

# More On Advertising

Ted Lawrence,  
Advertising Director  
Missouri Press Service



## Customer Retention vs. Acquisition

Corey Elliott of Borrell Associates recently presented a report on what small businesses are focusing on in 2021 vs. 2020. Some of what he found seems to be common sense; some is less obvious.

For instance, he looked at the efforts made to ensure the retention of existing customers vs. the acquisition of new customers

It is not surprising that in 2020, most small businesses focused on retention. (Read: survival.)

But in 2021, they say it's all about acquiring new customers. In fact, 59% of small businesses say they are more focused on acquiring new customers than they were in 2020. This makes sense, considering most businesses, focused in 2020 on staying open, not necessarily on growth. But today those business owners are telling us that they are ready to expand again.

**This Borrell report answers some important questions:**

What do business owners think is their best way to acquire new customers? What media are they using? What tactics?

65% say that the number one thing they need to do to acquire is to buy Social Media ads. The number two approach, taken by 52% of business owners, is to utilize Search Engine Marketing. The third is to develop community partnerships. (39%)

After four more digital approaches, like email, ads-in-apps, etc., the first non-digital tactic is listed at number 8, and it's one we know and love. Yes, 29% said they are using newspaper ads to acquire new customers.

And here's the bottom line: Only 43% of business owners claim to be "really good" at acquiring new customers. That means more than half of them know they need help. They need someone like you who can come in and explain that the tactics used to retain customers (Social Media ads, email lists, etc.) are not the same tactics that are most effective in acquiring new customers. That newspaper ads are among the most trusted. That customers want to support local businesses in 2021, and that the best way for those businesses to present themselves as 'local' is to consistently appear in the local newspaper.

***So let's get out there and help them fulfill their 'desire to acquire'!***

