Houzz Marketing A to Zz

Everything You Need to Know to Use Houzz to Grow Your Business
Table of Contents

What is Houzz? How does it work? ........................................................................................................... 3

Who Should Use Houzz for Marketing? ................................................................................................. 4

Why Use Houzz? 5 Reasons .................................................................................................................... 7

How Are Homeowners Using Houzz? .................................................................................................... 13

How Houzz Generates Business for Professionals ................................................................................. 16

How to Set Up Your Profile on Houzz .................................................................................................. 24

Create a Project and Upload Photos and Drawings ............................................................................... 22

Integrate Houzz with Your Offline Marketing ......................................................................................... 27

How to Make Sure People Find you on Houzz ...................................................................................... 32

Three Ways to Use Ideabooks to Grow Your Business ........................................................................... 44

How to Know if Houzz is Working for You ............................................................................................ 48

Takeaways and Next Steps ...................................................................................................................... 51
What is Houzz? How Does it Work?

First things first. The name! Houzz comes from “House” + “Buzz” and is pronounced “Howz.”

Houzz is the place 35 million homeowners find and save beautiful home photos. Compiling the features, styles, colors, patterns and designs they want, they can then collaborate with friends and family.

When they’re ready to make a move, they can search designers and contractors in their local area right on Houzz.

They’ll see your business’ reviews, projects, before and after photos, helpful answers provided in discussions. Everything they need to know to make the best choice – and it might just be YOU!

Here is an ideabook widget. Created by a homeowner, notice that it prominently features the name of the professional who took the photo (angelien garden & landscape).
Who Should Use Houzz for Marketing?
Those whose offerings include home and property improvement, design, build and repair services or products. Especially should those who offer services or products related to bathrooms and kitchen projects jump in.

Why? Twenty-eight and 23 percent respectively of those surveyed for the 2013 Houzz and Home report say that kitchen and bath are priority for their next project.
Who Else Should Use Houzz?

Look at some of the other, perhaps less obvious categories, you can choose when you sign up for your new Houzz account:

- home stagers
- home and outdoor media designers and installers
- lawn and sprinkler
- media and bloggers
- photographers (Houzz pros need local photographers to take their photos)
- pools and spa
- realtors (great reference for real estate agents here)
- rubbish removal
- schools and organizations (specifically, those related to design)
- solar energy
- tree services
- environmental services and restoration

Would YOUR business fit in on Houzz?
Why Use Houzz?
5 Reasons
Reason #1: Business is Booming & Homeowners are Hiring

According to the [2013 Houzz and Home report](#), 48 percent of homeowners are planning to remodel or build an addition or custom home in the next two years. Fully 84% of respondents reported plans to decorate or redecorate.

Your potential customers aren’t planning to skimp, either. The average budget for a kitchen remodel? Over $28,000!

Fifty-eight percent of those planning a remodel say they plan to hire professional help. Of course, of the remaining 42%, you know as well as I do that a few days, weeks, or even hours into a project many will start looking for some help!
Reason #2: Information-Gathering Methods Have Shifted

You might think that the biggest source of ideas or advice on home projects would be word-of-mouth. Not so! According to a report commissioned by Houzz, only around 5% said their main source of information was word-of-mouth.

Compare that to 68% who cited online sources (including Houzz) as their main source of ideas and advice - which means you need to be out there - in as many places that make sense for your business.
Reason #3: Decision-Making Priorities are Clear – and Houzz Can Help

The report also states that major factors in choosing a professional include the quality of ratings and reviews as well as demonstrated expertise. Houzz gives you a place to showcase both.

Homeowners also cited a “personality I can work with” as a much more important factor than cost. The ability to add projects and photos with captions, as well as participation in discussions and the way you answer questions will allow your likable personality to shine!
Reason #4: Google likes Houzz

Categories and profiles are indexed by Google. In the example on the right, Houzz shows up as the third non-paid listing. Try a search for yourself!
Still Not Convinced?

Reason #5: Amazing Statistics:

- Houzz monthly page views: 190 million (most recently available stat)
- Monthly unique users: 16 million (as of January 2014)
- Over 3 million user-created ideabooks
- 12 million mobile app downloads

Then There are Houzz success stories:

Fredrick & Fredrick Architects got a cover photo on This Old House because the editor found them on Houzz.

Some designers and others say as much as 65% of their website traffic comes from Houzz. In fact, one closet designer saw a 60% increase in blog traffic in their first month on Houzz.
How are Homeowners Using Houzz?
"I LOVE Houzz! We had a problem with the decking on our lanai. I searched Houzz for ideas. I found artificial turf and looked at tons of pictures of beautiful backyards. After talking with a few companies on Houzz, I decided on one.

