

Steer

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STEER YOUR BUSINESS | THE MAGAZINE

What is a sales process and do you need one?

Nicola Lutz

Facts about managing staff

Jemma Fairclough
Haynes

**me:now
Who Benefits?**

Barry Thompson

You get what you think about

Ash Lawrence

Beach Craft Spirits: A new rum on the Beach

Lara Beach



Editor's Review

Welcome to another fabulous issue of Steer Your Business. This month we have some new contributors sharing information with us. It's great to see our regular contributors, but it's also good to mix it up a bit with some new topics from some different business owners. If you'd like to see an article on a particular challenge you have, then please let us know. If you'd like to contribute, then also please contact us to find out what we need.

So this month we have our regular contributors – Ash Lawrence, Nicola Lutz, Jemma Fairclough-Haynes and Nigel Topliss who share their expertise with us again.

Do you have empty spaces in your diary and need more clients? Check out how Barry Thompson from Me:Now can help you fill those gaps and increase your customer base. You can use the app for FREE so well worth a read.

If you are looking to expand your network and maybe venture into new markets, then Pathfinder may well have some ideas for you. They have also offered Steer Your Business readers a discount if you'd like to attend their event.

Do you find sales challenging? Benjamin Dennehy is a sales trainer who can give you some ideas. When you run your own business, you often forget that you need to promote yourself and your business in order to make sales!

Do you have a positive culture in your business? Check out the article from Kiwi Resolutions to find out how you can make your workplace more positive and a better environment for everyone to work in.

Lara from Beach Craft Spirits tells us about her journey to be owning a rum distillery! I'm sure it's everyone's dream but is it as easy as it sounds?

We have an eclectic mix of articles this month as usual. I'm sure there are one or two you want to dip into and find out more. I know I want to read it from cover to cover and see what I can learn from everyone and think about how we can work together going forward. Networking in any form is exciting because you never know who you will meet or what opportunities will come your way. The Steer Your Business magazine is no different; it's a great way to connect with people you wouldn't normally meet.

Have a fabulous month. Please connect via social media and tell us what you think and what you'd like to see going forward.



Sally
Marshall

Sally

Contents

- 04** NEWS FROM THE BEACH
Sally Marshall
- 06** YOU GET WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT
Ash Lawrence
- 08** WHAT IS A SALES PROCESS AND DO YOU NEED ONE?
Nicola Lutz
- 11** FACTS ABOUT MANAGING STAFF
Jemma Fairclough Haynes
- 12** BEACH CRAFT SPIRITS: A NEW RUM ON THE BEACH
Lara Beach
- 13** RESTORATIVE APPROACHES IN THE WORKPLACE
Anmarie Frenchum-Cockings and Helen Calvert
- 14** ME: NOW WHO BENEFITS
Barry Thompson
- 16** SO, WHY DID YOU BUY A SALES JOB?
Benjamin Dennehy
- 18** THIS IS WHY YOUR CONTENT IS NOT BEING READ
Karem Ortiz
- 21** HOW DO I KNOW THAT A FRANCHISE IS FUTURE PROOF
Nigel Toplis
- 22** PUBLIC RELATIONS
Penelope James
- 24** FIGURING OUT THE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT
Nigel Toplis
- 26** EVENTS SEPTEMBER

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News From the Beach!

Recently I have been travelling and attended a conference in South Africa – Cape Town to be exact. This was a huge step in my personal development as well as a great opportunity to network with international delegates from around the world. I had expected to be attending the conference with a couple of colleagues from the UK but unfortunately, they had to cancel at the last minute, so I walked into a room full of people, knowing only one person who I had met briefly in Canterbury a few weeks earlier.

On the first day my flight was late, so I arrived in time for lunch. The dining room was pretty full but I found a space on a table and sat down. I started to chat to the lady sitting opposite and discovered that we had

a lot in common. She was one of the exhibitors at the conference and we soon fell into conversation about our respective businesses which continued over the next few days.

During one of our conversations, I happened to mention something which I'd been thinking about for a long time but didn't really know how to tackle it. My new friend had the answer and suggested a course which I could do in South Africa but via distance learning. In fact, she had been thinking about doing the same course and we decided that we could both sign up for it and follow each other's progress at the same time.

As you can probably imagine, this is an unexpected outcome from a trip to South Africa where I knew no-one, didn't know what to expect and certainly didn't plan to sign up to a distance learning course in order to improve my business back in the UK!

I also spent some time with the lady I had met briefly in Canterbury a few weeks earlier. Again, we hit it off and discovered that we think alike and have similar ideas on various issues relating to our respective businesses. We also plan to keep in touch and will probably end up working together at some point as part of a project which is currently been put together in another part of the world.

I also met someone else who belongs to another association and she has invited me to join her on a trip to Asia. Again it will be another networking opportunity as well as travelling to new places.

Networking is just a conversation and finding those like-minded people who can help and support you along your journey. Sometimes they come from surprising sources, but it really doesn't matter in this day and age with the internet and the ease of communication.

So, if someone offers you an opportunity, just think of it as a way of meeting new people and widening your network rather than a strictly business opportunity. You just never know who you are going to meet and where it might take you and your business.



Sally Marshall



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Get Involved!

Steer Your Business is about sharing information and building a community so why not get involved and become part of this amazing journey?

We Love to receive articles which help and support our readers and in return we will promote your business by putting in a call to action which links straight back to your email or website. If you'd like to write an article, we require about 500 words with a couple of images and we'll do the rest!

This is an amazing opportunity to get you and your business out there on a much bigger scale. The magazine is distributed through social media - currently 22k followers on Twitter - and also through the Steer Your Business social media on facebook and Twitter. Everytime a post is retweeted or shared, then it gets to an even bigger audience. Leveraging each other's contacts is fantastic and helps us all. You

just never know who will see your article and read it. If it's something that resonates with them, they can quickly and easily get in touch with you to start a conversation.

