


DUE NORTH

**The Ultimate Playbook for
Great Digital Marketing**



The Gold in Experience, Failure & Hindsight.



Steve jobs talks about “connecting the dots” in his commencement speech to the students at Stanford University. It’s the concept of experience, failure (learnings) and hindsight that are so important in your journey throughout life.

Part of my journey

It was the 2nd of January 2015. I was up at my parent’s farm and started planning the year ahead, as you do at that time of year. I started to realise how unhappy I was with my business. Our digital marketing business was only doing Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM), and we certainly weren’t setting the world on fire. We just couldn’t get the consistent results for all our clients - some were up, some were down.

Despite trying many things, I couldn’t work out what was going to get great results for our clients. I decided it was time to exit, so we sold the business to another digital marketing company in June 2015 who proceeded to run it into the ground, but that’s a story for another day.

However, once the business was sold, it kept bugging me that we couldn’t get good consistent growth for our clients. It’s amazing what just sitting, thinking and analysing can do isn’t it?

So, I looked through our own history of what worked and what didn't. I also spent a heap of time with my brother who had a very successful retail business, and grilled my good friend who had successfully exited two businesses for eight figures.

The night I'll never forget

Not too long after I found myself alone in Brisbane, at a pub in West End, drowning my sorrows because I just couldn't figure it out. I felt like I had wasted the last three years of my life and failed. But on my third beer, it finally came to me.

It's about every part of your marketing (and indeed your business) working in a cohesive unison. It's communicating the right messages, to the right audiences, at the right time through the right channels. It's about building a complete marketing system (that's the engineer in me) that ensures everything is on brand, on message and, most importantly, on value to your target audience.

It's about finding the right team of people (harder than we all imagined), to build the right strategy, with the right analytics, implementing the right optimisation process and management framework that will ensure our clients get consistent growth month-on-month and year-on-year.

Just doing SEO or Google Ads will never work...

It's about doing great marketing every day of every week of every month of every year. It's about showing up right and then consistently showing up! And that's exactly what Due North brings to the table. It's the agency I wish I had found 15 years ago and I'm super proud of it and our team.

Funnily enough Steve Jobs was right (who would have thought he was a smart man) – it's about connecting your dots of experiences, failures, and learnings (your own and others) that takes you on your own amazing journey of discovery.

I love this quote:

“ *The purpose to life is to discover your gift
The work of life is to master it
The meaning of life is to give your gift away* ”

Marketing is all about giving your gift away

When you shift your understanding of marketing to what it really means to do, you start to see things in a whole new light. No longer are you 'marketing' and 'selling' your products and services, but rather you are giving away what you are great at, that impacts people's lives for the better.

Zig Ziglar's take on this is:

*You'll get everything in life you want
if only you'll help enough people get what they want*

This is the core of marketing

How are you going to help enough people with the gifts that you have? Every single one of us is unique and we bring our own way of doing things, our own expertise that nobody on this planet has. Ultimately, we exist to serve others, to help others in our own unique way.

Whose life do you want to change?

The first of two pivotal questions that form the basis of all great marketing (thanks Seth Godin) is:

Whose life do you want to change? And don't say everybody – you can't help everybody, indeed those that try to help too many end up helping none. This is about what the small improvements to their life that is going to help them get to where they want to go.

Pain is such a great motivator.

Generally, businesses exist to either take pain away or to seize an opportunity for gain. Ultimately, pain is so much stronger in our want to get away from it, that it far out ways the benefits that opportunities present.

What problem are you going to solve?

With this in mind, your number one core task is to focus on the problem (the pain) and how you/your business/your offering is going to take that pain away. This is the biggest “not so secret” part of all successful businesses – they are crystal clear on the problem they solve.

Explain this to me like I'm a kid

I still remember the scene (or rather scenes) from the 1992 movie 'Philadelphia', where Denzel Washington's character is grilling one of the witnesses on the stand about why Tom Hanks' character was their best lawyer one day, and then the next he was their worst and they fired him. He kept asking, “explain this to me like I'm a two-year-old”. It's such a powerful statement that forces you to really boil down exactly what you are trying to say.

