

Community Engagement Tactics

For small businesses in rural areas

Tina Martin - DSS Lethbridge

Why it matters?

Networking is important for small businesses in rural areas, they rely on word of mouth and building a reputation within their community to grow more often than not.

Let's look at 5 main ways to do that.

Provide Education and Resources

- Webinars
- How-To Guides
- Videos
- Podcasts
- Workshops
- Classes
- Presentation
- Speak at Events

When creating educational content, make sure to focus on topics relevant to your business, your audience and that it is something that can add value to their lives. Providing educational content will establish you as an expert and it builds trust with those around you.



Partner With Other Businesses

- Joint Promotions
- Cross-Refer Clients
- Co-Host Events
- Offer Package Deals (Ex: Hair + Nails, Resto + Movies, Pet Store + Rescue)
- Exchange Business Cards Displays

This is a great way to expand your customer base. Make sure you are partnering with a business that aligns with yours and your niche. You want to attract people already interested in the space you are in.



Host & Attend Local Events

- Fairs
- Festivals
- Charity Events

- Markets
- Sports Events

This is a great way to bring awareness to your community that your business exists in the community. Rural community have a strong sense of community and pride, getting out there and supporting your neighbors speaks volumes to the value you provide.

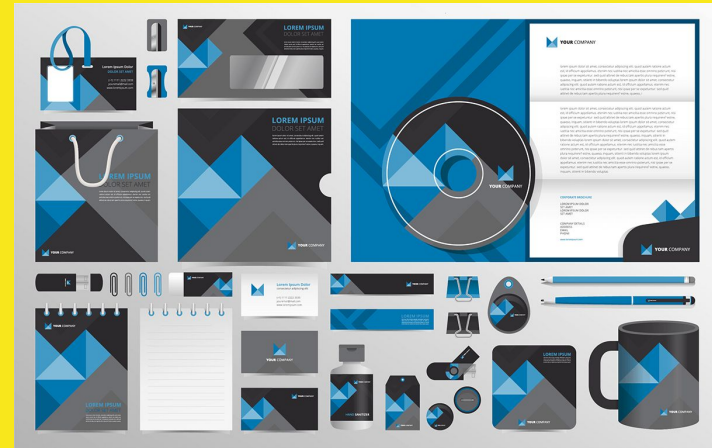


Print Marketing

- Town Guides
- Tourism Brochures
- Local Business Listings
- Newspaper ads

- Direct Mail
- Community Boards
- Business Cards
- Branded Merch

Many rural areas have limited internet access, which can make digital marketing strategies less effective. In these areas, print marketing can be a more reliable way to reach potential customers.



Volunteering and Sponsoring

- Support Schools
- Community Projects
- Help Organizations (Food Bank, Local Shelter)
- Sponsor Hockey Team

Helping and supporting your community will go a long way in building a positive reputation as a positive member of the community. It shows you care about those around you by giving back to them.

- Get Involved in Community Events (Parades)



Two Examples

A dog walking service business teamed up with the local photographer, a dog treat business and the coffee shop to host a charity event for the local animal shelter.

The dog walking business received recognition for putting everything together and in turn received positive reviews that attracted new clients.

The photographer offered pet portraits for only \$10, which was being donated to the rescue. They also received recognition and a recurring client.

The dog treat business gave away samples, since this was a retired person doing this out of their home, not many people knew they even existed before the event.

The rescue was named a lot during the event and the promotion of it, garnered attention and, a few people adopted a new pet

A photographer took images of the local berry farm and tagged the farm on social media.

The farm saw and shared the images.

A local wedding planner saw the images and booked a wedding at the farm.

The town's office saw the images and contacted the photographer about being in the local tourism brochure.

Got Questions?

Email me:

pixelsbytina@gmail.com

DSS Lethbridge
