Winning Wore Clients

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WINNING MORE CLIENTS

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WINNING MORE CLIENTS

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Information Products When Building a Brand

Once you become a freelancer or service provider, it is important to consider how you can stand out from the crowd. One of the best ways to do this is to create information products in order to build your brand.

Branding Made Easy

With brand building, you can brand either your company name, or your own personal name - like Oprah or Emeril. This will depend on how happy you are being in the public spotlight, and how much of an expert you wish to be in your field.

The important thing is that you present a consistent impression of quality and professionalism across everything that you do. This includes your website and anything you may sell at it, including information products.

Information Products

Information products are one of the most popular items selling online. Online education is booming, both formal and informal. People are always interested in learning more about things that can improve their lives and solve their main problems. If you can offer the types of solutions that people in your niche or industry really need, then you should have no trouble finding clients for your business.

What Kind of Information Products Should You Sell?

There are a number of information products that sell well online.

1. Ebooks

The easiest type of information product to create and sell is an eBook. You can create one in Microsoft

Word, add some images, and then upload it to the Amazon Kindle program. Amazon will convert the book for free and then make it available to their customers once you decide to publish the book.

When you are brainstorming topics for your eBook, start with the title. It should offer a value proposition such as "How to ."

Next, you will need an attractive cover because people really do you judge a book by it. You can connect with excellent artists at Fiverr.com and get a professional-looking cover at an affordable price.

Finally, you'll need is marketing material for your book. Write your back of the book copy, or marketing blurb, in a way that speaks to your target audience. Use keywords and phrases and mention some of the key things they will learn if they buy the book.

2. Paperback Books

Once you have set up a digital copy online, Amazon allows you to create a paperback version through their CreateSpace.com print on demand publishing unit. You would use the same Word document, with page numbers added, and what is termed a cover flat. The flat is the front cover, spine, and back cover of the book laid out one after the other, with the spine the correct size of the thickness of the paperback book. You can easily find someone on Fiverr.com who is able to do this according to your specifications.

3. ECourses

Sites like Udemy.com pair up those who have a topic to teach with those who wish to learn. You can make good money and raise your profile in your niche.

4. Multimedia Courses

Some content sellers like to create multimedia courses with an eBook, audio, video, handouts and more. It does take time, but it also adds to your prestige and these products will command a much higher price tag than a simple eBook.

5. Templates and Other Information Packs

Templates, cheat sheets, spreadsheets with formulas and more can all help your target audience work better, faster and smarter.

Branding

When creating any information product, be sure to put your logo and URL on it. Try to make everything look consistent in terms of color, fonts and style. In this way, you will soon create an entire product line that represents your brand.

If you are not already offering information products in conjunction with your business, begin brainstorming what your audience really needs and start planning your first product.

Maintaining a Relationship with Past and Current Clients

Once you have started working as a freelancer or service provider, it is important to maintain a list of contacts and clients in order to nurture those relationships and hopefully get a steady stream of work from them.

Potential Clients

New projects are great because they offer you the chance to work with new people. However, don't underestimate the value of current and also past clients who might be willing to offer you regular projects that will keep your business ticking over.

Marketing yourself can take up a lot of time. So can applying for new jobs at freelance marketplace websites and so on. It can also be really frustrating if you do your best to write wonderful proposals but are not getting any work.

Even if you do get gigs, they might only last for short amount of time, meaning that you still have to continue looking for new jobs while you are working on your current jobs. This soon becomes a tricky juggling act unless you're very organized.

A Happy Customer Is Your Best Marketer

A lot of business owners make the mistake of focusing on potential clients so much that they neglect their current and past clients. This can be a big mistake. Past clients who are happy are your best resources for word-of-mouth marketing and recommendations. Don't feel shy about asking them for a testimonial or reference in relation to your work.

Current Clients

In terms of current clients, you need to impress them with how professional and efficient you are. Producing your best work even under tight deadlines is what being a good freelancer or service provider is all about. Communicate clearly, be friendly but respectful, and you could end up with regular clients who really appreciate what you do.

Past Clients

The Pareto principle says that 80% of your business will come from 20% of your customers. It is easier to convince someone of your value when they have already used your services (if you have done a good job), than to try to convince total strangers to give you a try.