In the book “Play Bigger” (I highly recommend it by the way), one of the authors is part of a Venture Capital monthly pitch day, and I want to share the sensational question he asks to all the pitch presenters:

Can you explain to me like I’m a five-year-old, what problem you are trying to solve?

I dare you to have a go, spend some time digesting this and applying it to your own business. It’s certainly one of the bigger challenges, and one that brings amazing rewards when you get it right.

The Benefits of Answering This Question:

1 It’s a very different take on value proposition

While identical, this approach requires a very different thought process to get to the true essence of why your business exists, and how you can market your business better than your competitors.

2 It requires an intimate knowledge of ‘Who’

Whose problem are you really trying to solve? You must have absolute clarity in who you are doing the work for (and it’s not everybody; it’s not female aged 18–60), it needs to be specific people with a specific problem - that is your ‘who’.

3 It takes the complex and makes it simple

This question forces you to take what is, for nearly every business, generally a very complex operation and distil it down into something very simple that even a 5-year-old can understand. This is actually a really hard process.

4 It takes the simple and makes it compelling

The next step is how do we take the simple and make it compelling for those you want to change? How do we shout from the top of our lungs that you have a real problem, and we have the ideal solution?

5 It sells the problem first, not the solution

A wise man reminded me of this – thanks Rich Mulholland. Usually, our first focus is to sell the solution, which is wrong. Selling the features and benefits straight up never works. It’s like a lucky dip, occasionally you get lucky but mostly you’re just wasting your money. Sell me the problem first, and then I’ll buy your solution.

A business exists to solve a problem.

So, what problem are you solving? And explain this to me like a 5-year-old.

What is your business' most important asset?

Ask any business advisor about how you value a business, and the simple answer is composed of two parts:

1. Ability to generate customers (and repeat customers) AKA Marketing.
2. How profitably (and well) you fulfill the promise you have made to those you seek to serve (aka the rest of your business delivering on what you have promised).

So, when you look at that equation above, it's clear that your ability to generate customers is by far your most important asset (without it no. 2 becomes irrelevant and you actually don't have a business).

Therefore...

Marketing is your businesses most important asset

When you look at it this way, it clearly positions marketing as your business' most important asset. It is this that will primarily determine how much you can sell your business for one day. Hence, you (the business owner) need to see this as such and place it at the top of your priority list with the corresponding investment it deserves.

“You need to think/act/behave like you are going to sell your business in two years!”

Some very sage words came from a successful entrepreneur (thanks Paul Findlay), who passed on this idea when asked the question; “what would you tell the younger you?” This simple concept forces you to think very differently about your business. It puts a constraint on your time and forces you to focus on the really important things.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying you need to sell your business in two years. I'm saying you need to think/act/behave like you are – it forces you to act differently, to focus on different things.

Power of constraints

There is real power in constraints – it forces you to do better things with less, it makes you get creative with your approach, and it produces a much better outcome.

So, when you are faced with the constraint of “selling your business in two years”, you are forced to focus on the number 1 priority:

#1 Building a great marketing asset

And that is what this eBook is all about: How every business can and needs to do great marketing in order to prosper in tomorrow’s world. How it’s no longer okay to be average, and why you won’t survive very long if you stay there.

To succeed, grow and prosper you must do great marketing, you must build great marketing assets that produce great returns for you and your business. There is no more short cutting the system, putting marketing towards the bottom of the priority list, or not educating yourself on what marketing is/needs to be for your business.

One last concept I wanted to introduce you to:

A Marketing Engineer

This is somebody that brings the engineering discipline to the world of marketing. That brings a systematic approach to a traditionally creative world, somebody who brings the design, analysis and methodology that is inherent in an engineering mindset.

It takes an engineer to build something that lasts the test of time.

It’s our belief that you need to build great marketing assets that last the test of time, that enable you to focus on doing great marketing, that will bring rewards beyond your wildest dreams.

