

Steer

Issue 30

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STEER YOUR BUSINESS | THE MAGAZINE

Supporting Small Businesses

in lockdown - Latte & Live

Jennifer Gilmour

**PRACTICAL DEBT
RECOVERY AND CREDIT
CONTROL TIPS AND HINTS**

Graeme Weir

MASTER YOUR MESSAGING

Jennie Eriksen

Editor's Review

October already - where has the year gone?

With lockdown still very much on our minds, focus on businesses and how they can keep going is very much in the news. In this issue of the Steer Your Business magazine, we are looking at ideas to help and support businesses moving forward so that we all get the best return that we can in very challenging circumstances.

Professional indemnity insurance is something many business owners need to have in place and Anna Wilkinson explains what it actually is and why we need it. For anyone who is moving from employment to starting their own business, it may seem like an unnecessary expense, but is it?

How many times have you listened to a pitch at a networking meeting and wondered what the person actually does? Jennie Ericson gives us some great insights into getting our messaging right.

I met Jennifer Gilmour at the beginning of the lockdown when she and her husband started a Facebook group to support businesses. They have since built a community and membership which we are proud to collaborate with at Steer Your Business. Find out what they did and how they've grown their business in a way which they never imagined possible.

How well do you know your clients? It's very easy to provide your products or services to a new client but at the end of the day you want to ensure that you will be paid. Kingsfords Solicitors give us some practical tips on credit control and debt recovery which can help put processes in place.

We have a Steer Your Business podcast but audio long reads is a new one on me. Mark Kendrick and Dave Howell explain why a business should have an audio strategy.

Dealing with objections is something which many business owners fear when they try to get sales. It's something which you can overcome with some training and Phil Sayers talks us through the process.

Don't forget to check out the business directory as well which is growing with each issue. Some great businesses there for you to check out and connect with. The more you talk to people, the more you will grow your network, find some great people to work with and have a business to be proud of.

Have a productive month and keep in touch via social media or by emailing me directly if you need help and support.



Sally
Marshall

Sally

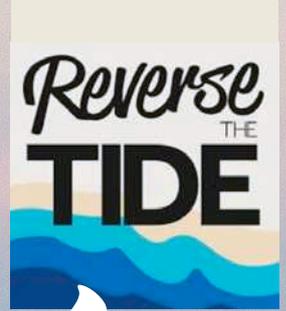
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News From the Beach!



More and more business owners that I'm talking to are finding a way to carry on working by going online or by offering a local delivery service. Obviously this doesn't work for every business but for many it does.

For my own business, I've focussed on the magazine and created a membership around it rather than around networking as many businesses have done. This makes the offering a bit different and by adding value, it is an attractive proposition which is proving popular.

I think that is the key. Adding value to what you offer attracts interest and ultimately customers. If you are the same as all your competitors, it is much harder work to find the customers who want to buy your product or service. By "standing out from the crowd" you differentiate yourself from all the others.

Adding value isn't as difficult as you might think. What can you add which your customers think is fantastic but which doesn't cost you a lot to provide. It might be something simple such as remembering their name rather than a "Dear Siri", or knowing that they drink tea rather than coffee when they come in for an appointment. A simple birthday card showing that you remember them or just a little thank you gift which they remember and will tell everyone about.

I have a collaboration through the magazine with Latte & Live which is based in Hull. They recently sent out small gifts to all their members and lots of photos were posted on social media which was great advertising for them as well as being appreciated by members.

What could you add to your product or service which makes your clients want to stay and also refer you to their friends and colleagues?

Do your customers tend to stay, buy from you regularly and refer prospective clients to you or do they buy once and never return?

It's an interesting exercise to do and something which you should be monitoring on a regular basis. If customers aren't returning, you could ask them for a review or send them a survey to find out why. Rather than being a negative exercise, if you look at it more as constructive feedback, you can address any issues and offer a better service going forward. If you don't know, then you could be pushing clients away when a simple change would keep them coming back over and over again.

If this is something you'd like help with, then please get in touch.



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Supporting Small Businesses in Lockdown

At the beginning of lockdown both my husband and I were worried about what the impact of Covid19 would have on our businesses. My husband runs OuTFox which provides printing and embroidery services, including a unique aluminium print range. I, myself, am a writer and an advocate for women in abusive relationships, I spend my time traveling to different events around the UK sharing my own experiences to raise awareness. I also run an online support group for women who have either experienced this previously, or are at present.