So what are you waiting for? Start writing and send your article to sally@steeryourbusiness.com and get your business out there - and it's FREE!

If you'd like to invest in some additional marketing, then we are able to advertise your business for you as a very reasonable rate. When business owners see your advert on a regular basis, they will remember you. When they are ready to buy, your name will be at the front of their thoughts. Please get in touch to discuss how we can help you promote your business to our readers.



@SallyDMarshall
22k
followers



Sally Marshall
7k
followers

ADVERTISING

Size	Ratecard		
	1-3 insertions	4-9 insertions	10-12+ insertions
Inside Front, Inside Back Covers	£350	£350	£350
Outside Back Cover	£450	£450	£450
Quarter page	£100	£86	£72
Half Page	£155	£130	£105
Full page	£265	£218	£171
DPS	£475	£386	£297

You **get** what you **think** about!



It was as I was walking up the departure ramp to board my flight home when I heard this loud laughter and a woman speaking with such passion and energy that I could not help but looking. I thought she seems to be the life and soul of that particular party; I was secretly hoping that I wouldn't be seated next to them on the plane, after all what were the chances of that out of 380 other passengers?

When we booked in Sarah (My wife) asked as usual for a window seat only to be told that the only window seat was a single and we would have to sit separately. I was hoping for a sleep on the plane and anywhere other than a window seat would make that impossible due to my long legs. So separate seats it was.

As I handed my boarding pass to the stewardess she said "just there Sir..." Fantastic, right in the exit gangway, not only a window seat but long leg room. Yahooooo.

While we waited for the last passengers to board the two seats next to me where still empty, it was then that I heard that same loud voice, surely not? You guessed it; she sat right next to me with her partner. (Bloody law of attraction) My four-hour sleep disappeared into the distance just as my short break had.

You are probably asking "and so what?" Well as you know I believe "Nothing happens by chance, my friend!"

"No such thing as luck. A meaning behind every little thing, and such a meaning behind this. Part for you, part for me, may not see it all real clear right now, but we will, before long." (Richard Bach) Everything happens for a reason.

So what could be the reason behind this meeting I wonder? It all soon became clear... This loud confident lady turned out to be the ultimate pessimist with absolutely no confidence and in danger of attracting all of the negative things she was imagining on a daily basis.

By the end of the flight Ash had done what Ash does best and this lady ended her holiday with a promise to learn from the Law of Attraction, re-frame her negative thought patterns and change her life for the best forever....

Now the lessons in this "chance," meeting and a reminder to us all;

- Everything happens for a reason.
- The Law of attraction will attract whatever you are thinking. Good or bad.

- If you realised how powerful your thoughts were, you would be very careful what you thought.
- The decision to change needs to be accompanied by positive action!

Now, for those of you that think the "Law of Attraction" is a load of old baloney here is the scientific explanation! One of the most difficult to conceive parts of your brain is the small section called the Reticular Activating System (RAS). This tiny portion of the human brain is the size of your little finger and it can actually have a major role and effect on your life in general.

This is how and why your RAS can change your life.

At any given time during your day, your mind is bombarded with millions of bits of sensory stimulation's from the physical environment where you are. Sounds, smells, tastes, sights, and feelings are continually being downloaded into your system, and your mind needs a way to filter that information. That is the purpose of the RAS and why it came into being.

The Reticular Activating System sits in your brain and acts as a custom filter which adapts to different types of situation and reacts instantly. If you think of the RAS as a bouncer at the door of your mind. Your beliefs tell the RAS what is or is not important, chiefly making a list of all the information invited to the party, and your RAS then acts like the club bouncer letting whoever is on the list in and chucking the rest out on the street.

Of those millions of bits of information entering your brain, your RAS only lets in around 130 pieces of those bits of information per second into your conscious mind. That's about all that your central nervous system can handle at one time, and the details you let in are the ones that you have deemed over the years to be important enough for yourself.

This is where the work comes in, and the awesome results follow. Over 30 days, if you think about it and imagine yourself experiencing something new, or affirming an additional, recent belief like "the world is full of amazing and incredible people," slowly but surely you are moulding your filter so that this new statement is having access to your mind and a new mind-set is taking place. As you give access to your mind for new convictions, new thoughts are making their way in your subconscious.

We all know that no matter our beliefs, especially where they normally deal with other persons, there are plenty of opinions to prove one right or wrong out there in the world. If you believe people are bad, there will be plenty of people around that can prove you right. If you believe people are great, there are just as many people out there waiting to prove that belief right.

In the end, it is about what belief you choose to embrace and impress upon your subconscious.

For the lady in question (You know who you are!) Thank you for keeping in touch and well done for the fantastic changes you've made!

Do It Now!



Ash
Lawrence



Email **Ash Lawrence** on
ash@ashlawrence.co.uk
<https://ashlawrence.co.uk>



No

A sales process is a series of steps that aim to get your prospective customer to buy, and then to rebuy. It involves two main areas to focus on:

1. the stages you want them to move through towards the sale, and
2. what you do at each stage.