Grow with Due North

HI, I'M BEN HIRONS

In the 17 years I've been running my own businesses, I've employed (and sacked) around 15 marketing agencies and consultants because they could never deliver on their promise. I knew I could do better. So I decided to form my own marketing business, Due North.



Due North has a unique offering. When you work with us, you deal directly with our marketing superstars. Our team provides broad marketing expertise across a range of disciplines, and are capable of both providing strategic advice and executing the plan. It's a model we're really proud of and it produces some amazing results.

“ *Due North have been great for our business. They are the experts when it comes to putting us on the customer journey and helping us develop and refine our message in an extremely competitive market.* ”

– Geoff Stewart, SuretyIT

We're confident that our model can get you the marketing results that you want. It allows you to start with just a service or two (e.g. Google Ads) but then expand your marketing needs to a whole range of services (or become your entire team) as your business grows and evolves.

Some of the services we provide to our clients include:

- Strategy
- Analytics and Business intelligence
- Execution and marketing resources/people
- Optimisation and growth
- Management



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01

SYSTEM

It's time to design and build a complete digital marketing system.



Introduction

The most valuable asset of any business is its ability to generate revenue... and generating revenue is a combination of mastering marketing and sales. Knowing exactly what your customer really wants (and needs) and then delivering on that and providing more value than your competitors.

Over the past 17 years, I have run five businesses:

- A payments business that was reasonably successful. We generated 22,000 customers, employed 40 staff and had an active database of over 120,000 small businesses.
- A party-hire chain that ended in dismal failure after 18 months due to a partner falling out.
- A commercial finance business that shared a similar fate.
- A digital marketing company that did okay and sold.
- And now Due North! Where businesses come to grow.

Over this time, we've dealt with, employed, contracted and used well over 200 sales and marketing people/professionals... and unfortunately sometimes scam artists... to help us grow our business. We've learnt a lot over this time, quite often the hard way, about what it takes to get more customers.

So here is the secret to getting more customers

It's actually pretty simple: You need to build a replicable, duplicatable, scalable, marketing system that provides good, solid, consistent and profitable growth for your business. Nothing more nothing less.

100+ years of experience for you to tap into today

As a team, we've got over 100 years of marketing experience which has developed our proprietary marketing system into one that delivers results and takes your business on the right journey.

It's not "We'll give you 9 billion% explosive growth"

That's not real and it certainly isn't sustainable. This is all about how we get that little bit better week-on-week, how we work smarter not harder, and how we get month-on-month compound growth.



No shortcutting, no chasing the shiny bright objects and latest craze coming out of the US

This is hard. You can't short-cut the process. You have to do it right, build the right foundations and use analysis to drive results. You've got to do it RIGHT or don't do it at all. It just ends in tears and thousands of dollars down the drain.

But with it comes glorious rewards beyond your wildest dreams

It's true! Building the right marketing system is what drives the revenue, profit and value in your business. It continues to produce results in the short and long term. It ensures you, and your business succeed.

It's time to reach your Everest

We love working with good people who want to do amazing things; who want to take their business to the next level and want to work with like-minded people who deliver. And we're keen to help in whatever capacity we can; just ask!

We love great marketing

We're fascinated about the connection that a business can forge with a customer that is at the very core of bringing a smile to somebody's life when they receive the value that has been promised.

It's all about value

Marketing at its core is all about delivering value to your customers. To ensure that they receive exactly what you have communicated to them and they walk away with the warm and fuzzies because you've helped to improve their life in some way.

It's time for all of us to do great marketing

We're sick of seeing mediocre marketing. It's boring, it's annoying and it certainly doesn't add any value.

Throwing down the gauntlet!

Rise up, business owners and marketers! Let's do great marketing. No longer is it okay to not be clear on your value proposition. It's no longer okay to not know your target audience better than they know themselves. It's no longer okay to not know what parts of your marketing are working and which parts aren't and how well each part is contributing to the business' bottom line.

Let's do extraordinary marketing!

So what does a great marketing system look like from 100km up looking down?