We soon came to the conclusion that we couldn't be the only ones concerned for our businesses, our finances and our family. We set up a Facebook group, Small Business Networking, to share our concerns; at the beginning of lockdown, the daily broadcasts and important information released for businesses were shared into the group, where we got angry together, shared our fears and anxieties together and encouraged and motivated one another. It became a community and a digital space to feel safe in.

We all needed the safe space as we watched the weeks go by, with no orders and cancellations of all of my event bookings. One particular week we spent around 50 hours in the group providing a virtual pop up shop to members, where members who chose to join it, had a half an hour slot promoting their individual business. We received amazing feedback from virtual stall holders with sales, social following and referrals, which all happened naturally and the group soon started to grow. When other business owners told us what a difference the group had made to them, we realised we were needed to incorporate this into our business plan,

Our group now provides support, networking, resources, opportunities and more. It fits in with OuTFox because it provides a service which is part of our business plan remit.

My husband always says, "You've got to go through the low times to know what the high times feel like". However, this is really not an easy thing to get your head around especially when you are in the midst of Lockdown and worried for the future of your business.

Throughout our time in this group we have noticed just how many people have managed to finish projects, do something they have wanted but not had the opportunity to do, or even opened a new business altogether.

Whilst we are still going through lockdown, albeit with less restrictions, we are reflecting on the time spent on this group and how we used it and have come to the conclusion that we didn't waste our time, but embraced it and added to our business offering too.

You can find our group on Facebook: Small Business Networking.

Latte & Live was born from the Small Business Networking group and we opened a membership group for for people to join, which is an all-access pass to the alternative online networking events, pop up shops, guest trainer workshops and more. It's fun and energetic and a members group growing of like-minded people who support each other through the ups and downs of running your own business during lockdown. There has been lots of collaborations too and we get together four times a month online and outside of those meetings, we have guest workshops and our members "Spill the Tea" together to learn about each other's businesses.



Jennifer Gilmour



Jennifer Gilmour

Intrigued? Find out more at www.latteandlive.com

oh and the first session is on me.

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Practical Debt Recovery and Credit Control Tips and Hints

Know your Client – they may be a Debt Risk!

The adage Prevention is better than Cure equally applies in the world of Debt Recovery. If you do not have access or wish to incur the costs of a Credit Risk company such as Experian use some free or cheap on-line resources to establish the financial veracity of your potential customers and clients.

- Use **Companies House** to search against Limited liability companies. <https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/> This will enable you to access a subjects Accounts, or whether the directors have a number of failed companies behind them. It details any insolvency position/history. You can add the subject company to a “**Watch List**” enabling you to receive automatic up-dates on any filings they make.
- **Disqualified Company Directors Register.** <https://www.gov.uk/search-the-register-of-disqualified-company-directors>
- **Individual Insolvency Register.** Search for insolvency information against individuals. <https://www.insolvencydirect.bis.gov.uk/eiir/>
- **Registry Trust Limited.** Check a person or a business for an £8 fee for any Judgments, awards, fine defaults, Child Support Agency info and Liability Orders.
Person:
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Business:
<https://search.trustonline.org.uk/Search/Business>
- **Free Property Search Websites.** There are a number of well-known, branded websites allowing you to browse all Properties including details of their sale or / rental histories. So when you are about to deal with new clients who are individuals, perhaps review their address and establish when they purchased their house, its value, then and now. Has the value gone up or down? Will you be able to secure any debts owed to you, against their property by way of a charge, if they don't pay your invoices?
- **H M Land Registry** – (£3 search fee per property, or £6 with property title plan). See the entries for the property – how many charges do they have registered and when – is it likely to be in a negative equity situation? (This includes details of court orders secured by a charge).
<https://www.gov.uk/search-property-information-land-registry>

Review your Terms and Conditions of Business.

Make sure your Business adopts the “*late payment legislation*” to protect your position. This refers to the amended Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 and the Late Payment of Commercial Debts Regulations 2002 and 2013.

