value you and your firm provide."

But, perhaps the most important thing a salesperson can do is listen. "If you want to sell better, just shut up," says Steve Fretzin, president of Sales Results Inc. "It's not just about you convincing a potential client that you are right for them. You need to let them talk as much as possible so you can learn about their weaknesses and, in turn, tailor your approach to fit their specific needs."

Singer agrees. "Ask questions," he says. "Be a good listener and let your prospects share their thoughts with you."



Whether it is an internal web application or an ecommerce site, we can develop a solution customized for your business.

Ramp Up Online Marketing Efforts

From Counselor Magazine

Here are five ways for your business to capitalize on expanding business in 2010 by embracing online marketing strategies.

- 1 Get on the social networks...LinkedIn and Twitter. It's free. You can hook up with old friends and clients, as well as find new employees.
- 2 Start a blog. Blogging software is easy to come by and easy to use. Find a topic that will resonate with your audience and start posting. Also, make sure to leave comments on other blogs so you can create a voice for yourself in online communities. Create a profile on Facebook.

3 Send out an e-newsletter. With clients and prospects, e-mail newsletters should provide some value to their businesses. Provide case studies, product ideas and promotional campaign concepts that they can use in their own marketing efforts. Give advice – not a hard sell. A great way to keep in touch!

4 Create an online video or podcast. Again, the technology is available to create simple audio and video. Choose a subject like green marketing, product safety or another hot topic and post your content on your site, YouTube, Google video and iTunes.

5 Write a press release. If you have some news, put a spotlight on it by writing a press release and posting it to your site. Sign up for Google Alerts to learn more about what's going on in the industry (and with your competition). Then, target your press release to the reporters who penned the related articles.



A few of the hot items that are guaranteed to pique your curiosity and get a reaction from your prospects and clients.



Product Showcase First Quarter Hits

Stay Clean:

It seems cell phone technology get better all the time. And yet, even the best view screens still get smudges on them. What's the solution? Screen cleaner. Made with an adhesive back, it fits onto the reverse side of any cell phone, MP3 player or digital camera and can be customized with a logo.

Be Secure

Life can be filled with little annoyances. There's the leaky faucet, the kid's music and the towel that just won't stay on your body. Here's a solution to one of those frustrations. This thin, but sturdy, clip securely keeps towels in place and can be used at the gym, the beach, the pool and in your own bathroom.

Tight Squeeze

According to surveys, the most stressful jobs are held by teachers, police officers, nurses and salespeople. If you're feeling a bit overwhelmed, take a cruise, go for a long walk or get a massage. If those ideas don't work, just squeeze this stress ball. Available in several bright colors with a satin pearl finish.

Get Carded

Gift cards have quickly become one of the most popular giveaways in America today. Forecasters now expect the gift card market to eclipse \$52 billion in the next three years. If you're missing out, join the fun with this gift card, in any denomination, that can be used anywhere VISA is accepted.