



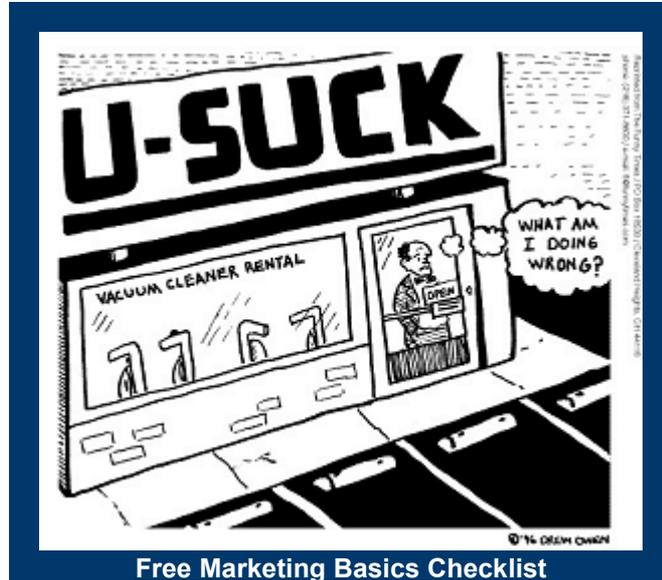
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"Doing business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark. You know what you are doing, but nobody else does."  
Stuart Henderson Britt

**This month's cartoon ...**



**Peter Rowe**

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T: 07 5510 3555 E: [peter.rowe@profitune.com](mailto:peter.rowe@profitune.com) M: 0408 844 000

Hi,

I am always chuffed to receive feedback on our newsletter and last month's earned this from Chris: "*Just thanking you for your newsletters. They are brilliant! It's refreshing to have newsletters that have substance and are not just another marketing tool. The paradox of course is that they are a more powerful marketing tool because (they are) not "just another" marketing tool - you know what I mean...*"

I do know what Chris means, but that did not stop me from responding with thanks, a cartoon, and, "*How about doing me a small favor? Would you think of five people who would gain the same enjoyment from the newsletter as you do, and forward it to them with a note suggesting they hook up for a while and evaluate it?*"

I'm still not *selling* (reeeally), but I am *definitely* marketing.

For much the same reason that Chris highlighted, we're being asked by an increasing number of businesses who target business clients, if they can use our articles as the basis for their own "non-selling" newsletters and client communications. They see our content as highly business-relevant, and as not pushing anything other than help in the form of practical business ideas.

The answer is "*Yes, we now syndicate our content to a few select parties whose values fit well with our own,*" so if you'd like to know more about a regular feed of original business-related content to lift your own newsletters and have them read and accepted more often, by more people, please talk to us about syndication.

And if we can't help you in that way, would you please think of five people who ... you know what you have to do for me now, don't you?

Enjoy!

Regards Peter Rowe



Director Profitune Business Systems

PS: Looking for an entertaining and informative presenter? For information about booking Peter to talk to your company or association, contact our Presentations Coordinator on [info@profitune.com](mailto:info@profitune.com).



## Low-Cost, High-Impact Marketing



*(Time to read this article: 8 minutes)*

Most people in business have nussed out a way of *selling* or they would not have survived to this point. There may not be a lot of science in the way they sell but, hey, when they can find an interested party it has worked so far.

And that may just be the point: Most of the people I know in small-to-medium businesses confess that when it comes to finding more "interested parties" to sell to - when it comes to *marketing* - they are almost totally at sea.

Many confess to "advertising in the paper" because they did not know what else to do; to putting in a bigger Yellow Pages ad because "the rep said my competitor would"; and to paying someone to "do a website for them" because they figured they had to get with the times but did not have a clue about how all of that worked or what they then had to do to turn that into new business.

At the same time, they also confess to having no marketing plan, no marketing budget; no way of measuring their return-on-investment from what they do for "marketing"; and no idea as to how to do better.



The scary thing is that when times get tough, the instinctive reaction is to "increase your marketing" but if that marketing is inefficient, poorly coordinated or just plain "doesn't work" then throwing money at the problem just increases the drain on precious cash and energy, and weakens your business instead of strengthening it - just when that matters most!

### When Marketing is a Mystery, Here's A Safe Bet

In tough times, you can load up the very expensive media cannon with brass words and fire them into the market in the wild hope that one or two of those words will fall on the ears of an interested party and convert them to an enquiry. Or, you can ask your satisfied customers to aim their own golden words at targets that they *know* will be interested in you and your products, and have them fight the first round of your battle for you.

It's a "cannon versus marksman" approach and the latter has infinitely less misses, and always produces a more effective, more economical and more satisfying result!