This affords you the statutory right to claim interest, costs compensation and the other entitlements in the event any invoice remains outstanding outside of your standard payment terms. **It is only available for Business to Business debts and may not be applied against individual consumers.** If no term is expressly listed an invoice unpaid 30 days from its date is the default position. Invoking the legislation is not compulsory as it is for the supplier to decide whether or not to use the rights made available. It would however always be our advice to at least refer to it in your terms, to use at your discretion, if a irretrievably relationship breaks down.

In addition to verbally informing clients/customers of your right to charge interest and/or claim compensation for debt recovery costs, as part of your standard payment terms, you should state clearly on all written communications, credit application forms, order confirmations, invoices and all contracts the following phrase :

“We will exercise our statutory right to claim interest and costs compensation under the late payment legislation, if we are not paid according to agreed credit terms.”

Interest is calculated at 8% above the prevailing base rate (currently a combined rate of 8.1% p.a. in total). This compares favourably with a standard contract rate of

around 4% p.a. or if matters were to go before a Judge you may only be awarded 3% p.a. for example.

Cost Compensation for chasing unpaid invoices. The following rates can apply and make any debt recovery exercise far more cost effective.

Retention of Title Clauses – can you claw back your

Size of unpaid invoice	Sum to be paid to the creditor
Up to £999.99	£40.00
£1,000.00 to £9,999.99	£70.00
£10,000.00 or more	£100.00

goods sold to a client/customer in the absence of payment? Ensure your standard terms make such provision, as you may at least be able to claw them back and sell them to a party more willing to pay for them.

Such clauses are especially helpful if the other side are made the subject of Insolvency proceedings. Instead of getting back the 'normal' 2-3p in the £1 to the value of your invoice, on the conclusion of any liquidation/ administration etc you may be able to claw back your goods for re-sale instead. (Please contact Graeme Weir to enquire about having your T's and C's reviewed and/ or to obtain a template letter for your future use when engaging with any Insolvency Practitioners).

Credit Control Processes

Accelerate the period in which you implement more formal recovery measures, in the event your invoices are unpaid. Assuming your standard invoice payment terms are 28-30 days, consider sending out a polite email on invoice date plus 14 days to remind them that the invoice should be discharged within the next 14 days.

On Invoice date plus 30 days send them a polite email to the effect that you cannot see that payment has landed and can they confirm that it has been released?

On invoice date plus 37 days – beef it up – “sorry to see that account has not been discharged are there any problems”? Indicate that your company’s policy is to refer it to an external agency to recover if not discharged very shortly and you have no control over that mandatory policy. Make reference (if applicable) to the application of the Late Payment Legislation interest and costs compensations, in the absence of immediate payment.

On Invoice plus 42 dues pass it over to a reputable Debt Recovery specialist. (Cough, cough)! They have already had 3 notices by that point and cannot argue that you have acted prematurely.

Use Final Notices from a third party, (please contact Graeme Weir at Kingsfords), to make your customer aware that matters have been escalated. These become part of your Credit Control processes involving the release of such Demands/Letters on your behalf for a nominal fixed fee per letter, every week/ fortnight/ month/ quarter customised to your requirements.

Conclusion – re-educate your client/debtor

Communication is key. Always Email your debtor – “can I give you a call to discuss the account”? Make keep non-threatening as you have the moral and legal high ground.

If they reply positively – that’s good. If they fail to respond that also has an evidential value – of their being obstructive! Not a good look. They can hardly say they were upset with your goods or services at a later date, if



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they have not flagged any concerns previously.

If you do speak, keep it light and fluffy and if they are stalling – use phrases like “how are we going to resolve this”. Put the onus back on them.

After every conversation ping them an email – thanking them for their time and confirming what was discussed and agreed. Again if they pay up fine – if not such emails are great from an evidential perspective, as it undermines their credibility. Again keep the language low key. Remember it may end up being read by a Judge and you will score Brownie points if you are seen to have been reasonable and fair.

Covid Challenges

The government at the time of writing is introducing the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill which will afford businesses some protections as against the threat of insolvency proceedings being issued against them. The intended legislation will also reduce the threat of personal liability to directors for perceived wrongful trading, for a limited period whilst trying to rescue their businesses.

Should you wish to discuss any issues arising please do not hesitate to contact Graeme Weir for a chat, free of charge. Graeme will welcome the opportunity to work with you in the collection of your outstanding debts. Similarly, if you are experiencing cash-flow issues and creditors are pursuing you, Graeme equally will be happy to discuss with you the approaches that you can adopt to seek to being made the subject of litigation.



