



# Carrabelle Chamber of Commerce

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[www.carrabelle.org](http://www.carrabelle.org)

## The Pearl of the Panhandle



Friday, January 20, 2017

### January

**Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Drumming with Mershell at Rio Carrabelle** 3-4 pm \$ 10 All levels are welcome. Limited number of drums, so reserve your space today by calling Rob @ (850) 307-0098

**Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> "Ulee's Gold" part of the Forgotten Coast Film Festival** presented by the Carrabelle History Museum with special guest Gus Holzer, first assistant director. 6 pm FREE Admission. Donations to the museum appreciated. Film will be shown at the FC Senior Center in Carrabelle, 201 NW Ave F. For more info, call (850) 697-2141 or go to [www.carrabellehistorymuseum.org](http://www.carrabellehistorymuseum.org) (This is the first film in a series of four made in or about the area...make them your Thursday night date nights!)

**Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Will Fulkerson, Piano & Quartet (FSU) at Rio Carrabelle.** 7:30 pm \$ 15 Cover

**Sat 28<sup>th</sup> Driver Safety Course by AARP at the Franklin County Senior Center** 9am-3:30 pm \$ 15 for AARP members; \$ 20 for non-members. Register at the Senior Center or call (850) 697-3760 or (850) 566-6789 Insurance discount is mandated by law for three years for everyone 50 and over who takes this class. People need to contact their insurance agent for exact amount of discount.

**Sun 29<sup>th</sup> An evening with award-winning author & environmental journalist, Cynthia Barnett & her latest book-Rain** 4-6 pm at the Apalachicola Center of History, Culture & Art. Hors d'oeuvres & Wine Reception 4-4:45 pm Presentation, Discussion & Book signing 5-6 pm. Suggested donation \$25. Seating is limited, call (850) 653-8936 or email [riverkeeper@apalachicolariverkeeper.org](mailto:riverkeeper@apalachicolariverkeeper.org) to reserve your seat!

### February

**Thurs 9<sup>th</sup> Florida's Springs: How are they doing & what is being done to protect these precious resources?** FSU Coastal & Marine Laboratory Lecture Series 7 pm-8- pm Call (850) 697-4120 or go to [fsucml@fsu.edu](mailto:fsucml@fsu.edu) for more information

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### Great article: Advice for growing businesses--- 10 steps to grow your customer base

We asked small business owners to share their experiences of growing their customer base. Here are ten great steps you can take today to generate leads and help retain your existing customers:

**38** **56**  
**Customers are the lifeblood of any business, so it's vital you can keep generating leads and retaining your existing customers. But doing so is often a concern for businesses, with more than one in three companies saying that generating new business is their biggest worry.**

We spoke to two small business owners and asked them to share their experiences of growing their customer base.

**1** **Get to know your prospects and customers**  
**There's a lot of talk about personalization and customer insight - that's because it works.**

Understanding your customers' needs can lead to better insights into your audience and allows you to develop services that are matched to your clients' needs.

It can also help you stand out from your competitors, something that Alice Boden understands. She's managing director of Bodice of Holt, which offers a home delivery service for fruit and vegetables. "We know our customers really well and know their preferences so we can tell them when certain things are coming - when they're in season and in stock. Our service is completely personalized to their needs.

"This is where we have an advantage over bigger suppliers. I have a good relationship with our customers and I know the business. Because I source the produce and pack the boxes, I know exactly what's happening and can provide a fully personalized service."

And it's not just consumers who like this approach. It also works for business clients too.

Mike Cockburn, Director at Sogno, a positive psychology coaching company, says, "It's important that we understand what our clients are trying to achieve: their mission, their goals. Then we look at how we can accelerate that and customize our services to meet their needs. It leads to a more balanced relationship."

**Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> “Forgotten Coast: Return to Wild Florida” part of the Forgotten Coast Film Festival** presented by the Carrabelle History Museum. 6 pm FREE Admission. Donations to the museum appreciated. Film will be shown at the FC Senior Center in Carrabelle, 201 NW Ave F. For more info, call (850) 697-2141 or go to [www.carrabellehistorymuseum.org](http://www.carrabellehistorymuseum.org) (This is the second film in a series of four made in or about the area...make them your Thursday night date nights!)

**Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> Blood Drive & Health Fair** 10 am-3 pm St. James Health & Rehab Center in St. James. For more info or to make an appointment, call Kristine in Admission’s (850) 697-2020 or (850) 661-2967

**Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> “Coastlines” part of the Forgotten Coast Film Festival** presented by the Carrabelle History Museum. 6 pm FREE Admission. Donations to the museum appreciated. Film will be shown at the FC Senior Center in Carrabelle, 201 NW Ave F. For more info, call (850) 697-2141 or go to [www.carrabellehistorymuseum.org](http://www.carrabellehistorymuseum.org) (This is the third film in a series of four made in or about the area...make them your Thursday night date nights!)

**Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Bark Side of the Moon! 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Mardi Gras Barkus Parade in Apalachicola.** All proceeds go to benefit animals of Franklin County including the Franklin Humane Society. For more info, call (850) 670-5064 or go to [mystickreweofsaltybarkers.com](http://mystickreweofsaltybarkers.com)

**Sun 2<sup>th</sup> “Flea Bitten Dawgs” Ukulele Americana Jazz at Rio Carrabelle** 4 pm Guest Hot Dog Stand “Mr. V’s Finest All Beef Dogs” \$ 15 door For more info, call (850) 307-0098

**Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>-April 13<sup>th</sup> AARP Foundation Tax-Aide at the Franklin County Public Libraries** Carrabelle Branch Thurs 10 am-3 pm 2/9, 2/23, 3/9, 3/23, & 4/6 Call (850) 697-2366 for appointment; Eastpoint Branch Thurs 10 am-3 pm 2/2, 2/16, 3/2, 3/16, 4/13 Call (850) 670-8151 for appointment. Walk-ins welcome.

For more in-depth assistance in preparing your tax returns, Call for an appointment with one of our Chamber Members:

Friedman Financial Advisors, Eastpoint—(850) 6701253  
Roberson & Associates, PA, Carrabelle—(850) 697-2542

**The PanCare Medical Bus** will be at the PanCare Dental Facility in Carrabelle, 106 NE 5<sup>th</sup> St. 10 am-4 pm. 2/21, 3/21, 4/18, 5/16 Offers Physicals, Exams, Primary Care, Urgent Care & Flu Shots. For an appointment, call (850) 247-9834

For More info

See our website [www.carrabelle.org](http://www.carrabelle.org) under “Things to Do” Events Calendar or the Community Calendar under “The Area”

Events Further afield:

Listen to **WOYS 100.5 FM Oyster Radio** Or go to [www.oysterradio.com](http://www.oysterradio.com) or [www.forgottencoastline.com](http://www.forgottencoastline.com) or [www.saltvflorida.com](http://www.saltvflorida.com)

**2 Divide your time: support existing clients and look for new work**

**In simple terms, there are two ways to get more business - win new business or get your existing customers to spend more. It’s important to ensure you don’t focus on one at the expense of the other, as both are important for growing your customer base.**

Mike says, “We do have a lot of repeat business and feel we offer the most value with long-term clients. But you need to keep bringing in new business too. Old business can falter if budgets change or people move on, so it’s important to look for new opportunities. You need to start a relationship early, so that it’s mature enough to deliver new business when your other work is completed.”

**3 Offer great customer service**

**To keep your existing customers coming back, it’s important you offer great customer service. In fact, research shows that 78% of people have walked away from a sale as a result of poor customer service.**

But if you get it right, it has a positive impact on your customer base and your bottom line. Loyal customers are worth up to ten times the amount they originally spend.

Take the time out to evaluate your customer service, make sure you respond to your customers quickly and keep an eye on social media so you can offer great service online too. Your customer numbers should grow as a result.

**4 Make the most of your networks**

**Ask a business owner where their customers come from and most will tell you that word of mouth is their main source.**

Recommendations from others are valuable: “It’s the idea of social capital - the value of relationships,” says Mike. “If I know people that they know, then there’s an implied trust.”