Your Portfolio

When working with so many clients, it can be easy to forget to update your portfolio to show off your best work, but that will be exactly what prospective clients want to see. At your portfolio site, you should have all you contact information and links to your best examples of the work that you provide - such as articles, website design and so forth. Each item should have a title, and a hyperlink to that item so they can see all you have to offer. Put this URL on all your marketing material.

Email Marketing

One of the easiest ways to keep in touch with past, present and future clients is to maintain email marketing lists. A service like AWeber.com allows you to create up to 1000 lists in your account, so you should have no trouble being able to create three separate lists to nurture these different relationships.

For past and current clients, you could send out a newsletter once a month with some valuable nicherelated content and any new services you might have added to your business. Link to your portfolio.

Treat them like they are special (which of course they are), and consider offering them discounts and

coupons, or special service packages that bundle your offerings. For example, you might be a virtual assistant who specializes in WordPress. Consider offering niche-related content for their site as well as your uploading and scheduling work.

For prospective customers, get them on your list first by offering them a useful free item related to your niche. It could be a checklist, cheat sheet or other item that shows you are something of an expert, and can help clients work smarter, not harder. Then send them more details about the services you provide.

By nurturing your current and past clients as well as looking for new ones, you will get more business with less effort.

High Quality Clients: Mistakes to Look Out For

There are a number of common mistakes freelancers and service providers make when they are trying

to attract high-quality clients. Avoiding these mistakes can mean the difference between struggling or

running your business smoothly, with a steady stream of clients willing to pay you what you are worth.

Not Distinguishing between Price and Value

A lot of vendors worry about price, and are willing to sell their services for less than their competition.

The trouble is that you can get locked into the cheaper price, and find it difficult to raise it in the future.

In addition, the lower price might attract only bargain-basement clients, rather than quality ones you

could have a long-term relationship with. Top business people might actually dismiss you for being too

cheap.

Then there is a question of value. Value and price are not the same. Your value will be in how good you

are with your work, how reliable you are, and how well you are able to stick to your deadlines. Your

value is also determined by your experience. If you are a real pro at WordPress, for example, then you

are more valuable than a person charging the same amount who isn't, because you are bringing your

knowledge and experience to every project.

Not Being Clear about What You Offer

Make a list of everything that you are good at that you could offer to your clients. Then narrow it down

to things that you enjoy and can do quickly. Next, decide how closely related they are to each other. Can

you offer a number of services that cover many of the basics that busy business owners would find it

useful to hand over to others? They might include customer service, email marketing, uploading content

to a blog, and so on.

For example, if you are able to do email marketing and you also have a health background, this might be worth mentioning in some cases, but not in others. A person interested in finance, for example, might not think you were the right person for them.

Not Choosing a Niche

Service providers who choose a particular niche to work in often find that it is easier to get work, because they start to build up a reputation as an expert in that niche. The top three niches are health, finance and self-help.

Not Having a Well-Constructed Portfolio

Your portfolio should give examples of each of the services you wish to offer, if at all possible. Give items a title, link to them, and if there are many samples, group them according to the category of services being offered.

Giving Away Too Much for Free to Make the Sale

It is great to want to prove that you are a talented worker who can deliver the goods, but time is money, and so is the work you do. A lot of new service providers give away far too much in terms of free information and their time. Free samples are not really needed - you have your portfolio to show what you can do.

You should also avoid long consultation calls. In an effort to be helpful and prove you are the right person for the job, you would probably give away far more information than you should. Then they really have no reason to hire you, because you have already told them what to do.

Not Marketing Yourself Enough

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Not Marketing Yourself in the Right Places

Determine where your high-end prospective customers are likely to spend most of their time. Then come up with marketing material that speaks to their needs, offering real solutions at an affordable price.

Not Asking Happy Customers for Referrals

Word-of-mouth marketing is key to a successful business. Happy customers spreading the word about how reliable and professional you are can make all the difference between a full calendar of regular assignments, and you having to chase all over trying to get gigs.

Keeping Interest Alive When Discussing Your Business

A lot of freelancers and service providers make the mistake of focusing on themselves rather than on their clients' needs. They also do not make it clear what value they provide. For example, they might tell everyone they work as a virtual assistant, but not make it clear exactly which top services they provide. Writing intriguing marketing copy in relation to your services can help you get more clients, and it is easier than you think.

