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The Electrician's Guide to Encouraging More Referrals



Referrals bring in valuable new business for electricians.

Here's how to encourage referrals and increase your network for word-of-mouth advertising.

Referrals are an incredible form of marketing in any service industry. Businesses that find ways to encourage referrals and earn more online reviews to bolster their reputation tend to become the most sought-after service companies in the area. But getting to that point takes some work as high-volume referrals rarely happen on their own.

As the saying goes, it's who you know. But it's also who those people know and whether they choose to put your name out there when a friend or family member mentions needing an electrician. Here's a look at ways you can encourage your customers to share your name.



7 Ways Electricians Can Encourage Referrals

Word-of-mouth advertising is powerful but you obviously can't force it to happen. So here's how to encourage it.



Request Online Reviews

While an online review isn't exactly a referral, it can help lead customers to your business. Reviews and testimonials are essential tools for marketing any business. They provide insights for potential customers who are shopping around for resources on how to solve a problem or find reliable technicians.

And even after someone learns of your business from someone else, they will likely go out and do their own research to see what they can find about you out there, which means you need to have a strong online reputation.

But getting good reviews from customers requires some nudging. Ultimately, the task consumes your customers' time. Some challenges that businesses face with getting good online reviews include:

Customers don't think to do it automatically

Some customers choose to remain anonymous, which lowers the effectiveness of the review

The reviewer might not take the time to write content to go along with their star rating for your business

That's where some encouragement and clarity from you can help. Send follow-up emails and text messages after completing a job to request a review. Include examples of helpful reviews and how they help local businesses thrive to make it clearer what you're looking for from the customer.



Remind Customers of the Value of Referrals

Plan out your marketing campaigns such that quarterly or every six months, you're reminding past customers of the value of a review. Or if you don't have a firm marketing plan with planned content, send out a little reminder of the value of reviews during slower times of the year or when you're ready to take on new business.

Prepare some social media graphics that illustrate the value of referrals and share those on your social pages regularly.

The best time to remind customers to refer their friends and family to you is after they've had a positive experience with you. That way, it's fresh in their mind and they feel compelled to share that experience with a friend.

But these are campaigns you don't want to automate. You'll know at the end of a project whether the customer was happy. Some jobs include complications you can't anticipate, such as additional parts or longer labor that increases the total cost, which could leave the customer unhappy. Or perhaps the customer didn't understand the scope of work despite your clear explanations and now they are surprised it didn't include a service and they aren't entirely happy.

So choose who you ask for referrals carefully. Mark within your marketing lists the pleased customers and those who might have had a mediocre experience from their point of view. That way, you know who to target with ongoing referral campaign reminders and who to avoid.



Incentivize Referrals

Customers are more likely to remember your name long-term and refer you to their friends when they know there is something in it for them. Regularly remind customers about your referral incentives, such as a free hour of labor on your next project or a \$100 gift card.



While this still won't make individuals who weren't thrilled with your service recommend your business, it will help remind those who do believe in your services to refer you.

One reason why customers are hesitant to refer service technicians or contractors is because they are worried that their friends or family members might have a bad experience, and then their reputations will be tarnished. There's no guarantee that someone else will have the same experience as they had, which can make them less likely to refer. And that's where the incentive comes in.

Not only do incentives remove barriers from customers worried about their own reputation, but they further solidify relationships between you and your customers. Loyal customers can become even more loyal once they feel valued and recognized for their efforts in helping you grow your business.



Get Involved in the Community

Individuals who are involved in their community build brand awareness. This might help past customers remember you when they have an opportunity to provide a referral or show someone in need of electrician services that you are an upstanding member of the community that they should feel good about welcoming into their home or business.



Sponsor local events, be present at charitable outings and give of your time to causes that matter to you. All these forms of community involvement will result in opportunities for you to meet new people, and you never know who those people know. Plus, you'll be able to do some good in your community, which will make you feel good and help you remain passionate about helping those around you.



Join Networking Groups

Many communities offer local networking groups to help individuals meet and get to know each other. And if you consider the fact that people know other people, this is a great opportunity to expand your network and gain further awareness for your business and services.



But you don't want to get too involved to the point where you just feel burnt out. In that case, you might do more harm than good by showing up to these events tired, unenthusiastic and checking your watch constantly. Monitor yourself to avoid burnout.

To get the most out of these events, make sure you're clear about what type of services you offer or who your ideal customer is. Some electricians focus solely on commercial projects and won't take on residential jobs. So when seeking referrals, be specific. You could include information on your business card as a small reminder to ensure you're getting the new business you're hoping to from these events.



Nurture Social Media Relationships

LinkedIn is a powerful tool for meeting new people. And you can be picky about who they are and how close they are to the areas you serve. But you can't just constantly connect on social media. You also need to nurture those relationships and use the platform for effective networking.

