

How to make your business bloom

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Five simple strategies for SMEs to attract more business in spring

Historically, spring is a busy time for small businesses and presents a season in the year filled with opportunities to capitalise on the energy and positivity of the warmer months.

“This spring,” says Janeesha Ragubeer, area manager at small and medium enterprise (SME) financier, Business Partners Limited, “will be particularly unique, as it will be the first warm season in over two years that South Africans can enjoy without needing to adhere to Covid-19 restrictions.”

With this in mind, Ragubeer shares five strategies that can help small business owners ensure that their businesses are well-positioned for success, ahead of the busy season.



Janeesha Ragubeer

1. Weave the spring narrative into your marketing collateral

Spring is associated with renewal and rejuvenation – a period of new beginnings. One can use these associations to encourage new sales by incorporating the spring narrative into marketing efforts on social media, emails and website and blog content.

“Encourage your customers to embrace the new, put a spring back in their step, spread the good vibes or spring into the new season by purchasing your product or service,” says Ragubeer, “This could be accompanied by a once-off discounted rate or an added incentive to drive repeat buying.”

2. Use spring as a launchpad for a new product or service

A new season is the perfect time to launch a new product or service offering. Spring provides a way to get your marketing message across strongly and to begin pushing sales on new items, so that these products and services are well established in the market before the festive period.

“Remember that spring is a highly competitive time of year, particularly in the retail sector”, explains Ragubeer, “so, when launching a new offering, refine your value proposition to focus on one or more of these key differentiating factors: price, value and service.”

3. Leverage outdoor markets and events

Increased sunshine and longer daylight hours are associated with positive emotions, which makes spring the best time of year to return to the outdoors. This year in particular, the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions may encourage more customers to attend outdoor functions and networking events.

“Bear in mind that at an outdoor event, your display or promotional area will need to stand out in a crowd of other vendors,” says Ragubeer. “Conduct extensive market research to ascertain whether an investment into aspects such as signage,

equipment and mobile fittings will produce a worthy positive return.”

Due to the availability of a larger space, outdoor markets and events also lend themselves to product demonstrations, sample giveaways and experiential elements that will give audiences a taste of what is on offer.

“Leverage the “buzz” and activity of these types of events to engage with customers face to face, spark conversation and add an element of tangibility to your product or service offering,” says Ragubeer.

4. Build a content community

With more people venturing into the outdoors during spring and sharing their experiences on social media, a business owner can use this time of year to engage with audiences online and build a community around products or a service.

“You could do this by hosting competitions, posting positive reviews, profiling your customers, and using micro-influencers to promote your offering,” says Ragubeer. “Heading into the last quarter of the year, the rise of “social commerce” will provide SMEs with an opportunity to use the power of social endorsement to drive sales and get people talking about what you do.”

5. Collaborate with seasonal SMEs

A number of SMEs rely on specific seasons to generate sales and drive profitability. During spring for example, small businesses supplying items such as artisanal ice-cream, swimwear, outdoor gear, air conditioners, exercising equipment and clothing and travel accessories are in high demand.

“You can take advantage of this spike in demand by partnering with other small businesses that can complement your offering. Collaborating in this way will allow you to combine forces and tap into another SME’s established audience, while adding value and promoting the element of fun and whimsy with which the season is associated,” concludes Ragubeer.

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