Who Will Hire You?

Many companies are now hiring freelancers in order to do particular tasks which are either too tedious for them to wish to bother with, or which they don't have the staff to cover. This being the case, there are many opportunities for virtual assistants and other service providers to work on a range of special projects, or get a steady stream of clients they can help every day.

A good virtual assistant can be worth their weight in gold to a busy executive, because them taking care of the many administrative tasks related to running a successful business frees the executive up to focus on business development, product development, and other important tasks that will make them more money.

Your Value as a Service Provider

You need to make your value proposition clear from the outset when you are writing your description of your services, but you can do so in an intriguing way. Some virtual assistants are generalists who will do just about any business-related tasks just as if they were a personal assistant working full time in an office. Others specialize in particular areas or computer programs.

One of the most popular specialties for service providers is WordPress, the number one blogging software in the world. Many business owners use it to create their websites. Once they have a website,

they need to keep it up to date. Virtual assistants who can upload content, schedule it, optimize it for search engines and so on, will command a higher salary than a generalist.

Be Solutions Oriented

When you are writing your copy, intrigue your audience by painting a picture of how great life can be if they hire you. Start by showing that you understand their pain points; that is, the things that they find most difficult in their business, which might be holding them back from the success they deserve.

By showing you understand their pain points, you are offering a solution to those problems through the services that you provide. What would their life be like if they didn't have to spend so much time working on WordPress? How much more time would they have to grow their business if you took over their email marketing campaigns?

Your Portfolio Should Support Your Assertions

It's relatively easy to write intriguing copy, but you also have to convince them that you can deliver. The work you include in your portfolio should show exactly the kind of work you are able to do, which you are enticing them with in your marketing materials.

If you've been struggling to get new clients, rewrite your marketing materials to make them more intriguing and compelling, and you should soon see clients who are willing to give you the opportunity to work for them on some exciting projects.

Building Up Your Referral System

Running a service business can be a great chance to earn money doing something you love while helping

others. The trouble is that many small business owners are a bit shy about marketing themselves

effectively. One way to combat this is to enlist the help of others who believe in you, and are therefore

willing to refer you to others.

Word-of-Mouth Marketing

Recent studies have shown that word-of-mouth marketing is one of the most powerful methods for

growing a business. People are much more likely to accept a recommendation from someone on their

social network than from any marketing material they might see from a company. This being the case, it

is important to make sure you have happy customers, and cultivate them as a referral system so you can

get steady work regularly without having to spend a lot of time chasing after it.

Choose the Right People

Your first step is to target the kind of clients you would like more of. Some can be wonderful to work

with, pay you on time, and really value your efforts. Others are less pleasant to work with, and you

would not really want more like them.

They should obviously be a best fit for your niche or industry as well - someone who really understands

what you do and would therefore be willing to point others in your direction because they know how

good you are.

Let People Know You Are Looking

You may not be on the lookout for new work all the time, but when you are, let them know. Stay in touch with them via your email marketing service. Offer a special discount code for them, and anyone they refer, to help drum up more business.

Support Them with the Right Information

Create a page that tells those who wish to refer you exactly what they need to know. Be sure it has a link to your portfolio.

Think about Complimentary Niches

Try to work with other people in your industry who do similar things to you, but are not direct competitors. Also consider niches that might be a good fit. If you are already working in health, for example, fitness, weight training, weight loss and so on might all be good areas to expand into. Impress your clients and they will be happy to tell others about you.

Consider Offering Incentives

This can be a bit tricky, because it is really like a bribe and you need to administer the program to make sure everyone gets what they are entitled to. However, it can be a great way to get more referrals. Think discounts, one free month of service, an upgrade, and so on. Remember, 80% of your business will come from 20% of your customers, so keep your existing ones happy.

Ask for Referrals at the Right Time

Some business owners make the mistake of asking for a referral as soon as the new client has signed up. The trouble is, how do they know whether they like you or not? Ask for referrals once a project has been completed. Also ask in your regular email newsletter to clients.

Another good time to ask would be at the end of a survey in which you remind them of all the services

you currently offer, and then ask them what other services they would find useful if you were to add

them to your business.

It's easier than you may think to get good referrals, and it is a great way to get more business with

minimum effort.