It's a great question. It's all about building a replicable, duplicatable, risk-averse process that gets better and better over time like a good red. We've identified the five core components of all great marketing systems.

1.1 Strategy:

How are we going to get your business from where it is today to where you want to get it to...on the quickest, easiest path of least resistance.

- Who are we selling what to?
- How do we find and engage more of your target audience?
- How do we maximise relationships (leads, customers etc)?
- Analysis of low hanging fruit and how to get quick runs on the board.
- What is the long term strategic work?

1.2 Analytics:

At the core of all great marketing is the data that tells you what is and isn't working.

- Data capture of all marketing and sales activity.
- Reporting framework.
- Data integrity and centralisation.
- Reports and dashboards.

1.3 Execution:

Work with great people to get good sh@t done!

- Team of highly capable and senior people.
- Cross spectrum skills set and autonomous.
- Internal and external resources/people/partners.
- All boxes ticked.



1.4 Analysis & Optimisation:

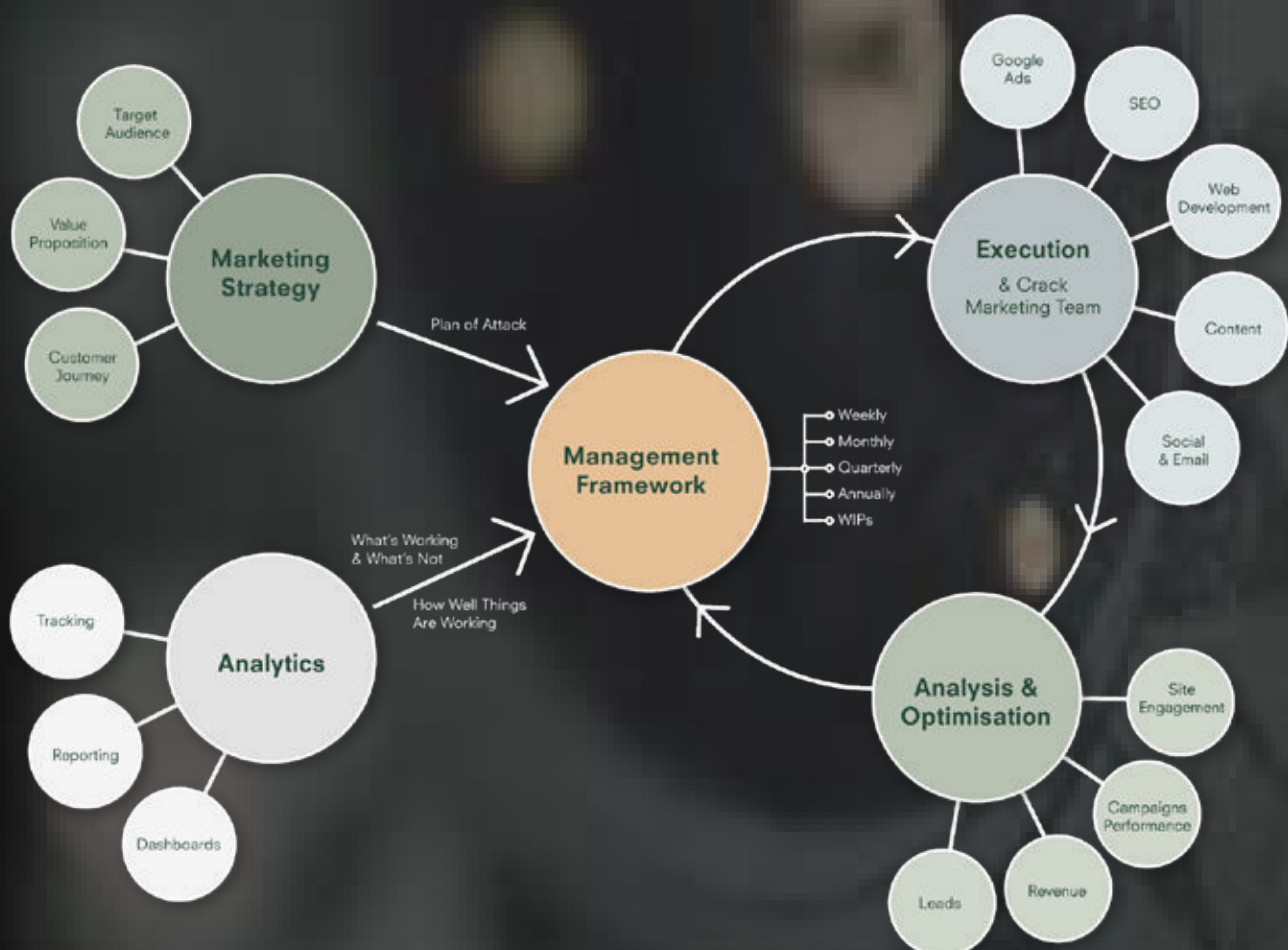
We get better and better and better and better.