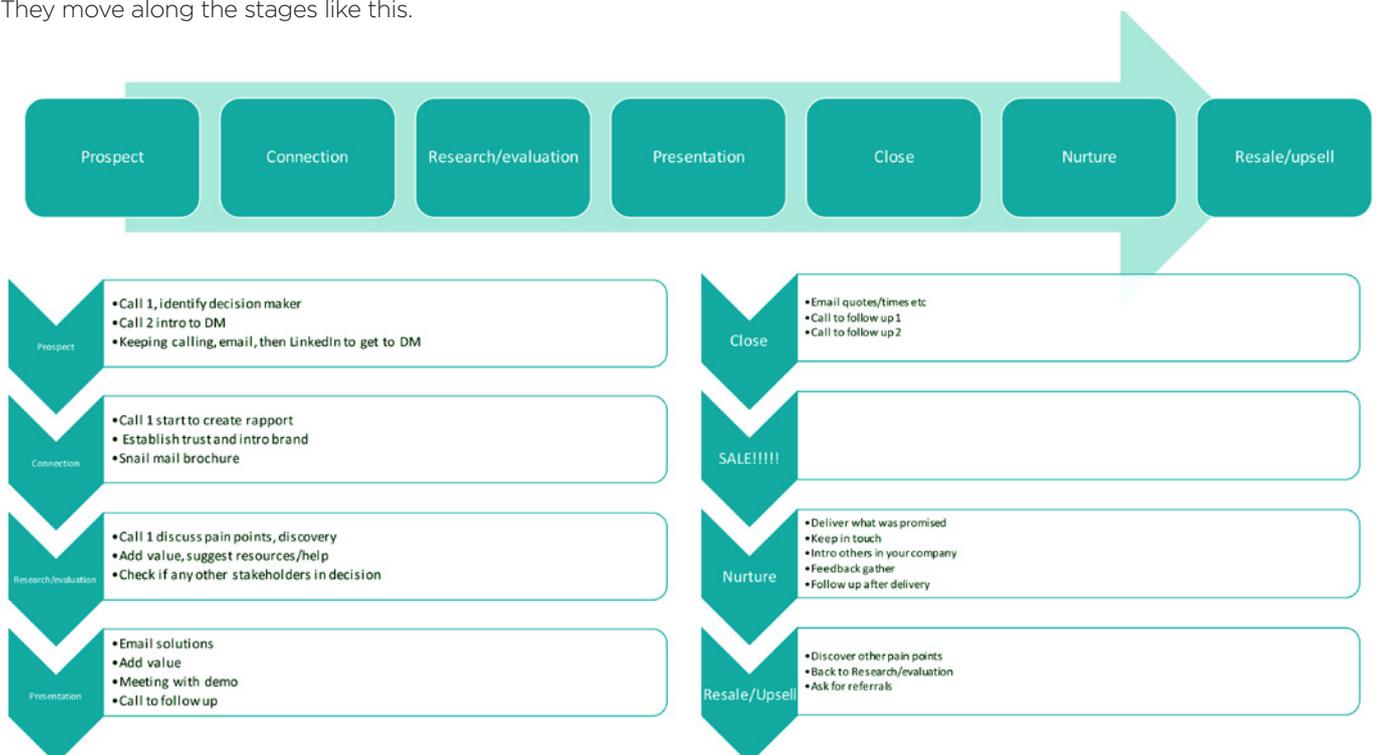
You need one to help you identify how many leads you have at each step so you avoid the peaks and troughs of deals coming in. It also establishes what you do with prospective clients at each stage, for example, email, call, visit etc. And which of these (their form, frequency) work best for your buyers.

1. The stages

They move along the stages like this.

- **Prospect** - your newbies. A list of potential buyers.
- **Connection** - usually a discovery call stage/initial chat
- **Research/evaluation** - learning their pain points, seeing if you have a match.
- **Presentation** - discussion of solutions you can offer to solve their pain points.
- **Close** - negotiation of pricing, timing etc.
- **Nurture** - post sale. Delivering what you promised. Keeping in touch, maintaining rapport. Asking for referrals
- **Resale / Upsale** - further discovery of pain points etc, go back to 'Research' stage.

Every day should include work at each of these steps. Often a business will focus so much on closing, and



Fluff

What is a sales process and do you need one?

presentation that they neglect the prospecting and connection stages, and this is why they get to a point where they feel they have no sales coming in.

Now you know what the stages are, you need to work out the best buyer journey at each of these steps.

2. What are you doing at each of these stages?

The *Prospecting stage* might be your website – is it user friendly? Does it have a call to action? It might also be sourcing lists from events, identifying potential leads on LinkedIn etc. The more you have at this stage, the more you will have at the *Close stage*. It's as simple as that.

The *Connection stage* is important as you need to qualify your leads are in a position and able to buy. You need to find and establish a rapport with the decision maker. How? Calling through your Prospects? Email campaigns? Don't forget that these people get a lot of emails – you need to stand out. What is the best time to call your potential prospects, morning or afternoon? Are they in another time zone?

At the *Research/evaluation stage* you should be asking some great questions to find out if you have a match. This is a vital stage and you may well come back to it several times before the prospect buys from you. It might be this stage takes the form of an email including some information about what you do, a call to follow up, maybe a mailed brochure. Work out the most effective way here.

The *Presentation stage* should be when you know you have fully understood your client and how you can help. It might include a demonstration of your product, a trial of your service or a sample of your work, so often it's done in person, but it could be via mail, email etc. Make sure you follow it up, a quick call, maybe an email.

Closing – don't forget to actually ask for the sale. Don't stall in the *Presentation stage* and go all shy! Make sure they have all the information they need and ensure you have a clear understanding of their situation. Be persistent,

rather than pushy. No Fluff has a cheat sheet for our email subscribers to help with questions and tips at this stage so feel free to get in touch.

YOU MAKE THE SALE! Insert a little dance here.

But all is not over... you need to keep them happy. Not just to gain a great reputation, but also for upselling, reselling and gaining referrals. Plus you feel great when you do a good job.

The *Nurture stage* may involve others in your organisation – introduce them to your client. Be clear on delivery of the service or product (by email is useful). Ensure you are delivering what was promised and when it's been delivered send a brief note or give them a call. Define what happens and the ideal time to do so in your sales process.

Resale/upsell stage is also important but can be a little cringey for some salesfolk – but if you have a good rapport and you've delivered a great product, then why not? I'd recommend only coming to this stage once their initial purchase has gone through, you can't ask for a referral when they've not yet experienced the first service/product.

When you have mapped out the process, tweak it as you go. Be aware of how many prospects you have at each stage of the process so you can be sure not to run dry. *Good luck!*



Nicola Lutz



Nicola Lutz
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Facts

about managing a staff member who is increasing their family

There are lots of myths and fables about what you can and cannot do with a member of staff who is expecting a baby or adopting a child. Here are 7 Employment Law facts about managing staff who are increasing their family.

