

How to get a better return from your marketing budget

In this Special Report
Bernard Savage of Size 10½ Boots
reveals how you can make every penny
of your marketing budget
work harder

Special Report



How to get a better return from your marketing budget

Dear Reader,

Which of the following 10½ situations apply to you?

1. You have a very limited marketing budget.
2. You operate in a firm where marketing is seen as a necessary evil.
3. You have a small in-house team to implement your plan.
4. You want to improve your return on marketing investment.
5. You don't measure the effectiveness of your campaigns.
6. You don't research the effectiveness of different marketing tactics.
7. You are being asked to justify or explain the firm's expenditure in marketing.
8. You've always set a budget based on what you did last year and need new ideas.
9. You are setting up a marketing budget for the first time and need inspiration.
10. You want to know what works and what doesn't.
- 10½. You keep doing what you have always done, it's easier that way!

How many of these scenarios apply to you? 2, 3, more?

If you can relate to 3 or more then this report will benefit you in a number of ways.

Marketing for success

Marketing can be seen as an integral investment in your firm's present and future success.

But what is marketing?

Definitions of marketing are plentiful and mean different things depending on what industry you operate in. Here is one we particularly like:

'Marketing is a social and managerial process, by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products or services of value with others.'

Marketing has been greatly misunderstood since the concept was born, especially in professional services.

In fact, many in the sector see marketing as an unnecessary evil. This perception makes it difficult for marketing to be effectively implemented outside the conventional business world.

However, you need to be aware that marketers have the ability to:

- identify and manage client demand
- know how to understand client/customer needs by establishing relationships
- create an offer to satisfy those needs
- present all of this at the right place at the right time

They are the eyes and ears of your potential and existing clients. You could say they are the client's voice in your firm.



Marketing is therefore one of the most essential and premier components of any organisation.

To ensure you keep up to date with changes in client behaviour and legislations in the environment in which you operate, you may perhaps need to rethink your attitude to marketing.

The marketing environment



The environment in which you operate will affect your firm's marketing decision and planning processes.

Your firm has two key environments it needs to consider when it comes to marketing – its macro environment and its micro environment.

As a firm, you hold little control over your macro environment – those external factors, which impact on your business performance but you nor I can do anything to change.

To be able to cope with your macro environment, you need to be able to anticipate changes and stay one step ahead so you have the advantage over your competitors by being able to react quickly to any changes the environment throws at you.

These changes tend to come from:

- political and legislative forces
- cultural and social forces
- climate and environmental forces
- economic forces (such as economic growth, inflation, unemployment, etc.)
- technology's impact on society and the business processes within the society.

In contrast, your firm holds a greater degree of control over its micro environment and this can be used to your advantage. Your micro environment is the one that your firm deals with on a daily basis and it encompasses the activities of your suppliers, customers and your direct competitors.

Whatever the size of your business, successful marketing relies on a combination of long-term strategy and a short-term plan of action.

Whatever plans you create will need to allow for the pressures and challenges your macro and micro environments throw at you. You need to build in a degree of flexibility when articulating your plan.

Marketing plans



Would you run a marathon without completing the training first?

To run a marathon you will go through a vigorous training programme to ensure that you are able to run the full 26.2 miles and are able to cross the finishing line (hopefully still standing).

So why is it, that so many businesses do not take the same discipline when planning their marketing activities?

They often have a goal in sight, be it increased revenue, a reduction in client attrition, a greater market share of a specific sector etc. So why do so few firms put a plan in place which maps out the key stages and activities that will achieve that goal?

It's true that your first marketing plan will be a time consuming piece of work. The effort and energy put into it is key to the success of your business.

In the years that follow, you will only need to revise the marketing plan to reflect current trading conditions, different goals and the objectives that your firm has set.

Like any new activity, you go on a learning curve when you instigate a marketing plan. Things become easier as you start to understand what works and what doesn't. The knowledge of your market evolves too and this enables you fine-tune your plan to target clients and other stakeholders more effectively.

