

Webinar starts at 9AM Pacific (12 Noon Eastern)

Solar Marketing and Public Relations

Presented by:

Jeff Spies

President SOLARSPIES

NABCEP Secretary

- **Audio options**

- Telephone - Refer to email for phone number
- Computer speakers or headset
- Move close to router or use a wired connection

- **Q & A**

- Chat - Type your question into chat window and host will read question to presenter
- Questions addressed based upon time

- **Download entire presentation with presenter notes at groSolar.com/training**

Presentation Outline



- Planning YOUR marketing program
- Target customers
 - Residential
 - Commercial
- Referrals
- Online Marketing
 - Website, Email, Press Releases, Social Media
- Trade Shows & Home Shows
- Training Events
- Lead Generation Services
- Print Ads
- Outdoor Ads
- Radio & TV


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Jeff Spies Biography



• President of 

• Secretary for 

• Training for 



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•Pre-Solar Experience

- Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Michigan State University
- 20 years experience in sales & marketing of electrical and mechanical motion control systems for industrial automation applications
- Extensive technical product training experience throughout North America and overseas

•AEE Solar Director of Training 2007 - 2010

- Organized the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd annual AEE Solar Dealer Conferences - Largest supplier based solar training events in North America
- Solar training webpage ranked #1 "Solar Training" link on Google for 2 years
- Featured speaker at major industry tradeshow and conferences
 - SPI, Intersolar, ASES, Northwest Solar Expo, NECA, IREC, MREF

•NABCEP Secretary - North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners

- NABCEP is the Solar Industry Certification Agency

•President of SolarSpies

- Training program development for groSolar and Solar Energy International

It's all about the leads

- Plan
- Execute
- Measure and Refine



Carefully plan your marketing approach

Clearly define your market geography - smaller often better

Identify target markets - Understand your ideal customers hotbuttons

Lead generation should effectively pre-qualify customers

Minimize sorting huge pile of leads for the one good customer

Constantly monitor marketing program effectiveness

ALWAYS ask prospect how they learned about you

Effective Advertising



- **Repetition** is the key to effective advertising
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- **Repetition** is the key to effective advertising
- Ads need to be seen 7-30 times
- Smaller ads with more frequency



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Branding recognition is imperative

Customers must see your brand/marketing messages 7-30 times before buying decision

Residential Customers

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What the World Needs. NOW™

- Empty nesters
- Retirees
- Business owners
- Corporate managers
- Professionals
- Best prospects:
 - Masters or PHD degrees
 - \$100-200K annual income
 - \$250-500K home value



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Commercial Customers

- Financially savvy
- Quality prospects have good potential to secure financing
- Often motivated by green marketing programs



Referrals

- Word of mouth advertising
 - Best source of quality leads
- Customer referrals letters
- Referral programs with rewards – branded swag

My solar installer was fantastic!



Provide customers with a quality system at a fair price makes happy customers into effective quality lead generators

After system is installed, ask happy customers for referral letter

Provide referral letter form in your final document package and on website

Referral programs with rewards

Branded swag rewards, Cash rewards

Website

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What the World Needs. NOW™

- Corporate presence website mandatory
- Online form for customer qualification
 - FindSolar.com
- Search Engine Optimization
 - Google adwords targeted to limited geography



Google AdWords

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Basic corporate presence website at the minimum
contact info including address, phone, email
licenses, certifications, qualifications
Display project photos – quality images only!

Online pre-qualification lead generation
Similar to Findsolar.com
Customer provides address, utility info
System provides ball park quote

Search Engine Optimization
Google adwords can be targeted to limited geography
Linking strategy is key to good SEO

Email

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What the World Needs. NOW™

- Email lists
 - “add me to your email list” button on website
- Avoid being labeled a spammer
- Use email marketing services with opt out function



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Email lists

Website “add me to your email list”

Purchasing email lists, but be VERY discriminating

Avoid being labeled a spammer

NEVER send marketing email from your email system - if you send email to more than 15 recipients, you risk being labeled a spammer by spam blocking services like spamhaus

Always use email marketing service (ie. Constant Contact) with opt out function

Press Releases

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What the World Needs. NOW™

- Free to produce
- Inexpensive to distribute
- Should grab attention quickly
- Post on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs...
- Writing an effective press release
 - Links shown in notes