1. As an employer your duty towards an expectant mother starts as soon as your staff member tells you that they are pregnant. The pregnant lady does not have to let you know that she is expecting a baby the pregnancy is beyond 15 weeks but it makes it easier for you to fulfill your duty as an employer if you know sooner rather than later.
2. Employees can take time off for antenatal appointments, this can include things like yoga and relaxation. This is regardless of whether they work full time and part time and you must pay full pay for this time off.
3. Time off sick whilst pregnant: Employers should keep a separate record of sicknesses for staff who are away from work due to a pregnancy related illness. The staff member should not be penalised or treated unfairly for sickness which is related to her pregnancy however, there is no right to be paid for this time off beyond statutory sick pay unless you have a contract or policy which says otherwise. Do remember that a contract can be created through conduct.
4. Family friendly rights and payments extend beyond a pregnant mother: Employees who will become parents through surrogacy and adoption are also entitled to paid leave to care for their new child. This is subject to the length of service that they have with the employer amongst other things.
5. You can make a person redundant whilst they are pregnant or on maternity leave. If you are not selecting a person for redundancy because they are pregnant or on maternity and if there is a genuine redundancy

situation you can make an employee redundant. A genuine redundancy situation is where the work has reduced or diminished so much that there is no longer a requirement for that role.

6. What about fathers, non baby carrying mothers and adoptive parents? Employees who are fathers, parents in a same gender relationship and adoptive parents can claim Shared Parental Leave. This is similar to Maternity Leave in that it allows the other parent to paid time off work to care for the new child. The staff member who wishes to take Shared Parental Leave must still fit the required criteria.
7. Payments for Shared Parental Leave do not have to be equal to payments for Maternity Leave. In a recent case a father won a claim of sex discrimination as his employer only paid statutory pay for Shared Parental Leave but they paid an enhanced payment for Maternity Leave. The tribunal agreed with the father at first but the case was overturned later. The reason why the case was overturned was because the tribunal

decided that Maternity Leave was not just about looking after the baby but that it was also about the health and wellbeing of the new mother.

There is much more managing a staff member who is having a new baby or child.



**Jemma
Fairclough
Haynes**



If you would like more information and/or a Maternity Policy to guide you and your staff you can contact us by visiting

www.orchardemploymentlaw.co.uk



Come chat to the Kat for design, layout and print on all your marketing. From logo design, leaflets and brochures to magazines and catalogues. We make sure you stand out from the crowd. Don't just print it, design it, USE it!

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Beach Craft Spirits

The **NEW** Rum on the beach

If anyone had told me that in 2016 I would be getting married, starting a Rum distillery business and be directing a community pantomime I would say they were bonkers! However, that's exactly what happened...

Beach Craft Spirits Established 2016

The business was started from a point when things were at the lowest ebb we had seen for a while. My husband (David) had just been made redundant from a job (This is bad in itself but he had given up a well-paid stable employment to follow this job – which I wholeheartedly supported) I remember the conversation so well. What are we going to do? My stomach doing turns and feeling sick whilst reassuring David that it would all be ok. That's when the idea of a craft Rum distillery was born.

The name was easy to come by Beach (Surname) Craft (Exactly that) Spirits (Rum's a Spirit). When we thought about what we wanted from the business it became obvious that the best way to develop it was to make it around our hobbies and lifestyle and David's degree. We both love the Beach (corny but true), David is a kite surfer and myself, I prefer the more sedate stand up paddle boarding side. David is one of our most prized assets in BCS, he is a degree trained Brewer and Distiller. How he made this decision as an 18-year-old is just another story!

Best made plans and all that...

What maybe wasn't obvious at first is that there is a lot more to business than it looks. It's not all plain sailing for sure. You can have the best intentions in the world and still get it wrong. There are so many things I could



mention here (good and bad) that happened in our first two years of business. Crowdfunding attempts, licenses, more licenses, first premises, moving premises... you get the picture. Life and business throw curved balls at you. What I have learnt is that "You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf them."

Where is Beach Craft Spirits now?

For starters in a much better place. We have new premises in Nairn in the Highlands of Scotland. Have I lost the passion for the business? No, way. I have enrolled in a 2-year HNC course in Business in the local college. This is giving me the building blocks to begin to complement

David's experience in Brewing and Distilling in the business. As of last week, we are now able to sell our Rums online from our own website. We will be attending local and UK wide events. Our Rums are very different for sure and cater to different markets. This is all very exciting and a step in the right direction. However, I am very much aware that although we have been a business since 2016, the arduous work has only just begun.



Lara Beach



You can find more about us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or our website: www.beachcraftspirits.co.uk

Restorative Approaches in the workplace:

the benefits to health, wellbeing & performance

'An organisation that fully embraces restorative practices has the potential to create a safer, happier and more effective workplace' (RJC)

What is a restorative approach? It is a term used to explain a way of behaving and facing difficulties which helps individuals and whole teams to build and maintain positive relationships, resolve problematic behaviours and repair harm.

So how do we create this environment? It may seem that lots of changes need to be made and employers will be thinking about costs involved. However, employee absence per year in the UK is on average £14 billion! That's £554 per employee.

Creating a culture where your employees feel valued and included will have a positive impact on their health and wellbeing, which reduces absenteeism this will in turn increase performance. Kiwi Resolutions Ltd can assist with looking at the processes an organisation has in place and can help to build on past successes. These slight changes can help organisations to become fully restorative.

Working with people is one of the key factors of a restorative approach, when we look at the processes involved, are there opportunities for all employees to input ideas into decision making? Of course, we don't all get to be leaders every time, but if a staff member has a fantastic idea that will increase performance or productivity, they will be given the opportunity to share their thoughts in a safe and inclusive environment.

