

## What Are the Gossips Saying About Your Business?



by Deborah Chaddock Brown

**I**NC. Magazine examined word-of-mouth marketing in their April edition. They defined the different forms of 'casual' advertising:

**Word-of-mouth:** An initiative that prompts customers to talk to other people about a product or service.

**Buzz marketing:** Putting products in the hands of celebrities to spread the word

**Influencer marketing:** Marketing that targets the "cool" people hoping that others will soon follow their example

**Viral marketing:** Promoting products through messages and video spread by consumers via e-mail.

The article contends that word-of-mouth has been able to infiltrate the areas of life people have protected from traditional advertising.

*"Many marketers believe that informal, unmediated communication through blogs, social networking sites, or chats in the girls' bathroom is hands down more effective than even the most polished ads."*

Have you considered adding word-of-mouth advertising to your marketing strategy? In a recent *Crain's Business*, Anita Campbell of *Small Business Trends*, provided data for a chart on "How to Catch a Client." The chart showed that 83% of vendors seek new small business customers through referral, with the next closest being networking events at over 50%. Direct mail and trade shoes fell in the 30% category.

Are you asking for referrals?  
How can you spread the word about your business?

Check out the Word of Mouth Marketing Association for great marketing tips for your business: [www.womma.com](http://www.womma.com).

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## Speaking of bathroom conversations:

In a recent *Time Magazine*, there was a small blurb that caught my eye. There is a new and unique place available to secure for your company branding - your product and service message.

### THE PUBLIC TOILET

I'm sorry, but isn't there any place where we can go for a little privacy without being bombarded with advertising messages? People can reach us on our pagers and cell phones, snail mail, home phones and faxes, computer email and instant messages - and now the loo? Remember those old commercials for the bath bubble product Calgon? The woman would pull on her hair and whine, "Calgon, take me away!" Well, evidently the bathroom is no longer a place we can escape.

According to the *Time* blurb entitled, "Caught with Your Pants Down" by Nadia Mustafa, Lifetime Television has a 20-second plug for the reality show *Cheerleader Nation* airing in stalls in 15 cities.

As you are putting your marketing plan together for the 2nd quarter of 2006, you might consider this new avenue of advertising. However, consider also consumer Leia Jervert who heard the *Cheerleader Nation* advertisement four times while visiting a NY pub facility and was quoted as saying, "I would prefer not to have my business solicited when I am doing my business."

'nough said.

## Where is Deborah speaking next?

May 7, "The Women in My Life"

Red Hat Society Luncheon  
Mustard Seed, Solon, OH

June 9, "Earning Customer Loyalty"

Women's Network 2nd Friday Lunch  
Peg's Catering, Akron, OH

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