

# eight steps to Business Marketing SUCCESS

Tasty Snippets from  
*The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success*  
Series One: *Laying the Foundations*

**What TO DO** and what **NOT TO DO**  
in creating your marketing machine



By Marketing Guru, Rachael Watt

Founder of Marketing Key International [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com)

*“My goal is to inspire and empower you, the small business owner on a limited budget, to achieve the business success you’ve worked so hard for. I have turned on its head the perception that marketing is hard, expensive and only successful when backed by a large budget. I will give you all the formulas, tools and techniques you’ll ever need for a successful business and marketing strategy, so you can finally achieve real results and live life on your terms.”*



## Contents

Introduction .....

**Step 1:** Identify Your Core Target Market .....

**Step 2:** Uncover Your Competitive Edge .....

**Step 3:** Articulate Your Brand Personality .....

**Step 4:** Review the Image You Portray .....

**Step 5:** Create Killer Marketing Materials .....

**Step 6:** Assess Organisational Effectiveness .....

**Step 7:** The Client Conversion Process .....

**Step 8:** Your Marketing Mix Toolkit .....

So, where to from here? .....

Conclusion.....

## Introduction

**“If you give a man a fish you feed him for a day.  
Teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”**

*Anonymous*

Welcome to *Eight Steps to Business Marketing Success!* This ebook is dedicated to all small business owners who wake up every day raring to go to work so they can live the lifestyle they have always dreamed of — and deserve!

You are a select few, a rare breed who should be congratulated for daring to dream big and becoming the captains of their own ship. Studies have shown that 95% of individuals dream of being their own boss, so they can live life on their terms; but only 5% actually go on to make it happen.

Then, unfortunately, only two out of five small businesses make it past their five year mark. Instead of selling the products that they love, or providing the services they're passionate about, they end up spending all of their time working in the business, trying to find customers to pay the bills, rather than working on the business to get the results they deserve.

I'm so excited to work with you so that YOUR business is not one of those that drop off the radar. This e-book is a taster of my *Marketing Guru's Guide to Success Series* — *it's my gift to you*. In it I'll teach you the rudiments of *how to fish* — how to create the ultimate marketing machine for your business in eight simple steps **guaranteed to bring in the big catch — more clients, more sales and more money!** You will learn step by step, tried and tested strategies to grow your business so you can reap the rewards for a lifetime.

OK. Let's learn how to catch some fish!



Rachael Watt  
themarketingguru@marketingkeyinternational.com  
[www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com)

P.S. If you find what you read here helpful, be sure to recommend it to someone you know who is dreaming big and could use a helping hand.

# BUSINESS MARKETING SUCCESS

## STEP 1 Identify Your Core Target Market

Quite simply, narrow your focus, define your product offering and know who you are targeting, that is, your target market. But, don't make the first big marketing mistake ...

---

### ☒ 1<sup>st</sup> MARKETING MISTAKE TO AVOID: Being all things to all people!

---

It sounds simple. Nothing revolutionary here. However, you would be surprised how many businesses try to tailor their services and be all things to all people. After all, how hard can it be? You're a nice person and you want to help out. For you it might be second nature to be so flexible and generous, but it's not good for your business. Before too long you end up spreading yourself so thin that: (a) you lose sight of what you originally started out in business to do; (b) you seem to have more unsatisfied, rather than satisfied, customers; and (c) you have more headaches than ever before! *Don't go there.*

My publishing company was a prime example of this. They specialise in book publishing and web copy for book sales and do a fantastic job. I asked them if they could prepare a short sales spiel on each of my products and services. This wasn't their core thing, but they were nice, I was nice, they wanted to help and I wanted the ease of using someone I trusted. However, after two reviews, with some goings back and forth, the copy was not at all what was required. So I ended up pulling the job from them — resulting in more work and processing for each party. This is not uncommon. I bet each of you reading this could tell a similar story. *(By the way, the publishing company and I still work together very well in other areas, but we are now both clearer on where our core strengths and focus lie.)*

### What is a target market?

Your target market is the specific group of clients that your company aims to capture. **They have been identified as people with needs or wants that can be met with the products or services provided by your company.** As a consequence, they will be receptive to your product and/or service offering and will be the ones likely to try, buy and re-buy time and again.

In most cases, when I ask a client or business who their target client is they say, "Anyone who needs our service"... that their product or service is universal. Now, while this may be the case, targeting 'anyone' makes it difficult for you to distinguish your business or offering from the rest. And if *you* can't, well, how can consumers know why they should choose you first over the competition? What you stand for, what your offering is and why it should be a consumer's first choice should be as clear as crystal. You need to stand out in the crowd!

For example, let's take a lawyer who says they specialise in family law, specifically for recently separated or divorced individuals. If you're a recently divorced individual with a family you are going

to believe he is more suited to meeting your needs, and as a result you will be more inclined to try his services over someone who says they work with anyone. The research and effort by the firm for the specific need has already been done for the consumer.

I once read, '**Knowing your target market is just like fishing.**' And it's so true. When you know the **type of fish** you are trying to catch, all you need to do is research things like: where do they hang out, what time of day do they go there, what do they eat or what type of bait do they go for, what sort of fishing line is best, what sort of hook should I use and so on.

Furthermore, knowing what type of fish you are after puts you miles ahead when it comes to saving time and getting the fish you really want.

**Now that you know what you need to do — define your target market — what's the specific benefits? Why profile your target clients?**

## Knowing who your target market/clients are will help you to:

- **build trust**, as your clients will feel *you* already know *them* — their needs, problems, desires, fears and feelings — you will overcome any resistance on their part. They will feel like *they* already know *you*.
- **stay focussed** — get the fish (targets) you really want
- **create better relationships** with your clients
- **give you an edge** over your competitors
- **make offers** that meet your clients' specific needs
- **save you time and money**
- **be able to talk to your market** in their language not yours
- **know how they would like to be rewarded**, for example, by giveaways and promotions
- **identify common buying habits**, triggers and objections so you can market more effectively and overcome these objections
- **easily identify partnership opportunities**

Just imagine! Three months from now you're making sales, receiving positive feedback from clients, profits are increasing and stress levels are decreasing— all because you took action to uncover who your target clients were. Let's show you how to figure out which ~~fish~~ target client you're after, then what it is they prefer to consume and how you are to effectively reach them. You want to catch the right fish, keep it on the hook and reel it in!

## Define your target clients; capture their hearts and minds

You need to know who your target clients are and capture what makes them tick to help you build the right positioning for your business. Your aim is to discover:

- **who your target clients are**
- **what drives or motivates them**, including their needs and wants and what they value
- **ways to reach them** (channels of communication)

You can define your target market according to their demographic indicators (for example, age, gender, income, to name a few) plus their needs and wants. (For more information on demographic indicators refer to *Action Key 1, The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success, Series One: Laying the Foundations*: [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com))

Something for you to remember in all of this: Don't confuse 'wants' with 'needs. People don't necessarily buy what they *need*, but they'll most likely always buy what they *want*. For example, have you ever gone out to buy a shirt that you need, but came back with the pants, jacket and shoes as well? Or even bought a pretty dress instead? Maybe you've gone to, say, McDonalds for a burger, but ended up buying the fries and drink, too, as well as up-sizing to the mega-meal ... after all it's only another \$1 more!

The point is, more often than not people will buy what they **want**, even if they can't afford it, not what they need. This is a universal pattern — I have yet to meet anyone who doesn't do this!