Creating a restorative culture will make it easier to tackle any difficult conversations or issues that arise. Kiwi Resolutions Ltd can assist

with building and maintaining relationships; we encourage teams to consider their performance, staff meetings and paperwork/processes to think about how these could be more effective. When we have a built a valuable relationship with our colleagues we are more likely to want to put things right when we have an issue.



Restorative practices are used to build a workplace culture of trust and empowers individuals to work proactively together. The approach can also be used responsively; Kiwi Resolutions Ltd is directed by accredited Restorative Practitioners who can facilitate conversations to help resolve conflict in the workplace. The process can support peers and colleagues to repair harm and assist team members involved to find a constructive and positive way forward together. While other conflict resolution practices are often effective, they can sometimes be narrow in their focus. Restorative approaches look at a much wider, community led, complete process, with building better relationships and stronger working practices at its heart.

Five tips to create a restorative workplace:

- Treat those involved fairly and equally.
- Allow all affected to have their say.
- Promote accountability and trust.
- Ensure continuity to positive practices throughout the whole workplace.
- Identify alternative ways of dealing with conflict.



**Annmarie
Frenchum-
Cockings**



**Helen
Calvert**



If you would like to know more about restorative approaches and how the practice can assist your workplace contact Kiwi Resolutions Ltd on info@kiwiresolutions.co.uk or 01843 310063
www.kiwiresolutions.co.uk



www.menow.co.uk

Who BENEFITS?

Just who benefits when a small business is successful? The easy answer is 'everyone', but the devil is in the detail. So here are some numbers...

There are 5.4 million private micro-businesses in the United Kingdom*. A micro-business is classified as any business that has fewer than 10 employees. You might be a little surprised to know that of those, 4.5 million have no employees, are under the VAT threshold and are not registered for PAYE.

If just 1% of these 5.4m businesses could each fill an extra five appointments a month (assuming that each transaction generates on average £60) this is the impact this would have:

- 54,000 businesses filling five more appointments a month - just over one a week
- 270,000 more transactions a month - 3.2m more per year
- Increasing their combined revenue by £16.2m per month, or £194.4m per year

That's a lot of money.

What if they could do more?

But what if these small businesses filled 15, 20 or 30 more appointments a month?

The average sole trader/micro-business owner works a nine-hour day (I know - some work a lot more) for six days a week. That's potentially 216 hour-long appointments available each month per person, and obviously that increases based on the number of staff.

So, two staff would total 432 appointments a month, four equals 864 total appointments, etc...

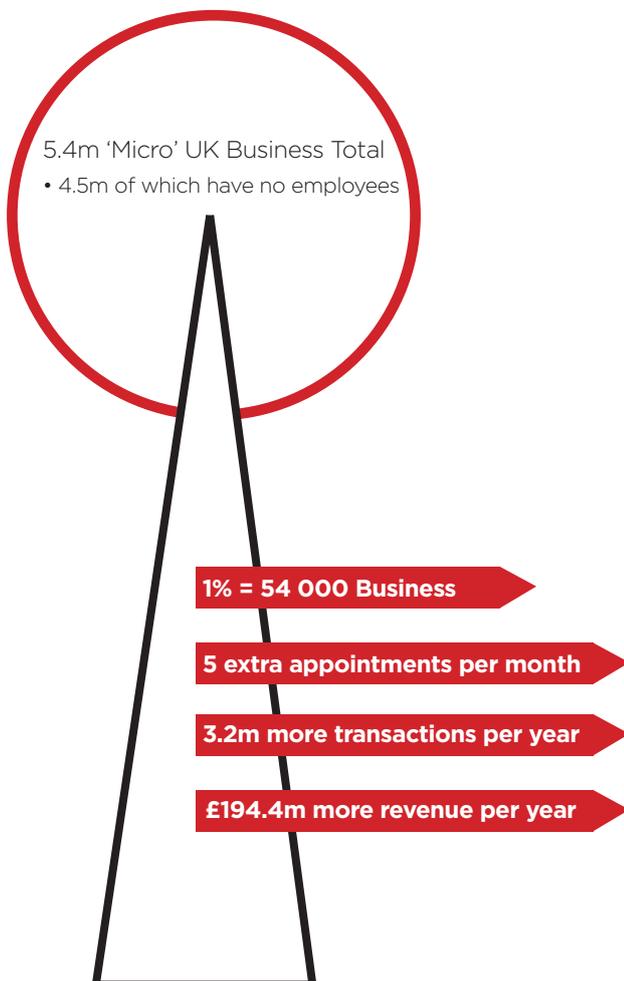
Now, not all of those potential working hours are filled with appointments, so there's scope to fill some of them. What if 1% were able to fill more of those slots?

(Note: if 1% of small businesses in the US alone filled five extra appointments per month, this would generate \$13.4bn a year).

So, who would benefit from this?

Well, credit/debit payment systems such as Square & iZettle. They charge on average 1.75% per transaction.

Our 1% of the small business pool in the UK will have generated an extra £3.4m for them a year just from filling five more appointments each month. If they fill an extra 30 a month then Square & iZettle benefit from an additional £20.4m per year.



And again, that's just the UK.

But let's not forget that the bulk of this money is now in the hands of our small businesses.

This money will need to be deposited into accounts, so our banks are benefiting too. The business will have used up stock in servicing their extra appointments, so products will need to be purchased. As our 1% of UK micro-businesses thrive, they may need to grow and this leads to employment, which will then require legal, insurance and further accountancy services.

And let's not dig into how much extra money a profitable business will cause to flow into a local economy as staff use more services like bars and restaurants.

Well, we all do.

The message here is that when small businesses thrive, we all benefit.