To be really effective (and to challenge those in the firm who perhaps are sceptical of marketing or are demanding to know what return on investment marketing is generating), you need to make sure you can measure the outputs of the plan and articulate what progress is being made. If this progress doesn't relate to goals and targets within the firm, you are going to have a tough job convincing certain colleagues of marketing's worth.

So, let the ambitions of your firm guide you in the marketing goals you set. Bring to these plans an understanding of the market that those ambitions relate to. From this you'll be able to formulate a marketing plan of activities which really will appeal to your target market. These activities will actively work to achieve your firm's objectives and satisfy (or at least silence the moans of) the powers that be in your firm.

Now let's take a look at the areas your marketing plan needs to address.

The 7 Ps

In order to ascertain long term profitability for any firm you need to be able to create a product or service which satisfies the needs and wants of your potential clients and existing clients.

In order to do this you need to use a combination of tools known as the marketing mix.

The marketing mix is probably the most well known marketing term. It features in most marketing text books and articles and reflects elements that, in essence, are tactical marketing tools. You can mix different tools

together to produce the results you want in your target market.



The concept is just like mixing a cake. You have your basic ingredients, milk, eggs, flour and sugar, but in order to create a different cake you will add different volumes of each ingredient. For example, for a sweeter cake you just need to add more sugar.

In marketing a firm's products or services, you need to have all of the marketing ingredients in place but be able to organise them in a manner which will best meet the requirements and also the needs and desires of your clients.

Many combinations are possible of the marketing variables (or ingredients) and are known as the 7Ps. These P's are known as product, place, price, promotion, physical evidence, people and processes.

Product stands for the services or products that you offer to satisfy your client's needs. Place includes everything you do to make your services available to your client. Price is the amount of money the client has to pay to obtain your services. Promotions refer to the activities that communicate the benefits of your services to your clients (more on those in a minute). Physical evidence makes up for the fact that not all services are intangible. People refer to the customers, employees, management and everybody else who may be involved. Processes are the way you do business and people matter as they are tangible and can signify quality .

To ensure your marketing delivers the results you want, the trick is to use the right combination of these P's to satisfy your target market. Identifying a plan and conducting research will help you to precisely what the client wants.

And when it comes to what your clients want, I'm afraid they have a habit of changing their minds. Therefore you must be constantly improving the service and product offering by using the right combinations at the right time.

Another key aspect of your marketing plan's success will be to identify your marketing

budget and then to be creative and smart in fully utilising every penny.

Allocating a marketing budget



No matter how small or large your marketing budget is, there are some great marketing techniques that you can implement to make sure that you maximise the money you have available and generate a great return on investment.

To ensure you are using your marketing budget in the most effective way, why not think about the following:

1. What's the overall aim of the marketing plan – what wider targets has the firm set that the plan needs to support?
2. What activities are you currently spending your marketing budget on?

3. Are your current marketing activities giving you a good return on investment? Are they bringing the firm closer to those targets?
4. How can you reduce marketing spend without compromising on the quality?
5. What else could you do to achieve the goals that have been set?

As one client of ours said about marketing plans,

‘Treat your budget as if it were your own money.’

If you are not convinced that a specific activity is going to generate the desired return on investment, ask yourself what can be done to improve its chances? Is it worth going back to the drawing board and coming up with a better solution?

If you need help putting together the right plan for you, why not check out The Chartered Institute of Marketing’s planning tool at <http://www.cim.co.uk/marketingplanningtool/>

Marketing activities that won’t break the bank



With the general overview of what marketing and marketing planning involves, let’s now look at some specific marketing activities which you might want to consider in your plan.

Remember that you should pick the activities that are most likely to achieve the plan’s goals, objectives or targets. To do so, they need to be the type of activities your target market is most likely to engage with.

Throwing money at expensive marketing activities does not provide you with an automatic customer base. Consider these 10½ relatively cost-effective promotional activities which can be used to create great impact with clients and contacts. The trick is to be consistent in your messages and not contradict yourself in any way – it will only confuse your target market and lose their interest.

Here then, are 10½ marketing activities for you to try:

1. Public speaking



Finding speaking opportunities is a great way to show-off your expertise without overtly selling yourself and your business. Being given a platform on stage can help to establish your credibility. To achieve this though, you have to make your stint in the spotlight as interesting as possible.

