

BRAND STRATEGY

DIY MARKETING: HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCH YOUR BRAND WITH NO MONEY, NO AGENCY, AND NO EXPERTISE

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I've owned my own business. I've helped launch and manage two successful dot-coms (Netflix and CNET). And I currently work for HP (which is ranked #9 in the most recent Fortune 500 listing). So I've seen my share of marketing and brand-building efforts — both good and bad.

Here's one marketing secret I want to share: You don't need a dime in your marketing budget to successfully launch and build your brand. You simply need the right resources, a bit of time and the commitment to learn, improve, and share.

Free DIY Marketing Resources

The adoption and acceptance of social media is very good news for small business owners. The quality of marketing expertise that's available via blogs, communities and online conversations is staggering and could cost you thousands of dollars were you to actually pay for it out of pocket (I did when I had a business). But why would you, if you can get the same expertise for free (or at incredibly affordable rates)?

Your brand's "story" (the mission statement, logo, brochure, web site) is often the reason

customers decide to spend money with you. Start building the brand story for your business by checking out these free resources:

1. **Ask an Expert:** Top small business marketing experts such as Guy Kawasaki, Anita Campbell of Small Business Trends, and Duct Tape Marketing's John Jantsch share their expertise, strategy and tips on the web to help you develop and evolve the compelling story of your business . Often, you'll find them on free webinars, too. But take it one step further and reach out directly. These experts love to receive comments, questions and participate in conversations.
2. **HP Creative Studio:**



This 2009 Webby-Award winning site offers dozens of free, professionally designed templates that you can download, customize, and print for your business within minutes, including:
Business cards and Business Identity Kits

- * Stationery and Envelopes
- * Brochures and Business Forms
- * Website and Blog Templates

The HP Creative Studio is also a great asset to find tools and other DIY and affordable design services (such as Logoworks and StockLayouts) that professional marketing agencies use every day.

1. Twitter:



Get expert advice, get opinions and share your expertise with world (or just your neighborhood) - in real time. Any marketing expert worth their salt is on Twitter, and you get their sage advice for free. Better still, many experts will follow you back and respond to your questions. Even better still, when you're ready to test drive your new marketing materials, the Twitter universe is a great place to ask for feedback and opinions. (Author and marketer Tara Hunt asked her Twitter followers to rate the jacket design of her new book "The Whuffie Factor," and she got hundreds of opinions plus free designs in response.) Use the following resources to get started and put Twitter to work for you (I've also included links to the resources' Twitter account):

- * How to Use Twitter to Grow Your Business ([via @Copyblogger](#))
- * 50 Ideas on using Twitter for Business ([by @ChrisBrogan](#))
- * We Follow ([@wefollow](#)): This is a user-powered Twitter directory that makes it extremely easy to find people by topic, company or interest. (You'll find me in WeFollow's HP category.)

Take the first few steps to launch your brand - there's a world online ready and willing to help. Including me.

Angela LoSasso manages [HP's Small Business Wiki](#) and [HP's Small Business Blog](#). You can also find her on [Twitter](#).