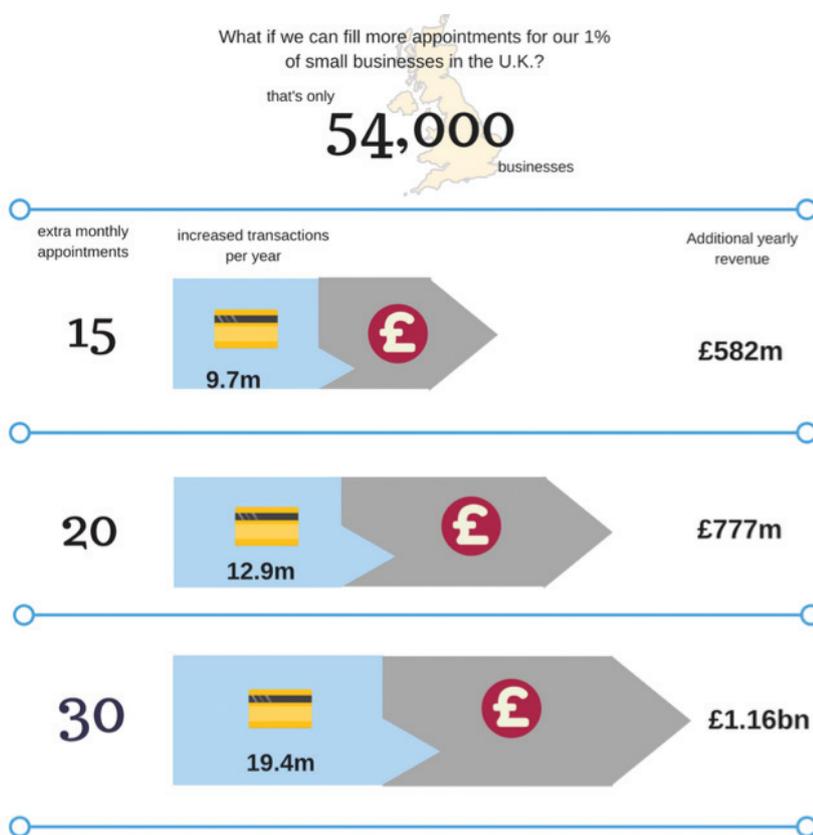
The numbers show just how much impact there can be when small businesses are able to fill five extra appointments a month and how staggering the numbers become when they have the opportunity to fill even more.

We are doing our bit

This is why the me:now app was designed - to help small businesses advertise when these appointments are available. We want to see small businesses be successful - we can see the benefits for everyone.

It's also the reason why me:now gives every small business five listings every month... for free.

**ONS Business Population Data 2017*



Add 1% of U.S. small businesses



Barry Thompson



Find out more at www.menow.co.uk/how/

“So, why did you BUY a sales job”

I asked the entrepreneur.

“Yeah, about that” they replied “I had no idea there would need to be so much selling involved. I have a great product, it’ll change the world, for some reason I thought getting it out there would be easier.” “I hear this all the time”, I said.

Entrepreneurs are great. They make the world colourful and exciting. They change lives, societies, communities and individuals. They bring new things in to a world that is always looking for something. They are passionate and driven people. Often, they are focused 100% on what they seek to achieve.

Unfortunately, this passion can cloud their ability to sell what they have. Yes, a certain amount of sales will come from your passion alone, but that is not a consistent, predictable way to sell. People buy emotionally and justify intellectually. On occasions we let our emotional response dictate our intellectual response. Whilst still a valid way for people to buy, it is not a consistent stable way to sell.

Too often businesses and ideas fail because the passion isn’t enough. I tell startups that what they need to do is really put themselves in the shoes of those they seek to sell too. Immerse yourself in their world, their problems and frustrations. Understand how their problems would manifest themselves in a way that would allow an objective bystander, looking in, to see that they are displaying symptoms of a root problem that your product or service can fix.

It’s all too easy to be driven by your, the entrepreneur’s, reasons why buyers should need something, as opposed to the buyer’s point of view, which is rarely solution-based thinking but an emotional desire to stop, prevent or overcome something.

Ask yourself simple but probing questions;

- **What do I actually fix?** This will often not be the very thing you have specifically designed your product to do - now that’s a counter intuitive thought process for an entrepreneur!
- **Why would anybody care?** Have I fixed something people actually care about?
- **So what?** If they don’t fix their problem, so what? What happens?

- **Who cares?** Who actually cares about fixing this problem?
- **What symptoms** would an individual or organisation be displaying that would indicate they may have a root cause problem I actually can fix?
- **What** would an individual or organisation be specifically complaining about, which they have no clue we are the solution too?
- **If they have a problem** we fix how long would it have been going on for?
- **What would they have probably done** to try and fix it and if so how successful was that?
- **What has this cost** them in time, resources and money to date and what will it continue to cost unless acted on today?
- **What’s the impact** on the business been?
- **How does that make them feel?** - This is essential, even if they can answer the above, if they say “It doesn’t really bother me” you’re not selling to this person or organisation
- **Have they given up trying to fix it?**

To be a successful entrepreneur stop thinking and talking about your creation, rather spend all your time thinking and talking to your prospect about them.



Benjamin Dennehy



#makesalesmengreatagain

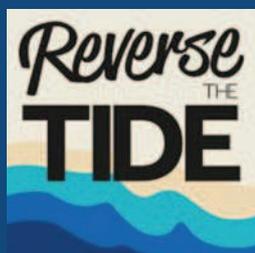
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Try to create other types of content. This is why I love infographics or explainer videos for example. Don't be afraid to test the waters, instead of creating the same things over and over again.

REASON NUMBER 5 : Boring visuals

“ The share of engagements on Facebook accounted for 87% for brand posts with images”- *Emarketer report, 2014*. If your images are boring or don't fit with your brand they can hugely impact on your content. The statistics, as you can see above, speak for themselves.

In another report, by Buffer, tweets with images earn 150% more retweets (medium.com), so get the ball

rolling by looking for or creating stunning visuals for your content strategy. There are great places, such as Unsplash, where you can find great images to meet your marketing needs.



