



How to Undercut Google's Pay-to-Play Model and Advertise on a Budget

It's genuinely depressing to think about the totality of words we've wasted whining about Google's pay-to-play model.

Not because we regret the time spent educating our readers, but because we wish this weren't the reality of digital marketing in 2020. Especially during a crippling pandemic.

And we know this situation is just as depressing for all of the small, local service providers out there who feel like they don't have a fighting chance.

But we're done with despair. It won't do anything to combat Google's nefarious greed.

That's why, today, we're showing all you small business owners how to fight back.

In this blog post, we've compiled some of our best tips to market yourself online without handing all of your hard-earned money to Google's coffers.

READ MORE: [How Google's Greed Is Slashing Your Website Traffic](#)

Use Social Media Ads

Whether it's Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Yelp, or Twitter, your audience's favorite social platform is the perfect place to advertise your business.

In fact, designing a quick ad and paying for clicks or impressions on one of these platforms will be much cheaper and potentially more cost-effective than Google Ads in terms of ROI. Just a small investment in time and money could pay off big.

After all, the endless social media scroll is how most people are exercising their thumbs these days. Might as well take advantage of it!

Use Word of Mouth

We know, we know: Nobody likes talking in person anymore!

Thing is, that's not entirely true. Sure, people consistently prefer texting over calling on the phone, but that doesn't mean *everything* takes place virtually. People talk!

Especially people who are close friends and family. In casual conversation, they're likely to recommend contractors and service providers whom they had a good experience with. So, there's no harm in giving your customers a little nudge to spread the word!

However, there is such a thing as *virtual* word-of-mouth, too. For example, you can use platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and NextDoor to join local groups, stay up to date on community events, and even network with other small business owners.

There are so many ways to get your name out there organically. Think outside the box!

Use Offline Materials

This might sound odd coming from a digital marketing team in 2020, but we're big proponents of including offline materials in your overall marketing strategy. Such materials include:

- Flyers
- Brochures
- Business cards
- Direct mail
- Branded calendars, pens, coasters, tote bags, etc.

With memorable marketing materials, unique branding (including logos and signage), personal referrals, and face-to-face networking in your community, you can supplement your online efforts and really stamp out a place for your business on the local scene.

Keep Fighting!

It's easy to feel discouraged when you realize how much the Google game is rigged—but, frankly, that's not productive. Instead, stay in the ring and keep swinging. There are so many other avenues you can take to market yourself that don't involve draining your bank account straight into Google's gullet.

And if you need any assistance with creating a Facebook ad or designing a business logo, don't hesitate to contact us! There's nothing Prospect Genius loves more than helping small businesses stick it to the big guy.