### Arm Your Troops

However, if you do no more than ask your best customers to "tell other people about us" you have no control over the quality of their communication, the accuracy of their story, or the effectiveness of their efforts on your behalf. They'll be sincere, no doubt, but they may not be "impactful", and *that* would be a pity.

So how do you give them the support they need to support you?

Could you arm them with a well-designed brochure that highlights how others benefit from owning or using your products or services? Can you supply them with business cards, fridge magnets, mouse mats or other promotional material that, along with their sincere recommendation, give their acquaintances a way of at least *finding* you and getting in touch for the first time?

## Be Smart About It

Could you ask your referees to refer others, via a link, to a special introductory offer on a private page of your website? Could you take that a step further and email a uniquely-coded link to each customer to forward to their friends so that when they click through, you can see who sent each one? Could you then reward them - or at least recognize them - for their efforts on your behalf?

## Back to Basics

Oops, here I am talking about relatively sophisticated marketing when I haven't asked you to check the basics taught in "Business Marketing 101", so let's make sure they are in place before we do anything else. You might like to tick that you have:

- A well-researched **colour palette** (think FedEx's red and yellow; Coke's red; IBM's blue - so well identified that they were known as "Big Blue") that not only identifies you at a glance, but also capitalizes on the psychology of colour (red implies passion; blue, love; green, nature; etc.)?
- An instantly-recognisable **logo** (Commonwealth Banks "cheese on toast"; Billiton's "blobs"; Qantas's flying kangaroo) to tie together all of your physical and intellectual property in the minds of your potential customers?

- A simple, memorable and consistent **brand name** (Coca-Cola, Microsoft, IBM, Google). When you first start out, it's handy if your brand name suggests what you do (a drink containing both cocaine and kola nut; small computer software; international business machines; something that works across 1-followed-by-100-noughts of web pages)? Later, if you're around long enough and throw enough money at it, even your daughter's (Mercedes) name can come to mean "prestige motoring".



- A catchy **slogan** (or "tagline") that catches the attention or imagination of your target audience (Beanz Meanz Heinz; "Just do it", Nike; "Oh What a feeling!", Toyota)?
- Badging** on everything? Your colours, logo, brand name and/or slogan on *everything* that you put out into the marketplace (stationery, website, premises, vehicles, uniforms, products, advertising) so that they all add to your share of awareness among potential buyers?

## What To Do First?

Get the basics right, *quickly!* Consistency across the items listed above counts for 90% of the initial impact, so just do it!

If you're tempted to bog down on the selection of palette, name, logo, etc, then spare a thought for the Standard Oil Company which was known in most of its Western markets under its Esso brand, had a readily-recognised pallet of yellow and black, and a neat slogan of "*Put a tiger in your tank*".

In 1973, Esso invested billions in rebranding across the globe, created a strong new related brand name, palette and logo and ran the lot out in a huge advertising campaign designed to take it to a whole new level of dominance in the global market.

All went well until in 1989 one of its self-named ships, the Exxon Valdez, created the world's greatest environmental disaster with a 40-million litre oil spill in the pristine wilderness of Prince William Sound, and all of Esso's precise branding turned to, well, "mud" and its new name, Exxon, became inextricably linked with "corporate criminal negligence" in the minds of the world.

The Exxon lesson for you?

## Why The Name You Pick Is Not That Important

Create your brand thoughtfully but quickly, because ultimately it will come to mean the sum total of the associations you create around it by the quality of your products and service delivery.

So, create the "flag under which you will do business" quickly, and then use it pervasively and consistently so that the marketplace will start to associate with it, all of the good things that you create and use and say and do, and that others say about you, every day.

All of that is what is going to become "your brand".

## Help?

If you feel you need help in marketing your business powerfully, effectively and economically, it's time you asked for, then put to work, our [free Marketing Basics Checklist](#).

## Was that Eddy Groves?



*(Time to read this article: 2minutes)*

For those who asked if it was Eddy Groves (formerly CEO of ABC Learning) illustrating the 'Engaging Your Staff' article last month, the answer is "No, it was a model. But, you've raised an interesting topic," for Eddy is probably the perfect case study in [what not to do](#) as a Company Director.

## Are You A Company Director?

Many of even the smallest businesses these days organise themselves as an incorporated entity - usually a proprietary limited company - and appoint themselves as Directors of that company.

Assuming the title "Director" might offer some cache, but it also brings you under the rules of the laws governing all incorporated entities. In Australia, that's the Corporations Act 2001, and it imposes obligations on all directors, even those whose shareholders consist solely of themselves.

## What Are Your Obligations?

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission is charged with administering the Corporations Act, and according to its website, as a Director you are obliged to:

- be honest and careful in your dealings at all times
- know what your company is doing
- take extra care handling other people's money
- make sure that your company can pay its debts on time
- see that your company keeps proper financial records
- act in the company's best interests, even if this may not be in your own interests.