- Identify what's working well and how do we do more of it.
- Identify where things are falling short and how to fix and improve it.
- Identify what do we need to stop doing.

1.5 Management:

Ensuring we have the right management framework and cadence in place to scale.

- Daily quick checks.
- Weekly WIPs and high-level results.
- Monthly review, analysis and plans.
- Quarterly strategy, review and plans.
- Annual plan and strategy.



1.1:

STRATEGY

'Strategy' is one of the most overused words in the English language

Well, behind 'disruption' that is. As a result, a lot of people get it wrong and don't understand what it entails or how you go about implementing one.

After 17 years in business and seeing all manner of strategy consultants and marketing experts, we've combined everything we've learnt to create what our customers have told us is by far the best strategy they have ever seen!

Your Marketing Strategy should include:

Who

You need to get really crystal clear on who your target audience is and know them better than they know themselves.

What

You need to identify what are you really selling them? What value do you bring to your target audience? What's the emotional connection that you need to make? (This isn't referring to features and benefits).

Where

Determine where they are at. What does the customer journey look like? What are the 27 possible touchpoints you're going to have with them and how do you demonstrate value every single time? What does your website need to do? What does that first phone conversation need to do? Really define what their journey is and what you're doing at each step of the way to add real value.

Today

Recognise where you are today. Your analytics (tracking and reporting) are important through this process as they will help you identify what's working, what's not, what you need to fix and what the low hanging fruits are.

Your Everest

Know where you are going. What is your Everest? In three, five or ten years - what do you want to achieve or conquer? Get clear on your future and what you are going after.

Analytics

Know what you need to track. What tracking and reporting do you need in place to make sure you know if you are on track or not? What metrics do you need to measure that will give you the information you need to make informed decisions?

Resources

Identify the resources you need. Time, money, effort and most importantly people. Apart from paying Google/Facebook money, marketing is all about people doing good things.

Management framework

Determine how you will manage your marketing. How will you manage each channel? What's the daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual framework you need to continually grow and improve?

Plan

Consolidate it all to develop a plan of attack. We love a 90 day plan. Anything longer is too long. It's like that saying "a good plan goes out the window as soon as the fight starts". A 90 day cycle works really well. It gives you the direction and compass you need but allows enough time to chop and change.

It's all about getting from A to B.

A marketing strategy is effectively how you get from A (where you are today) to B (where you want to get to). It requires a lot of time, energy and focus to develop and tweak but it's well worth it. If you don't get it right, you're going to face a strong headwind when you're attempting to scale your Everest. If you do get it right, it will become a license to print money, as it will tell you exactly who is doing what, when they're doing it and what sort of results you'll get. It will also quickly identify when things are going wrong and how to get back on track.

Rewards to riches when you get it right, a path to heartache if you get it wrong.

While nearly every business is dabbling in some form of marketing, most I see are doing so without the strategic framework to gain the outcomes and revenue growth they desire. That's where investing the time upfront to get your marketing strategy right (not an easy feat I might add) will save you weeks, months or even years of heartache down the track when things don't go to plan.



STRATEGY STEP 1

WHO

Define your target audience

The first step in building a great marketing strategy provides the foundations by getting crystal clear on who you are selling what to. To tap into your target market, you need to get to know them...intimately!