Graeme Weir



Graeme Weir can be contacted on gjw@kingsfords.net or via direct dial **01233 648406**

MACKNADE

Launches New Range of Hampers



A hamper is the perfect gift to send (and receive) at Christmas and Kent food gurus, Macknade, have just launched their new range for 2020, showcasing the very best produce from the Garden of England and gems from further afield.

Macknade, who have branches in Faversham & Ashford, are renowned for creating beautiful hampers for every occasion and their brand new range is bigger & better than ever before. From Christmas cheese boards to gin tasting boxes, there's something for everyone on your list.

All hampers are available in large volumes for corporate gifting. If you want to reward staff or thank clients this Christmas, Macknade has a hassle-free solution, which is just one phone call away.

Choose from their extensive new range or create a bespoke hamper to reflect your business or the lucky recipient you're sending to. You might have a colour or logo that you want to feature, a theme that reflects your values or a special note you want to include – it can be as personal as you like.

With the Christmas party off the agenda this year, why not get creative and send something delicious for your team to enjoy at home!?



To place a corporate order, simply call the team at Macknade on **01795 534497** or email **katie@macknade.com** to discuss the best choices for your needs & budget. Large volume discounts are available, as well as delivery to multiple locations.

Hampers are also available to order online from www.macknade.com.

Why Your Objection Handling isn't Working

(and how to fix it...)

Objection handling is something salespeople seem to fear the most.

Do you find that you're continually thrown by objections? If so, there may be reasons your objection handling isn't working.

1. You don't listen to your customer.

Once an objection is raised, are you formulating what you're going to say before your customer has even finished talking?

When your customer raises an objection, try to focus even harder on what your customer is saying. Listen to them thoroughly to make sure you don't miss out on any details. Acknowledge what your customer is saying and then question what they mean in order to completely understand the situation.

So, in the case of budget concerns, explore if there's a willingness to buy, but the timing isn't right, or explore if there are other ways of packaging your product to fit the available budget.

2. You get defensive.

Frequently, our first reaction to an objection is to get defensive.

Instead, try to acknowledge what your customer said. "I understand how that might be a concern ... " is a much better start than, "What do you mean?" Acknowledging our customer's objection demonstrates that you care about what they said instead of signalling that you're "ready to fight."

3. You don't explore what your customer means by their objection.

It's important to explore objections further in order to fully understand the meaning behind their words. If your customer tells you they don't like your service don't jump in and guarantee they'll have a dedicated customer service contact.



Perhaps what your customer meant was that they didn't like how your service range wasn't as large as your competitor's. Asking "Can you tell me what you mean by 'service'..." could provide clarification to allow you to respond to their objection more appropriately.

4. You view objection handling negatively.

Starting a sales call with the idea that objections are "bad" can lose a sale before you even start.

Instead, view objections as a way to help your customer solve their problem. An objection gives you opportunity to provide further value by clarifying and addressing their concern. It can even help you build a stronger relationship based on trust.

5. You see the situation from your perspective.

Sometimes we're focused on one thing... doing whatever it takes to close the deal. With this mindset, it's hard to see the situation from your customer's perspective.

But selling isn't only about getting what you want, it's about helping your customer solve their problem. If an objection is raised, you'll be so blindsided by your desire to win the business that you won't be able to effectively handle their objection.

If you want to respond in a way that moves the sale forward and builds trust, you need to view the situation from your customer's point of view.

There's an entire module in our EPIC Selling training programme focussed on handling objections, or if you'd like to discuss how we might be able to help you in handling objections, then arrange a free exploratory discussion.