Karem Ortiz



Karem Ortiz, is a marketing master student at the Kent Business School and SEO marketer freelancer in Kent. Need help with SEO, content marketing or a WordPress website? Contact Karem on: 07736395592 or visit her website: <http://karemortiz.strikingly.com/>





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How do I know that a franchise is **'future proof'**?

The short answer of course is that you don't. It's impossible to predict the future and success is not guaranteed for any business - be it independent or franchised.

However, we all know (and continuous research has confirmed) that the risks involved in a franchised business are greatly reduced and consequently, whilst no guarantee is given, the chances of success are far greater with a franchise compared to an independent business.

So, with these caveats in place, there are steps/actions you can take to enhance the chances of success of your chosen franchise and some of these considerations are simply a matter of common sense.

Membership of The British Franchise Association (BFA) would indicate to me that the business has been subject to and passed independent scrutiny; whilst I would also be more confident of businesses that have proven themselves by being in business for a number of years.

But it is more than common sense, you also need to look closely at the franchisor and the level and quality of their support.

If I'm looking to buy into a franchise then certainly I would be looking for more than 'telephone advice' and support from a distance.

I want real people understanding my business and providing me with proactive cover in the key areas of marketing, sales, business planning, procurement, training and finance.

I see the best franchises as those that foster a 'marriage' and, as such, I want the franchisor to be a positive participant in helping grow the business and, as such, should make the bulk of their money from a royalty based on business performance (and not through a huge initial fee).

This encourages the franchisor to work hard with the franchisee to help develop their business, and over time develop new income streams for the franchisees.

The franchisor therefore is a key point of reference when evaluating the 'future proof' of a business, and their support, financial standing, longevity and stability should all be closely examined in direct consultation with them.

You should also seek advice from business professionals such as the banks, accountants and the BFA to get a feeling for the reputation of the franchisor.

All of the above of course acts as a sieve lessening the risk with each shake.

But as a final, and maybe most important, point of reference I would always speak personally to two or three existing franchisees and get their input on the business

itself, the support of the franchisor and the robustness of the proposition.

As the old saying goes the only guarantee in life is death and taxes, but with a little forethought you can at least further reduce the risks involved in owning your own business.



Nigel Toplis



Nigel Toplis is managing director of The Bardon Group. Contact him on Tel: 01530 513300 or Email: info@thebardongroup.co.uk

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“People often ask me what I do. When I say I’m a Public Relations Consultant I am frequently confronted with blank looks.”

P Stands For Public

Public Relations has to do with the public, your target audience: the person who buys or supplies your services/products, the people who work for you, those who invest in your company, regulators and journalists. All can have a powerful impact on your company’s reputation. If they are unhappy with your service/products they won’t purchase from you again or may even take to Twitter to criticise your products (remember Gerald Ratner’s “it’s total crap” comment?!). If they are pleased, then they will act accordingly with their wallets or recommend online or to a friend.

R Stands For Reputation

Reputation is key to your survival as a company/brand, as well as your ongoing development and success.

Is your reputation good or bad? Can you live up to it? Can you maintain it? Is it based on fact, or merely perceptions?

A good reputation means your company/products will stand out from the crowd and give you the competitive edge you need to succeed and prosper.

A poor reputation or one based on inaccurate perceptions will achieve none of these things, lose you suppliers and customers and eventually your business.

In a nutshell, Public Relations is a discipline which helps you manage your reputation by communicating and building solid and positive relationships with your target audiences and by influencing opinion and behaviour.

Public Relations can take many forms: including proactive public relations - where you actively promote your company and brand, reactive public relations -where you

strive to protect your brand and crisis public relations - where you plan how to ensure the best outcome for your company/brand in a difficult situation and more...

But How Do You Do Pr?

Essentially, but not exclusively, PR is about securing positive media coverage for your company – print or online (including social media). It can be slow and painstaking, but the consistent drip feed of positive news stories, carefully aimed at your target audiences, will create results which in time will build a solid and lasting reputation for your company/brand. Third party endorsement from a journalist, respected blogger or member of the public is invaluable in terms of brand/product reputation. Consumers are apt to take more notice than an advertisement or a flyer and remember the endorsement for many years to come.

In short, there are a multitude of ways in which Public Relations can assist you achieve your objectives by raising your company’s reputation with its publics, but one thing is for sure, if you invest in PR it will transform your business.



Penelope James



You can contact Penelope James on 01303 844555

Looking for a new Post-Brexit Export Opportunity?

Whilst uncertainty still surrounds Brexit, now is the time to investigate and consider new markets which will provide the UK with significant opportunities.

So where should you consider?

Saudi Arabia may not be the first country that springs to mind, however this rapidly diversifying country is currently embracing Vision 2030, a government plan to diversify the economy from its reliance on oil. The reforms Vision 2030 is bringing is resulting in a country that offers excellent opportunities to UK Plc in all sectors. It is a wealthy country and under its new, energetic and dynamic leadership of Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman it is forging ahead with a progressive agenda which entails spending vast sums of money across virtually every sector.

Within the last 12 months, ambitious plans have been announced to build a vast holiday resort on the Red Sea coast which has the backing of Virgin's Sir Richard Branson, and Neom a vast transnational city and economic zone near the border of Jordan and Egypt. Women, as has been widely publicised, are now able to drive and are being appointed to prominent positions. Cinema's, sport, tourist visas and plans for a Six Flags park in Riyadh are bringing entertainment to the Kingdom.

Saudi's appreciate the British and the way we do business. We have a long-standing relationship that we should be capitalising on at this time.

If the thought of trying to enter the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia seems daunting, or if you already have a presence but want to increase your market share, then you should seriously consider attending the 'Opportunity Arabia - Oil and Beyond Conference' on the afternoon of 19th September, to be held at The Grocers' Hall, Princes Street, London.

The conference, now in its 14th year will provide attendees with a valuable insight into how to succeed within the Saudi market and avoid the potential pitfalls.

