



5 ways to build your business through community engagement



Because investing in local networking is an investment in the future success of your business.

No matter what kind of business you run — whether you are primarily B2B or B2C, have a highly visible storefront or serve a niche industry — engaging in your community and maintaining an active and visible presence can be a fundamental part of your success.

Your local community is at the heart of your business. Playing a prominent role locally helps you create a close network and make the connections you need to thrive. The following are some of the simplest — and most effective — ways to become a visible leader in your community.

1. Join the local chamber of commerce

Businesses do better when they are supported by other businesses. Through the resources, events and connections that you make as part of the chamber of commerce, you can partner with others to make your community stronger and better for businesses.

2. Organize volunteer days

Create opportunities for your employees to take a day to give back. Some ideas include working at a food shelter or a Habitat for Humanity work site, cleaning up a local park or organizing an ongoing charitable endeavor.

3. Sponsor athletic events

Consider investing in sponsoring 5K runs or bike races. You might even have a team of employees participate in an event and have custom jerseys with your logo made for them.

4. Participate in events

Seek out opportunities for public, in-person exposure at neighborhood block parties, fairs or local events sponsored by your chamber of commerce. Set up a tent and be ready to introduce yourself and get to know those who live and work around you.

5. Host events

Even if they have nothing to do with your business, activities such as networking events, art showings or a monthly speaker series will interest some members of your community. They might just become your future clients and vendors.

It's hard to find time to get away from the numbers, demands and details that go into your daily operations. However, taking the time to position your company as a prominent member of the community is rewarding, conducive for networking and good for the bottom line.