

# Ways to Market Your Accessible Business

By: Rosemarie Rossetti, Ph.D.

How can a business utilize marketing strategies to showcase the accessible features of its business?

Marketing an accessible business involves creating strategies highlighting your commitment to inclusivity and reaching diverse audiences. Here are several ways to effectively market an accessible business.

1. **Develop an accessible website:** Ensure that your website is accessible to people with disabilities. Follow web accessibility guidelines, such as using alternative text for images, ensuring proper color contrast, optimizing it for people who are blind and who use screen readers, providing video captions and creating a logical structure for content. Have a designated section of your website labeled "Accessibility." Emphasize the accessibility features and services in your business.
2. **Communicate accessibility features:** Make sure your marketing materials, including your website, brochures and social media profiles, clearly outline the accessibility features and services of your business. Highlight facilities like wheelchair ramps; accessible parking, entrances, seating, changing rooms, restrooms, braille signage and any other accommodations you offer. Include a map showing the location of accessible parking, entrance and seating. Point out accessibility features and services prominently in your marketing materials. Use the term "accessible," not "handicapped," on signs in the parking lot and restrooms and when describing these areas in your marketing materials.
3. **Show photos of accessible features:**

*For hotels,* show photos of your accessible rooms and list all accessible features, including entrance, bed size and mattress height, bathroom grab bars, shower/bathtub, transfer shower/bathtub chairs, closet, thermostat, mirror and furniture layout. At the reservation desk, show a photo of the lower counter. Include in some of these photos people of short stature and people in wheelchairs, scooters and walkers.

*For restaurants and bars,* show photos of people in wheelchairs entering your building and dining at low tables. Show the inside of an accessible stall in a restroom.

*For a retail clothing business,* show a person in a wheelchair, scooter or walker entering your building, shopping for merchandise and entering an accessible changing room. Show a staff member helping a person in a wheelchair, scooter or walker.

4. **Collect and share testimonials:** Encourage your customers, especially those with disabilities, to share their feedback and positive experiences. Continually improve your services and make modifications to improve your business. Testimonials are powerful marketing tools and can significantly influence potential customers. Share these testimonials on your website, social media platforms and marketing materials to build trust and credibility.
  
5. **Attend disability-related events:** Participate in conferences, trade shows and community events focused on disability and accessibility. Set up a booth or display, distribute promotional materials and converse with attendees. Your involvement lets you showcase your products or services and connect with potential customers. Networking with like-minded businesses and individuals can also lead to valuable partnerships. Some organizations to consider that have conferences are the Paralyzed Veterans of America and the United Spinal Association.

Marketing an accessible business goes beyond promotion and attracting customers; requires integrating and fostering inclusivity into all aspects of your operations. Showcasing your commitment to accessibility will promote a positive, strong brand reputation within the community. Your business will positively impact and create a welcoming environment for all.

**Bio:** Rosemarie Rossetti, Ph.D., is an internationally recognized accessibility consultant, speaker, author, and president of Rossetti Enterprises LLC. [www.RosemarieSpeaks.com](http://www.RosemarieSpeaks.com)

She speaks to and consults with meeting professionals and destination marketing organizations to help them create welcoming, inclusive environments. This ensures they exceed the requirements mandated by the venue and the meeting organizer for inclusion and diversity.

Having been paralyzed from the waist down with a spinal cord injury, she speaks from her wheelchair, sharing her dramatic personal story. She presents to audiences throughout the U.S. and beyond as a recognized expert on inclusive design.

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