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Strike a balance between attracting new clients and giving old ones a reason to return



James Caan

Dear James

I RUN a local IT business and would like to grow my customer numbers. Business is steady but I need to start generating more income through clients.

Dave Bell

THE IT world is very competitive so you have to work harder than in other industries to keep customers and even more so to win new ones. First,

ask yourself who you think is more likely to buy from you – an existing customer or a passer-by? Of course, it

will be the former but many firms make the mistake of being complacent with existing clients so you must strike a balance between attracting new orders and giving customers you already have a reason to return.

Are you doing all you can to ensure they are happy? Everybody loves a good deal, so why not put incentives in place such as birthday promotions? Get to know your clients and understand what products they

are likely to buy. Run surveys to get feedback about your employees.

Once you have managed to keep existing customers happy, you need to attract new ones. Get out and network. Capture the details of passers-by and have a pile of business cards at the front of your shop so they can take details. Investigate online advertising and see if there is any value to run a campaign on Facebook or other online networks.

Finally, don't forget even if you are a local business it's important to make sure you have a well-built website that is attractive to your customers.

A happy customer will return and will recommend you to others. Start with the basics and build upon them

and you will start to see a difference.

■ For the full article and news of [James Caan's](#) free app, go to [standard.co.uk](#). His new book, *Start Your Business in 7 Days*, is out now.