



Wendy Harrington
919-753-5111
wendy@BeaconCreativeLab.com



Michelle Doeffinger
919-280-6197
michelle@TriangleSocialMedia.com

*bring you an exclusive trend-and-action report from booth attendees
at the June 23, 2023 NYC Small Business Expo*

How Small Businesses are getting leads *(and how to boost yours)*

The Raw Numbers

- 33%: Word of Mouth
- 15% Facebook
- 13% Instagram
- 10% Google Ads
- 9% LinkedIn
- 1-2% each for: SEO, Google Search (organic), Company Website; TikTok, Twitter; leads provided by partner companies or government bids.

How to Leverage the Trends

#1: Word of Mouth. This includes client referrals, and referrals from people you network with. Since most responders were solopreneurs, that's not surprising – it's a no-to-low cost source!

(If this is one of your favorites, scroll down to the last page for ways to grow it!)



Wendy Harrington
919-753-5111
wendy@BeaconCreativeLab.com



Michelle Doeffinger
919-280-6197
michelle@TriangleSocialMedia.com

#2: Social Media. This channel came in second with Facebook slightly ahead of Instagram.

- Several business owners noted that while they get *followers* on Instagram, they relied on **Twitter** or **LinkedIn** for real response and connection-building. Maybe a new direction for you to try...?
- A few were seeing success on TikTok, one on YouTube.

SUCCESS TIPS:

- Use hashtags to find people, pages, groups to connect with and follow.
- Encourage referrals and reviews – and be active in providing them for businesses you love and appreciate!
- Consistently – which doesn't mean *constantly* – share messages that help people see your expertise, personality and value first hand.
- Run ads that show your audience you understand and can help them – but be sure to carefully specify and test details like your target audience, message, and offer!

These are ways that people are making social media work for them... but what if this just seems overwhelming? **Give Michelle a call; she's here with ideas for streamlining your efforts, or for taking the load off you and your team.**

#3: Google Ads. This pay-to-play method (you pay every time someone clicks on your ad in the google search results listings), is most effective once your audience AND keywords are well defined, and match your business goal and lead process. (Keywords are the terms people use when they search for something.)

It's often especially cost effective for keywords that indicate someone is ready to buy... BUT it's important to test to see what will work best for you, because those are also the most costly ads to run. *If you need help on this front, give us a call at 919.753.5111 and we'll run some numbers for you...*



Wendy Harrington
919-753-5111
wendy@BeaconCreativeLab.com



Michelle Doeffinger
919-280-6197
michelle@TriangleSocialMedia.com

Tied for #4: Organic Search + Business Website. Being found in Google searches naturally (that's "organic search"), and getting leads from your website, are two *different* lead methods that typically work hand-in-hand...

Organic Search: often requires some work called S.E.O. or Search Engine Optimization – steps that can help your site be found more easily:

- All begin with choosing the correct keywords and matching them to business goals...
- Some involve edits to your website itself (those are called "on-page"), some ("off-page") are steps that drive traffic to your website... others are from your local business listing in Google...
- None are one-time actions. Review your keywords and analytics at least quarterly; plan to make updates based on what you learn.

When the right searches lead people to your website naturally, that is SWEET, and cost-effective, but it rarely happens by accident.

Leads from Business Website: Similarly, changes keep happening in tech and "user experience" (how visitors expect to interact with websites). We're not fans of unnecessary investments, but it's smart to evaluate your website against others in your industry each year.

Expect to make significant updates, if not revamp your whole site, every 3-4 years. **(Ask Wendy for a quick website audit to look for any major search or usability flags, if you'd like; it's free.)**



Wendy Harrington
919-753-5111
wendy@BeaconCreativeLab.com



Michelle Doeffinger
919-280-6197
michelle@TriangleSocialMedia.com

What other lead sources were mentioned?

- Professional associations or government bid processes. If your trade or certifying body, or chamber of commerce, passes on leads, this might be something to test.
- Highly-targeted print ads. If you choose to test print ads, work with a pro to create the ad and offer (don't DIY it, or use the magazine's overworked graphics department), run the ad 3-6x, and choose a publication with readership that is very targeted – one packed with people that you know will be overwhelmingly interested in your type of service.
- A few responders mentioned "email scraping..." *What's that?* Usually it involves gathering email addresses from directories, social media profiles and publicly available data, and then sending cold emails that promote your services.