Chaired by Former British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Sir Alan Munro, there will be keynote speakers including Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean - Member of the House of Lords and Co-chair of the Saudi British Joint Business Council, Oliver Cornock, Editor in Chief, Oxford

Business Group, and regular guest on BBC News "The Briefing" and Stuart D'Souza, CEO of AEI Saudi, based in Riyadh.

In addition, panels and case studies covering both the established and 'new' opportunities available will include such topics as:

- Smart Cities
- The developing role of Women
- Technology
- Energy
- Training/Education
- Infrastructure
- Entertainment
- Sport

Delegates will also be able to meet the experts and connect with the Kingdom by way of a panel discussion, Q&A's and a networking event.

The conference is being organised by Pathfinder Trade and Invest who have been arranging overseas Trade Missions and UK Conferences, summits and briefings since 2011.

To further help interested parties establish business relationships within Saudi Arabia, and to explore first-hand the business opportunities available in the Kingdom, Pathfinder Trade and Invest are also organising a Trade Mission to Saudi Arabia to take place from 25th to 29th November this year.

Pathfinder Trade and Invest feel strongly about the opportunities Saudi Arabia has to offer and are delighted to extend to members of Steer your Business a £50 (33%) discount on the delegate fee - please contact markv@pathfindertradeandinvest.com to obtain the promotional code to be entered at check-out, stating that you heard about the event through Steer your Business.

We look forward to welcoming you at the 'must attend' occasion of the annual UK-Saudi bilateral events calendar.



To register for **Opportunity Arabia Oil and Beyond Conference**, please visit Pathfinder Trade and Invests website at www.pathfindertradeandinvest.com/events/opportunity-arabia-conference-london-september-2018/ Or email markv@pathfindertradeandinvest.com.



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Strategy: Have a Plan: How Are You Going To Get To Your Desired Goal? Do you have a plan for your business journey? Do you drift from one thing to another with no real focus on the outcome?

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Events September

Company	Name	Date	Time	Location	Cost	To book your place
Dragon CoWorking	We're Done Fridays	Every Friday	3pm - 5pm	Dragon Co-Working 7-8 New Road Avenue Rochester, ME4 6BB		https://dragoncoworking.co.uk/events/were-done-fridays/
ABC Networks	ABC Maidstone	4th Sept	7.30am-9am	K Sports, Cobdown, Station Rd, Ditton, Aylesford ME20 6AU	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Chamber of Commerce	After Hours Ashford	4th Sept	6pm	The Conningbrook Hotel, Canterbury Rd, Ashford, TN24 9QR	Free	https://www.kentinvtachamber.co.uk/events/after-hours-club-322/
ABC Networks	ABC Gillingham	5th Sept	7am - 9am	Gillingham Golf Club, Woodlands Rd, Gillingham ME7 2AP	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Dragon CoWorking	Creative Confidence: Do what you love & get paid what you are worth	5th Sept	4.30pm - 6pm	Dragon Co-Working 7-8 New Road Avenue Rochester, ME4 6BB	£10	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/creative-confidence-do-work-you-love-and-get-paid-what-youre-worth-tickets-48534328483
ABC Networks	ABC Sittingbourne	7th Sept	7am - 9am	Sittingbourne & Milton Regis Golf Club, Wormdale Hill, Sittingbourne ME9 7PX	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Steer Your Business	Your Business, Your Life, Your Way	10th Sept	10am - 4pm	Canterbury	£97	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/your-business-your-life-your-way-tickets-48529337555
Dragon CoWorking & Stormchasers Digital	WordPress Academy	11th Sept (Every 2nd Tuesday)	6pm - 8pm	Dragon Co-Working 7-8 New Road Avenue Rochester, ME4 6BB		https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wordpress-academy-tickets-41644831813
ABC Networks	ABC Canterbury	12th Sept	7am - 9am	The Blean Tavern, Blean, Canterbury, CT2 9EF	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
ABC Networks	ABC Ashford	13th Sept	7am - 9am	The Flying Horse, Wye Road, Boughton Aluph, TN25 4HH	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Ladies Who Latte	LWL Ashford	20th Sept	10am - 12pm	The Farriers Arms, Church Rd, Ashford TN25 6NU	Free	https://www.facebook.com/groups/383353965115057/
ABC Networks	ABC Upon Medway	14th Sept	7.30am	George Hotel , 7-8 New Rd Ave, Chatham ME4 6BB	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
ABC Networks	ABC Maidstone	18th Sept	7.30am - 9am	K Sports, Cobdown, Station Rd, Ditton, Aylesford ME20 6AU	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
ABC Networks	ABC Gillingham	19th Sept	7am - 9am	Gillingham Golf Club, Woodlands Road, Gillingham, ME7 2AP	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Dragon CoWorking & ABC Networks	Dragon@SIX	19th Sept	6pm - 8pm	Dragon CoWorking 7-8 New Road Avenue Rochester, ME4 6BB	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/207578043183085/
ABC Networks	ABC Sittingbourne	21st Sept	7am - 9am	Sittingbourne and Milton Regis Golf Club, Wormdale Hill, Sittingbourne ME9 7PX	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
Women in Business	Kent Women in Business Luncheon	25th Sept	11.15am - 2.30pm	Bradbourne House, New Rd, East Malling, West Malling ME19 6DZ	£31.50	https://www.kentwomeninbusiness.co.uk/book-your-place
ABC Networks	ABC Canterbury	26th Sept	7am - 9am	The Blean Tavern, Blean, Canterbury, CT2 9EF	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
ABC Networks	ABC Ashford	27th Sept	7am - 9am	The Flying Horse, Wye Road Boughton Aluph, TN25 4HH	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/
ABC Networks	ABC Upon Medway	28th Sept	7.30am - 9am	George Hotel, 7-8 New Rd Ave, Chatham ME4 6BB	£16	www.abcnetworks.co.uk/bookings/

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