I also transformed our bonus room into a guest suite and found many items on Houzz. Anyone that has a great product to sell should be on Houzz!“
-Victoria H. (tyler3554)

"I add something to my Houzz Ideabook because of something that catches my eye in the picture. It can be a beautiful vista, a cool idea, an innovative product or a house/room design that I like. Unlike Pinterest where links to pictures get broken, Houzz retains the highest possible image so I can always go back and zoom in."
-Daniel H.
How Engaged are Visitors?

This Alexa.com Printscreen Shows a high number of daily page views per visitor

By comparison, visitors to Pinterest, another site popular with the home decorating/design crowd, spend slightly more time per day on the site, but view about half a page fewer than Houzz users per visit.

Houzz attracts a very loyal user base!
How Does Houzz Generate Business for Professionals?
Ideabooks

Homeowners create ideabooks as they are planning a project. Ideabooks are full of photos from various professionals that inspire the homeowner. When you look at the photos, it’s easy to see which professional took the photo.

As they collect your photos, they may notice that many of their favorites are yours AND they may realize that you’re local.

Other homeowners may see the ideabook and notice the same thing!
Discussions & Photo Questions

Homeowners also ask for help in Houzz discussions. When you participate and provide helpful answers, you establish yourself as an expert, get to showcase your personality and your work, and the answer becomes part of your profile.

Don’t feel you have to limit yourself to answering questions of only local homeowners - your answer to someone in Madison might be seen by (and impress) someone in your home town of Toledo!

They see your answer, are impressed and they hire you!
Potential for Tremendous Exposure

When you add great photos to Houzz, Houzz writers and editors may add those to their articles and ideabooks, or feature them on the home page, which means a lot more exposure for you and your work.

No one can pay for that kind of exposure so it comes with a high trust factor to browsing homeowners. Upload your own photos of excellent quality that are at least 1000px wide for your best chance at inclusion.
Increased Website Traffic & Lead Generation

You can add links to your website on every project and photo you upload to Houzz, increasing the chances people will visit your site to learn more and possibly become a lead.
Sell Your Products on Houzz

While Houzz is big with the service and design crowd, it’s also become a viable market place for selling home-related goods online.

Here’s what you need to know:

• You first need to become an approved seller at houzz.com/seller.
• You add products, setting your prices and handling delivery or shipping.
• Houzz processes the payment and allows you to track inventory.
• House charges a 15% referral fee.

“Houzz is the go-to source for high-end remodeling, interior Design and products. It’s the perfect place for us to be.”

David Masin,
Masins Fine Furnishings
Tips for Product Sellers:

For best results, don’t just list your products and wait for the orders to come in! For the best chance of discovery, be an active user, just like any service provider.

You can save products to ideabooks, so make sure you take pictures of your products in real-life settings. Then you can create an ideabook around the product, while still making the ideabook one that will be fun to peruse!
A Houzz Professional Shares His Experience

“Houzz has created a site that generates interest from those in a position to buy. Houzzers readily get an idea of our design abilities and quality and typically this leads to a good fit and a good working relationship.”  - Peter Wodarz, Milieu Design

Milieu Design offers landscape design, maintenance, lighting and snowplowing. They’re a “Best of Houzz” winner for design AND service. Check out the account for some inspiration.
How to Set Up Your Profile on Houzz
How to set up your professional profile on Houzz

1. Create a profile.
2. Choose “Professional.”
3. Confirm your email address.
4. Complete your profile, choosing your category carefully.

Additional details are optional, but as with all online profiles, the more information you can provide, the better!

- Use keywords in your business description and services provided
- List every city and region you serve
- Be sure to upload a profile photo of you or your team. A business logo will work, but is not ideal.

Grab the free Profile Checklist here.
Setup Tips for Greater Exposure

- Add a cover photo. Upload an image at least 1200px wide. You will be able to crop it to a maximum of 1200x300. Keep in mind that there is a shadow gradient that extends about halfway up the image.
- Create a project and upload at least five images of your work*
- Encourage at least three customers to review your work. *
  Note: If your customers aren’t online savvy, they can fill out a hard copy and send it to Houzz. Here’s how.
- Add a Houzz badge to your site*.
- Allow people to add photos to houzz from your site - add the code http://www.houzz.com/buttonsAndBadges
- Make it easy for people to learn more about you by adding your social links to your profile.
- Add a Houzz tab to your Facebook page.
- Add Houzz widgets to your website. You can add Houzz reviews, slideshows and badges.

