

A simple guide to marketing your new business

Frequently perceived as expensive (marketing isn't if you're getting value for money) and, as always, not as complex as some may have you believe.

To help you get to grips with some of the basic principles, here's a start to a simple overview of some of the types of opportunities that are available to businesses of all sizes. Before you start thinking about marketing your business . . .

Research - a must

There really is nothing like knowing your market place. Understand 'who' your product (or service) is aimed at. 'Where' might you be able to reach that market? This of course should be researched and understood before you even start trading. For some products it will be essential to know 'when' the customers might buy. Christmas decorations tend to sell better to the public in November and December, although if you are selling Christmas promotion products to retailers you'll need to be ready to go in June! Once you have the who, when and where you can start thinking about "how" you are going to find new customers.

Branding - so important.

Often completely overlooked by small businesses. Think about the successful companies you know and you'll picture their corporate image in your mind. Where would Boots be without their distinctive lettering? TOYS R US without the back to front 'R'. In today's visually stimulated world your branding image is so important. Don't be tempted into thinking a branding can be generated from clip art either, from the very start it should be a professionally produced image, it is the only starting place for any serious business person. And, of course, the total stationery package must reflect the branding throughout: letterheads; compliment slips; business cards; invoices; statements; faxes; envelopes as well as the delivery van; premises; shop front; website, bags, packaging, etc.

Advertising - only one option?

Everyone's first thought "Shall I put an ad in the newspaper?". Generally the answer to that is "No!". Although there is a place for ads in publications, it's not for everyone . . . This article continues on <http://www.cmr-group.co.uk/marketingoverview.html> see other free articles on the marketing page of the Custom Marketing Resources website.

Sole traders especially need to get their marketing professionally coordinated if they are planning to make a success from their investment.

Logo; advertisement; website and van.



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Organiser chairman Founder presenter Marketing mentor



Branding? Why bother!

How many images are we bombarded with everyday? On the TV; on the way to work; on the bus; in the train or in the car? Pick up a paper or a magazine or turn on the computer and there's more of those images vying for your attention. Everywhere we look, all the time our eyes are open.

On the simplest level, imaging buying from a shop whose signs are blue, leaflets are red, ads are green, website is black and who's bags are yellow? What confusion. Add to that different size typestyles, thicknesses and uncoordinated images without rhyme or reason. Strangely enough though, that is exactly the situation that many businesses put themselves into. Potential customers cannot easily link together different parts of one business's promotions and in some cases, even a single campaign of simple ads. Easy to see why then that the best way of promoting any individual business or company, is with a theme.

Thankfully gone are the days when serious business people reach out for a bit of clip art to use as a logo, business has become far too sophisticated for that.

There is now an understanding that colours stand for something, you can build a feeling of 'established', 'trust', 'excitement', 'drama', 'reliability', 'fun' just by using a colour - in the right way of course. A graphic can often help create a uniqueness. Typeface also plays a massive part in the portrayal of the image a potential customer might be looking for. If the sign, the leaflet, the van, the ad, the website, the bags - all have a matching image then half the job is done. Potential customers will be able to bring it all together when they see each part of the corporate image, whether it is an ad, a passing van, a website, a business card or a shop front.

If you need some information about "briefing a designer for a branding" then keep the quotes, Google that phrase and read on. Interestingly 5 other companies have used the terms 'Branding? Why bother?' (different ! and ? positions) since CMR produced the original a couple of years ago.

For the full articles 'Branding! Why bother?' go to <http://www.cmr-group.co.uk/brandingwhybother.html> If you want to brief a designer for a branding or simply find out more then go to <http://www.cmr-group.co.uk/briefingbranding.html> See other free articles on the marketing page of the Custom Marketing Resources website.

Just a selection from the Creative Branding page of the Custom Marketing Resources website.



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Ten ways to help you save money on print

Buying print takes practice and knowledge that the majority of businesses will never get to acquire. Anyone who handles it everyday across a wide variety of jobs will quickly get to know the necessary fundamentals to save money.

Many of the statements in this article have been simplified and there are exceptions to every rule, it has been written in everyday language as a general guide only.