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Free to produce

Inexpensive to distribute

Should grab attention quickly

Writing an effective press release

<http://www.netpreneur.org/news/prmachine/pr/default.html>

<http://www.wagingpeace.org/menu/action/action-tools/how-to-press-release.htm>

<http://www.allbusiness.com/marketing/public-relations-press-release/881-1.html>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Press-Release>

Social Media **groSolar**
What the World Needs. NOW™

- Services evolve quickly
- Facebook 
- Twitter 
- Linked In 
- Blogs – Website, REW 

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Post updates on all services

Facebook

Massive growth in past 2 years

Convenient networking platform for referrals

Twitter

Short 140 character messages

Linked In

Good for branding and trade recognition

Blogs

Your company website

REW total access package

Trade Shows & Home Shows

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What the World Needs. NOW™

- Home Show
- Trade Show
- Green shows are over-abundant
- Stand out in the crowd



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Home shows

Homeowners

Trade shows

Commercial customers

Contractors: solar, electrical, roofing, hvac

Green shows are over abundant

Carefully select based on your target audience

Stand out in the crowd

Best in Show Booth Design

Proper Staffing

2011 Industry Events



- **Feb 22-24** **Electric West** - Long Beach, CA
- **Mar 8-10** **REW Conf & Expo** – Tampa, FL
- **April 3-5** **PV America** - Philadelphia, PA
- **Apr 29 - May 1** **NW Solar Expo** - Portland, OR
- **May 19-21** **Solar 2011** - Raleigh, NC
- **June 17-19** **Midwest RE Fair** - Custer, WI
- **July 12-14** **Intersolar** - San Francisco, CA
- **Oct 18-20** **SPI 2011** - Dallas, TX
- **Oct 23-25** **NECA** - San Diego, CA

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Feb 22-24

Electric West - Long Beach, CA
<http://www.electricshow.com>

Mar 8-10

REW Conf & Expo – Tampa, FL
<http://www.renewableenergyworld-events.com/index.html> **Utility and large commercial focus**

April 3-5

PV America - Philadelphia, PA
<http://www.pvamericaexpo.com> **groSolar Booth**

Apr 29 - May 1

Northwest Solar Expo - Portland, OR
<http://www.nwsolarexpo.com>

May 19-21

Solar 2011 - Raleigh, NC
<http://www.nationalsolarconference.org/>

June 17-19

Midwest RE Fair - Custer, WI
<http://www.the-lotsa.com/> **Lotsa Fun!**

July 12-14

Intersolar - San Francisco, CA
<http://www.intersolar.us>

Oct 18-20

Solar Power International - Dallas, TX
<http://www.solarpowerinternational.com/> **Biggest solar show in North America**

Oct 23-25

NECA - San Diego, CA
<http://www.necaconvention.org>

Booth Staffing

1. Big smile and friendly demeanor
2. Effective handshake
3. Humor
4. Product knowledge
5. Entertainment



Be the center of attention in your booth "neighborhood"

Big smile and friendly demeanor

Effective handshake technique - Physical contact increases likelihood of buying

Laughter - Having a staff member with a sense of humor AND product knowledge works wonders

Entertainment - People are drawn to crowds of people Entertaining gregarious booth staffers reign supreme

Be the center of attention in your booth "neighborhood" Get your neighbors to congregate in your booth

Big smile and friendly demeanor - People love friendly booth staff. Gregarious outgoing booth staff attract more prospects.

Handshakes - When you touch a prospect (handshake, high 5, shoulder slap, and even a hug) you increase the potential to turn the prospect into a customer. The touch should not be forced, but should be natural. If you have good rapport with the prospect and you tell them a funny joke, a backslap is acceptable when done correctly. If you really bond, a hug can do wonders, but be very discriminating with any contact beyond the handshake. Judging proper way to make physical contact is a learned process and I will restate that any touching beyond a handshake must be natural and not forced. Do it wrong, and you lose the prospect.

Laughter - Make them laugh within 30 seconds and they are more likely to purchase from you. Having a staff member with a sense of humor and product knowledge works wonders. My primary goal with ALL booth visitors is to get them smiling and laughing within 30 seconds (15 seconds is better). Not everyone has this ability, but if you have someone on staff that is the life of the party, you might want to have them in your booth making the place lively.

Entertainment - People are drawn to crowds of people and having entertaining staff working the booth keeps interested prospects at your booth listening to your pitch, and the crowds automatically attract additional people.

Create a nice trade show booth "neighborhood" - Get your booth neighbors to like you. Chat them up. Give them free coffee and food. Joke around with them. Share laughter. In the slow times, they will hang out at your booth attracting more visitors.

