



## **Study of Small Business Habits Reveals Big Majority Prefer to Go It Alone When It Comes to Marketing**

*Yellow Pages Association Study Indicates Generating New Customers Is Biggest Marketing Challenge for Majority of Small Business Owners*

**BERKELEY HEIGHTS, N.J., Dec. 16, 2008** – While a majority of small business owners say generating and retaining customers is the toughest marketing challenge they face, more than half of them do not use outside support for their marketing, according to a study just released by the Yellow Pages Association (YPA).

The YPA’s “Small Business Marketing Poll” found that nearly two-thirds (62%) of small business owners say they use only internal resources to assist in their marketing efforts, while nearly three in five (59.1%) small business owners say generating new customers or retaining current customers is the toughest marketing challenge they face. The national study, conducted by global marketing research firm Issues and Answers, included 200 telephone and 200 online interviews with owners of small businesses (one to 50 employees), asking about their marketing and advertising habits.

“A majority of small business owners are not asking for outside help when it comes to marketing and advertising, so many may not realize that there are ample resources available at little or no charge,” said Neg Norton, president, Yellow Pages Association. “And in times like these, when every dollar spent must be justified, and when winning and retaining customers is crucial, we feel that getting a professional opinion simply makes good business sense.”

For example, the Yellow Pages industry has a nationwide direct sales team that calls on small businesses and provides face-to-face marketing consulting at no charge and, in many cases, online and offline advertising packages and Web site, online banner, and print ad design as well.

“Our members have an unparalleled ‘feet on the street’ resource that has its fingers on the pulse of trends and issues affecting small businesses and is tied into local communities from coast to coast,” Norton said. “As a result, they’re able to offer customized marketing solutions, featuring an integrated approach that leverages the strength of both online and offline methods and improves the potential for better business results.”

### **Quantifying Results**

In other key findings, the study also revealed that while many small business owners use return on investment and leads to measure the success of their marketing program, a surprising number don’t measure at all. Specific results include:

- The largest percentage (44%) of small business owners uses ROI to measure marketing program success.
- Small businesses also frequently use qualified leads and telephone inquiries – 29% and 21%, respectively – to measure success.
- Interestingly, 26% of small business owners do not use any type of measurement for their marketing programs.

“When it comes to measuring return and generating leads for small business marketing programs, Yellow Pages rank near the top of all advertising media,” Norton added. “For example, Yellow Pages print and online listings received more than 17 billion searches in 2007 from consumers ready to make purchases. In addition, Internet Yellow Pages accounted for more than 20% of all online local commercial searches last year, and Yellow Pages print – with \$13 of revenue generated for every \$1 invested in local display advertising – is among the best values of all advertising media.”

### **Study Methodology**

The results are based on a telephone and online survey of 400 small business owners conducted by Issues and Answers, a global marketing research firm. Two hundred interviews were conducted over the phone and 200 were conducted online. The sample of participating companies was drawn from Dun and Bradstreet’s business list of companies. Each company was screened to include only those that have between one and 50 employees (full and part time). The margin of error for the survey is ±5%.

### **About The Yellow Pages Association**

The Yellow Pages Association (YPA) (<http://www.ypassociation.org>) is the largest trade organization of a print and digital media industry valued at more than \$31 billion worldwide (\$14 billion in the U.S.). Association members include Yellow Pages publishers, certified marketing representatives (CMRs), and associate members (a group of industry stakeholders that includes Yellow Pages advertisers, vendors, and suppliers).

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