Your target market needs to be specific and should consist of at least 3-4 different segments of ideal customers that have all of your different needs and wants. These segments obviously won't account for all of your customers, but you want to define them as best you can.



WHERE TO START

There is a multitude of ways in which you can define your target audience and a wealth of resources available to help you do it. The best place to start, however, is with an internal brainstorm. We've provided an example here for you to do that. The most important thing is to try and be as specific as you can.

- **Demographics:**

For consumers: Such as age, gender, location and income

For businesses: Industry, size, location and who within the business

- **Problems:**

Why are they looking for your service? What challenges, pain points and opportunities can you identify?

- **How:**

How are they going to try and solve this problem/opportunity?

- **Solutions:**

What information and solution are they looking for?



IT'S ALL IN THE DATA



The next part of this process is to delve into data to refine your target audiences and confirm that the information you have brainstormed is correct. You always get a little surprise when you dig into who your actual clients are. It may also raise some missing information that you want to start capturing.

Start by analysing your customer data, either in your customer database or with Google Analytics, another great tool that will reveal a lot of useful insights about your customers.

If you aren't capturing this kind of information, then you should be surveying it. It's quick and easy to survey some of your current customers to find out exactly who they are and where they're at.

Some key points to think about:

- Demographics: male v female, postcode, age
- Lead Source – how did they hear about you?
- Once-off versus repeat business
- Top 20% of revenue generators versus bottom 80%
- Social and Google (both provide relevant information)

DEFINE YOUR CUSTOMER PERSONAS

Collating the data on your customers is really important as it will help you define your customer persona. Your customer personas are fictitious profiles of your ideal customer, segmented into target audiences that we want the marketing strategy to focus on.

It brings together all of the information you've captured about who they are, where they are, what they like and dislike, and how they are likely to find out about your product or service.

Customer personas help you and other people in your organisation understand them better and are a great reference tool to ensure that any marketing you're undertaking is targeted specifically to each of your appropriate audiences.





STRATEGY STEP 2

VALUE

Define your value proposition

One of the hardest parts of a marketing strategy is defining your value proposition; the value you as an organisation are providing your target audiences. Another way to think of this is what are you being hired to do for them?

A value proposition is a promise of value to be delivered.



YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Defining your value proposition inevitably revolves around:

- **Pain**

How can you help ease the pain points in your customer's life?

- **Gain**

What is the solution they are seeking and what is the opportunity for you as a business to help?

A value proposition is a promise of value to be delivered. It's the primary reason a prospect should buy from you. In a nutshell, a value proposition is a clear statement that explains:

- How your product solves customers' problems or improves their situation (relevancy),
- Delivers specific benefits (quantified value),
- Tells your ideal customer why they should buy from you and not from the competition (unique differentiation).

It should be the first thing visitors see on your home page and is vital to get right in your marketing strategy.



HOT TIP

Your value proposition should not describe features or benefits, but rather, the **real value** to the end-user! It's the emotional connection they will have with your business.

WHERE TO START

Write in English (no jargon) and use the language of your customer to explain what the offer is and how they'd benefit. Write it like a pitch. You're in an elevator and you have five seconds to tell them what your product/service does and the benefit to them. When used on your website, your value proposition typically would consist of four things:

1. **Headline.** One short sentence.
2. **Sub-headline** or a 2-3 sentence paragraph. A specific explanation of what you do/offer, for who and why is it useful.
3. List the key benefits or features; 3 bullet points.
4. **Visual.** An image that reinforces points above.

EG: PERISCOPE'S VALUE PROPOSITION

'Explore the world through someone else's eyes.'

Why we like it

It communicates the value users will get from using the app, rather than the features and benefits

It ignites curiosity about sharing and engaging with the world around them

It is simple yet sophisticated – the value proposition sits within the 'search' field at the top of the website with streaming videos filling the rest of the page – no other explanatory text is necessary.