You will need to engage your audience. If you do, people will remember how they felt about the experience of being in the audience long after they remember the content.

It is therefore very important to develop a good presentation style and command the stage. Use highly visual slides and talk to the audience, not the projection screen!

2. Press articles

Another way to position your expertise and build an impressive reputation is through press articles.

A great way to use Public Relations (and press articles in particular) to your advantage, is to collaborate with clients and write joint articles, or at least get their endorsement. Don't pay for advertorials, but instead seek out writing opportunities that enable you to present ideas and share best practice.

Build relationships with key trade publications and find out what their forthcoming features are. You can plan your writing around the issues that are really relevant, important and topical. Getting articles published also gives you news to freshen up your web site and information to share with your existing network.

3. Postcards

Brochures are boring and invariably get put in the bin, or if you are lucky get filed away. They're also beginning to be viewed as un-eco friendly (and may contradict your efforts on the Corporate Social Responsibility front). An alternative, which is a great deal cheaper and

more effective, is to create a branded but interesting postcard.

Postcards can be more fun and made more personal by writing messages on the back. Some ideas to get you going are 'Thank you' or 'Saw this and thought of you'. You could perhaps use them to promote a new service or specific promotion. If you are mailing out a large number, digital printing makes everything more cost effective. Technology now makes it easier to personalise your message with the recipient's name and business.

Perhaps you are bold enough to be more innovative and use postcards to say 'thank you for your business' or 'congratulations on being a client of ours for 1 year', or perhaps 'good luck with your office move'.

4. E-marketing

E-marketing is both a simple and cost effective marketing approach. Assuming you have a well maintained database and accurate information, you can be no more than a touch of a button away from connecting with your network.

Regular e-bulletins are a great way to add value and generate more points of contact with clients, prospects and connections.

The difference between an e-marketing campaign that works and those that are viewed as spam relies on developing, what a Size 10½ Boots legal client calls, a 'from me to you' culture. What they mean is devising communications that are relevant to your target audience. Send something that they'll be interested in and do not use e-marketing merely to shout about your firm. The other great thing about e-marketing is that it is so much easier to track and measure in comparison to conventional communications.



Technological advances mean that you can now analyse the popularity, not just of the communication, but also different parts of it too. You can see how many people have accessed or downloaded certain pages and which contacts have clicked on certain links in your message. It's not surprising that digital communications and e-marketing have remained relatively buoyant in the recession in comparison to other media.

5. Strategic alliances

Collaborate with competitors and/or clients to form a strategic alliance.

In the current trading environment many markets are shrinking. The trick is to win a bigger market share. Collaborating with your competition or perhaps another firm with complementary services to yours is one way to achieve this. It is better to win half a project, than not to win any at all. If you are able to 'piggy back' a bigger brand, this will help to build your credibility and increase your chances of success.

An example of where this has worked well is when we ran a joint seminar with the law firm, Roythornes. Size 10 ½ Boots provided an external speaker and Roythornes hosted the event. Both firms were able to achieve much more than if they tried to run this event independently.



6. Social Media



Use social media, for example, Blogs, contributing to industry forums online, LinkedIn and twitter, to spread your message further and build brand awareness. If you are sceptical about the business value of such tools, read what Don Tapscott and Dan Williams are advocating in *Grown up Digital: How the Next Generation Is Changing Your World* and *Groundswell: Winning in a world transformed by social technologies*.

7. Free Seminars

Invite prospective clients to free seminars or discussion groups. If you can get a celebrity or interesting key stakeholder to attend, this will really endorse the event. It will also help to build credibility and increase attendance.

As an example, we at Size 10½ Boots recently helped another law firm to get a Labour MP and Chair of a Select Committee to be a guest speaker at one of their events.

8. Guerrilla Marketing



Guerrilla marketing is a concept created by the author Jay Conrad Levison. The term describes a positive and creative mindset where you promote your business on a shoe string budget. Here is a personal story that elucidates this point.

