

## **‘Thank You’ Remains Key in Marketing**

Staying visible to your clients in positive, trust-developing ways is very important as you develop and maintain the reputation and brand of your business.

“Often, small-business owners overlook some of the best opportunities of staying visible to their customers,” says (Insert name and title) of (Insert county). “One means commonly missed today is the simple ‘thank you.’

“With today’s online tools, staying in touch with customers remains easier than ever,” continued (Last name). “That said, though, the old written thank you remains tremendously powerful.”

The question some business owners ask is: When should I send a thank-you note?

“The opportunity that everyone thinks about is when a person has done business with you,” says Glenn Muske, the North Dakota State University Extension Service’s rural and agribusiness enterprise development specialist. “You can’t say it enough in words or by writing to the person who is spending his or her money in your business.”

Another key time to offer a thank you is when customers recommend you, your business or your product/service to someone else.

“You may not only want to thank them for the referral but to let them know how it went,” (Last name) says. “Even if the results aren’t known for some time, this just provides another time to be in touch.”

These are not the only opportunity to connect with customers to thank them, however. Other times can be:

- Even before they become a customer. You may have had the chance to bid for a job but didn’t get it. You might want to thank them for the chance.
- When they offer a compliment. Let them know you appreciated it.
- When they make you smile, provide some good news or just add some sunshine into your business
- When they are patient as you deal with other customers
- When they aren’t so patient. Let them know you appreciate their business.
- When they try a product or service you recommend. They have done so based on the trust you have established. They are outside of their comfort zone and you should acknowledge this.

“A thank you also is recommended if the customer offers a suggestion or an idea,” says Muske. “If you follow through with the idea, let him or her know what you did.”

The thank you note can be a powerful tool in your marketing strategy. Everyone likes to be recognized and appreciated. Add thank-you notes to your toolbox.

While hand-written notes remain key, email notes are gaining popularity. You can get more information about them at: <http://bit.ly/SdSH42>.

Additional ideas to help focus your marketing strategy can be found at your local Extension Service office at [insert phone number and email address]. Also visit NDSU's small-business support website at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/smallbusiness](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/smallbusiness) and sign up for the monthly newsletter. Also check out Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NDSUextsmallbiz](http://www.facebook.com/NDSUextsmallbiz) or Twitter at @gmuske. Another resource is: [eXtension.org/entrepreneurship](http://eXtension.org/entrepreneurship).

The Small Business Administration and its related organizations, Small Business Development Centers and the Service Corps of Retired Executives, also are useful resources.

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