"That's all very well and good," I hear you say, "**but how do I find out who these ideal targets are?**"

My answer: **Just ask!** The absolutely best way to uncover who your target clients are and what drives or motivates them is to simply ask! People love to be asked their opinions and you will find most are very willing to help.

So, **for those of you who have an existing client base**, look at who are your best customers/buyers. Your best or ideal clients could be defined as those who purchase regularly or spend above a certain threshold, or they could be the ones that really trust and value what you do — the ones who are looking for your specific expertise to satisfy their needs and wants or the ones you just like serving. It really doesn't matter and the combination will be different for every business. All I'll say is, determine the criteria, be consistent and stick to it.

You can use a variety of methods to discover your ideal clients' specific needs and wants — why they have come to you for your product or service. For ideas on how to collate the information you need, and in fact *which* information you need, refer to *Action Key 1* in *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success: Series One-Laying the Foundations*, available at [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com).

*[Hint: Once you have this guide in your hand you will have access to downloadable copies of numerous types of questionnaires and spreadsheets to assist you in capturing this very necessary marketing information. That's my little bait for you!]*

Now, **for those just starting out**, who have no or only a very small client base, you will have to build a profile of who you think your ideal target client or market is. Your conclusions could be based on a number of things including:

- **Research of a complementary businesses target market**
- **Research of people you know who meet the ideal target client profile**
- **Using your own industry knowledge or research.**

Some basic categories to look for in your ideal market, using demographical indicators, are: Age, Gender, Marital Status and Occupation, to name a few.

For more information on how to reveal your best buyers or ideal clients, refer to *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success Series One: Laying the Foundations, Action Key 1*, available at our website: [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com).

Leveraging this knowledge to capture hearts and minds and build the right positioning for your company is where the opportunity to really shine lies. If you can determine what makes your ideal target clients tick and then position your product or service offering to satisfy these needs or wants, you are onto a winning formula.

#### **EXAMPLE 1: What to do!**

##### **FISHING TIP** **Use the right bait - caviar!**

**A fantastic example of the power of understanding your target clients was shared with me by a mentor of mine, Kerwin Rae:**

'Victoria' had a high end beauty therapy business in Sydney. Kerwin surveyed Victoria's client base and discovered that 80% drove European cars. He then approached BMW, Mercedes and Audi and offered them gifts to give to all their new car buyers from Victoria's business.

The gifts were perceived to be from the Car Dealer; however, they were actually from the beauty therapy salon and contained facials and services that required the car buyer to go into the salon to redeem. There they were treated to a great level of service that prompted 80% of them to become ongoing clients, spending as much as \$5,000 - \$6,000 or more per year on treatments.

The cost per acquisition (the cost to acquire each client) was \$8 (for the gifts) and the average income received from the investment was \$5-\$6K. Victoria acquired 60 new ongoing clients ... you do the calculations! It was worth it! Profiling her client based enabled her to tap into another business's client base for little or no money, with big returns.

This is how powerful following the process can be. What's more, once you know who your target clients are you can help your staff by also educating them on who they are to look for. In many cases I have found some sales people don't even know what to look for in an ideal client.

Then you can focus your efforts on serving those who fit your profile, rather than wasting your time on those who don't.

There's a lake of thousands of starving fish out there — all you need to do is throw in the bait and it turns into a feeding frenzy! So happy fishing!!

## BUSINESS MARKETING SUCCESS

### STEP 2: Uncover Your Competitive Edge

Before you can even begin to successfully build your marketing strategy and promote your services, you must discover and communicate how your business is different to the guy down the street who says he does the exact same thing as you. This can be as simple as serving a specific market niche or it can be the way in which you package, price or guarantee your services. It could be your reputation for exceptional service or a unique product offering you have.

---

☒ 2<sup>nd</sup> MARKETING MISTAKE TO AVOID: Not standing out in the crowd!

---

One of the worst mistakes a business (especially a small business) can make is not being **unique**. If you don't demonstrate that point of difference or uniqueness that differentiates you from other businesses your consumers will most likely just base their decision to buy on price. The first thing they will say is, "How much?" And you don't want to be in this game as there will always be someone able to do it cheaper—especially in today's globally accessible market.

So, now more than ever you must differentiate your business from the rest because in today's market place there is a plethora of choices for consumers. What is your aim? ... To be the **FIRST** choice amongst your targets. So, if you want to survive out there, especially in this economic market, **you must differentiate yourself in the eyes of your prospect by uncovering what makes you different** — your competitive edge!

By defining what sets you apart, you will:

- **attract the right clients**
- **create better relationships** with your clients
- **have an advantage over the competition** — making you first choice
- **be able to make unique offers**
- **better position your products and services**
- **remove the need to compete or to discount services**

## EXAMPLE 2: What to do!

### FISHING TIP

#### The right fisherman for the right fish

The marketing consultancy I used to work with specialised in servicing the financial services industry and all staff members were required to have a financial services background. This was their *core difference* to all the other agencies that claimed to do what they did. They had a clear niche (financial services) and clear differential features that set them apart from their competitors, putting them ahead of the rest. They were able to confidently say, “We’ve walked in your shoes,” and because they knew who their target clients were it made them first choice amongst their target clients 99% of the time. Just shows how effective doing this work upfront can be.

Before we take a look at your key points of difference, I want to touch on the **difference between expectations and differences** (your competitive edge). A lot of my clients say to me, “We provide quality work, we’re honest and we offer friendly service.” → THESE ARE NOT DIFFERENCES; THEY ARE EXPECTATIONS. In business today, consumers and your clients will expect that you do all of those things as standard. Something for you to keep in mind as you progress now to defining what makes you different.

Now, there are

## Four key steps to uncovering your core points of difference and ultimately your competitive edge

**1. Interview a handful of your best or ideal clients** to get feedback on their view of your company and what it offers. Advise that you are conducting some research and as a valued client would appreciate their feedback. You are aiming for ten or more responses. If you are in Business to Business pick some of your best suppliers, clients and contractors and work through the same process. Ask things like:

- **Why they buy from you**
- **What makes them stay**
- **How they found you**
- **Why they refer business to you**

What I have found is someone who buys from you or uses your services will probably be better placed to tell you why you’re different or unique than anything you could ever articulate — you’re looking for that ‘why you’ answer!

As you work through this you will discover little touches you provide are a big deal to your market or target clients — which can be the things you want to tap into and use to communicate how you’re different.

2. **Interview your team** (if you have one) and get their perspective on what your company stands for. You will probably be surprised at what you uncover, and your staff will love the chance to have their say.

Thirdly, and this is a big area ...

3. **Research your competitors** to see what they are offering, to learn from them and to see if there is a gap in the industry you can fill (this is where you will really start to see and uncover your edge and is probably the most important step in the process).
4. Firms that continue to grow are always on the lookout for innovative ways to improve their marketing or client service. By studying your competition and all they do, you will discover that you do some things well but they do some things better. You may uncover that no one is doing, saying or promising something and you could grab this difference and make it YOURS.

## Key questions to ask yourself when researching your competitors

- a. Who are your top three competitors? You could look at more, but I find three is a good balance and allows you to draw some clear conclusions.
- b. What products and services do they offer?
- c. What's their unique selling proposition (USP) or market positioning? Essentially, this is the message they claim in the market, like *Happy Banking* or the *Fresh Food People*.
- d. What do they offer that you don't?
- e. What do you offer that they don't?