A previous boss of mine at Procter & Gamble wanted our team to ‘punch above our weight’ and get free publicity, which would influence the Procter & Gamble CEO. Some savvy enquiries with our colleagues in the US alerted us to the hotel where the CEO was staying on a visit to the UK. Our team created a welcome pack for the CEO with some carefully crafted messages.

The result was a very welcome phone call from the CEO and an unplanned addition to his itinerary – a visit to see our team!

An emotional connection was therefore established and all it cost was a few postage stamps!!



9. Referral Strategy

People in professional services firms often say ‘a lot of our business comes from referrals’. How many though really proactively ask for referrals? If you were to build a process to do this, you have an opportunity to create significantly more leads.

People buy from people they trust. People are therefore more likely to buy from you if you have been recommended by someone else in your prospect’s existing network.

What’s in it for your contact to refer business to you? Think hard about the things you could do to stimulate referrals, and the rewards your referrers could gain as a result.

10. Video testimonials

Seeing is believing

When a client is evaluating whether to buy your services they are really weighing up risk. They are thinking: 'can this person or service really deliver?' If you can demonstrate that you have delivered a solution for someone else in the past in a very similar position to your prospect you are mitigating this risk.

10%. List Price

Everything is negotiable. Never pay list price for anything.

Still looking for more marketing ideas?

Well, many firms we work with use direct mail in some way in their marketing activities. We're often asked how you can improve the success rate of a direct mail campaign.

So here are our thoughts and tips on the subject.

How to achieve up to 50% success rate from direct mail



Mmmm, direct mail, which way do you swing?

Do you put it at the top end of your marketing strategy or shove a few quid in its direction at the end of your planning? To some it's as useful as your granny's pooch scampering out of trap 3 at the 8.30. If this is you, you should read on because to others it's not only worth a punt but with the right backing direct mail can be an absolute winner.

So, for those who see it as merely a pain in the proverbials, let's analyse why some envelopes are tossed unopened into the recycling whilst others perch proudly in the 'to do' tray.

I would hazard a guess that the doubting Thomas's amongst you think of direct mail as nothing more than a standard envelope in which there's a standard letter with a standard sales proposal.



It's the standard envelope that needs to be addressed and I don't mean with a street name, although naturally this is needed. The standard envelope definitely needs to be... taken in hand!

If you are going to spend money on direct mail you need to spend wisely to get the most out of your budget. I can already hear the mental cash registers clocking up the cost of the designer, the paper, the ink and then there's the mailing, in comparison to pressing 'send' in your email account.

But it's how you use the print and the overall packing to your advantage that will turn your efforts into success. So be bold. You are taking the brave step of putting yourself in front of a

prospect to offer them your services. You need to grab their attention.

Being shuffled to the bottom of their pile of post is not an option. What's the easiest way to ensure this doesn't happen? Well for a start, don't mail a standard envelope. Make sure there is something about your direct mail that is going to switch on the curious nerve endings of the brain. Get them twitching to see what's inside.



In 15 words or less...

And if you do send something that looks out of the ordinary in appearance and it's opened, Hallelujah! They're in! You've got them so don't let them get away.

You have no time to waste. In fact you've got around 4-8 seconds (that's roughly 15 words) to get your point across. There's probably no surprise when I tell you that the first point to consider in direct mail is to **be succinct**. (I'll say no more).

Benefits first, features later

If you don't offer your prospect something they need in that direct mail, you'll find yourself heading off to be recycled before you can say "wheelie bin".

No matter what type of business you are in, you **MUST** concentrate on selling the benefits and not the features of your products or services. People only care about one thing and that's "what's in it for me?".

A feature is a characteristic of your product or service. A benefit is what the feature does for the client. Though benefits can be described in a million ways there tend to fall into one of five main areas:

1. Convenience – saving time and effort
2. Saving money or increasing wealth
3. Providing peace of mind
4. Appealing to image or ego
5. Providing fun and enjoyment

So be bold about the benefits you can bring. Put them in your headlines; make them obvious in the content of document. Ensure the prospect is absolutely clear about what they get out of whatever it is you're communicating.

Be chatty



Asking a question is always a good way to open the channels of communication, or as close to chatting as you can get without actually chatting, if you get my drift. So try and adopt a chatty tone with your message. Don't be overly familiar as this may put the recipient off. The trick is to be friendly and certainly not stuffy or formal.