Using Advertisement to Draw in Quality Clients

Once you have started your own service business, you will need a continual stream of prospective

clients willing to give you a try, and happy clients willing to give you word-of-mouth marketing - for

example, on the social networks. One way to drum up business is to advertise. However, since ads cost

money, you need to develop a strategy that will give you the most bang for your budget.

Determine Your Specialty

Freelancers and service providers usually do best when they specialize in a particular area, such as

finance or self-help. Decide which niche or industry best suits your talents and interests. Create a

portfolio that showcases the work you have done in these areas.

Determine Your Services

What do business owners in that niche or industry need most? Make a list of services you can perform

well that will take the burden off busy executives.

Identify Your Target Audience

Who is most likely to buy from you? Where do they spend their time? How old are they? What are their interests? By creating a profile of your ideal customer, you can start to focus your ads with a greater accuracy.

Determine Which Ad Networks and Formats Will Work Best for You

A lot of business owners run ads through Google AdWords in an effort to compete in the search engines in relation to certain keywords. This is one way to drive traffic with paid ads, but the Google system can be complicated to learn and expensive to compete in. Their "quality score" is a mystery to most users, but it is one of the main determinants as to whether your ad will ever even run, and what placement it will get if it actually does.

Social media sites now have a range of advertising opportunities that are generally easier to set up than Google AdWords, and are better targeted too. They also tend not to have lots of mysterious rules. This means more visibility and clicks, for less money.

Facebook and Instagram will allow you to run ads with an image. Come up with a great headline and a link to your Facebook or Instagram account page, and you will get a good deal of traffic because you are not sending them off site. Make sure your home page has lots of interesting information about you. Include a link to your portfolio, and on your portfolio, details about your services. Linking straight to your service page is not a good idea in this case.

Twitter has a similar set of ad choices to Facebook, allowing you to promote one single post, or your entire account in order to get more followers. The best thing about Facebook, Instagram and Twitter is that you can be a great deal more precise about who you want to target. If you wish to find an audience of men or women 35 to 45 who are interested in computers, for example, all you have to do is set those parameters and your ad will show only to those people.

LinkedIn also has opportunities for professionals to connect with their target audience. Again, you need to create an eye-catching ad and send them to a page that offers them useful information, not just a sales pitch.

The LinkedIn Pro service will also allow you to see jobs related to keywords you choose, but you need to be quick. They only accept five quotes for each assignment, and most assignments listings tend to expire within 24 hours. Showing them your portfolio, rather than your rate card, is the best way to generate more interest in your services.

Ads cost money, but the right ad can make a big difference to the number of clients you get. Find out as much as you can about the most popular social network(s) for clients in your niche, and focus your advertising on that to start with.

Attracting High Quality Clients with Pricing Strategies

Once you start running your own freelance or service business, it is a good idea to learn more about what is termed psychological pricing in order to attract the right type of clients. You might be tempted to start off low just to get some business, but this might backfire in terms of you getting nothing but "bargain basement clients". It might also mean you get quite a few regular clients, but you end up locked into a low price for your services and will have a hard time justifying an increase.

Knowing What You and Your Time Are Worth

Pricing is the core element of any business. There are numerous techniques to set prices, but your starting point should be what your time and expertise are worth. You don't want to sell your services too cheaply because you might be seen as inferior to other vendors. If you are going to price yourself higher, then you need to show a clear reason why you are worth the money. This can help you build brand, and brand loyalty.

Your final price should include all total costs involved in doing the work. Keep a time sheet and all receipts involved in each project.

The Rule of 7 or 9

Prices with 7s or 9s in them are usually more attractive than those with other numbers, so try to work them into your rate card.

Bundling

You will probably offer a range of services. Consider bundling for a slightly lower price, but higher perceived value. This can bring up the amount each customer spends as well.

Monthly Packages

In some cases, you might consider offering particular services for one monthly fee. For example, if you are uploading content to a WordPress site every day, it might not make sense to charge by the hour, but rather through a package deal that sets the terms of the work up front.

Silver, Gold and Platinum Packages

You can also offer tiered packages. The silver would be basic services, and then you would add on as you create ever more exclusive packages full of features. Just keep in mind how much you charge for each individually and what sorts of limits you can set for the packages.

Repeat Customers

You need to set limits for the packages because your business will only thrive if you have repeat customers rehiring you regularly.