Phil Sayers



Contact Phil on phil@protensd.co.uk
or **07776 203 431**
www.protensd.co.uk



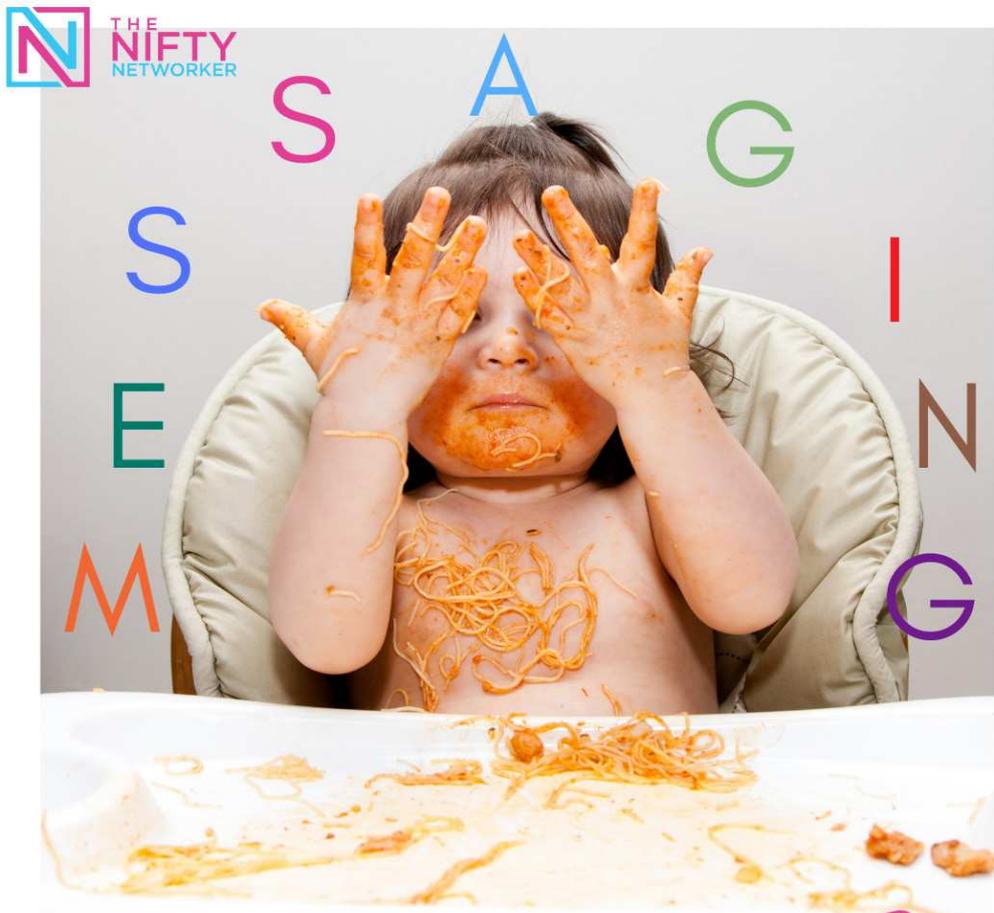
Master your Messaging

Have you ever been to a networking meeting or similar where you have the chance to talk about what you do, but for some reason your messaging isn't landing? Frustrating for you because you're not getting the engagement you're looking for and your fellow attendees are potentially leaving the meeting not really getting what you do.

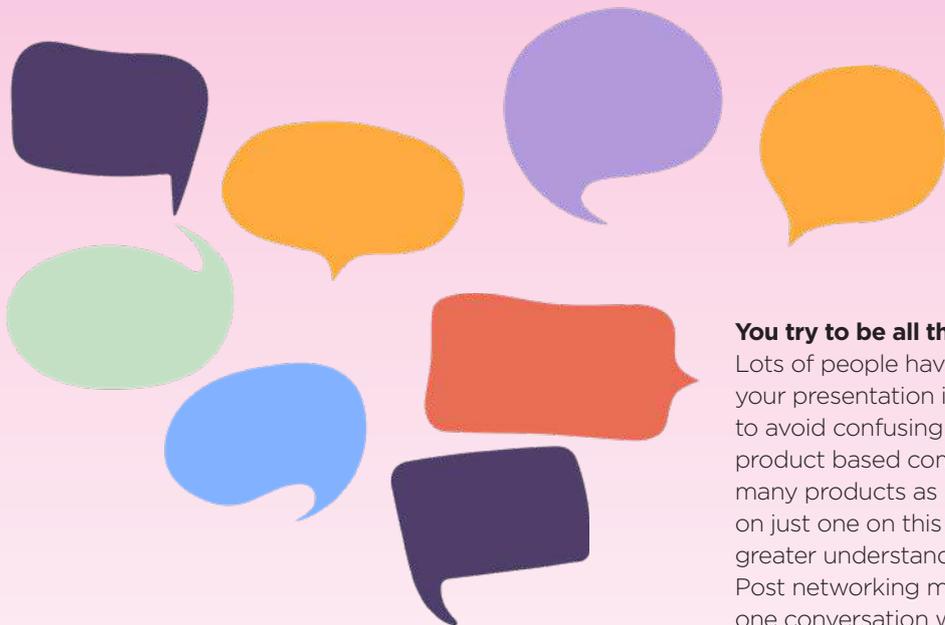
Here's three reasons why your messaging may not be resonating with your audience with a quick tip on how to turn it around.