It's important to realise that a Company is an "entity or being" under the law to which you, as a Director, have an obligation. This might seem a bit queer to those who "see themselves as the Company", but the Law takes a quite different view, and requires Directors to "act in the best interests of the company" even when that may mean disadvantaging yourself.

For more on this, see the [ASIC site](#).

## Time For Some Training?

The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) has been offering company directors the opportunity to gain or refresh knowledge of their duties and responsibilities since 1975 and their site offers a wealth of information and is worth a browse by any Director, old or new.

Why not take the easy way out, and simply pay professionals to tick the boxes, lodge the returns and carry out your Director's obligations for you? Well, we'd endorse using professional experts, that's for sure, but we'd also endorse your knowing enough to judge the quality of what they are providing.

The ASIC website puts this point very succinctly when it states that "even if you appoint an agent to look after the company's affairs, you - not the agent - may still be held responsible for those legal obligations."

To refresh or begin your Director's journey, you'll find help on the [AICD website](#).

## Small Business and General Business Tax Break

*(Time to read this article: 1/2 minute)*

With the intent of boosting investment and economic activity the Federal Government has introduced an investment tax break for Australian businesses that turnover less than \$2m a year.

Under the break, capital purchases before 30 June 2009 will entitle the purchaser to an additional 30% tax deduction over their normal allowance so a \$2,000 computer purchased before 30 June earns an additional \$600 deduction for the 2008-09 tax year; a \$60,000 purchase of plant earns an additional \$18,000 deduction for that year.

For more detail, talk to your accountant or check the [ATO site](#).



## Distressed or De-stressed? Your Choice

(Time to read this article: 5 minutes)

Business coaches often become aware of stress in their clients before the clients themselves can put a label on their changed behaviours and mindset. With the factors in the market at the moment, it's not surprising that we're checking for and finding the symptoms of stress in more clients, and even in their employees.

So this makes it a good time to talk to an expert in stress management and treatment and we called on Sam Patrick who is a trained Naturopath and former Nurse, to ask for her take on stress. This is what she had to say:

### Stress is Normal

Anxiety or stress is a normal physical response to potentially dangerous situations and our bodies are designed to deal with it. But constant stress due to prolonged worry is not normal and can lead to negative effects on our mental and physical well-being. Left untreated, prolonged periods of stress can contribute to depression, elevated cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart attacks and stroke.

While anxiety starts in our heads it can weaken our immune system and put our finely tuned body out of balance, presenting as one or more physical symptoms that can range from a simple common cold to a churning stomach, loss of energy, an irritable bowel, low libido, headaches, dermatitis, neck tension, and insomnia.

Mental and emotional side effects for some people might include an inability to concentrate, memory lapses, depression, erratic mood swings, easy anger and frequent irritability, while others display their stress through behavioural changes such as over-eating or drinking, increased smoking, fast driving, overuse of medication, aggression or dysfunctional decision making.

### Stress Stocktake

If you read through the above and mentally ticked enough to rate your stress levels at greater than 6/10 on most days of the week, it's time to take stock of yourself and to instigate some positive lifestyle and stress management changes.

By the way, it might be helpful to discuss this with your fellow workers and to rate yourselves, then each other, for a comparison. Sometimes you or they may miss the fact of growing progressively more difficult to work with.

### Stress Relief

In nature, stress is a response to "fight or flight" situations which are almost invariably met with high levels of activity and energy expenditure which - provide you win or survive - leave you feeling physically exhausted and mentally euphoric (due to all the good endorphins and serotonin released by the activity).

And therein lays the clue to stress management in modern business life, so you might like to try some of these for relieving stress:

1. If you are stressed, talk about how you feel to your partner, spouse or friends. If you don't know whether you are stressed, ask them - they'll tell you! Alternatively, talk with a health professional.
2. Take 10 very deep breaths (using your diaphragm muscles instead of your rib cage) every time you feel stressed.
3. Exercise to the point of a light skin sweat for an average of more than 20 minutes a day every day. It's OK to do 40 minutes three times a week, for example, to make your average, but make it regular and avoid one big hit a week.
4. Experiment with six weekly or monthly massages in a row, and see how you feel.
5. Schedule to enjoy light, entertaining or funny films at the movies or at home on a regular basis.
6. Add a little aromatherapy to your life with lavender on your pillow or in your bath. You'll find it helps you to relax and to sleep, both of which build your stress-management ability.
7. Give Yoga, Tai Chi or Pilates a try. They are rhythmic and gentle and hugely de-stressing.
8. Experiment with bridge or pool or a similar shared activity on a regular basis. The mental focus will take you out of "work mode" for a couple of hours of renewal.
9. Buy a dog, they are proven stress busters, they enjoy a walk so much that they are likely to lead you



into regular exercise, and that big dose of unconditional love they give you is seriously good for your health.