Value Adds

Some service providers offer additional value to their customers in the form of a special website, portal or membership site with useful information. It is a good place to upload contracts, descriptions of your services and other items they will need to know when working with you. You can also offer original content, niche-related information and news, and so on.

Other useful items include templates, cheat sheets, planners, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and similar items that do not cost a lot or take a lot of time to create, but which can set you apart from the competition and keep top clients eager to come back for more.

Parallel Offerings

If you are struggling to get customers, carefully analyze what others providing the same service are offering, then try to go at least one better. You can be sure the skills are in demand and you are marketing yourself as at least equal to if not better than your competition.

Go High in Order to Get What You Want

If you want to sell your services at \$27 per hour, start at \$57 and then strike through the price to make it \$27. Clients will feel like they are getting a great bargain.

It can be difficult not to undersell yourself, especially if you are just starting out. Use these ideas to ensure you get paid what you deserve.

Attracting High Quality Clients with Self Promotion

One of the fastest ways to grow sales and profits in your freelance or service business is to go after highend clients. They can afford to buy from you more often, and at higher prices. Having a regular client list of happy customers who come to you over and over again and pay you regularly, is the best way to run a successful service business.

But how can you connect with these high-quality clients? Here are several suggestions.

1. Make a List of All the Services You Can Offer

Choose the ones you do best, and ones that you can demonstrate through your portfolio, linking to good examples of that type of work.

2. Write a Profile of the Kinds of People Who Would Be Interested in Hiring You

Don't make the mistake of saying "everyone" will want your services, because you will end up selling to no one. Instead, be precise about who you want to work with. For example, you might say:

"Small business owners in X niche or industry who can afford \$Y per month in order for me to take over all the work involved with Z task. They are happy working virtually and will appreciate my expertise in reference to A, B and C software/programs."

3. Make a List of Their Main Pain Points

What do these people have the most trouble with? How can your services help? What can they afford to have you do this work?

4. What Is Your Competition Offering?

Search for other vendors offering similar services. Can you offer the same, or even more? Price yourself competitively based on your research.

5. Create a Great Portfolio Site

Your portfolio should contain examples of each service you wish to offer. Give each a name and hyperlink to it. If you offer a range of services, put the links into categories as well - such as WordPress administration, content creation, and so on.

6. Spend Time Where Your Target Audience Does

Once you have created your ideal customer profile and portfolio, and have identified their pain points, it is time to look online for your target audience. What sites do they spend time at? Which groups do they belong to?

7. Make the Most of Social Media

Your social media posts should show you are a problem solver who gets things done. Make the most of your free postings to convey the impression that you are reliable and able to deliver the services you offer in a timely and professional manner.

Run Facebook and Twitter ads that target exactly the kind of client you are looking for. These ad networks are so targeted, you will spend a fraction of what Google AdWords would charge, and get better prospects to market to.

Make the most of LinkedIn too. Create a great profile that highlights the services you can provide. Use the professional services feature to find gigs that match your skills set.

8. Ask for Reviews and Testimonials

Once you have happy and paying clients, be sure to ask for reviews and testimonials to help market your services as a reliable worker who meets their deadlines.

9. Make the Most of Email Marketing

Create three lists of clients: prospects, current clients, and past clients. For prospects, you need to get them on the list to start with so you can begin to market to them regularly. A good way to get them to subscribe would be to offer them something of value related to your niche, such as an eBook, case study and so on.

For current clients, mail out to them a couple of times a month with useful content and anything new related to your company.

With past clients, consider sending out a newsletter, and special offers to get them to come back and use your services again.

Use these nine ideas to get the high-end clients you want from your niche.

Strategies for Sharing Intriguing Content

Once you have your own website or blog, it can be very difficult to come up with fresh content to keep

your readership happy. However, there are a number of techniques that can help you maintain an up-

to-date and vibrant online presence so that your target audience will keep coming back for more.

Know Your Niche

If you are working as a freelancer or service provider, chances are you have specialized in a particular

area, also referred to as a niche or topic. Some of the most popular topics for content online include

health, finance, and self-help.

No matter which niche you are working in, you need to show what you know in your field or industry by

producing great content that demonstrates your expertise. However, it can be really tough to write from

scratch all the time and still run your business successfully.