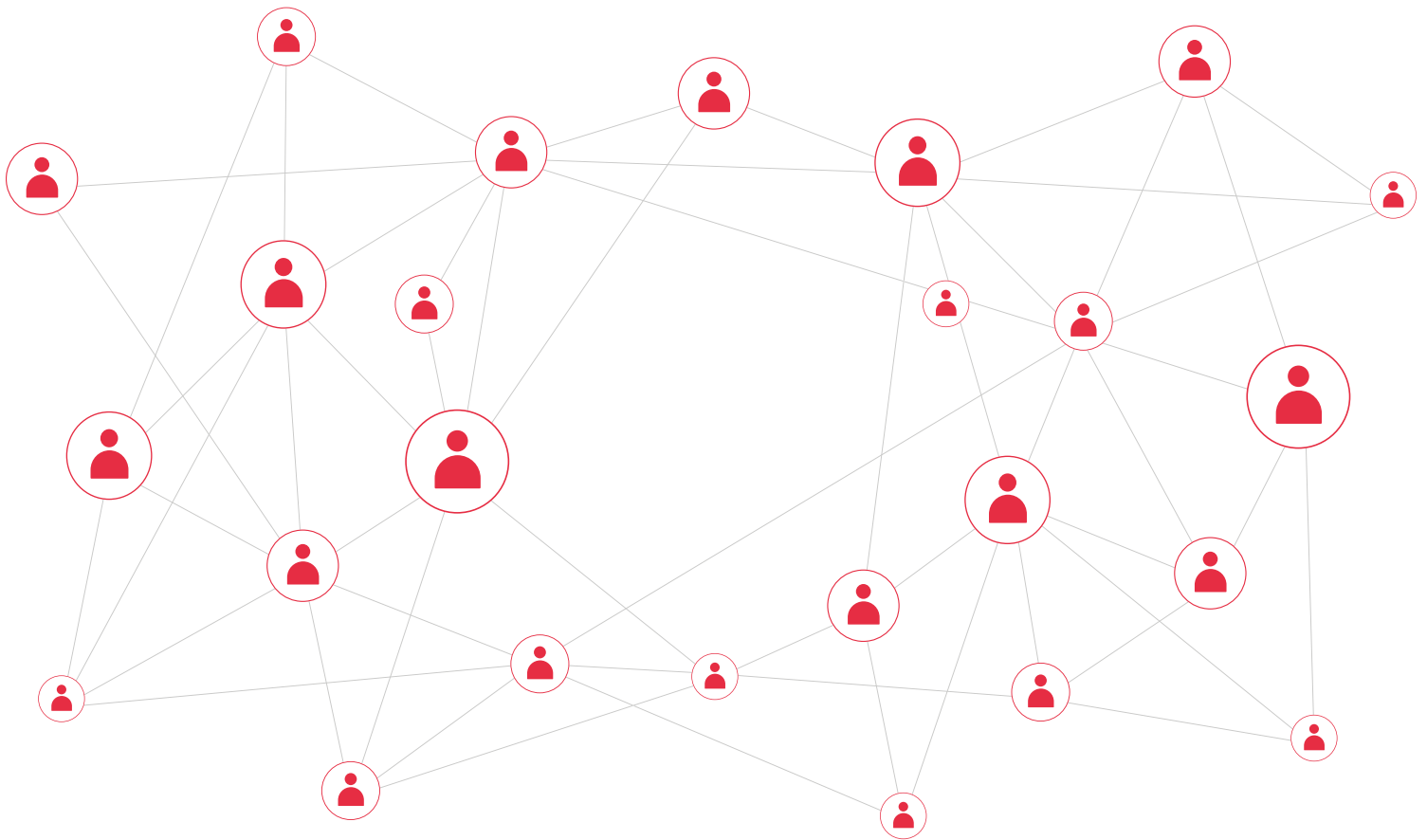


Join local groups on social platforms to find referral opportunities. For example, local networking groups might have some chatter about electricians or questions related to projects that you can answer. In some cases, you might answer questions without any self-promotion just to be an upstanding member of the group and show you're active in the community. Other times, you might make it clear what you do and how you can help. It all depends on the circumstances and what the individual is asking about.



Build Referral Networks with Other Companies

You can't do it all and yet when homeowners or businesses have an electrical need, they might also have a plumbing fix or be looking to expand their home or business through a construction project. Build relationships with other service technicians to provide referral networks.



When you regularly refer business to other service technicians, they are more likely to do the same for you when the opportunity arises. So don't forget to network with other businesses during events and gatherings because those relationships can be just as valuable.

Making Referrals Part of Your Marketing Plan

Marketing a business requires careful strategy and attention to detail for everything from social media to reputation management. When you're running a business, focusing on everything from operations to marketing can be complex. Allow the experts to oversee your marketing strategy by working with New Light Digital, a full-service digital marketing agency focused on helping companies grow. Schedule your free consultation now.

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