Make it easy

If you want a response, make it clear how your reader can give it to you. It's all very well being in the 'to do' tray but if your prospect doesn't know what 'to do' you won't be in there very long.

... are you having a laugh?

Hopefully. This is my final point; a point with enough importance to stand on its own.

Direct mail is commonly thought of as a piece of advertising and this is where it ends. In other forms of advertising, particularly on television and radio, humour abounds. It's always the funny ads we remember isn't it?

If, like me you need to get out more, you actually stay tuned to watch them again. So why not use humour in direct mail? You don't need to be a linguist to play around with words, their meanings and associations. Be creative and have a flutter.

So there we have it. So when you next consider direct mail, think of a little bundle of benefits fittingly written within a 15 word framework - which will have your prospects laughing all the way to their 9am meeting.

Think they'll remember you when you follow up with a call? Most definitely.

You may still be sceptical but I know from my own experience that if you land a Size 10 ½ Boot on someone's desk and follow it up with a phone call it doesn't half make those first few

minutes easier. There are no embarrassing attempts to prompt your prospect to recall your letter, they remember it.

Don't forget to market to your existing clients

It doesn't matter how you dress it up, the fact of the matter is that the most important part of any business is its clients and ironically the most ignored part of any business is... its clients. I'm not saying every business is guilty of this but there's often room for improvement.

Furthermore, it is a common misconception that new business is greater than repeat business. Not so! Existing clients are worth far more than we give them credit for.



Have you got green fingers?



If Alan Titchmarsh was to write a book on marketing using only his gardening know-how, he would have one area right at the tip of his green fingers. He knows his plants well, really well. He knows which plants crave shade and which delight in full UV and he moves them around the garden accordingly. If you replace plants for clients you'll see where I'm coming from.

Essentially each plant (think client) has differing needs and this is where Alan would blossom at marketing school. So, treat your clients as the individuals they are. Discover their individual needs and review these on a regular basis. Once the 'needy' areas have been established offer a solution alongside your commercial expertise and you will be blossoming too.

If you haven't got green fingers

It's easier said than done to get to grips with the nuances of your target market. As we said earlier, clients and prospects have a habit of changing their requirements and desires.

It's one of the reasons why it is important to review your client portfolios on a regular basis. In fact so passionate are we about this, we have engineered 'Client Service Reviews' to help our clients do just that.

Apologies for this slight sales, plug but here's an insight into how Client Service Reviews can work and support a firm's marketing.

Through structured interviews with their key clients, we identify the blind spots in the service a client currently offers. Once we have gained insight into their client's needs we report fully on the areas the business that could be developed to meet such needs. We recognise and highlight the 'fertile' areas awaiting our clients' input for growth.



Propagate and prosper

Most human beings like to be asked their advice and feel that their opinions count for something. Keeping in contact with your client base via Client Service Reviews does just this. Your client is happy to have been asked what they need and they know they can trust you to deliver. This trust is an invaluable asset, as it makes their decision to use you again much easier.

Preaching to the converted

To give you more of an idea about the value of Client Service Reviews, here are a few of our success stories.

The Rollits Project



Rollits is one of Yorkshire's leading corporate law firms with offices in Hull and York. The firm has 23 partners and has a philosophy of continued improvement. It collaborated with us to identify blind spots in its understanding of the client experience and brand perception with its key clients.

20 existing Rollits clients were invited to participate in face-to-face surveys ('Client Health Checks'). The deliverables for the project were to:

- Better understand the Rollits' client experience.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in client service delivery.
- Identify critical success factors.
- Get feedback on pricing; brand and communication.
- Competitive intelligence.

From conducting the 'Health Checks', we were able to give Rollits, 20 individual client reports that captured insight gleaned during the interviews. These reports also recommend a way forward to address immediate opportunities to improve client service.

We followed these reports up with a presentation to the project team identifying themes from across the research. This presentation introduced a traffic-light system to describe the overall health of each client relationship.

Short, medium and long-term action plans were also presented which highlighted how the insight could be used to improve the firm's position.