Too many words in the time allotted

When you attend a networking meeting you'll usually arrive knowing how long you have allocated to speak and



Is your messaging messy?



what format that might take. It can be anything from one to five minutes usually.

A rule of thumb is one minute = approximately 150 words, and whilst I'm not advocating reading a script verbatim, 150 words is quite short (I'm pretty much at 150 words in this article and I'm still on tip number one!).

My advice is to top and tail a document that includes your name and introduction, a call to action and repeat of your name as a template. Then in the middle section of the document include information about your product or service. Who do you serve? What pain points do you address for your clients?

Remember, if you try to cram in more words by speaking quickly your audience will miss the details of your message and will struggle to be a good ambassador for you. Further, meetings have a structure and everyone is afforded the same amount of time to speak. Running over intentionally or ignoring a time keeper who is indicating to you that you've used up your allotted time is not cool and certainly not showing respect to your host and other attendees.



Jennie Eriksen



For more tips and ideas for successful networking, join the Facebook group **The Nifty Networker** www.facebook.com/groups/theniftynetworker or visit the website www.theniftynetworker.com

You try to be all things to all people

Lots of people have more than one business but during your presentation it's best to stick to mentioning one to avoid confusing your audience. And, if you have a product based company rather than try and mention as many products as possible all in one presentation, focus on just one on this occasion so your audience gains a greater understanding of what it is and how it works. Post networking meetings when you have a one to one conversation with an attendee you'll have a longer opportunity to share more of what you do.

You assume people know what you do

"Everyone knows what a (insert profession) does." "You'll all have heard of (product/company)". Says who? Specificity is a tricky word to say but being specific is so much easier. Don't make assumptions that people know what you do (lots of people will nod politely without really understanding your work) and just because you know lots of people that have heard of your product it doesn't mean the people in the room have. And if they have, there may be a ton of information they don't know about the product.

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ADVICE, CONSULTING & DESIGN

Know What You're Getting into!

A recent question: "I am thinking of going self employed for a while because I cannot find new employment, can I take out Professional Indemnity Insurance just for a year or 2?"

In short, no. But let me go back in order to come forward so that you understand WHY...

There are 2 main types of Insurance available; Claims Occurring & Claims Made. We are going to focus on the latter because that is how Professional Indemnity (PI) operates; Let us start with the Google definition;

"A Claims Made policy refers to an insurance policy that provides coverage when a claim is made against it, regardless of when the claim event occurred. A claims-made policy is a popular option for when there is a delay between when events occur and when claimants file claims."

Now let's put that into practice;

Joe is an Architect. Joe has Professional Indemnity Insurance to protect him for the advice & designs he gives/creates. He plans a new building project for his client, a bathroom extension with an antique double-ended bath, with gold swan headed taps as the focal point... 2 years later Joe still has his Professional Indemnity Insurance active, it has been continuous for the time he has been trading. His client calls him and explains that the building project, after some to-ing & fro-ing with the council planning departments, is now finally under construction! BUT by following Joe's design, they have found that they are 2 metres short on space to fit in the heirloom golden swan headed bath!?! Thank goodness he had that Professional Indemnity insurance.

In the above example, if Joe had stopped working and cancelled his insurance - there would be no cover. However, if Joe had stopped working but continued to insure the advice/designs that he gave during that period of work; the cover would be available to claim upon!

So, a Claims Made basis covers claims that are made and reported during the policy period only and not once the policy period is over. On lapsing or cancelling a 'claims made' policy, the historic cover paid for will expire

This basically means that you just have to hold the PI cover as open and active at the time of the claim, for the lifetime of the policy. It doesn't fix you to one broker or provider, it just needs to be continuous and if you move between providers, be sure to provide the last policy details to the new provider. I like to remind all clients of the 'claims made' basis at the sale of each PI policy.

