



How to not mess up your business networking follow up

Business networking and attending events should definitely be a line on your monthly marketing activity plan. It's an essential part of brand awareness.

In other words, if you pick your event well, it's a golden opportunity to put yourself in front of like-minded people, potential collaborators and maybe even a customer. Here's my top 6 tips for getting your event follow up right:

<p>1. Don't 'not' follow up</p>	<p>Even if you feel no one is worth following up, you could be missing an opportunity for a conversation, or to raise some awareness of you and your brand. The very least you can do is a social hello on Twitter or LinkedIn for example, to keep the conversation going and to remind them of you (and therefore your brand, your product and your service).</p> <p>If you really think no one was worth following up, ask yourself why. Were you perhaps at the wrong kind of event? Make sure you have an objective for attending an event. If it's to meet a particular type of person (a single audience), then research that audience and only go to the events where they hang out. Be where they are, and be ready to converse.</p>
<p>2. Don't use boring impersonal cut & paste copy</p>	<p>If you've struck up a conversation while networking (which let's face it is why you are there), you've already broken the ice and are getting to know someone. Use what you've talked about in your follow up, not some pre-written copy and paste copy that looks like it's straight off a template. It will stand out a mile and look like you just can't be bothered, or worse, didn't listen to a word they said.</p>
<p>3. Don't assume they want your newsletter</p>	<p>Tailor your follow up for them. But don't hard sell – just be friendly and helpful. This is also your moment to reiterate your elevator pitch and reinforce your key marketing messages.</p>

<p>4. Don't spam them</p>	<p>Even if you think they are not 'buyer-material', think who they might know who might benefit from your services, and who they might influence. A referral for you maybe?</p>
<p>5. Don't pester them</p>	<p>Don't overload them, and don't bombard them. Get your timing right with sending follow up or marketing material. Get it right and they will look forward to your content, not dread it.</p>
<p>6. Don't forget them</p>	<p>So let's assume you've attended the right kind of event, put yourself in front of the right kind of people, and said the right kind of things when you've met them. You've now got their business card and you've got their permission to keep in touch.</p> <p>Now, all you have to do is follow-through – make sure you have something to send them and regularly get something relevant and interesting to them. They've said yes, so again, keep the conversation going.</p>

In summary

In the Watertight Marketing framework that I am accredited to work with, networking fits-in with a couple steps of the customer journey – awareness, interest, and even loyalty. So ensure you have a solid follow up procedure and regular communications plan filled with the right kind of content for each type of audience you have.

And don't forget, networking doesn't necessarily mean attending a breakfast networking event. You can network at trade events, conferences whether you are attending, exhibiting or even speaking. And how about running your own events – like the Watertight Marketing Lunch & Learn sessions for book owners.



About Cheryl: With experience in branding, design and advertising, Cheryl helps growing businesses stop wasting money on marketing. She's loves a challenge and sees her role as simply giving clients good advice. She's a Chartered Marketer and accredited to work with the methodology of the award-winning small business marketing book Watertight Marketing (www.watertightmarketing.com).