[These last two questions alone could give you a point of difference.]

Many of the businesses in the same industry as you can teach you a thing or two. Start on the Internet, but don't stop there. Order a brochure and call their customer service centre. Buy a product if you can. The point is to look at everything they do for tips to improve your marketing and service and to see if there is a gap in their offering you could fill.

### Look at:

- Packaging
- Delivery
- Follow-up
- The way the transaction was conducted
- What they send you
- How they contact you after you ask for more information

Researching your competition is such an effective tool that there is a whole section on it in *Action Key 2 of The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success, Series One: Laying the Foundations*.

- 5. Collate, summarise and review** the results of the steps above to uncover your competitive edge. (See *Action Key 2 of The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success: Laying the Foundations* for all the tools you need to collate, summarise and review your core points of difference.)

To be successful in business you don't have to be the best or the cheapest, you just have to be unique. Determining this upfront will differentiate you, distinguish you and give you the advantage over everyone else in your market place who claims to do what you do.

## BUSINESS MARKETING SUCCESS

### STEP 3: Articulate Your Brand Personality

When you think of a soft drink or fast food, who do you think of? My bet is you think of Coke and McDonald's ... Why is that? Because for a long time now Coke and McDonald's have communicated a clear and solid **Brand Personality** to the market place that consistently makes them first choice amongst consumers.

Your Brand Personality, often called in the industry your UPS (Unique Selling Proposition), is what makes your business unique in a world of homogeneous competitors. It's the message(s) you proclaim on any of your marketing, sales or advertising material that sets you apart from the rest. For example, for some airlines it is 'Friendly Service', while for others it is 'No Frills'. So the aim of the game is to identify your unique Brand Personality and shout it out at every opportunity.

Articulating your Brand Personality is part of the initial foundations you must lay in order to build and ensure your success. The stronger and clearer your Brand Personality is, the more likely your name will be remembered in a conversation about your industry, products and services — which will lead to greater word-of-mouth advertising and eventually sales.

Think of Avis Rent A Car, Federal Express and Dominos Pizza. All of them have slogans that differentiate them from the competition.

For Avis Rent A Car they said, *"We're number two. We try harder."* They knew that the number one car rental company, Hertz, was way bigger and they could never compete head on. So they positioned themselves as the number two car rental company that worked harder for their customers — I think that's fantastic. And I know in Australia we love the underdog, so you can imagine the success this had for them!

For Federal Express their slogan was *"When it absolutely, positively has to be there."* They based their slogan on a promise of reliability and continue to do so to this day.

With Dominos, *"Fresh, hot pizza in 30 minutes or less guaranteed"* they uncovered that most pizza eaters don't care about how much stuff is on their pizza, but that it's hot, fresh and delivered quickly — a proposition that is carried across all they do. Even their boxes have a hot spot now!

Each of these slogans or core messages differentiates these companies in the market place. So, what are the benefits?

---

Articulating your Brand Personality will:

- **Confirm your core points of difference and differentiate you from the competition.** As I have said, to be successful in business you don't have to be the best, you just have to be unique and this will give you the advantage over everyone in your market place.
- Give you a **clear vision** of what you are in business to do,
- **Clarify your purpose and keep you focussed.** Remember how we talked in Step 1 about how it's all too easy to go off track and try to be all things to all people? Well, this will stop that tendency and will become your constant mantra.
- **Form the foundations of all your marketing material,** making it easier to position and sell your products and services to your target clients. You want to let everyone know you're different and unique, for you to build top-of-mind awareness so that you are FIRST CHOICE when clients think of your industry, product or service offering.
- **Serve as a training manual for staff:** What better tool to give a new employee? It sets the expectation from the outset; confirms not only what you are in business to do, but also what's expected of them; confirms whether they share these values and so on. (All will become clearer as we progress)
- And finally, **provide a framework for your visual identity development,** which we will look at in Step 4.

OK. Now we know **WHAT** needs to be done and the benefits. Let's now look at the **HOW**.

## The four stages to developing a powerful and persuasive brand personality

1. **Articulate your key points of difference.** *No, I'm not repeating myself. You can tick this off! You already did it in Step 2. ✓*
2. **Articulate what you stand for,** including your company's core values and beliefs
3. **Describe the reason you exist and the difference you want to make.** (Brand Purpose and Brand Vision)
4. **Create your marketing message.**

All of four steps above makes up your business's ....

## Brand personality map



To reveal your Brand Personality,  
work through these core questions:

- Who are our target clients?
- What are our key points of difference?
- What are we in business to do?
- What is the world we want our brand to create?
- What do we stand for — our values, beliefs and competencies?
- What is our brand proposition — the way we would describe our business?
- Ultimately, what is our USP (Unique Selling Proposition)

However, before you go and get started on working through this for your business I want to give you some ...

## KEY TIPS

### TIP ONE: Be Open to Fresh Ideas

---

When developing your Brand Personality and core marketing messages, it can be easy to let limitations crowd your mind. Avoid using the following negative sayings:

- It'll never work
- It's not in the budget
- We've always done it this way
- We've tried it before
- Great idea, but not for us
- Nobody in our industry does that

Encourage wild and 'out there' ideas and try not to over-think ideas – there are no right or wrong answers at this stage.

## TIP TWO: Aim Your Marketing Message at Your Target Clients

It may sound obvious, but you'd be amazed at how many businesses get this wrong! When developing your core marketing message remember that these are never about you or your business. Rather, **it's about the client** and **what you can do for them**. The client's only thought is, 'What's in it for me?' So remember what you uncovered in Step 1 and make it all about them and what they want! Finally, ...

## TIP THREE: Be True, Sustainable, Relevant and Unique

When developing your brand personality and core marketing messages, each must be:

**True:** Without a doubt, your statements must be provable and credible with both your target clients and staff. In other words, you and your statements should be 'fair dinkum'.<sup>1</sup>

**Sustainable:** They must have the ability to evolve and grow with your business over the long term. You don't want something that's got a short shelf life — remember that all of this is building equity in your brand, a point businesses often don't realise. Also, remember you will have it for a long time because changing your messages, if done incorrectly, can be confusing to consumers and damaging to your business.

---

☒ 3<sup>rd</sup> MARKETING MISTAKE TO AVOID: Not being consistent with your messages and look

---

*Look at this classic example:*

---

<sup>1</sup> **Fair dinkum** : Aussie (Australian) slang meaning 'absolutely true', '100% genuine'. In the US, one might say 'Be kosher'

**EXAMPLE 3: What NOT to do!**

**FISHING TIP**

**Don't change your fishing jacket too often!**

I knew of a company that fell into this exact trap. They started out with a particular company name, but due to circumstances they evolved to another name. After this they decided to go international and changed it for a *third* time. Now this could have been ok if they had planned it and mapped out a process. However, some of their material and communications were in the first name, some in the second and the website in the third. Can you imagine how confusing that was for their clients? As a result they lost the trust of their consumers and are still trying to get on their feet.

So, to avoid this mistake make sure your positioning is sustainable.

**Relevant:** They should be relevant to your ideal target markets. They must address a specific need, want or frustration common amongst your target.

**Unique:** They must be unique in the market; something above great service that only you can own. Again, your competitor research in Step 2 will help you here.