10. Join a laughter group (no joke). These are non-profit groups set up around your community.
11. Go to the library and lose yourself in a magazine or book.
12. Start a new hobby - gardening is a great candidate here. Grow your own veggies!
13. Shorten your working hours, then discipline yourself to get the important stuff done inside of your new times.
14. Have a hot bath once a week, using essential oils and floating candles. A small glass of champagne would be OK. And some company...?

For more of Sam's wisdom, check her [www.byebyebriidget.com](http://www.byebyebriidget.com).

PS. Sam's a frequent traveller and has written a book "Hot Tips for the Business Traveller" which we'd recommend.

## Hoax "Hoax Warnings"



*(Time to read this item: 1 minute)*

Occasionally a weather cycle in the natural world will bring a plague of mice or moths or caterpillars and in a not-dissimilar fashion a cyber world cycle will occasionally bring a plague of viruses (or "malware" as it's fashionably called these days).

Among Best of Breed are the very plausible "share-this-warning-about-a-virus" viruses. Whoever writes this stuff knows that, unlike themselves, the vast majority of people in this world actually care about each other and they trade on the fact that if they send them a dire warning and urge them to spread it wide and far, they will.

### Presto! Instant virus!

The latest one of these to cross my Outlook was the "Hallmark Hoax" with a subject line shouting "PLEASE FORWARD THIS WARNING AMONG FRIENDS, FAMILY AND CONTACTS!" and warning of an email with a Postcard from Hallmark attachment. It goes on to intone that "This is the worst virus announced by CNN. It has been classified by Microsoft as the most destructive virus ever."



The warning IS the hoax and when well-meaning souls start spreading it vigorously to everyone in their contact's list, the hoaxer gets his or her jollies.

### Look Before You Leap

Next time you receive such a warning, before you forward it to anyone, do a quick Google for "Hoax" followed by the keywords in the warning. That way you can avoid the embarrassment of becoming just another hoaxer's apprentice!

## Thoughts on the subject of Marketing



*(Time to read this item: Do you really care?)*

Doing business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark. You know what you are doing, but nobody else does.  
Stuart Henderson Britt

Advertising may be described as the science of arresting the human intelligence long enough to get money from it.  
Stephen Butler Leacock

Never write an advertisement which you wouldn't want your family to read. You wouldn't tell lies to your own wife. Don't tell them to mine.  
David Ogilvy

So long as there's a jingle in your head, television isn't free.  
Jason Love

In general, my children refused to eat anything that hadn't danced on TV.  
Erma Bombeck

Promise, large promise, is the soul of an advertisement.  
Samuel Johnson

Make it simple. Make it memorable. Make it inviting to look at. Make it fun to read.  
Leo Burnett quotes

## On the Lighter Side



### Kevin the Chicken

Derek the farmer was in the fertilised egg business. He had several hundred young layer hens called 'pullets', and ten roosters to fertilise the pullets' eggs.

With clipboard in hand, Derek spent his days closely observing each rooster's performance, tracking results in his meticulously-kept records. Any rooster who didn't perform went into the soup pot and was promptly replaced by a new recruit.

This all took an awful lot of Derek's time so he bought a set of tiny bells, each with a different tone, and attached one to each of his roosters so that he could now tell by sound alone. Now he could sit on the porch and fill out an efficiency report simply by listening to the bells.

Now Derek's favourite rooster was Kevin, and a very fine specimen he was too with a sharp eye, a proud cockcomb and a cocky stance, but on the morning of his first bell trial Derek noticed that Kevin's bell hadn't rung at all!

He went to investigate.

The other roosters were chasing pullets, bells-a-ringing and the pullets, hearing the roosters coming, were running for cover in all directions. But, Derek's amazement, Kevin had his bell in his beak, so it couldn't ring. He was methodically sneaking up on one pullet after another, doing his job, and moving on swiftly to the next.

Derek was so proud of Kevin, he entered him into the National Poultry Exhibition and Kevin became an overnight sensation among the judges.

#### The Result?

The judges not only awarded Kevin the *No Bell Piece Prize* but they also awarded him the *Pulletsurprise* as well.

Clearly Kevin was a politician-in-the-making! For who else but a politician could figure out how to win two of the most highly coveted awards on our planet by being the best at sneaking up on the populace and screwing them when they weren't paying attention?

## The Brevity Brief



"We read and recommend The Brevity Brief. If you're serious about keeping up to date with business ideas, but have limited available time you can download the mp3 and listen while you drive.

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Peter Rowe

T: 07 5510 3555 F: 07 5510 3544 M: 0408 844 000 E: [peter.rowe@profitune.com](mailto:peter.rowe@profitune.com)

Suite 401, 130 Bundall Road, Bundall, Queensland

PO Box 8917, GCMC, Queensland, 9726