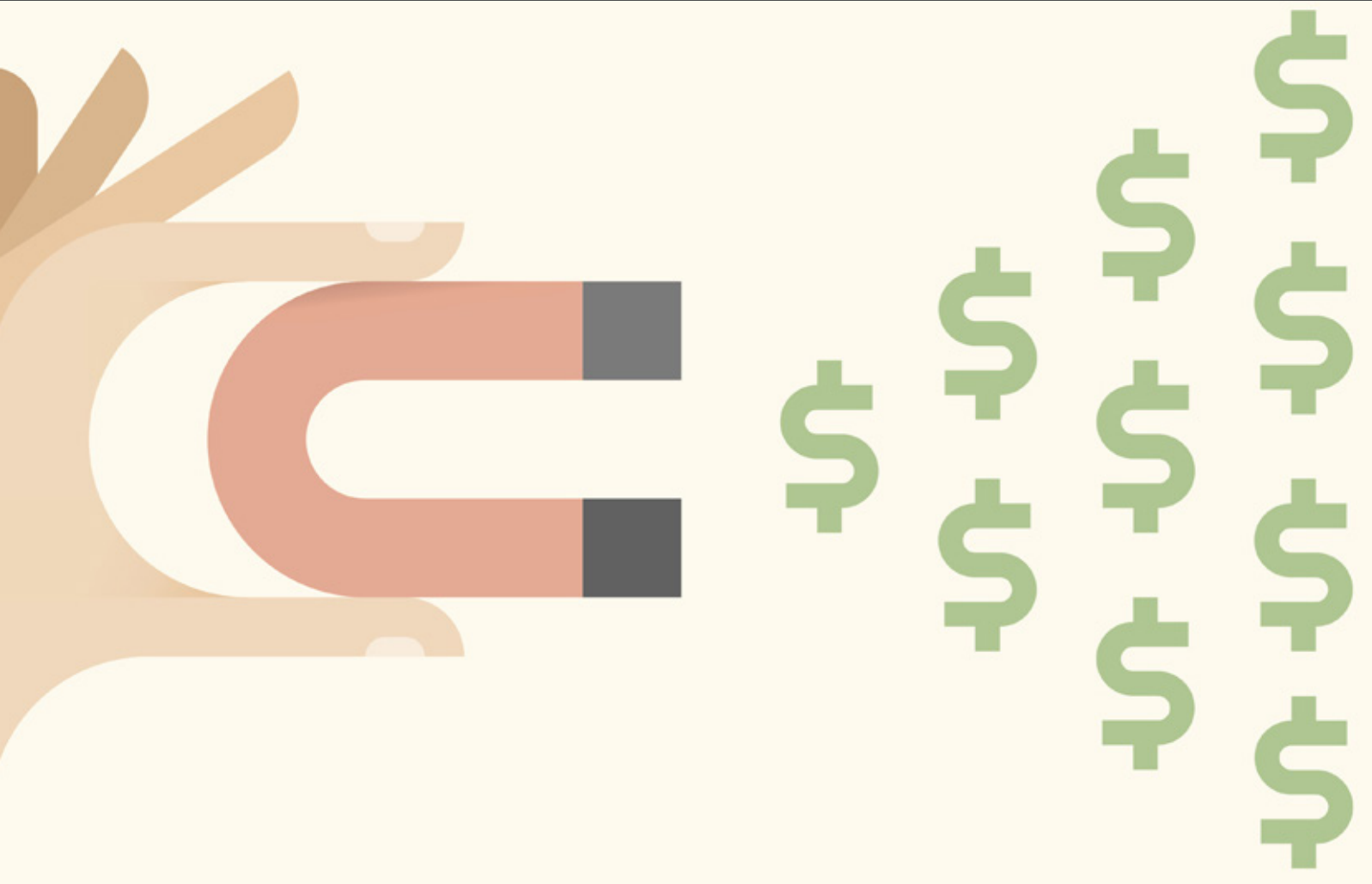


5 Ways to Attract New Customers

and Grow Your Equipment Vendor Business

Whitepaper Brought to You By Balboa Capital





In today's hypercompetitive, customer-driven business world, you need to look at new ways to make your equipment vendor business stand out.

This Balboa Capital whitepaper covers five essential topics that can help you take your vendor business to the next level. By exploring customer service initiatives, new sales channels, and private label financing, to name a few, you can attract and keep new customers.

This translates into more revenues and growth opportunities for your equipment vendor business.

1. Improve the Customer Experience

Whether you are selling equipment to businesses in the retail, service, healthcare, technology or manufacturing sectors, the importance of knowledgeable, friendly and capable service cannot be underestimated. Customer service is one of the most important components in the success of every vendor business. Without quality customer service, people won't want to buy your products or use your services, and this puts your company's success –and survival – at risk.



Success is a Two-Way Street

A good vendor-customer relationship can help both parties achieve success. First, vendors and their customers need to make sure they are

the right fit for one another. The right vendor should have the right selection of equipment along with the experience that instills confidence.

Always be Accessible

Next, both parties need to make themselves accessible during business hours and deliver effective and informative communication. Today's equipment vendors and their customers are busy building their businesses, which means time is valuable and at a minimum. Keep phone calls and e-mails on topic, and be proactive should any unexpected problems occur.

Open, honest communication goes a long way in any relationship, particularly one between equipment vendors and customers. Lastly, sending a thank-you note via email or making an occasional followup phone call are great ways to make you and your business look good. Showing gratitude can go a long way, especially in business.

2. Introduce New Equipment as it Becomes Available

New equipment is an important element in vendor business growth. Because of increased competition, changing customer expectations and innovative technology breakthroughs, the introduction of new equipment, or updated versions of existing equipment, can help drive sales and differentiate your equipment vendor business. In many cases, new or updated equipment offers some form of functional benefit(s) to your customers, and this can be used as a key selling point. For example, it might have a completely new set of features that result in greater efficiency and cost reduction.

