

## Marketing? Schmarketing!

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The truth is that most businesses don't do it to any great extent, which leads to a jaundiced view of what it is and what it delivers.

Although it has become a science over the last 35 years, the basics are as plain as the nose on your face. You **HAVE** to do it! A bald and uncompromising statement that is beyond refute. If you don't nobody will know you exist or how good you or what you do are.

Now, about those basics; when you are starting out or in the earlier stages of development, perceived bigness is a major issue. To be taken seriously you will most likely need to be seen to be bigger than you actually are. This is where the most fundamental part of any marketing kicks in – your identity.

The way you present yourself will determine how you are perceived, it's the same as sales, if you don't leave something to be remembered by, you won't be remembered!

Get yourself a good strong identity that is simple, memorable and relevant. This will form the cornerstone of your brand (see branding in the next issue).

The next and most vital thing you need to do is to analyse your proposition. All too often businesses large and small lose sight of the most important participant in their business – the customer.

OK, you know your thing inside out and backwards. You also know how it works and why it is the best thing since sliced bread – your customers don't!

A tired but true acronym falls into play here – KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid). Don't be tempted to try getting your target market (marketing speak for your potential customers) to eat the whole Elephant in one sitting. Break your proposition down into easily understood portions. This has two main benefits: 1 you will probably be the only one in your sector doing this and 2 you have more reasons to revisit them more often, giving you increased exposure and educating them into the bargain.

You see, these things are not science, they are logical and, for the most part, common sense. Collectively they will have a huge impact on your market presence and your business.

If you take a look at what the big boys are doing you will find that the little gems imparted here are actually what they do most of all. The Nike 'tick' the Audi connected circles; they are both very strong visual identities that are

reinforced at every possible point of contact with their customers and potential customers.

Then look at what they say about their stuff: Vorsprung durch technik was once define in a double page spread ad in 9pt text in a broadsheet newspaper because people wanted to know. Now they don't care they simply recognise it as a phrase synonymous with quality – WOW!

Neither ever, ever try to tell you everything about what they do and neither do they ever try to leave you in any doubt as to who has been talking to you by whatever means.

Marketing? It's the most simple and fundamental of all human instincts and yet it can be one of the most very, very difficult to get right. Start with the basics and, if you have the foresight to invest, have a chat with someone who can help.

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