In addition, Professional Indemnity is sold on a 'Minimum & deposit' basis; insurers calculate an amount for your premium to ensure that the cover will be available for a claim if & when you need it. That means if you cancel your policy half way through the year; there will be no refund.

So what am I saying?...

Well, if you are looking to go Self Employed, well done! But go into this adventure knowingly and consider the time period that you will be working in this way; because if you need Professional Indemnity you could be paying annually or monthly for some 5/7+ years after you have finished being a sole trader. If you have stopped running your own business (or retired etc) you can put the policy into run-off cover, but costs are still attached.

If you have looked at buying Professional Indemnity online, the above still applies. If you have looked at buying the cover direct or from a broker and you have not been told about the above, it will still apply. Professional Indemnity is an Insurance policy based on 'Claims Made' structure - these policies are rarely, if ever sold in any other capacity.

As I always add, Insurance is one of the last industries where you can receive free & professional advice, so go ahead and utilise that if you are thinking about your options.



Anna
Wilkinson



Contact Anna Wilkinson on
0208 773 2222 - anna@1stopinsurance.com -
www.1stopinsurance.com



Heard any great businesses?

Why your business needs Audio Long Reads

Does your business have an audio strategy? Over 7 million people in the UK now listen to podcasts each week. That's one in eight people and is an increase of 24% over the past year – and more than double over the past five years. Your business needs to be part of this audio revolution.

Spoken word content has massively expanded over the last three years. There are over a million podcasts to choose from. Audiobooks are seeing a renaissance, as consumers look for efficient ways to consume content. If last year was the age of video, 2020 is the start of the business audio age.

“We totally recommend that our clients always have an audio strategy because audio is ubiquitous,” said Jennifer Hungerbuhler, EVP Managing Director of Local Audio and Video Investment at Amplifi in the Pandora 2020 Definitive Guide to Audio Report. “Audio truly touches everything; it’s mobile, personal, social, interactive, engaging, emotional, live. But more importantly, as podcasts, speakers, smart devices and connected cars continue to grow, our clients need to understand how sound and voice can work for their brands.”

As the podcast continues to expand, businesses are increasingly paying more attention to how audio can be used across their enterprises. Unlike other forms of content your company creates, podcasts are easily consumed. As over two-thirds of podcasts are listened to on mobile devices, it is easy for your audience to consume your podcast and act on its messages. Audio has become one of the most engaging content formats. According to the latest research from Stockapps 21% of Spotify users engage with podcasts.

The demands that screen time places on consumers today can be overwhelming. To gain relief from these demands, consumers are turning to audio. Adobe found

that 25% of consumers already report they have bought a product or service after hearing a digital audio ad.

In the Pandora 2020 Definitive Guide to Audio, Josep Hernandez, Senior Director of Media and Total Connections Planning at PepsiCo commented: “I’m so hot on audio. We are doubling down on audio. We need to seize on the huge shifts in audience behaviours; we can no longer multiply attention on multiple screens.”

Audio Long Reads

Audio, though, is not just podcasting or audiobooks. There is a new audio format that is taking shape: Audio Long Reads.

The development of mobile digital devices, the connected home and in-car audio have converged to deliver listening platforms a range of audio content can exploit. Businesses that want to stay relevant, connect with their customers and, remain leaders in their market sectors, must embrace audio content.

Audio content is already appearing: The New Yorker regularly converts its features into audio versions. The global blogging platform Medium, enables its contributors to record narrated versions of their posts. And spoken word reports and audio whitepapers are also now appearing.

Audio Long Reads transform the new written content your business is producing into highly engaging audio your customers and commercial partners can consume with ease.

Listening instead of reading has become commonplace thanks to podcasting, but what if your business’s reports, blogs, whitepapers and case studies could all have an audio version? And don’t forget the vast archives of content your business contains. This content can have a whole new lease of life converting this material to Audio Long Reads.

Continued overleaf

From previous page

- **Can an audio version of any written content be produced?**

Yes, any of your business's written content can be converted to audio format. The audio content you can create can also be enhanced with music and sound effects. It's essential to understand how the written word can be converted to the spoken word and how the different formats need to be handled.