Just to throw a bit of a curve ball ... Although your ultimate USP or marketing message will be a statement of your uniqueness or what makes you different, it doesn't always have to be something that is unique to you; you simply have to announce it first.

Let me give you an example. Say you're a furniture retailer and your core message turns out to be "Buy today, we'll deliver it tonight." Now, most of your competitors could do that too, but because you were the **first** to shout it out it's yours. Then if any of the others start saying it they are actually building your brand equity or strengthening your message in the minds of your prospects, because you said it first.

Here's a bonus feature to consider also: **Be specific**. When Dominoes stated your pizza would be *1. Fresh 2. Hot and 3. Delivered within 30 minutes* it was specific and measurable.

Saying things such as *The Best Selection in Town* or *Service With A Smile* ... dull, boring and just plain worn out! So, **think outside the box**, be specific, be open to fresh and 'out there' ideas and be true, sustainable, relevant and unique.

Here's another example for you.

**EXAMPLE 4: What NOT to do**

**FISHING TIP**

**Don't stop fishing because of a change in weather. Adapt!**

This is what happened to a Financial Services client of mine based in Sydney. The GFC (global financial crisis) had just hit, their clients were laying people off left right and centre, no one was spending, budgets were being cut and the owner was understandably worried.

Now, it could have been all too easy for them to do the same — cut back on staff to reduce overheads, review and cut costs, and so on. But instead we went into the market to find out what their customers' needs and wants were at that point in time. And as a result we repositioned their brand in the market place. We went through the exact process you are about to go through and changed their positioning to say, "We can help you through these tough times."

The company went from strength to strength. They actually thrived in the GFC. They took on additional staff and grew to have new locations in Melbourne and Brisbane simply by doing what YOU are about to do.

## BUSINESS MARKETING SUCCESS

### STEP 4: Review the Image You Portray

When you go into business, one of the key ways to establish yourself as part of the marketplace is by making yourself easily **identifiable**. Even more than just having a presence in the marketplace, you want to be a client's first choice! And building and managing a brand plays a significant part in making that happen.

Your visual identity is a graphical representation of your brand personality, designed to capture and appeal to your target clients above all others.

Having a look and feel that is captivating to your target clients, consistent across all you do and a true representation of your business will guarantee you set yourself up for success. It is through visual and graphical elements that the heart of your business can shine.

Furthermore, consumers react very well to seeing the same image over and over again; they remember consistent presentations. So, having a consistent look throughout your communications and marketing materials helps identify your company as being reliable, thorough and focused. It also means you make a good **FIRST IMPRESSION** that will be a **LASTING IMPRESSION**.

### First impressions count

You've probably all heard the saying, "You never get a second chance at a first impression," and this is oh so true in business.

First impressions are so important. People will judge you at first glance by the image you portray. This image impacts all aspects of your business and plays a vital role in your client's overall experience with your company.

So, defining your company's image or brand identity in a way that appeals to your target market and supports all your marketing messages will ensure you make the right first impression. So, let's summarise the core benefits of a strong brand:

### Core benefits of establishing a strong brand or visual identity for your business include:

- Sets you apart from the competition
- Showcases the personality of your business
- Provides a visual representation of your business that captures your style

- Drives client loyalty so they come to know, like and trust you — existing clients trust strong brands because they know what to expect
- Gives potential clients a firm idea of what they are buying before they buy it, making the purchase decision easier

**Every part of your business must live and breathe your brand identity. All of your brand identity elements must support your image.**

Let's look at how to develop your visual identity.

## The four steps to developing your visual identity

### STEP 1: Observe for yourself

I want to impress upon you how much the subconscious mind of your client is at play when they come into contact with you and your business.

They will be influenced by a number of elements within your Brand Personality, such as your **logo**, **tagline**, **colours** and **website layout**. If you own a business premises it will also include **staff attitude**, **uniforms**, **office colours**, and so on.

One of the best ways to experience this is to enter a place of business that you have never visited and take note of everything you see, hear, smell and feel.

When you step back and do this you might realise just how much subconscious impact all these factors have on your senses and consequently on your judgment of the business. This is the same process your clients go through with your business on first contact.

Once you have done this, take a walk around your business and observe it with heightened senses. Notice what you may have previously overlooked. Initiate some interaction with your business as if you were a prospective client. For example, call your business, ask someone to fax you a document, visit your website or mail a letter to yourself. Note your reactions to the engagement. It is imperative that you understand how much impact these seemingly little actions have on the overall effectiveness of your marketing.

### STEP 2: Determine your visual identity elements

There are a number of elements that must be considered in your overall identity development. Of course, the most commonly sighted elements are your company name and logo. While these are important, there is much more to consider.

### Brand Identity Elements:

- Visual elements (logo, colours, fonts, icons)
- Stationery and forms (e.g. letterheads, business cards, compliments slips, invoices)
- Printed materials (e.g. advertising, brochures, leaflets)
- Website, social media pages and electronic communication (e.g. email signature, Facebook page)
- Signage
- Delivery vehicles
- Client service (employee attitudes, dress code/uniforms, office/shop ambience)

The array of elements will depend on the nature of your business and your requirements.

### STEP 3: Hire a graphic designer

As first impressions are so important, enlist a professional! They will need to know what your business is about and what you stand for and want to portray. They should be able to capture the essence of your ideal clients, points of difference and brand personality (Can you see now how following the process is so important?)

---

#### ☒ 4<sup>th</sup> MARKETING MISTAKE TO AVOID: Trying to do-it-yourself!

---

*[Note: Members of Marketing Key International have immediate access to a database of reputable, reliable graphics designers, copywriters and copyeditors to help them with all their business marketing needs.]*

### STEP 4: Keep it simple, consistent and relevant

Remember, your brand identity will be translated and used across all you do, so fancy logos or typefaces may be hard to read in certain formats. I have seen businesses do themselves a disservice by having illegible fonts that people just can't read. **Keep It Simple Sweetheart!**

Be consistent and relevant. Everything you do should appeal to your core targets, so always keep in mind who they are and what drives them and ensure your image matches this. Let me show you an example.

#### EXAMPLE 5: What to do

##### FISHING TIP

##### Image not working? Revamp and repeat - everywhere!

When I worked for a large financial services organisation here in Australia research was commissioned as to how their brand was perceived in the market place by their core or ideal target clients. Research results revealed that consumers saw them as old, stuffy, conservative — a totally daggy<sup>2</sup> image — so the chance of us appealing to our younger target client was slim! Something had to be done.

Over a two month period we did a complete visual identity review: updated their image, refreshed their colour pallet, modernised their logo and translated it in a phased approach across all elements within the business. After twelve months, research was commissioned again and the core market's perceptions had completely transformed. The company was now in our core targets' consideration set; they were seen as a safe and secure financial organisation one could trust.

The result? New acquisition levels lifted dramatically. We took that identity and refreshed their website, which won Sitecores 2011 International Website of the Year. I also led the team to win marketing team of the year.

So, what I am talking about works! A simple, consistent and relevant image is important, and I've proved it time and time again, no matter what size the business.

---

<sup>2</sup> Daggy: Australian (Aussie) slang for - unfashionable, uncool, 'nerdy', 'dorky' - the image you definitely DON'T WANT if you want to appeal to a younger market or are looking for a trendy partner!

## BUSINESS MARKETING SUCCESS

### STEP 5: Create Killer Marketing Materials

Now we're going to move into the practical production of things that will kick start your marketing efforts to generate leads, sales and valuable dollars for your business — which is after all the name of the game.