TPP Law



TPP Law is a specialist law firm with a clear and unique focus on supporting public service partnerships and projects based in London. TPP Law sought our help to conduct client service reviews with 20 of their key clients to deliver growth and retain clients. The deliverables for this project were to:

- Identify key factors for success and use findings to present a commercial case for the firm, showing how to enhance the service provision in the market place.
- Conduct one on one interview with key decision makers at their (the client's) offices.

The research findings have since helped the firm ratify its approach to its brand and CRM, and have provided insights to enable relevant actions with its major clients. This project also

helped to enhance the firm's reputation with key clients who valued the investment of independent research to better understand what they require. The firm said that the project enabled them to develop an increased external focus.

Success in this project was evident by the fact that TPP Law were able to identify what they were doing well and what areas they needed to increase in order to deliver growth and retain clients.

If you're still in doubt about the value of Client Service Reviews, remember it costs around 8 times more to gain a new client than it does to keep a client. Remember that budget we're trying to squeeze?

Now let's take a look at how you are going to turn some of your marketing thoughts and ideas into action.

How to get the best ever value from your external consultants

It's not always easy to ask for help. As a youngster we expected to ask for help and we'd take it (otherwise we'd have spent many a day wearing t-shirts back to front, shoes on the wrong feet and when it came to tying laces - I'm

harking back to pre-Velcro fastenings). Help was a necessity.

Then we reached school age and our independence developed. We shunned help in an effort to prove we could do things on our own. Eventually, asking for help was seen almost as a weakness.

However, once over the hurdle of recognising that help is not reflective of a flaw, a consultant could be what you are looking for with your marketing plan and/or its implementation. If you can find a consultant who can support your specific needs, then you will soon realise that they are worth their weight in gold and you will wonder why you ever hesitated.

We all know that if you've spent all day tapping away at your keyboard reading and re-reading, spell checking and word counting, a 'fresh pair of eyes' will almost undoubtedly spot an error or two, I mean two! A consultant could do just this.

Perhaps you are venturing into unfamiliar territory, or your profits need some clotted cream to pile on the pounds. There are numerous reasons why you might think about asking a consultant for help. When you do, it is

not a foolhardy decision but it is one which needs thorough planning.

Alas consultants don't work for free, but if you want exceptional value (rather than the blue and white stripes at Tesco) here are some good tips.

1. Anyone know a good builder?



I expect most of us have experienced this situation - you need work doing but you want someone you can trust. Anyone lucky enough to have experienced a good tradesman will be happy to tell all their friends, so ask around for a referral. It's a good start to getting the names of your finalists! But don't stop here, look around, do some 'Googling' and if you like what you read make some appointments.

2. Question time



Obvious but true, you may need to interview a number of consultants before you find your pot of gold. Here are some questions to help you get the ball rolling:

- What is your background in the industry?
- When and why did you decide to become a consultant?
- What would you consider to be your most successful contract to date?
- Explain the financial impact your intervention will have.
- How is your offer different to that of other consultants?
- What sectors do you have experience in?
- Show me examples of similar projects to this and your results.

3. A marriage made in heaven

Not literally, but there's no harm in making your relationship with your consultant as close as possible.

The trick is to communicate from the start. If you do, you'll find you're halfway there. Be clear about why you are hiring them and what your expectations are.

You wouldn't invite a builder into your home without letting him or her know which walls need to be knocked down and where the new door needs to go. So think logically and illustrate your plans.

4. Time and space

We all need time on our own, so let your consultant know how much you expect them to be around and how often you would like them to update you on their findings. Go so far as to set a weekly 'date' in your diaries if this is what works best for you. Think back to the builder, if you don't want him there at 7.30am working on your kitchen whilst you are buttering your toast, you need to tell him.

5. Comfort zone

This is a two-way relationship, so make it easy for your consultant by giving them an overview of your firm - the general culture, its structure, how meetings operate etc.. This will help them to feel familiar and will avoid the situation where they find themselves interrupting the weekly sales meeting through no fault of their own.

