

SETTING UP A DATABASE MARKETING SYSTEM

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There are three simple steps in creating a database system to help your business retain your current business base. They are;

1. Get a computer with database handling software

Most of us already have a computer at home or work that can handle database marketing. At work we may already have a database management system included with the business software we currently use to do business. If not, try using Excel or Works, both programs can do what you need. With either you can build a database and manipulate the information.

2. Decide what information you want in the database, and then gather it.

Everyone will have different information they want to have in their customer database, but here are some suggestions;

1. Name, address, phone, birthdates and e-mail
2. Date, type and amount of last purchase
3. Preferred product or service
4. Marital status and anniversary
5. Children and ages in a family

Gathering the information is time consuming, but well worth it. You can get the information you need from checks they use to pay for products or services, forms you use to do business now, or to build your database try having a drawing for something. Remember you don't have to gather all their information at one time. People don't like to sit and fill out forms, so ask for some info now and update their records later as you gather more info.

3. Take the information and the system and begin moving business. Here are some ideas for using the information above;

An auto repair shop would use #2 to sort all oil changes between 6 months and a year, then send them a post card reminding them it's time for another.

A jewelry store would sort using #4 and send out a special discount to customers with anniversaries coming up in the next month.

An art studio would use #3 to invite people who normally purchase a certain Artists' paintings, to a "special showing" night.

Any business can use #1 as a source to build an e-mail database to communicate with their customers as well as regular mail

With all of the above uses, you don't need an expensive advertising piece, a simple post card will do. It will seem more personal and it will keep your costs down low.