In this section I'll tell you about the ultimate kickass<sup>3</sup> marketing tool for your business that is flexible, affordable, personal, practical and most importantly, educational. And it works!!

Over the last five years I have developed one of these for every company I have worked for; it's such a proactive tool that every business should have one.

Before we take a look at this marketing tool I want to convey to you this: **successful marketing is never about you**, it's always about your clients and what you can do for them. Yes, there's a place for your story, how and why you have been in business for years and so on. But your clients want to know *What's in it for me?* — the solutions, benefits, resolution or favourable outcomes. Most will have a dire need, want or frustration they want solved. So you need to convey that your company is the one with the solutions.

So, successful marketing is, in my opinion, about **client education**; giving every potential buyer enough information to determine if your product or service offering is right for them.

How are you going to do this? By developing that kickass marketing tool for your business, which I call a **Prospect Pack**.

**A prospect pack is a folder of information designed to help you present the best possible case for why a prospective client should buy from you.** It is made up of a series of educational pages that can be frequently updated and tailored to the specific needs of your prospective client. For instance, you may supply different pages for a business client as compared to a retail client or supplier, as their needs differ.

The pages contained in the Prospect Pack can be collated as needed in a folder or file and then produced 'in-house', meaning there is no need for expensive print runs or excess stock in the office. You wouldn't go and have 5,000 copies printed unless you had 5,000 people to give them to. You simply print off your Prospect Pack pages as needed, collate them in your branded folder and give this to every potential client that enquires about your services.

---

<sup>3</sup> kickass: very good, excellent; cool; awesome - No, it's not swearing.

## **If done correctly your Prospect Pack not only provides you with a valuable education tool, it also:**

- establishes credibility
- reinforces your brand identity
- clarifies the real benefits your company has to offer
- provides the opportunity to promote your product or service offering and sets relationship expectations
- gives positive reinforcement that your clients are making the right decision
- ultimately negates the need to sell as the client has all the information they need to make a decision on whether to use your product or service.
- saves you time, money and stress. You don't have to explain your offering to clients; you can take them through the pages or give it to them to read at their leisure

## **Your Prospect Pack should reinforce your Core Marketing Messages and contain some combinations of the following information in separate A4 pages based on your design template:**

- The benefits of doing business with you
- Your company profile
- Product or service offering
- Reasons to believe/credibility elements
- The way you do things
- Frequently asked questions
- 'Surprise & Delight'
- Call to action

*Note: This list is a framework. Depending on your business type, there may be more or less pages you would like to include. For more information refer to The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success: Series One, Action Key 5, available from [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com).*

**So, how and where do you use your Prospect Pack?** Your Prospect Pack is intended to educate your prospects, be it a potential client, partner or affiliate. Use your Prospect Pack to your advantage and give it out at every opportunity, including tradeshows, functions, workshops, sales calls or visits, on your website as a downloadable PDF, referral sources or potential partners, the list is endless ...

## EXAMPLE 6: What to do

### FISHING TIP

**If your image is not working - revamp it - then repeat it - everywhere!**

I helped a client who called me a week before a three day trade fair in Sydney, advising that they had booked a stand and asking me what they should put on it as they had no marketing material. Plus the brochures they had were outdated and not a good reflection of their brand (*that's a whole other story!*). So, it was a last minute rescue mission.

It was a hotel and hospitality fair and I knew they needed to give attendees *something*. So first we pulled together a Prospect Pack that educated potential clients on the benefits of doing business with them. Then we ran a competition whereby people put their business cards in a bowl and at the end of each day they had the opportunity to win some great high value gifts, which worked a treat. Plus, because they had a bunch of business cards from their core targets they were also building their prospects database for future contact, communications and promotions.

They had lots of interest from the packs and competition, as well as tender applications, all of which resulted in leads totalling over **\$6 million** — all from developing this pack and educating their potential clients on the benefits of doing business with them.

**A good Prospect Pack is a simple yet powerful strategy everyone should adopt.**

Depending on the nature of your business the pack can also be perceived as a good value item — an add-on. For example, let's say you're at a seminar and *really* want to sign up for a course, but you know you have to first consult with your better half.<sup>4</sup> (Yes, it's a partnership!). Or you actually HAVE signed up (and have to break the news when you get home). You arrive home, so excited, pumped from the seminar speakers. "*I want to sign up to this course,*" or "*I have signed up already!*" Before your partner in crime has a chance to roll their eyes, question your purchase or pull out the Excel budget spreadsheet, you confidently place the professional and clear Prospect Pack in their hands, while humming your victory song. (I'm sure many of you will have a story like this).

By giving your prospects this pack there is a tangible element they can showcase to justify or reinforce their decision. You would be surprised how effective, yet simple, this is.

What's more, the documents you develop for your Prospect Pack are easily transferrable and can form the basis of your website copy, or even be reworked for a 160-character Twitter bio. Once you take the time to get the information down you can use it time and time again.

So create a Prospect Pack for your business — a fantastic proactive marketing tool you can leverage time and time again. [Let the Marketing Guru walk you through this whole process, step-by-step in *Action Key 5* of the *Marketing Guru's Guide to Success*. I'll show you in detail what to include in your pack and how to use it.]

Just remember, it's about educating your potential clients so they know and like you, trusting you can satisfy their needs and wants. Remember this and you are well on your way to business success and the ability to live life on your terms.

---

<sup>4</sup> Better half: your significant other, the other side of the coin, possibly the 'nagger' or 'chief dishwasher'

## BUSINESS MARKETING SUCCESS

### STEP 6: Assess Organisational Effectiveness

If you want your clients to come back for more and tell the world all about how wonderful you are, you've got to make certain that your actual product, processes or service matches what your marketing promised. It's all about **meeting and exceeding expectations**; moving your clients to way beyond satisfied so they feel compelled to tell others and re-buy, time and time again.

I have heard many stories over the years about companies who, through their advertising, have captured their audience, but when the prospect arrived at the door or made that call they were bitterly disappointed by the experience that greeted them. This resulted in lost sales and multiple lost onward referrals.

Many say customers are the lifeblood of a business. While this is true, if you don't have the right staff equipped with the right mindset, and the business tools in place to help them be successful in their role, there will essentially be no business at all. Let me share a recent experience of my own.

#### EXAMPLE 7: What to NOT do

##### FISHING TIP

##### **Make sure your fishing team are following the same game plan**

Just the other night while out for dinner with friends in Broadbeach I experienced this: We had a fantastic waitress assigned to us; the service was impeccable; she was friendly, obliging and couldn't do enough for us. Halfway through the evening she was nowhere in sight, so I asked another waiter for some more drinks. Well ... he was the polar opposite; not at all friendly; it seemed like our request was an inconvenience; and he got the order wrong. This change turned around our whole perspective of the evening — it really was interesting to see the contrast. Certainly the experience has affected our decision whether to return to that establishment or not — we're still undecided.

So ask yourself: How efficient and effective is my organisation? Do I meet or even exceed my clients' expectations at every interaction? Do I have happy, engaged staff? Do I have a culture that others would love to be a part of? Do I invest in technologies to ensure ultimate success? Have I optimised the way I do things? Do I regularly reward staff for a job well done?

Here the aim of the game is to ensure you get your operational house in order to set your team and business up for success.