Most of his clients come from networking, something he’s passionate about.

“I think people sometimes equate networking with sales and prospects can be sensitive to a sales approach. But if you recognize that only so many contacts will go on to be clients, then it reduces the pressure. The work we do is based on trust and openness so the way we make contact is a good opportunity to demonstrate that. I meet up with loads of people and if I can help, they remember that. That can open new doors.”

Alice agrees. “Networking is really useful. It’s not just about selling, it’s about what you can do for people.”

**5 Look for partnerships with other businesses**

**Your ideal customer will already have relationships with other businesses and this offers a great opportunity.**

By partnering with other firms which offer complementary services, you can not only reach a new audience but also potentially offer more to your customers.

It’s something that Bodice of Holt are looking into at the moment: “There’s a body development firm in Bath, which offers personal training and nutrition advice. Part of their service is to help their customers to understand what they

should be eating when they're training, which includes fruit and vegetables. They are recommending us to their clients - and we're look at delivering directly to the gym once a week. "It's about looking around and keeping your eyes peeled for opportunities. Be open to new ideas and speak to people to see if they're interested."

**6 Make use of social media**

**Social media has revolutionized the way customers and businesses can share information and have conversations.**

From online customer service to using social media to get insights into your audience, there are now excellent opportunities for businesses to reach out via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other networks. Which ones work for you will depend on your business, your audience and the way you like to communicate.

**7 Think big**

**If you're a small business, can you work with a big company? The simple answer is yes.**

But many small companies find it intimidating to make contact. Mike has a range of big clients, from Greggs to Kia, and says it's worthwhile approaching large corporates.

"Our success with clients goes back to developing a network of long-term connections. But small businesses now have more opportunities to work with big clients. I think that's changed since the credit crunch. Big corporates may have been suspicious of smaller businesses in the past but they now recognize that they offer value and have lower costs too. There is less prejudice now."

**8 Play to your strengths**

**It's definitely worth testing a range of marketing approaches and seeing what works. But remember that every business is different, so you may find that some approaches don't work. Don't be afraid to drop these.**

Both Alice and Mike agree that you need to focus on what works for your business.

**9 Adapt as your business grows**

**It's important to keep trying new ways of reaching your audience and don't automatically reject things that might not have worked in the past.**

As your company becomes established, you may find your customers come from different sources.

"We get new customers from a wider mixture of places as the business has grown," says Alice. "We've been going for about two years and at the start, it was through friends and family. Now we get people through word of mouth, advertising and from attending markets. We also get people through Google and the website."

**10 Measure what works for you**

**As you try out new approaches, be sure to monitor where your customers come from and which sources offer the most value.**

You can then keep refining your approach or scale up activities that work to grow your customer base further.

**From: [www.sage.co.uk/business-advice/growing-and-running/ten-steps-to-grow-your-customer-base](http://www.sage.co.uk/business-advice/growing-and-running/ten-steps-to-grow-your-customer-base)**

**Executive Board**

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- Sheri Wesson**/Forgotten Coast Photography

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- Lisa Keith**-Lucas-Chamber Special Events Committee

	Visitors at our Visitor's Center				Carrabelle Brochures Sent			
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Jan	51	106	131		30	75	56	
Feb	111	167	233		27	63	56	
Mar	163	171	248		25	74	73	
Apr	118	178	226		41	47	77	
May	66	137	160		26	79	69	
Jun	64	153	171		66	90	74	
Jul	80	133	188		36	66	46	
Aug	52	125	93		36	70	92	
Sept	56	109	111		21	37	47	
Oct	76	152	147		22	25	36	
Nov	79	113	203		19	31	20	
Dec	<u>62</u>	<u>142</u>	<u>189</u>		<u>32</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>30</u>	
Totals	978	1,686	2,100		381	683	676	

**Total [www.carrabelle.org](http://www.carrabelle.org) Website Visitors: Jan 1-Jan 15: 8,018**