- **If our reports, whitepapers or blog posts contain graphics, how does the Audio Long Read manage these elements?**

Any kind of graphical content can be linked to from the audio version you create for your business. This content can be hosted on your website. A simple audio cue can be used, so listeners know when you are talking about some graphical content.

- **Which voice will be used to create our audio content?**

This is one of the most powerful elements of Audio Long Reads. You can choose from a range of professional voice artists to read your content. Matching a voice to your business creates an audio brand your enterprise can use across all its communications channels.

- **Can we place ads in the audio content we create?**

Placing ads within your audio content isn't complicated. You may have already heard ads or sponsors spots in the podcasts you listen to. It's also possible to place ad breaks in your Audio Long Reads to showcase specific products or services you want your listeners to be aware of.

- **Where can we use our new audio content?**

Everywhere! On your website, social media channels and even embedded into other reports, your new Audio Long Read content is versatile. When the audio file is completed, this can be hosted in several formats and on every major audio streaming service.

The demands that screen time places on consumers today can be overwhelming. To gain relief from these demands, consumers are turning to audio. Adobe found that 25% of consumers already report they have bought a product or service after hearing a digital audio ad.

You can listen to an Audio Long Read from Raconteur. The original report **Why CEOs Must Rest Their Thinking is here.** <https://www.raconteur.net/c-suite/ceo/ceo-thinking-reset/>

The **Audio Long Read** of this report is here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qTD66Uwzs_Jd7OQGhiET63BXcFItgOIh/view



Your audio identity

Why is sound so important for branding? Today we are bombarded with images daily. A conservative estimate is that we see over 5,000 ads each day. Often, these are silent. Adding audio can have a transformative impact on the audience. Brands like Intel and Nokia have familiar audio components to their branding. Recently MasterCard created a new sonic component to their brand.

"Sound adds a powerful new dimension to our brand identity and a critical component to how people recognize Mastercard today and in the future," said Raja Rajamannar, chief marketing and communications officer, Mastercard.

How does your business build a sonic identity?

There is a well-understood visual language where text and colour can be used to evoke specific moods and drive us to take action such as clicking a link to view more information about a product or service. Audio can massively enhance these messages.

The huge expansion of podcasting and the enormous uptake of smart speakers using voice control, audio has been moving through a renaissance. Audio Long Reads are the next major evolution of business communications.

At Listen to Business, we have the twin skills of journalism and audio production to enable us to offer Audio Long Reads of your business's content.

The next content revolution is audio. We can help your enterprise ensure its audio strategy reaches your key audiences.



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The STEER YOUR BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP CLUB

Over the lockdown we've been looking at ways to give even more value to our readers and subscribers and making the magazine accessible to more businesses, big and small.

We've come up with the Steer Your Business Membership Club which enables every business to get involved, whatever their size.

All businesses need to be visible and by having a listing in the business directory you will be seen by our readers, have clickable links through to your website and get found.

Virtual networking is definitely the way forward at the moment, and maybe into the future as well. It enables you to meet other business owners from across the UK and beyond, who you can connect with, build relationships and do business when the time is right.

A printed copy of the magazine is something you can show to your clients, or potential clients.

By having a simple advert on our website which clicks straight through to your website, you improve your search results. You can also be seen by anyone who clicks on the Steer Your Business website as well as your own so increases the chances of making sales.

We all need a bit of help and support and having a session with a business coach might just give you more clarity or a better sense of direction for your business. Talking through your ideas with someone who isn't directly involved in your business is often a way of seeing the wood for the trees if you're feeling a bit lost or overwhelmed.

The Make It Happen Academy has a member's directory, access to podcasts, courses and other resources so again

another great opportunity to network and get help and support when you need it.

With an enhanced listing in the business directory (logo, website, email and phone details), you will now also have:

- FREE virtual networking up to 4 times a month and meet like-minded business owners from across the UK
- a printed copy of the Steer Your Business magazine delivered to your door (worth £3.99)
- a simple advert on the Steer Your Business website
- 3 x 1-2-1 Zoom sessions with a business coach
- 20% discount on advertising rates
- FREE access to the Make It Happen Academy

All of the above is great but what if you also had the opportunity to have an article published in the magazine showcasing your expertise?

All of this for just £15 per month plus VAT or £150 plus VAT for 12 months (12 months for the price of 10)

If this interests you, check out <https://steeryourbusiness.com/steer-your-business-directory/> and book your place now.



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