Know What You Are Selling

The key is for you and your sales team to fully understand everything about the new equipment so you can communicate its specifications and answer any questions that your customers have relating to the equipment. Additionally, finding ways to cross-sell to your customers is a great way to increase sales and drive more business. For example, make note of what your customers' needs are and

suggest additional equipment that may address other areas of their business. Find ways to add to the sale by suggesting supplementary pieces of equipment that can be used to increase productivity on the machinery or equipment being purchased.

Stay Ahead of the Curve

As a busy equipment vendor, it's difficult to allocate time to find out what new or updated equipment is being made available. However, it is something that you need to do. If not, your competitors will, and they will end up taking away your market share. Talk to your manufacturers and distributors throughout the year to find out what new or updated equipment they are working on. It is also a good idea to get on their email or direct mail lists to stay informed. Lastly, make time to attend trade shows to network and get a first-hand look at new equipment that is used in your specific industry.

3. Look for New Sales Channels

Marketing your business with traditional offline strategies such as television, radio and print advertising can be costly. Consider various online marketing efforts to see which ones might build awareness of your vendor business. Online marketing will continue to grow as your customers increase their mobile and tablet usage, so plan accordingly. Update your website regularly; make sure it is supported on all mobile devices, add fresh content, and check that all links and online forms are working accurately.

Pay-Per-Click Advertising

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) ads are a great way to drive traffic to your website and get your company name out there. PPC ads don't have to be expensive and can be easily monitored to see how much business they bring in. When growing your online presence, be sure to join in on the conversations that those in your industry are having. Be active in online forums and take steps to maximize your online network.

Other Strategies

Reach out to your loyal customers and offer incentives for them to write reviews and rank services. Ramp up your social media strategy and utilize all appropriate networks that are beneficial for your business.

Next, networking is a great way to meet with peers, find new sales channels, learn about industry developments and promote your company in a personalized manner. Consider making a persistent effort in business networking, as it keeps you connected with business owners in a wide range of industries.



4. Offer Flexible Financing to Your Customers

Instead of requiring a 100% cash payment, leasing allows the customer to obtain the equipment they need for a manageable monthly payment. The ability to update their equipment helps business owners avoid technology obsolescence and the difficulties that come with outdated software, technology and equipment. Having a leasing option available at the point of sale makes acquiring equipment a simple and seamless process for customers.

Your Customers Want Affordability

Many business owners are watching every dollar they spend; often times they are hesitant to acquire the equipment they need due to costs being out of their budget. Instead of negotiating on price, it's possible for vendors like you to sell more equipment based on the affordability of a monthly payment.

Use Section 179 as a Selling Tool

In addition to lease payments being affordable for your customers, they can also be deducted under the Section 179 tax provision. Make sure your customers consult with their tax advisors

to find out if the equipment they're financing is eligible for the Section 179 deduction.

Work With a Respected Financing Resource

You can't start a business relationship with a financing company without having a complete understanding of its credentials, capabilities and reputation. The financing company you choose will be an extension of your brand, and you cannot afford to compromise. Doing so can end up hurting your equipment vendor business should any unexpected problems arise.

Common things to look for when narrowing your search for a funding resource include:

Experience – Does the company have experience in equipment vendor financing, and has it worked with equipment vendors in your industry?

Performance – Does the company have systems in place that simplify every step of the financing process for you and your customers?

4. Offer Flexible Financing to Your Customers (cont.)

Focus – Will you work with a dedicated equipment vendor financing specialist who will always be available should you have questions or need consultative services?

Lending Power – Does the company have the lending capacity to handle your anticipated sales volume?

Reputation – How is the company perceived in the marketplace? Specifically, does it have a positive reputation that can benefit your business?

Once your customers have a positive financing experience and are able to secure the funding they need for the equipment you sell, they will more likely return to you for their future business needs. Establishing these customer relationships will drive revenue to your business and result in increased referrals.



5. Utilize Innovative Online Sales Tools

Find the right business management software and customer relationship management (CRM) software to effectively and efficiently manage all aspects of your equipment vendor business. Today there are desktop and cloud-based software systems for you to choose from that offer the scalability that your vendor business requires.

Increase Your Efficiency... and Your Sales

Next, the success of your business relies on sales, so you can benefit greatly from a robust online sales management system. Depending on the system you use, you will be able to keep track of your orders, as well as provide your customers with the accessible resources they need to get lease quotes and submit online finance applications, to name a few.

Anytime, Anywhere Access

Having real-time access to all of your financing transactions saves time and provides you with an instant snapshot of how your vendor business is doing. Some sales management systems have a variety of additional online tools that let you calculate lease payments, submit finance applications, present purchase options, track sales performance, run a variety of reports and more.



Summary

As an equipment vendor, you are faced with intense competition and with customers who are watching every last dollar they spend. In order to stand out from the crowd and become a preferred equipment vendor, you need to be proactive with your marketing efforts and offer flexible financing solutions.

Balboa Capital hopes that you found this whitepaper to be helpful for your equipment dealer business.

About Balboa Capital

Balboa Capital is a technology-driven financing company that provides business owners with fast, hassle-free solutions to fuel their growth and success. The company specializes in small business loans, equipment financing, commercial financing, equipment vendor financing, and franchise financing.

Balboa Capital developed an intuitive online platform that simplifies the entire financing process. Calculators provide instant estimates, applications can be completed and submitted in a matter of minutes, and sophisticated credit scoring technology provides instant decisions. Visit <http://www.balboacapital.com> to learn more.