Doing this from the outset:

- leads to happy engaged employees who know what they are there to do and are motivated to do well
- ensures smooth customer transactions
- means you'll make the right first impression
- identifies gaps in your service levels/business processes
- reduces staff turnover
- ultimately saves you time and money
- leads to greater word-of-mouth referrals and repeat business

There are a few things every business should ensure are in order so they have congruency across all they do and ultimately get their marketing working for them. I've split these into two categories: 1) foster staff engagement and loyalty; and 2) invest in the best systems for your business.

**Let's first take staff engagement and loyalty** because, as you may have guessed, your staff can be the backbone of the organisation — the unsung heroes who can make it all happen — or, conversely, can be the stumbling blocks to success. To truly get your marketing working for you and have congruency in your business it is vitally important to foster staff engagement and loyalty, ensuring they understand where the organisation is going, what this means to them and whether they are happy and willing to join the ride.

**There are four things you need to do to make this happen:**

- **Ask your staff for their opinion:** Like your clients, your staff will love the opportunity to have their say. If you have a team who performs operational tasks for your business then do some in-house research, either individually with each member or in a team setting. Ask each member to articulate what they consider is working and not working. Look at operational processes, your business culture and how you do things.
- **Have an Organisational Effectiveness Action Plan in place:** Once you have captured your team's feedback, you are ready to document what needs to be either improved or fixed to ensure a happy work environment for your staff.
- **Develop a Reward and Recognition program: Reward staff for a job well done!** Incentivise your staff to succeed; reward and recognition are always well received. From your research you will uncover what makes your staff 'tick'. With that knowledge you can implement a rewards program that will engage, motivate and excite your staff to come on the success journey with you.
- **Educate staff on your strategic direction:** Once you have conducted your in-house research, it's important to collate the results and educate your team on where you intend to take the business. Ensure they are onboard with the company's vision, set expectations around who you're targeting and what's expected of them, and encourage them to live it every day.

**Areas for discussion with your team should include:**

- Organisational goals and Brand Personality
- Introduction to killer marketing material (Prospect Pack and Website)
- Client Conversion Process: Introduce the Welcome Pack and 'Getting Started Discussion' (You will develop these in Step 7)
- Organisational Effectiveness Action Plan over the short, medium and long term
- Any Reward and Recognition or incentive programs being introduced to foster their engagement
- What is expected of them

[You will be guided through this whole process in *Action Key 6 of The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success*. [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com)]

I worked through this for a client whose staff had low moral; they were unhappy, unmotivated and, as you could imagine, there was unrest in the team — something needed to be done. Here what I did in a nutshell:

**EXAMPLE 7: What to do**

**FISHING TIP**  
**Game Plan: Listen to the crew**

As a third party who the staff trusted (I have this way of getting people to talk) I interviewed all employees to get to the heart of the issues, find common themes, concerns and so on, in a safe manner. First, we did this one-on-one and then as a group.

After this I mapped out short, medium and long term action plans to address the common themes. I got the directors to buy in and be committed to the execution of the plans. Then I got the team on board. It was important to acknowledge what was uncovered and set their expectations as to what would and wouldn't be done, because realistically some things can be fixed and some can't.

In short: **Team** loved it, made progress posters and charts for around the office, they could see things getting done and changed. **Owners** were assigned to each action and regular updates of progress given at team meetings.

As a result staff morale lifted, the team felt like they had been listened to, staff turnover diminished and overall it became a great place to work again, with happy motivated staff.

## Now let's take a look at **investing in the best systems for your business**

Once you have engaged and happy employees who are eager to come on the business and marketing success journey with you, it is imperative to provide them with the latest systems, technology and training to be able to optimally perform their roles. To gain a clear idea of what technologies or systems will make their job easier, a good starting point is to **ask your staff**; get their feedback. Such systems could be marketing and CRM (Client Relationship Management) systems or the latest electronic or information technologies relevant to your industry.

Remember, your aim is to set them up for success, so make sure that with any programs you introduce proper staff training is provided. I would also ensure staff is on board with obtaining the new technology so any unrest around it can be avoided.

Remember, **happy staff** will result in **happy clients**, which will result in **increased sales** and **increased profits** for your business.

## BUSINESS MARKETING SUCCESS

### STEP 7: The Client Conversion Process

Here we're going to work through what you actually do when your target client comes a-callin'.

Many small business owners and front facing staff hate the need for selling or the idea that they need to convince someone to buy. This attitude is usually transparent to a prospect and can be a real road block to making sales and driving your business forward.

As you have come to learn, the focus is on **educating your targets** so they can: differentiate your business, products and services from the rest; like what you have to offer; and trust you enough to express an interest in your business and, more importantly, the way you do things. This eliminates the need to sell, which to me is a much more natural and effective way to convert a lead.

So by now you should know your target market and you are speaking to your prospective clients effectively. **So, what happens when the phone actually rings?** This is a great question and one that is often overlooked. Once you have that phone ringing or have received that email enquiry, you need a well-planned process as to how you are going to logically move someone to try and/or buy what it is you are offering.

This is what I call a **Client Conversion Process**.

#### There are three distinct steps in the Client Conversion Process to follow:

**Step 1 Lead Qualification:** This is the discovery stage where you determine if the prospect actually fits your ideal target market. You're going to become really good at saying no at this point, as you don't want to be all things to all people.

**Step 2 Offer Presentation:** This is where you present an offer of a product or service to the eventual buyer.

**Step 3 Closing the deal:** When a client says 'yes' and they want to buy, you then need a smooth transition onto the sale and client management steps.

The sale or transaction can take many forms depending on the type of business you have — from a cash register type transaction to an exchange of contracts or agreements. Whatever form it takes, the aim is still the same: to set, meet and even exceed your clients' expectations from the outset.

Be crystal clear about how you work, what you need from your new client in order to provide what you promised and what you expect from them as well.

To do this, there are two key requirements: (1) to have what I call a **Getting Started Discussion**; and (2) to provide your new customer with a **Welcome Pack**.

### **The benefits of having a Getting Started Discussion and providing a Customer/Client Welcome Pack are:**

- Sets expectations with your new customers about what service they can expect from you
- Educates your buyers on what's expected of them — to refer!
- Showcases the range of services you offer, providing the perfect place to cross and upsell additional services
- Allows you to surprise and delight your customers, as in each Welcome Pack you give them something they didn't expect, such as a discount coupon or free gift — offering something unexpected is a sure way to please!
- Helps you build your customer database — can capture key data
- Gets your marketing working for you

## **The Getting Started Discussion**

Your Getting Started Discussion will take place as part of the sale, but will be structured and will reiterate a number of key points to your new customer, as well as capture some or all important information to:

- a) ensure you get clients off to a flying start ; and
- b) build an ongoing relationship with clients

### **Some areas to be covered in your Getting Started discussion include, but are not limited to:**

- What you need from the client to get started – include their core contact details and preferred communication methods
- How you charge and invoice; including accepted payment methods
- Who to contact regarding any enquiries, billing issues, faults, complaints etc.
- Your Service Promise
- Any Terms and Conditions

[Action Task 7 in *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success Series: Laying the Foundations* will cover all key areas to be included in the Getting Started Discussion and provides a worksheet. [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com)]

Discussing key information up front will mean: fewer payment issues as you will have addressed the money side of things very early on; you will set your clients' expectations; and you will once again present a more professional appearance for your business. It gets the transaction off to a great start!