If you set the scene from the start you can both make informed decisions as to how you'll work with each other. This is always going to help in the long run. I'm not suggesting you go so far as to order them a new chair or get some obscure Columbian coffee beans in the kitchen if this is their favourite beverage, but this is someone you are investing time and money in. If you make it as pleasant as possible from the start, the benefits for you will begin early on.

Remember, it might be the case that you just don't gel. Once the contract has been drawn up, you don't particularly want to find yourself in the divorce courts. If you have any doubt, keep looking.

6. Your flexible friend



So, you've done your bit in making them feel comfortable and being clear about what you want. Now it's their turn. Don't be afraid to ask how they feel they will help your business, what experience will they draw on?

Don't say too much here as this is their chance to win you over. You need to feel positive and inspired by their response. What you are looking for here is their flexibility.

Even if their experience is limited within your industry it doesn't mean their abilities as a consultant aren't going to be valuable to you.

How they use their experience and understanding to analyse your business is crucial. You don't want them at this point to get out a 'tried and tested' list of guidelines that 'never fail'.

You are unique and any good consultant will offer to mould their expertise to your firm; s/he needs to be made of plasticine not plastic.

An innovative lead generation technique that really works

It doesn't matter if you are plugged in or totally WiFi, at the end of the day we all share the same aim – making our bread and butter. This means keeping budgets in check and more importantly working out how to make the most of every penny in that budget. Therefore lead generation may well seem like an all-consuming process that you do not have time to carry out. But, like most things in life, you get out of your leads what you put in.

On your marks...

The world of commerce is frenetic and there are many needles out there in a bigger than enormous haystack. So an effective lead generation tool is going to be paramount to your success. Nobody has the cash to blow on leads that don't generate sales or time to waste on phone numbers that are out of date. If you are currently experiencing leads that are more 'dirt track' than 'the road to Mecca' we've got some help for you in the form of 'Rapport Research'.

Rapport Research is essential to the everyday running of your business. Not only does it access those 'hard to reach places' but, having gathered the information about your target clients, it goes on to establish contact with the client and in doing so begins the important task of building a relationship with them.

Take a moment to think about life in your office where leads were just there for you. Imagine not having to find a lead, hoping it would lead to a sale? Wouldn't it be easier if you knew the sale was already on amber and the green light was only moments away?

Get set...

Rapport Research is a service we've developed to combat the fact that, if you go in 'cold' with a client or prospective client, there's a lot of suspicion to overcome. Let's face it, you often face quite a lot of negativity.

Again, apologies for the sales plug, but it's important to mention this crucial part of a marketing plan which looks to actively bring direct business into the firm. The principles behind Rapport Research are prevalent in all businesses and you may be doing some of it yourself already.

You know yourself that, if you open the door to someone with a sports bag of household cleaning products, you are more inclined to say you are just about to have your dinner than if their arrival had been prearranged.

Through face-to-face research and questions however, a significant amount of insight can be gained and rapport develops. For a client to then approach the already 'warmed up' prospect half the battle is won. Take this example:

A law firm used the Rapport Research method to begin a relationship with a senior in-house lawyer for a global automotive firm. They were launching a major new initiative in the legal marketplace, but wanted to fine-tune their service offer by commissioning some research.

The goal of employing this research technique was to build rapport with the prospect. In a convivial meeting rapport was established. On behalf of our client, we were able to gain valuable insights that helped us later shape their commercial proposition.

Having engaged the prospect, the next challenge was building a relationship. Appealing to this prospect's intrigue in the new service offer and recognising people's inbuilt

desire to be consulted, the process yielded valuable insights into what might work at the launch and what wouldn't. The prospect valued being asked for his point of view and we found some common ground – in this case an appreciation of the Outer Hebrides!

At the end of the interview the prospect was given the opportunity to learn the outcome of the research and the client's plans for the launch. And, in a future meeting the client and prospect met and their relationship blossomed.

Go!

As a high value, low volume lead generation tool, Rapport Research quite simply works.



The secrets of the smart heads of marketing and business development

In this final section of the report, I thought you might like a peek at the views and secrets of leading marketers and business development professionals in the sector.

Can you keep a secret?