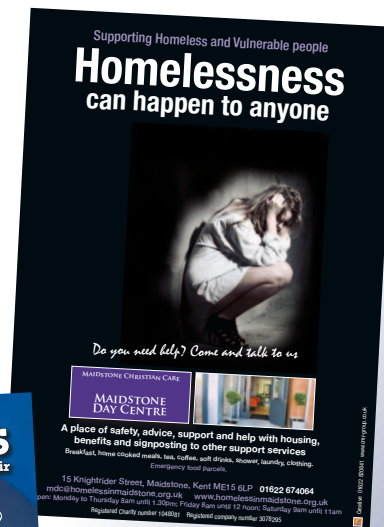
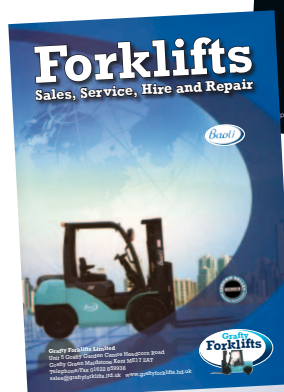
Here's a few tips from a seasoned print buyer:-

1. Quantity. Never buy more than you need. If you need 500 for distribution and a few for stock to see you through for 6 or 12 months then buy 500, don't be tempted by the fact that another 500 only cost a fraction of the first 500 if you order them in one go. Inevitably you will want to update and change the item so avoid waste.

2. Thicknesses. Get to know the weight of the paper you use. We all know 80 gsm it's the one that goes in the photocopier! And the fax machine. Letterheads are more frequently printed on 100 gsm these days, and sometimes the 'luxury' version on 120 gsm. If your printer or photocopier is always giving you problems this could be why - the machinery doesn't like the thickness of the paper. Leaflets are printed on 135 gsm, sometimes 150 gsm and again the 'luxury' version 170 gsm. One thing to look out for is paper so thin that it shows through from the other side. 80 gsm paper is not suitable for two sided printing. Business cards of any quality will be on 250 gsm, the 'luxury' version on 350 gsm and sometimes laminated as well. Avoid free offers from websites that will damage your reputation every time you give out your card! Folders and more prestigious printing jobs are printed on 400 gsm. None of these thicknesses are 'rules' but just general guidance, if you want your job to feel really top notch go thick. Thicker costs more.

3. Size. It matters so learn. A4 is a letterhead, 297 mm x 210 mm. Compliment slips are generally one third A4, 99 mm x 210 mm. Business cards are around 55 mm x 88 mm or credit card size if that is what you specify 54 mm x 85 mm. A5 is half the size of an A4. A3 is twice the size of an A4. Post cards are A6 (a quarter of A4). Generally these are the basic sizes you'll come across in most offices. Printing on standard sizes keeps the cost down . . . This article continues on <http://www.cmr-group.co.uk/savingprintcosts.html> see other free articles on the marketing page of the Custom Marketing Resources website.

Print is less about putting ink on paper and more about what message the print carries to the targeted reader. Print is only part of marketing - getting the message across to the right audience is very important.



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Briefing a designer for a website (making you think)

Like all new technologies do eventually, websites have now passed through the 'newness' barrier. All the website businesses that suddenly sprung up 25 years ago with young enthusiastic 'entrepreneurs' have either become established or (in the main) disappeared through lack of business experience. The website business has finally become of age - well nearly. Beware there are still a few 'enthusiasts' professing to provide a professional service whilst running a disco in the evenings or doing a day job.

More importantly business owners have now realised that it is not an option to have a website, it's essential to have a presence - and it has to be professionally produced to be taken seriously.

So how do you start to tell someone what you think you need? The first thing is for you to clearly define what you want to get out of it. Not everyone provides the type of product or service that can be automated on the web, OK if you sell standard widgets that people either want or not, but not if you are providing a personal service customised to the specific needs of the client. An ecommerce site will deal with basic variations like style, colour and size but you cannot show (and talk about) endless colour variations or feel textures and thicknesses on line.

You might want your site to be able to provide a version of your face to face presentation, either with a video guide through the pages or a talk through with you on the end of the phone while you lead your customer towards his requirements. The biggest benefits of these two are: the first means you are on call 24/7 without even knowing about it; the second enables you to add your personality into the 'meeting' without leaving the office.

You need to know that the biggest search engine in the world tells us very clearly that 77% of all surfers do not schroll - 77%! The viewing area has suddenly become very important. So has getting the size of the web pages. A4 is for paper. Websites have to match screen sizes . . .

This article continues on
<http://www.cmr-group.co.uk/briefingwebsite.html>

See other free articles on the marketing page of the Custom Marketing Resources website, especially "Why is a website like an iceberg" and "What a website can do that other promotions can't" or Google them - with the quotation marks of course!

Websites need to reflect the corporate image of your business, even more so if you are a sole trader. It makes sense if you can find a professional who can help in all areas of marketing, not just websites. With Custom Marketing Resources "One Call Does It All"



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