*These items will improve your ranking with the Houzz algorithm.
How to Create a Project and Upload Photos
Create a Project

1. Go to upload photos or projects.
2. In the drop-down menu to choose a project, select “Create New Project” and name it. Use keywords to describe the product or service you’ll feature in the image.
3. Fill in all the fields and upload images for which you own the copyright or are otherwise licensed to use, and that meet the quality guidelines shown. Remember that “keywords” here refers to the entire project, not just to the images you will upload.

A note about images – to increase your chances of being featured, make sure your images are of high quality and at least 1000 px wide. If at all possible, hire a professional photographer to document your projects. You can find one on Houzz!
Upload Photos and Drawings

Now it’s time to fill up your project with at least five images. Upload the images and then.

1. Go back to each photo you have uploaded and refine the description and keywords, making them as specific as possible. Houzz recommends using keywords to identify:
   1. Specific materials used
   2. Colors and patterns
   3. Shapes and sizes
   4. Quantities
   5. Products with features
   6. Designer or brand names

2. Add tags to photos, where applicable. If you used, say, a faucet by Kohler in your design, you can tag that item in your photo by clicking in the image where the item appears and then selecting “Product Tag.” You can upload any missing products by selecting “Upload” in the upper right corner of any Houzz page and selecting “products” as the category. Then go back and use your new tag.

3. [Here’s an example of a very well-done project](#). The only thing that would be better is if each photo description were unique.
How to Integrate Houzz with Offline Marketing
As with all online marketing, Houzz is more powerful when you integrate it with all your offline marketing and branding! Get Houzz stickers, consider adding a mention of Houzz to your company vehicles, business cards, brochures, etc.
How to Make Sure People Find You on Houzz
Homeowners can find you via keyword searches, which is why your profile setup is so important, and why you should spend plenty of time writing your descriptions on projects and individual product photos.

Other factors that will help you rank highly and be discovered more readily:

- A large number of photos
- High quality photos
- Popular, relevant keywords
- Lots of good reviews
- Relevance
- Plenty of detail in the descriptions of your images
- Staying involved! Recent activity boosts your rankings.
Submit your Projects and Get Featured!

Big or small, Houzz wants you to submit your best projects to editors for a possible featured ideabook. These are not paid placements, which benefits you, the featured professional even more valuable as homeowners will know it’s based solely on quality!

The key to being featured is sending in a project that will likely resonate with the community. It may also be a benefit to you if you are in one of the less crowded categories (lawn and sprinkler versus kitchen and bath).

Houzz also recommends a focus on small to medium-sized homes and budget-friendly projects. Follow all their guidelines completely for your best chance at getting featured!
Be Social

Community interaction is one of the ways you’ll be found on Houzz - not only because of the Houzz search algorithm, but also because of the increased opportunity for incidental discovery - so stay involved!

Follow Others

Follow other designers whose work inspires you. Follow homeowners who interact with you. Follow local providers whose work complements your own. For example, if you are a landscape artist, follow local pool and spa installers. You never know what networking opportunities might arise offline as well!
Watch for and Promptly Answer Direct Questions

Viewers can post questions on any of your images or on your profile itself. When a question is posted, you will be notified, so keep an eye out!

If you are afraid you’ll miss the email, create a filter for emails with this subject line: “Someone has a question about one of your photos on Houzz.” You can also check the “Questions” link on your profile just to make sure.
Answer Questions Posed to Other Pros

A note on etiquette - if someone asks a question on the photo of another pro, it’s considered impolite to answer before they do - unless they don’t respond in a couple of days, in which case, it’s fair game! You can also chime in after they’ve had a chance to have their say.

To find places you might provide helpful information, search photos for your area of expertise. Look for a question you can answer, and then go for it!
Work Those Discussions!

You can contribute to any discussion. Just browse until you see one you want to weigh in on. For example, this one on how to update a black and white kitchen.

When you respond, you can include a link to any image on Houzz, so if you have an example of a fabulous black and white kitchen on your own account, link there for even more exposure.

Another bonus when you contribute to a discussion is that your answers show up on your profile, letting people see that you are engaged and present!
As is the case with social media and your blog, contributing valuable, helpful information to readers establishes you as an expert in your field and increases your business exposure.

Even if the person who started the discussion is way outside your service area, someone down the street from you could see it and then notice you for the very first time. You might find great opportunities to share your expertise in the “Design Dilemma” discussions.

Even if the question isn’t directly related to what you do, if you have something helpful to say, say it!
Start a Before and After Discussion

Everyone loves a Cinderella story. Showing what you’ve been able to do with that ugly yard/bathroom/porch/whatever really helps people imagine what you can do for them. Check out this example.