Backdrop and Displays

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- Popup booth backdrops
- Messaging
 - Simple with quality logo/graphics
- Hardware
 - Show visitors flock to **interesting** solar displays
 - Video displays less important



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Booth backdrop is important

Pop-up backdrop preferred to banners. Banners look cheap. Much better to use a popup backdrop. They are pretty inexpensive and the investment is well worth it over the long run. Look professional. Avoid tables that separate you from prospects

Messaging

State your product/service clearly and simply.

Don't clutter your backdrop with lots of text.

Show visitors rarely read anything other than 2-3 lines from your backdrop.

Hardware

Show visitors love hardware

Attractive interesting displays that are easily touched. When a prospect touches the products, the likelihood they will buy from you goes up considerably.

Video

Can be an effective supplement to good staff, but don't expect anyone to watch more than 30 seconds I am not a big fan of video because I have seen few show visitors actually watching the videos. Remember that people tend to go to shows to see product and talk to booth staff, not watch TV.

Booth Strategies

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- Raffles, games, and giveaways have mixed results
- Dirty booths are major turn off
- Chairs and table
 - Use only in cordoned off meeting area
 - Booth staffers should ALWAYS be standing



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Raffles, games, giveaways

These can attract people but leads are often lower value

Try to qualify leads effectively to minimize processing

I used to work for a manufacturer that had a fun game in the booth that attracted big crowds. We scanned the badges of the participants, but the value of these leads were almost zero. Those that played the game and were good leads would have come to our booth anyway. The crowds that congregated around the game actually impeded the pathways for legit prospects that wanted to talk to a booth staffer.

Dirty booths are a major turn off

Keep your coffee cups and computer bags out of sight.

Store supplies & belongings out of sight – behind backdrop or in closet

Chairs in the booth

Avoid chairs except for use in predefined meeting area

Staffers should ALWAYS stand unless engaged in active meeting with prospect

Training Events



- Educate the community
 - Understanding PV Tech
 - How to buy solar
- Libraries, church groups, real estate groups, solar groups....
- Presentations
 - Less text more dialog



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“How to” buy solar

Educate the community on solar benefits and technology

Speaking engagements

Libraries, church groups, real estate groups, rotary, chamber of commerce, solar groups

Presentations

Less text more dialog

Lead Generation Services

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What the World Needs. NOW™

- Findsolar.com
 - CoolerPlanet.com
- Home Power contractor guide
- Solar Today contractor guide
- Active lead life
 - Residential 1-3 days
 - Commercial longer



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Findsolar.com <http://www.findsolar.com/>

Cooler planet <http://solar.coolerplanet.com/>

Home Power contractor guide <http://homepower.com>

Solar Today contractor guide <http://ases.org/>

Get Solar <http://www.getsolar.com/>

Print Advertising

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What the World Needs. NOW™

- Newspapers
 - community newspapers strong
- Magazines
 - targeted audience
- Direct mail
- Door hangers
- Yellow pages



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Newspapers – community newspapers still strong

Magazines – more targeted audience

Mailers

Door hangers

Yellow Pages

Direct Mail

Purchasing mailing list

Develop your own mailing list

Outdoor Advertising

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What the World Needs. NOW™

- Company vehicles
 - Rolling advertisements
 - Drivers safe & courteous
- Worksite signage – with customers permission
- Bus signs
- Subway signs
- Taxicab signs
- Billboards



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Company vehicles

Fantastic rolling advertisements

Drivers must be safe & courteous

Worksite signage – with customers permission

Billboards

Bus signs

Subway signs

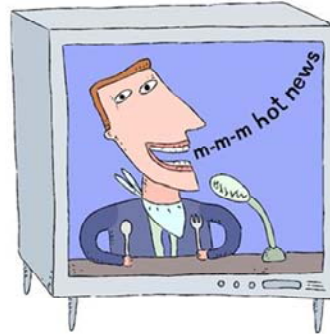
Taxicab signs

Radio and TV

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- Media coverage often more effective than commercials
 - Get interviewed at interesting job site
- TV
 - Paid Sunday morning interview shows
- Radio
 - NPR attracts key demographic audience



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Media coverage may be more effective than paid commercials

Get interviewed at interesting job site

TV

Paid Sunday morning interview shows

Radio

NPR attracts key demographic audience

“gro” your solar business with

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- Largest 100% percent U.S. owned distributor in the solar industry
- Quality products you can trust
- Excellent customer service
 - we call our customers back!

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