Luckily not many people can; least of all those leading the way in marketing and business development! And as I'm not shy or retiring, when set the task to discover how the smart folk out there glean every penny from their budget I went out and asked them. Print this out and keep your highlighter handy because you could be about to pick up some very useful tips.

Here's what they had to say...

ADDLESHAW GODDARD

Richard Oakes, Director of Business Development, Addleshaw Goddard LLP

One of my little secrets to gaining every last drop from your budget is to make sure you test your ideas with your clients before going to

market. It sounds obvious, but I'm not talking about standard market research here! This is more co-designing a solution.

This way you get true feedback on your initial concepts and end up with a more saleable product plus, in my experience, those you ask for advice in the design phase more often than not are keen to buy a piece of the product they helped design... becoming your early adopters. You get two bangs for your buck... a research result and a sales lead!



Doug McPherson, Regional Director, SPG Media

While the traditional budgeting process still serves a purpose, businesses today must be flexible enough to react to what is needed today rather than what you thought might be needed in the previous September. Marketing budgets should be set to cover the plans you know will achieve the visibility you need to meet next year's objectives.

But be prepared, if something's working well expound the theory of ROI and ask your accountants for more - your ambition will repay

the initial cost, drive your business forward and increase your competitive advantage.



Richard Davies, General Manager, Shell

If you are undertaking an exhibition or event always hold a "beauty parade" and get three agencies to pitch on the same day. Invite colleagues who are not involved in marketing to this session to get their fresh view.

You can tell a lot about an agency from the effort that they put into the "pitch". Good quality photographs make your presentations and literature stand out. Don't be content with surfing Google and using an image that EVERYBODY uses.

You need to ensure that you have the Intellectual Property rights to use the image in your marketing. I recommend a great on-line image database called istockphoto.com.

ADDLESHAW GODDARD

Lance Sapsford, Head of Business Development, Addleshaw Goddard LLP

Treat your budget as if it were your own money. Think about ways that you can actually generate income to offset against it such clients sponsoring events or selling consultancy services. Designate a detail and task focused manager to be the guardian of the overall budget and make delivering 'no overspend' one of their performance objectives.

Not a bad treasure trove to delve into is it!

I hope this report gives you some new ideas of how to get a better return from your marketing budget.

I will be delighted to answer any queries or share more ideas on achieving your goals.

Please do call me direct on **0777 189 7772** and arrange a FREE boot-fitting to discuss your personal challenges.

Warm regards

Bernard



Bernard Savage, Size 10½ Boots

E: bernard@tenandahalf.co.uk

W: www.tenandahalf.co.uk

PS. Remember, **“Small differences collectively change outcomes”**

Have a look at how the difference of a 10½ Boot won the day for our inspiration behind the business name. Go to the foot of our home page www.tenandahalf.co.uk and view the video clip.

Size 10 ½ Boots Client testimonials

ADDLESHAW GODDARD

“These guys’ open doors we couldn’t open. At Size 10½ Boots the key qualities are motivation, energy, enthusiasm and a very commercial focus.”

Richard Oakes, Business Development Director, Addleshaw Goddard, Law Firm



“Staff members are certainly more confident about what they need to do to develop contacts and sell the firm’s services.”

Martin Rogers, Regional Managing Partner, Mazars, Accountancy Firm

Watson, Farley & Williams

“Our business development team are now equipped to deliver practical and digestible training in a way that the partners and fee earners really understand and can implement immediately. We have been particularly impressed with Size 10½ Boots’ commercial focus and a ‘results based’ approach.”

Simon Bastin, Business Development Director, Watson, Farley, & Williams, Law Firm



“It was extremely useful to get everyone focusing on where new opportunities may lie and the practical steps they need to take to access those opportunities. It got the team thinking about which organisations or businesses may be in the market for property based legal services, how we could access those organisations and how we might define our service to give us a real competitive advantage.”

Jonathan Cavell, Partner, ASB Law, Law Firm



“I think what came across most of all was your credibility and believability. People want to know what works and then they will do it and I think you gave us some really good ideas. I shall certainly be taking them forward to take the service I provide to my customers to a higher level.”

Jordan Marshall, Commercial Finance Planning Manager, HSBC, Bank



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