## Your Welcome Pack

is a bit like your Prospect Pack, except this time it's oriented towards validating your client's purchase decision.

### It should contain information such as:

- What the customer can expect from your business
- How to contact you for any enquiries
- How to get the most from their new product/service
- What you need from them in order to get started
- What was agreed upon at the sale
- A copy of your invoice (and payment instructions)
- Your Referral instructions

Your **referral instructions** are a crucial piece of your Welcome Pack. In an Action Task in *Action Key 7 of The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success: Laying the Foundations* you will develop a referral card or certificate which you would give to your new clients for them to pass onto like-minded friends, family or colleagues who they believe would benefit from your products and/or services. Everyone likes to refer or discuss their new purchase with their friends and family; so plant the seeds early and watch the additional leads flood in.

Hint: offer a discount on the referral card to either the receiver of the card or the giver.

I love this step as it's truly your chance to shine in the eyes of your new customer. If you get this right you are well on your way to success as people love to share their experiences and tell their friends about their latest purchase. You sure as hell then want to ensure it's a memorable one, so you can leverage this positive word-of-mouth referral wherever possible.

## BUSINESS MARKETING SUCCESS

### STEP 8: Your Marketing Mix Toolkit

So, you now know what to do when the customer comes a-callin', you have all your marketing tools, you have engaged staff who know what's expected of them and the systems for success. Now all that's left is to generate a **flood of leads** to increase sales and profits — don't we all like the sound of that!!

You will be aware that there are many ways to promote your services, from advertising to partnerships, the Internet (including websites, Facebook and Twitter) and public relations.

The key to success is to pick 2-4 marketing tools to implement that will give you the highest return on your marketing dollars. This means that you want to choose the mediums that deliver your marketing message to your core targets at the lowest possible cost to you.

The trick here is to ensure you have a **market message match** — that is, that you match your message to your market using the right medium. If you can do this success is guaranteed.

From all my years of experience I have found it's all too easy for businesses to be swayed by the latest marketing gimmicks and advertising tactics, jumping from one shiny new thing to another without having a clearly planned out marketing strategy.

So in this Step you will learn to be strategic and determine the marketing tools right for you. You will develop a marketing plan and stick to it for at least 3-6 months, testing and measuring all you do to gauge success.

Determining your core marketing mix toolkit from the outset is an absolute must for any business. If you do this you will quickly see what's working and what's not; you will remain focussed and on track; and you will have the ability to test, measure and refine your activity, which means you can be timely with offers and responses, saving you time, money and stress in the long run.

Now, before we actually go on to look at my top marketing tools for business, I would like to talk a bit about **developing your marketing mindset** and the age old debate, **'Is marketing and investment or expense?'**

---

#### ☒ 5th MARKETING MISTAKE TO AVOID: Viewing marketing as an expense!

---

Well, marketing is by far one of the most important factors for the success of any business. Yet in my opinion many companies apply their marketing incorrectly, looking at it as an expense that needs to be capped at a certain point. However, with the right strategies in place to drive optimum sales, successful marketing needs neither to be expensive nor exhaustive.

Brad Sugars, in his book *Instant Cash Flow* (which is a must read), outlines that when implemented properly marketing is in fact a **business's best investment**.

He shows that if you were to run a \$1,000 ad that returned you \$2,000 in profit in a matter of weeks, then you're doubling your money. What's more, you can run that ad as many times as you like because it never costs you anything — it always returns you a profit. When you look at it this way, marketing is only an expense if applied incorrectly.

So, as you move forward on your marketing journey I want you to keep in mind that marketing is your best investment. After all, you are in the business of **MARKETING** your product or service, not selling it.

There is an old advertising quote that goes, "Any fool can make soap; it takes a clever man to sell it." This is still true to this day. Anyone can make soap, but it won't matter at all if no one buys it.

There are endless marketing strategies out there, including letter drops, newspaper ads and events. For now I'd like to tell you about my favourites that are not only guaranteed to give you maximum leverage and exposure, but are cost-efficient too.

So, here are my favourites.

## Top Four Most Effective & Cost-Efficient Marketing Strategies

### 1. Joint Venture Partnerships

This involves two businesses coming together for mutual benefit. They could serve the same market or have a product that complements what you do

This is a very powerful technique and if done well can generate a huge amount of clients with small effort on your behalf. The greatest thing about this method is that you have other people doing your marketing for you.

**The key is finding the right business to offer your services.** You want their clients to be ready to take action with you. So you need to be really clear on who your target market/clients are.

**To prepare a joint venture with a particular business you will consider the following:**

- What type of clients would you like to attract?
- What businesses already work with the host business? Do they have a database?
- Does the business have a great attitude and business values you can align yourself with?
- Are their clients likely to want to work with you? Do they have money?
- What are you going to offer? The offer needs to appear valuable or the host business is less likely to be interested. You want the agreement to be a win-win situation for both the host business and yourself.

- How are you going to communicate your offer to the host business?
- How will you present your offer to the host business' clients (vouchers, flyers, cards etc)?
- Is the host business in competition with you in any way?
- Does the host business like its clients and do the clients like the host business? (If the clients don't like the host business then they are not likely to take up their recommendation to use your service).
- How much time and money will it take you to setup?
- Is it worth your time and effort?
- What do you want to get out of this relationship? How can you make it mutually beneficial?

### Some Examples:

#### **No 1:**

A life coach could enter into an agreement with a gym where the life coach gives the gym vouchers for free coaching sessions, which the gym hands onto its clients as a bonus or gift. This makes the gym look good because it appears that the gym is paying for the coaching session for its clients, and it gives the coach the opportunity to give the gym's customers a free session. This will hopefully lead to more paid sessions and the coach gets the recommendation of the gym, so it's more likely that the clients will use the voucher and trust the coach.

#### **No 2:**

A beauty salon owner might consider offering vouchers for a free 30 minute massage by allowing a local hairdresser to give the vouchers to their clients. This way the hairdresser benefits by offering their customers a valuable freebie and the beauty salon benefits by gaining free exposure to new customers.

#### **No 3:**

As a financial planner you may want to approach an accountant and ask them to do an endorsed mailing to their clients and that you will do the same. You could even include a free consultation or an invitation to a free information evening.

The aim with these strategies is to provide an offer that will entice the recipients to take action that moves them further along the path of client conversion, whether that is to find out more information or to buy. For example, this action could be for potential clients to go online to either your website or Facebook page and provide their details for a free ebook or discount voucher. The value to your business in this instance is they have provided their details — remember that the aim of all your marketing is to either sell or to build your list.

## 2. Referrals

We know that no one really likes to be sold to, which is why word-of-mouth referrals are one of the most powerful and cost-efficient lead generation marketing tools available. My top tip is to make receiving referrals a stated expectation in your business. Build a referral program that encourages your existing clients to refer business to you.

In other words, when you sign up a new client or when someone decides they want to buy from you, let them know what you will do for them (the benefits of doing business with you) and advise they will be so happy with the xyz service, product or application that at the end of 30 days (or whatever timeframe you want) part of their responsibility will be to refer three more like-minded people they know that need that result, too.

Now this will vary from business to business, but you get the idea. This is such a simple yet powerful concept because you are putting your performance on the line, guaranteeing they will be so thrilled and so on. And secondly, it sets the expectation up from the outset.

