

How new businesses can support each other through skill-sharing

Getting up and running can be the hardest part of any new business. Even when you've got the startup costs out of the way, you may still find yourself without the in-house skills you need to reach your goals.

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So, why not take things out of house?

You are not alone. There are plenty of other new businesses, small businesses, and freelancers who will be happy to lend a hand on a quid pro quo basis.

Whether it's hiring freelance writers, sharing space with another startup, or collaborating with another brand on projects, there are hundreds of ways you can scale your business through skill-sharing.

Think about the skills you can offer, and the skills your brand needs. Then, *build a collaborative network* and scale both your and new friends' brands through skill-sharing.

Not sure how? Here are some tips:

Make collaboration easy

If you're open to collaboration, let people know.

Not everyone has the time to research who they should be contacting

about collaboration. Some people may even be hesitant to reach out. You reduce these problems by making it totally clear that you are up for skill-sharing.

Perhaps create a collaboration page on your website. You could include the kind of collabs, skills, and businesses you feel like you could work with, as well as contact details for the relevant people.

You could even create a collaboration form, in which interested people and businesses could drop their details.

The easier you make it to collaborate, the more skills you can add to your network.

Be clear about your goals

Yes, it's lovely to help each other out. But let's not lose sight of the end goals. Everyone involved wants to gain something from a collaboration. Be totally clear about what that is, and you'll find it a lot easier to work together.

If you're vague about details or tiptoe around your ultimate goals, you risk gaining nothing. You may also have a frustrating and unsatisfying experience that neither party wants to repeat.

Don't be afraid to clarify your goals. People will respect you for your transparency, and communication will be a lot more productive as you move forward.

Be prepared to compromise

Being clear about your goals is not the same as steamrolling over everyone else's needs. Explain what you want, then let your partners

share what they want.

It's almost inevitable that your needs won't completely match. But that doesn't mean you should scrap the whole partnership. There is always a compromise to be found.

What's more, if you're willing to communicate and negotiate until you reach a working compromise, it says a lot about your skills as a business person. Developing (and showcasing!) these kinds of skills will serve you well as your business scales.

Cross-promote on social media

Cross-promotion is one of the quickest and easiest ways to grow your business. Do it well, and you can reap huge rewards with very little financial outlay.

You do have to be careful about how you choose your cross-promotional partners. Find a business whose needs and strategy aligns with yours.

It's also important to make sure that your content can fit their needs and audience. As Aaron Thomas of Hive19 authority management specialists points out, " Developing your content strategy depends on the individual business in question. A construction company who targets locally, for example, will require different content to a global corporation."

Find a non-competitor brand with an audience that might also be interested in your product/service. Approach that brand and offer to promote their business on your social media in exchange for them doing the same on theirs.

Cross-promotion can be anything from giving your partner-brand a shout out on Twitter to integrating them in a full social media campaign. Whatever works best for you both to get that all-important social boost!

Guest post

Guest posting is a lot like social media cross-promoting, but more in-depth.

When you guest post, you typically produce longer-form content (a blog post, for example) on a relevant topic. You'll usually get to build some links to your own brand for people to follow - but this isn't always the main goal.

Guest posting is a great way to position yourself as an expert in your field. It helps to get your brand's name known, and shows people that you not only know what you're talking about - you're also respected enough to talk about it on industry-wide platforms.

Attend networking events

Ok, we can't physically attend events right now. However, there's some amazing collaborative technology out there right now.

It's worth investing in tools like [Asana](#) and [Slack](#). They make it easy to communicate with different people and teams, plus they integrate well with popular collaboration tools across a variety of industries.

You can also use collaborative tech to virtually attend networking events. You'd be surprised at how innovative these have become since the pandemic began. You can now video chat and even '[mingle](#)' in virtual settings. Plus, online networking makes it easier than ever to swap details with interesting new people.

So, get out there (while staying home), make your face known, and build your business through new connections!

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