

www.TheAttentionBusiness.com

www.TomlinsonDigital.com



Five Reasons NOT to Take On Online Marketing Yourself: And Four Reasons not to Outsource

“Getting good marketing help is one of the biggest challenges facing small businesses today,” according to Anita Campbell, CEO of Small Business Trends. Anita confirms that, “marketing is more challenging today than ever” and “business success is all about finding the right outside service providers and using them wisely.”

These days it is at least possible to get stuck in and try your own hand at online marketing. But just because you can, it doesn't mean that you should.

Here are five reasons you should think twice.

1) You Don't Know What You Don't Know.

While you might feel savvy after reading a couple marketing books or listening to a savvy marketing guru, it doesn't compare to working with a qualified team or consultant with great experience and a great record. You simply don't know what you don't know, and if you do it yourself, what you don't know will hurt you. Like having a tag-line that makes no sense, or sends a wrong message. Like pouring money into your website's graphic design when the better focus is Content Marketing and improved anchoring on Google Local. Like not realising you need video to illustrate what you're about. Or pouring hours of your own time into social media when you could be doing something more useful. Or not capturing contact details for your visitors. The list goes on.

2) A Business Owner Can't Be Objective.

Passionate business owners tend to be absorbed by their business—an advantage when it comes to DIY marketing, right? Not really. Effective marketing starts with an unbiased perspective. To be successful at marketing, business blemishes MUST be seen clearly. As a business owner you just don't have that objectivity. If you read Ken Segall's book [Insanely Simple](#), about his working with Apple, you'll read how Steve Jobs was proven wrong time and time again by his more objective and talented outside team who created some of the most iconic and

www.TheAttentionBusiness.com

www.TomlinsonDigital.com



successful marketing ever done. If it's true for Stave Jobs, it's going to be true for the rest of us.

3) The Best Marketing Is About System + Inspiration.

We've all heard the old adage that sales is "90% perspiration, 10% inspiration". This is less true with marketing, where we can all think of inspired marketing campaigns which have transformed a company's fortunes by capturing the imagination of the market. But remember, the biggest marketers of consumer products and brands, like Unilever or Proctor and Gamble, have been using a systematic approach coupled with a little bit of inspiration for decades.

One of the main dangers for small business owners going it alone is letting the ball drop and doing nothing. Spending money on a new web site, spending dozens of hours on social media, then getting immersed in the business and doing nothing. Marketing talent is important, but one the best reasons for outsourcing online marketing is to make sure it gets done.

4) Have You Really Got That Much Free Time? Really? Online Marketing Requires Time and Persistence.

Great marketing is part science, part art. Yet, building a solid online presence for your business requires time and repeated focused effort week after week. Have you really got the time for struggling with this kind of unfamiliar work? Would you be better doing well what you do really well?

5) DIY Doesn't Really Save Money.

Because you're not spending money on outside resources you might think you're saving tons of money with a DIY approach. Just remember this...it's not just what you spend, it's what you spend and *get back on* what you spend.

Good marketing will get you back more, and sometimes significantly more, than what you spend. So, how do you *get* great marketing? You find someone who is going to take the time to understand your business and what you are trying to achieve. That's what big successful companies with huge marketing budgets do, but

www.TheAttentionBusiness.com

www.TomlinsonDigital.com



you can do it too. The online world puts high quality, targeted marketing within your price range.

You also have to factor in what *your* time is worth. Your time is not cheap. If you kept track of every minute you spent trying to do it yourself, and applied a money value to that, you'd be surprised at the expense. Also realise that every expensive minute you spend fumbling with something you don't do great is taking away valuable time and talent from something you *do* do great. That's another expense.

"Business success is all about finding the right outside service providers and using them wisely. You can't do it all yourself."

BUT...

Conversely, here are reasons you should be doing content and Social Media work yourself.

1) It's Your Business! You decide the What, if not the How.

You can outsource work, and you can consult, and you can get help; but the first questions you need to answer are **what** you do, and **why**. Only then can you decide how to actually perform, and whether or not to outsource.

Decide what to do – plan what to do – learn how to do it. The **what** always comes before the **how**.

Think about it. When it comes to the "how" of online marketing, you can learn how to do it yourself; you pay someone else to do it; you can copy someone else's methods; or you can strive to do something exciting or unique. But if you're going to put in hours of learning and trial and error on say Facebook marketing or Google Adwords or optimizing your site for Google; or if you're going to spend hard-earned cash on getting someone to do this stuff, then you sure as hell better be doing the right thing in the first place.

If you let a marketing agency make the "what" decisions alone, you'll end up suiting their agenda perhaps more than your own.

www.TheAttentionBusiness.com

www.TomlinsonDigital.com



This is your business, your money to be made or lost, your time... *and your life*. Consult and get ideas and advice and have someone else write the plan; but don't let someone else take control of the decisions about what you do.

2) It's Your Brand, Your Personality and Your Expertise

If your business is reliant heavily on personality and expertise, and creating an authoritative image for that, your input is going to be vital. You need your words, your face, your voice and your thinking all over it. You will have to be heavily involved.

There is no point in this case having some neutral, anodyne, bloodless blog articles outsourced to a jobbing writer if you want to stamp your personality on it all.

Again, get advice, get design work done, get professional photos videos and art work done. Outsource the grunt work like submission and creating profiles and proof reading – even typing it out. But there comes a time when the words and ideas have to be yours.

3) Outsourcing May not be the Easier or Cheaper Solution

Years ago I was running an ecommerce business, and as business grew quickly we were getting more and more calls and emails from customers. It was becoming difficult to maintain service levels at the high standards we'd set ourselves.

I looked into outsourcing the incoming phone calls and emails. In order to test the services we were looking at I made some trial phone calls. I discovered that they only handled the easy stuff, and referred anything remotely difficult back to the original seller, even basic questions. Unless it was "I want to place an order", they didn't want to deal with it. I realised that if we outsourced the calls, we would still have all the hassle calls, and not the order phone calls – when orders should be coming in online in the first place.

The answer was to systematise information sharing with the customers and to encourage them in various ways to order online. Information like order tracking and stock availability was beefed up online and made available to customers. The result was an 80% drop in calls and emails. Customer satisfaction rose.

www.TheAttentionBusiness.com

www.TomlinsonDigital.com



Before outsourcing, go through your plan, take advice, and see how you can create a plan which will minimise work, automate drudge work and allow you to concentrate on ideas and inspiration. You still may want to outsource, but you'll keep down the costs and you'll be happier with it.

4) Don't Outsource for the Wrong Reasons

The wrong reasons would be that you feel overwhelmed by the scale of what needs to be done on social media, overwhelmed that everyone else is tweeting more than you, and overwhelmed *that you're not that good at it!*

Wrong reasons! Read up, make your plan, and get organised, and have the confidence to know that huge amounts of social media activity by businesses is very ineffective.

Don't be held captive by the game of social media. Everytime you find yourself tweeting or posting "because you feel you ought to", step back and ask yourself why you don't have a strategic plan.

The Takeaway...

This should give you a good idea about what and when you should outsource. Use outside advice to get an objective view. If you need to, outsource the boring grunt work. If you can find the right people, get someone to create content that will be better than you'd make yourself. And by all means outsource the co-ordination and admin of the whole set up. But you decide on what is done, the direction and above all what you are trying to achieve.