While we're big fans of email to people who've "opted in" to receive your messages, sending out promotional emails to people who haven't "opted in" to get them is not good practice (and is illegal in some places).

That doesn't mean you can *never* reach out to prospects who may welcome your offerings, but it does mean you should be as respectful as you would if you were knocking on their door. It's probably okay to try a few times, but if no one is home (responding), take the hint. **(Want help growing your email list for prospecting, or nurturing relationships through email or text campaigns? Give Wendy a shout.)**



Wendy Harrington
919-753-5111
wendy@BeaconCreativeLab.com



Michelle Doeffinger
919-280-6197
michelle@TriangleSocialMedia.com

How to make “Word of Mouth” work harder for you

Is word of mouth your top source of leads? That’s wonderful – and a sign that you’re on the right track. But if this is the main (or only) way you get business, you’ll be stuck at the mercy of others’ contacts and goodwill.

If you’re looking to grow your client roster, or expand your audience, we can’t urge it strongly enough: **take charge of your visibility**. “Preaching to the choir” will only get you so far!

Step 1: Spread your message wider

Put a consistent message in front of more people — those with a specific need or want that you can help with. Go where your prospects already are (e.g., social media groups, mailing lists, podcasts they listen to, collaboration partners).

Here are a few tips:

- As noted earlier, explore search terms, keywords and/or hashtags to help identify people to connect with (and to listen for the types of needs and wants being expressed).
- Use social media *sociably*. Broaden and deepen your online network.
 - Share info that they’ll find interesting, AND also interact with what *they* share.
 - Remember, these platforms work by becoming sociable with more people; they’re not about “free online advertising”. Done well, as your community grows, so will your reputation as a go-to resource.
 - **(TIP: Check out Michelle’s social media coaching: she can help you assess and fine tune your efforts!)**
- Partner with businesses that serve your audience.
 - Say you’re a massage therapist; partner with a hypnotist, physical therapist, sports coach, float spa, stretch professional, nutritionist, or meal prep service. And what about a speech coach, divorce or estate planning attorney, or financial planner (why? People’s top fears/stressors are public speaking, finances, love, etc.). Get creative!



Wendy Harrington
919-753-5111
wendy@BeaconCreativeLab.com



Michelle Doeffinger
919-280-6197
michelle@TriangleSocialMedia.com

Step 2: Be consistent

Steadily “showing up” helps build trust in your reliability. Whether you’re active in networking, making follow up calls/emails, doing social media posts, running ads, sharing videos... aim to be consistent, even predictable.

Also show up “on brand” – that is, with the same personality, style and content that you use naturally. Everything about how and why you operate IS your brand – not just your colors or logo! Conveying the “real you” when it comes to your company’s unique values, purpose, and even process helps prospects get to know you. **(If you’re not sure about what your brand is, or whether it’s working for you, give Wendy a call for a quick evaluation.)**

And if you’re a mission-driven service provider, it’s great to focus more on your audience’s concerns, vs focusing solely on your skills or certifications. It’s not that people don’t care about your accomplishments or methods, it’s that first and foremost they want to know you “get” them.

Step 3: Encourage people to take action. You DON’T always want to be hitting people up with a sales request, but you DO always want to have something to invite people to do next. You could ask them to book... to buy... to read... to follow you... something! Don’t leave the next step to our all-too-indecisive human nature.

[Beacon Creative Lab, LLC](#) is dedicated to helping mission-oriented service providers get more clients, and grow their audience, with cost-effective branding, websites, and targeted marketing. [Book a 30-min Consultation](#):
<https://koalendar.com/e/meet-with-wendy-harrington>

[Triangle Social Media, LLC](#) helps businesses of all kinds strategize, optimize, and navigate social media platforms. We can manage your social media marketing for you, along with you, or help you do it better yourself! Contact Michelle at Michelle@TriangleSocialMedia.com for help.