

Reprinted from [www.smallbiztechnology.com](http://www.smallbiztechnology.com)

## Deals via Email Rule on the Internet for Small Businesses

by Ramon Ray, *Smallbiztechnology.com*

### **Small business need and indeed look for the most cost-effective ways to foster business development.**

Many small business owners attend trade meetings and conferences and rely on word of mouth to find partners and contacts that are important for growing their small businesses. The only problem is that at a trade show one may only be able to speak with 20 people - for 30 seconds. And only have in depth communication with 3 of those 20 people. Of course there's always time to meet and discuss outside of the trade show - right?

### **WRONG!**

Since their time is spent generating real revenue for their business and dealing with paying customers and staff on a daily basis, small businesses do not have the time (nor energy) to nurture business development as they should.

### **But this is where "Deals via Emails" comes in.**

I was at a recent business meeting, and asked the 20 or so business professionals if they had ever heard of a few, what I thought per popular, Internet discussion lists. No one had. Mind you these were not clueless, net ill-literate people. Small businesses that harness the power of the Internet to interact with others will be far ahead of small businesses that are "net clueless" and not interacting online. The key to online business development and deal making is smart participation in online discussion lists.

### **Email deals**

Now having said that - once people contact you (or vs versa) this is where Deals via Emails can kick in and you can slowly (or quickly) start expanding your enterprise - virtually.

1. Develop low cost - no pain deals first
2. Get some background info about the other party. Check out their Web site. Sniff out their customers. Sniff out their competition
3. It can't hurt to talk with them on the phone - one telephone call may be the key to sealing a profitable relationship.

**There's a lot of wisdom gathered below from various professionals, giving their experiences with "Deals via Email":**

Lena L. West  
President & CEO  
xynoMedia Development  
[www.xynomedia.com](http://www.xynomedia.com)

1. What are some deals that you have made via email. - estimated \$ value of the deal (if possible) - what you gave and what they, the other party, gave

Most of our business is conducted via email and phone. It's rare that we meet clients or business associates in person unless the situation warrants it. For example, we closed a six-figure deal with a San Francisco-based company without even meeting the CEO face to face. The give and take was basically - based on emails and conversations, we knew what they needed. They saw what we were capable of doing, checked our references and we signed the contracts.

2. Before making the deal did you know the other party? - Did you conduct the entire deal via email? - If not what other communication methods came into play - phone, fax, face to face? - How much was email used if other comm methods came into play ? (only for the initial contact, everything but signing a paper contract...etc)

Before we made the deal, we knew of this company but, it wasn't until we actually started doing business did we really get to know our respective teams. The only two communications means that were used in the sealing of this deal were the telephone and email. Even the signing of the contract was done electronically - they applied a digital signature to our contract.

3. How many deals do you make via email in an average month or year?

As I said, most of our business is through email. We handle about two to three projects per month and aside from the initial consultation, which is done by phone, most of our business is done via email. I, personally, communicate with my mentors via email.

4. Have you found email to be a great way to make deals or do you prefer phone calls, faxes or face to face?

Email has been the best! If we're up at 3am, we're able to compose email and send email to clients. Most of our clients are start-ups so their home phone is their business phone. If we get ideas in the middle of the night, we know we can't call and leave a message so, we send an email and copy each other. And the beauty of that too, is that email is in print - so to speak. You can have the information directly in front of you when you have your next conversation. Client's can't say, "No, I didn't say that", about an email that they sent. Cut and paste stops all that. And plus, people think more. If you know that what you are going to say is going to be around, potentially forever, you think about what you say.

5. The email deals you have made, have they been with those in your local area or a close state, or in another time zone or country?

We have one client in San Francisco but, we are currently courting a client located in Botswana.

6. Please share any other comments you have about email deal making.

The only tips I can give are:

1)Use a signature file - this way client's always have your contact information in front of them. And if something you write gets forwarded, the recipient can contact you.

2)Be professional. Don't send clients spam or any other junk mail. It's ok to send BUSINESS appropriate stuff now and again but,don't over do it.

3)Use email as a CYA method. After every teleconference that we have with clients, we send a synopsis via email that includes action items and deliverables and we copy one another. This way you are always on track. Email keeps communication lines open and that is key.

4)Email is cheap. Use it. Save money.

5) However, just because it's cheap don't use it as a catch all. If you feel like you need to reach out to a client by phone, then make that call. It may make all the difference in the world to a client.

7. *What are some resources you use to find others to make deals with and mutually grow your business?*  
I use web sites like guru.com, iniku.com and the like. The B2B sites are good as well.