

A vertical stack of seven smooth, grey, rounded stones is balanced on a piece of weathered, light-colored wood. The stones are stacked from top to bottom in a slightly irregular but balanced manner. A blue rectangular text box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text. The background is a soft, out-of-focus gradient of light blue and white.

# The seven essential steps to market your business

## Introduction.

Marketing your business can mistakenly be thought of as simply advertising. Marketing and advertising are not the same things.

Marketing is the entire process of providing a product or service to a client, from understanding who they are, what are their needs, how they find your business and why they will buy what you offering through pricing and promotion. Your business will most likely succeed if you properly educate clients, keep them involved, build a solid reputation in their thoughts, and sell to them intelligently.

Below I have covered the seven essential steps to get you started, this is just scratching the surface of how you can intelligently market your business to the greatest effect.

I hope you find it of some use.



Steve Hutton



## 1 Know your audience.

### Know what you are selling

I know this sounds crazy, but you have to know exactly what you are selling before you can sell it. This means that you should drill down into how your product or service benefits your prospective clients and how this experience will be life-changing for them.

For example; one Fish and Chip shop may just sell food, but another (which you will probably recommend) is amazing! Why is this? Is it the freshness of the food, the taste, the location and decor of the premises, or the attitude of the staff and service given?

### Be clear about who you are selling to

This is probably the most important thing to consider when you are creating your marketing strategy. Who do you want to buy your products? What are their needs and wants? What do they like? What don't they like? How much money do they have to spend? Are they interested in your product? If you don't know these answers, then how will you ever be able to effectively market your business?

### Create an avatar

By understanding your client's needs, wants, likes and how they are currently being marketed to, you can use this information, start to create an avatar for your perfect customer – you may already have a client you can use – and make this your target audience avatar.

Find out more about your avatar by using market research, but if you don't have time to conduct this thoroughly, then you should at least try to find out some basic information. Such as:

- Demographics (age, gender, occupation, education and income level),
- Psychographics (activities, interests, values and opinions, where they spend their time online.)
- Geography (lifestyle, location).

## 2 Create a brand identity.

The next step is to create a brand identity. A brand identity is not just a company logo, it's a set of values, beliefs, and expectations that your company holds dear. This needs to resonate with your avatar. Once you've established what your brand stands for, use this in marketing communication.

### Build trust

To generate interest in your brand, you need to build trust. This means that people should have confidence in what you are offering. They should also feel comfortable enough to share their experiences with others.

### Be honest

Be honest about who you are and what you do. When you're clear about your brand positioning, clients can easily connect with its purpose and become loyal advocates.

### Tell stories

People buy products or services based on emotional connections. If you want them to relate to your brand, create stories around your business or product. People love to hear about the journey someone took to get to where he/she currently is.

The best way to attract people to your brand is through quality content. People love content that educates, entertains, inspires, and informs. Make sure you're creating content that fits these categories.

"Branding is what makes a company distinct from their competitors. A brand can help people recognise your products or service even if they are not familiar with your business. It creates a strong connection between your business and your clients.

*Steve*

## 3 Develop a message.

You need to have a clear message about what you want to communicate to your target market.

Your message is the content of your communication. It's the reason people buy from you, and it's the way they remember you. So, you need to develop a clear message that speaks directly to them. What do they care about? Why should they buy from you instead of someone else? Think about what makes you unique and differentiates you from other companies in your industry. Make sure that this message is both relevant and interesting. If you do not have a clear message, then people may perceive you as trying to sell something that you are not.

Consistency is the best way to build trust and loyalty among clients. If you are consistent in your messaging, then people will know what to expect from you. This means that if they hear about your product or service through one channel, they can expect to hear about it again through other channels.

Once you have a good understanding of your audience, you can begin researching different topics and developing content ideas.

## 4 Create content.

Content marketing isn't just about writing great copy; it's about creating content that works. When you create content that works, you're not only providing value to your audience but you're also helping them solve problems.

Your copy should be clear, concise and written in a way that is easy to read and understand. Use action verbs whenever possible. Make sure that your content has a call-to-action at the end of each paragraph.

Once you've developed some content, you may want to test it out through social media, email campaigns, etc

## 5 Get the message across.

### Use Social Media

Social media is one of the best ways to reach your audience. But remember to use the platform that best suits your avatar. For example; you may already be using Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, but is your target more likely to be using LinkedIn or watch YouTube?

You can gain interest by sharing content, asking questions, commenting on other people's posts, and interacting with your followers.

How about offering something free? People love free things. Give away something valuable for free, like a guidebook or a how-to, and you will get more traffic than if you were just promoting your service or product. Also, give away something free at regular intervals; people appreciate having something to look forward to.

Use visuals. Visuals help to get a point across. When creating visuals, keep things simple. Avoid using too many different colours or images and instead, stick to just a few. Try to avoid using text in your visuals unless it is necessary.

### Make sure you have a good website

Your website is the first place that potential clients will look if they are searching online for your product or service. So, it's important that it looks professional, has all of the necessary information that people would expect to find on a company's website and communicates exactly what you're offering and why your product/service is better than the competition.

Make sure that your website is mobile-friendly. You can't expect people to visit your site if they can't access it from their phones. (54% of web traffic is on mobile) If you are not making your site accessible on mobile devices, you're missing out on a lot of potential clients.

Always have a call-to-action (CTA). If someone lands on your page, what do they want to do? Do they want to buy something? Sign up for a newsletter? Leave a comment? Your CTA should be clear and concise. You don't need to use big flashy buttons; just make sure that it's easy to spot.

Include social sharing options. People love to share content! Make it easy for them to share your content across various platforms. This way, you'll reach even more people.

## 6 Give great client service.

Client service is often overlooked but it's an extremely important aspect of marketing. Your clients expect a certain level of quality from your business and client service goes a long way towards creating positive impressions. If a client has a problem with your business, they may choose to go elsewhere rather than deal with your issues. Always remember bad news always travels faster than good and happy clients will always refer your business and come back.

# 7

## **Find the time and skills to carry out the tasks.**

In a recent survey carried out by Outbound Engine, 86% of respondents would rather spend their time on other business activities than spending time on marketing. This, with the lack of in-house talent to carry out the tasks, seems to be the biggest hurdle to overcome when it comes to marketing.

Hiring the right skills and talent from outside the business is the obvious choice, it's not just the financial return from the investment but also the correct and professional brand identity that can be achieved for your business. If you would like to find out how I can help, please get in touch.

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