When you create your own, you might want to include the location in the title or description. Also, include keywords to describe the materials, color, style and room/area involved. If there was a special challenge (tiny bathroom remodel?) mention that, too! Just try a search on Houzz to see what you should include to be found for your before and after!
Start a Poll

Your audience is willing and eager to provide you with free market research information! Ask a question to help you figure out what your customers want, what their challenges are and what their priorities are.

For example, this poll about the most important finishing touches for cabinets. You could also upload or link to several photos (you can link to Houzz photos even if they’re not yours) and ask readers to pick their favorite.
Start a Pro-to-Pro Discussion

If you’re looking to benefit from the experience of other professionals in your industry, network with others in your area, or just make connections, this is the place to be.

Only pros can enter this section, so this is the place to ask for help, get opinions and collaborate freely.
Advertise!

Local businesses can use Houzz advertising to:

- Get more exposure in the local area
- List their business in additional categories or locations
- Target homeowners looking for professionals to hire

Get more information or Call 1 (800) 640-8061

National brands can advertise on Houzz, too.

Advertise on Houzz

Houzz is #1 at reaching U.S. homeowners who are actively building, remodeling and decorating. Learn more about our solutions:

For Local Businesses  For National Brands

25 Million+ Monthly Homeowners

500,000+ Local Professionals

90% Own a Home

Big Plans

In the next two years, Houzz users plan to:

- Decorate 73%
- Build an Addition or Remodel 40%
- Build a Custom Home 9%
Three Ways to Use Ideabooks to Grow Your Business
Ideabook Strategy #1: Showcase YOUR Style with the Work of Others

No doubt there are projects you could do, in styles you’d like to work in that just haven’t happened for you yet (or you didn’t get a photo when you did it).

Create ideabooks of other people’s work to show what you could do given the chance. It’s a great way to showcase your style and get more of the work you want. It’s also another great way to get found.

Don’t worry about advertising for the competition. For service professionals, being local is key. So, feature work done by other pros outside your local area.
Ideabook Strategy #2: Collaborate with Customers

Pros can create ideabooks to share concepts, color schemes and other options with clients. Just create an ideabook (click “collaborate” and make it private if you want), add images to it and when you’re ready to share it, click “collaborate” and add in anyone you want to see it.

Collaborators can then move images to a new ideabook, comment on photos (privately, too, even if the ideabook is public) and delete images if you’ve given him or her edit permissions.
Ideabook Strategy #3: Use Ideabooks as Guides or Stories

Only Houzz contributors can post actual stories and guides, but you can make your own by unofficial guides by creating a public idea book with plenty of beautiful images and helpful text.

Want to recreate your “how to build a deck with pallet boards” ebook on Houzz? Go for it!

You can either use actual photos of the process, or upload images of the ebook Pages.
How to Know if Houzz is Working for Your Business
While the number of ideabooks your images appear in is a good indicator of your successful use of the platform, the real question is – *is Houzz supporting your overall marketing and business goals?*

If your goal was more website traffic, check Google analytics or HubSpot to see how much traffic you’re getting from Houzz.

If leads are what you are after, you should have tracking in place (goals in Google analytics) or some other way to see where your leads are coming from (ahem, HubSpot).
If the only thing you care about is acquiring new customers, you need to make sure that you ask every single person you speak to how they heard about you. Because it can be difficult to remember all the places they’ve seen you, ask every new customer if they have seen you on Houzz.

As with any kind of organic online marketing, give it time. You’ll need more than a few months of diligent and consistent effort in order to know if this is a good platform for your business.

In fact, it’s a good idea to plan on at least six months of consistent effort when evaluating any kind of new organic online marketing.
Takeaways and Next Steps
Houzz can be an incredibly powerful marketing tool for a home-related service or product business. It doesn’t require a huge marketing budget, fancy equipment, or technical expertise.

What it does require is a strategy and follow-through. While the investment in time is substantial, the payoffs can be huge.

So, what are you waiting for? Set up your Houzz profile today – and let us know if we can help!
About the Author

Alisa Meredith, certified Houzz marketer, is a consultant and the self-proclaimed Pinterest fanatic at OverGo Studio.

In 1999 she started writing helpful books and blog posts for the benefit of business owners everywhere.

Catch her on podcasts talking about Pinterest, on the OverGo blog, or on Twitter @alisammeredith.

She’d love to know if you found this ebook helpful – click to send her a tweet!
About Us

We build. We execute. You love. You Grow.
We love to build and execute marketing processes that stimulate growth for our clients.

We are your inbound marketing team. Click below to request a consult.