Now, not everyone will follow through, but far more will do so at that point than if you go and ask them 6 months down the track. It's time to learn from the Irish — Paddy — the perfect example!

#### **EXAMPLE 8: What to do**

##### **FISHING TIP**

##### **Choose the fish YOU want to catch and throw the rest back in**

Paddy Lund, a local dentist, was so over having clients who failed to pay, or were scared of the dentist, or saw it as a chore to engage his services that he moved to an *appointment and referral business only*.

He renovated his entire practice: it had welcome booths, ambient music, a coffee grinder and a bread maker, so the office smelt of aromatic coffee and crusty bread when clients walked in. The service his practice offered was exceptional — he knew everything about his clients, their favorite treats, how they took their coffee and so on.

He then sacked over 50% of his client base and put his prices up because now his clients were paying for **an experience**. And the only way to get in was through a personal referral from a client he already saw.

All of the clients that remained on his books had to agree to refer three likeminded individuals to his practice that were like them and willing to pay. He didn't want anyone who couldn't afford his services. Furthermore, he made each client that remained on his books agree that if for any reason whatsoever they were dissatisfied with the service they would tell him first.

This strategy worked a treat. Paddy had people queuing to get in, but he never wavered; unless they were referred his doors remained locked. *Ah. In this case you can't say 'the luck of the Irish'. It was the forethought and strategy!*

### **3. Public Relations**

Like referrals, PR is a powerful lead generation tool because when someone else endorses you or your business with no motive or reason to do so, it's far more believable to your audience and highly credible.

Here, I want you to find out where your clients find their information, then build a list of local media in your area — look at local people who write about what you do, industry publications etc. Then work on building a relationship with them. Send them something interesting about your company or industry at least once a month.

However, remember, like your marketing materials your PR material should never be about you and your company — journalists will not care about promoting you or your business. What they care about is themselves, their publication and their readers.

So think about what their readers would want to know about your industry. This could be tips, strategies and techniques. You could even hire a writer to produce a series of articles for you to submit. There are some great cost-efficient resources for this on [www.elance.com](http://www.elance.com).

Your aim here is to become the expert in your field and the go-to-person for journalists and media alike. So take time to build the relationships and watch what the power of third party endorsements can do for your business.

#### 4. Two-Step Advertising

The whole purpose of advertising is to get your target clients to give you permission to start marketing to them and educating them.

This is where Two-Step Advertising works a treat, as instead of selling them something you are actually getting them to come to you for information.

An example of Two-Step Advertising would be to firstly direct a reader to your website and then encourage them to leave their details via an incentive or offer. This could be as simple as a free ebook, a piece of research or an invitation to come along to an informational seminar or webinar. Be creative with what you offer. Like your PR strategy, it should be something they would like to know and find valuable.

Providing this information builds your credibility and trust. It tells the readers to come to you for information, shows your willingness to build a relationship and gives you permission to start marketing to them — which is the whole purpose of your advertising.

That covers my lead generation tools. Now I want to share with you one of the **biggest mistakes** I see small businesses make, and that is to neglect to market to their current customers.

---

#### ☒ 6th MARKETING MISTAKE TO AVOID: Not marketing to your current customers

---

Your existing customers provide the platform for your profits to skyrocket if you simply talk to them. One of easiest, most effective and cost-efficient ways to talk to your clients, retain them and grow your business is through a proactive **Client Engagement Program**.

## Client Engagement Program

No matter what industry or business you're in, I encourage you to implement a front-end Client Engagement Program. The aim of your program is to educate, harness loyalty and advocacy, and gently start moving your clients towards the next purchase.

With this in mind, there are **7 elements to a good Client Engagement Program:**

1. Surprise and delight your clients
2. Provide monthly offers and newsletters
3. Leverage and make the most of every interaction
4. Conduct a client health check
5. Re-activate clients who have stopped buying from you
6. Hold client events, seminars or workshops
7. Make a plan and live by the calendar

The benefits of doing this are enormous because instead of going out to find new customers you are leveraging the ones who have already bought from you. Most of you will know it is a lot harder to obtain a new client than it is to retain an existing one.

Remember ...

- Keep it simple
- Roll out 2-3 strategies at a time
- Develop an implementation calendar
- Stick to it for 3-6 months
- Continually test, measure and refine all you do.

---

## SO, WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Getting your marketing right is so important to your business; but it is an extensive process. It's understandable to feel overwhelmed by what's involved. That's why I created *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success*. Being something of a systems goddess, I saw the need for a new business strategy program that would guide business owners through the processes involved in building a successful marketing strategy.

*The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success, Series One: Laying the Foundations* has been set up as a step-by-step tool to coach you through creating and implementing a complete marketing system for your business, guaranteed to set you up for ultimate business and marketing success.

Another thing that sets *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success Series* apart from the many other business education programs is that it is a **holistic system**. Other programs often just provide the tactical strategies or the latest marketing techniques to promote your business, products and services. However, *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success* is designed to get **every facet** of your business working for you, ensuring congruency and consistency across all you do.

In *Series One: Laying the Foundations*, we lay out all the pieces of infrastructure I have introduced you to in this ebook that need to be in place for a *well-constructed* business. I then walk you systematically through how to assemble each piece for your business in a way that is guaranteed to set you up for success.

After sixteen years of studying and working in marketing, it is my firm belief that doing the groundwork described in these pages is what builds a successful marketing strategy, and hence a successful business.

In *Laying the Foundations*, I will literally walk you through what you need to do to gain:

- A clear picture of who your target clients are, what they value and how you can reach them.
- A powerful and persuasive Brand Personality blueprint that clearly reflects you and your business.
- A killer Prospect Pack for your business that is flexible, affordable, educational and, most importantly, guaranteed to increase your clients, sales and profits.
- Three ways to get your operational house in order, resulting in happy, engaged staff who are driven to succeed.
- A client conversion process guaranteed to effectively determine whether your prospects are in your ideal target market and, if so, how to turn them into clients — saving you time, money and stress.
- A clear way to harness the power of referrals and get your marketing working for you.
- Four high leverage strategies to grow your client base and make money quickly.
- The tools to be successful for the long term.

As *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success* is based on action rather than theory, I have provided **questionnaires, checklists, brief templates ... everything you need** to ensure you get your marketing strategy up and running.

**Each system includes:**

- 1 x 150 page workbook
- 1 x Audio CD with over an hour of content to get you started
- 1 x Resource CD loaded with free resources to fast track success
- Free access to Marketing Key International's Success Academy – an exclusive resource centre for owners of *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success*.

To learn more about *The Marketing Guru's Guide to Success, Series One: Laying the Foundations* visit [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com)

What's more, you also have the opportunity to learn first-hand from me via our interactive **One Day Workshops, Three Day Masterclasses** and **One-to-One Mentoring Programs**. There really is something for everyone.

For more information on our products and programs and to find an event near you visit [www.marketingkeyinternational.com](http://www.marketingkeyinternational.com)



## CONCLUSION

**Thank you** for reading through the *Eight Steps to Business Marketing Success*.

You are now well on your way to business success via marketing. You have the formula and an array of resources at your disposal to make it all happen. So, commit to the process, take action one step at a time and live the life of your dreams.

Remember, you are in the business of marketing your products and services, so invest in becoming the expert.

Here's to your success and living life on your terms!



P.S. If you found this ebook useful please do me a favour and recommend it to your friends, colleagues and associates. They will thank you for it!