Fortunately there are a number of shortcuts to getting great content. One of them is to share

interesting, relevant and valuable content with your target audience through what is known as content

curation.

What Is Content Curation?

Content curation is a means of sharing great content at your website without having to write it from

scratch yourself. There are automated services that you can plug into your site, such as Taboola.com or

Outbrain.com, which will post interesting articles on your site in the location of your choice - usually

under content you have published. If you've ever visited The Weather Channel or popular entertainment

sites, chances are you have seen this form of content curation.

Do-It-Yourself Content Curation

Taboola and Outbrain are easy to use and can become an additional stream of income for your website,

but if you want to impress the people in your niche, sharing the latest news with them is a sure way to

impress.

Curating yourself will take some time, but if you are a smart business owner, you are probably already

reading a number of articles per day that are related to your area of interest. You probably have several

favorite blogs, news sites, and niche-related sites you visit regularly. Chances are your busy audience

might not have seen some of this content, so why not share?

Think Like an Editor

When you are planning content for your site, make a list of the most important topics that should be

covered. Then add newsworthy items. There's a lot of content being produced by many different

websites that can cover these topics. Share it in order to keep your audience well-informed.

Aim for the top writers and sites in your niche or industry. By sharing this type of content, you are

showing that you are well read in your field.

Add Value to Your Curated Content

Some people just put up a link to the content and leave it at that. However, the best way to curate is to

add value to the content by discussing it briefly. For example, a 100-word introduction to the content

and link, and why you believe it to be important, also helps to demonstrate your expertise. For longer

articles, you might create a summary of what you feel are the main takeaway messages contained

within it.

This will help your audience find the kind of information they need, and will also impress them with how

much you know.

If you've been struggling to "feed the beast" and keep your website or blog going with fresh, interesting content, consider sharing content that you love with your target audience, and see how much your traffic will improve.

Reaching Out to Clients Directly

A lot of freelancers and service providers market in broad strokes, hoping to catch the attention of a large number of people and praying that several of them will be motivated enough to actually give their services a try.

However, in order to get clients, you usually have to answer their unspoken question, "What's in it for me?" This might require more direct input, helping you forge connections with potential clients.

Through developing a relationship with them, they are much more likely to be willing to give you a try. If they try you and like you, this could be the beginning of their becoming loyal to your brand.

There are a number of ways to use direct contact to connect with prospective customers. Here are a few suggestions.

Your Customer Service Box

Pay attention to the people who contact you directly, treating every one of them like a prospect. Be polite and courteous. Set up a reminder for yourself, or your assistant, to contact them again in a week to see if they have any further questions. This kind of follow-up will stand out in their mind.

Face to Face

Carry business cards with you everywhere. Take business cards from those you meet as well. Write notes on the back as to what your follow-up steps should be. Sticky notes and a pen will also work to remind you of the person's contact details and the information you promised to send, such as a special cheat sheet or handout. Always position yourself as a problem solver.

You can meet prospects anywhere, including standing in line for coffee, so pay attention to your appearance even if you work from home and are just popping out for a few minutes to grab a latte. If you live in a large city, there are often industry-related networking events. The local Chamber of Commerce will also usually have a calendar of live events. They are always looking for interesting speakers as well, so if you have a hot topic within your niche, don't be afraid to offer your time. You'll get plenty of free publicity in exchange.

Trade shows and conferences are ideal places to meet clients and mingle with important people in your niche or industry. Even getting just a small booth gives you (and your staff) the chance to get walk-by traffic and increase your visibility. Remember, people do business with people they like, so be personable and sincere.

On the Phone

Some people still prefer the old-fashioned telephone. If they leave a message, be sure to phone them back in a timely manner.

Social Media

Pay attention to the people who like, comment and share regularly. If they are connected with you, you should be able to contact them via Messenger or other direct means of contact to say you've noticed them, appreciate them following you, and would like to know if you can help them in some way.

Email Marketing

Nurture your email marketing lists by sending out useful newsletters once a month, with special offers and the latest news - such as new services you are offering. Of course, you have to get them on the list first, so be sure to offer a free eCourse or eBook that helps solve a common problem in your niche. When you connect with people on social media, you can also give them the landing page for the free item and invite them to check it out.

Personalize your approach to getting new clients using these ideas, and you will find more people who
will be willing to give you a try.
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