STRATEGY STEP 3

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Defining your customer journey in your marketing strategy is an incredibly useful step in helping you to understand what touchpoints exist and how you can best communicate and add value to your audience at each specific step along the way.



HOT TIP

You want to add **real value** from that first interaction. We live in a world where the customer is king. You've got seconds to impress your customers, so you need to ensure that at every opportunity you are demonstrating how good you are by providing real value (for free!).



Stages		Description
Awareness and information		How do we get more of your target audiences to find out about your business and how to provide all the information that they are looking for / need to see?
Interest and decision making		We need to ensure that your target audience is attracted to your product and we demonstrate that you provide a more valuable service/product than your competitors
Purchase process		Once they have decided to choose you, how do we ensure that they have a 1st rate experience
Long term relationship		Once we have a customer, we want to keep them for life as both repeat business but also advocates of our brand

AWARENESS

The awareness stage is about understanding how you are going to get more of your target audience to find out about you. As part of your marketing strategy, you should decide which marketing channels are best matched to your target audiences. For example, if you sell walking frames and your target market is elderly people 75+ years, Instagram isn't for you.

1. Choose your channels

While we live in a digital world, there is a multitude of ways in which you can reach the target audience who will be interested in your offering, however, not all are suitable or achievable given factors such as your available budget. What you do want to aim for, is starting with those that will give you the best return on your investment. We like to categorise them into two main streams: inbound and outbound.

2. Interest & decision making

Once your customers have become aware of you, you need to find ways that engage and ignite a genuine interest in your business, service or product. Consider how your target audience is researching and shopping for your products and services and the factors that are influencing their decisions. How are you developing strategies to connect with your audience in these ways? According to a McKinsey report, one of the most important ways to influence your audience is consumer-driven marketing (such as internet reviews and word of mouth recommendations). This proves that it is increasingly important for businesses to be coming at this from both angles.



3. Purchase

Making a good impression on your customers doesn't stop at the 'Buy Now' button, that's just the beginning! It's the one experience that will shape their opinion on every future decision in the customer journey, including future purchases, so now is the time to win them over and gain their ongoing loyalty. Take a look at your purchase and post-purchase touchpoints and assess how well you are managing the customer's expectations, including:

- **Customer service:** It needs to be exceptional, whether it's 'live chat', phone, web enquiries or in-store to ensure the lead up to and process of checkout runs smoothly and the customer feels comfortable with their decision.
- **Check out process:** Either in-store or online, it has to be as easy and streamlined as possible. Use analytics to show you where things may be breaking down online and where customers are dropping off.
- **Post-purchase communications:** Everyone loves a good 'thank you for your purchase' email and this is a good start but it shouldn't stop there. Develop a tailored email strategy for each of your audiences that keeps you top of mind. This should let them know about things they are interested in and provide them with exclusive offers to help them feel valued for being a customer.
- **Returns Policy:** Just like the checkout process, the returns process needs to be just as smooth.
- **Deliveries:** Customers want to have 'A-Grade' management of their returns or delivery of items. They want to have a choice about everything, including where and when it's delivered. Ensuring a good experience is even more important when it comes to managing any issues that may arise.
- **Maintenance / Upkeep:** Customers want to know how to make the most of their purchase and ensure it lasts as long as possible. Sharing timely reminders on how use it, how to make the most of it, how to maintain it, and how their experience can be enhanced are great to build a better relationship with your customers. They show you care and it will be appreciated.



4. Long term relationship – repeat! repeat! repeat!

This is the part of your marketing strategy that ensures your customers continue to buy from you again and again. It's how you build an ongoing relationship that drives repeat business and creates new business. In today's consumer world, the customer is king.

They want it now, they want it tailored, they want to feel special and appreciated and they are happy to come along for a 'ride' of enjoyment, entertainment and inspiration. Some ideas to build a long-term relationship with your customers include:

- Thanking them for being a customer, with honesty and earnestness.
- Asking for feedback. All businesses should survey their customers. But don't make this impersonal. Take a customer out to lunch once per month to get the good the bad and the ugly.
- Adding value for free. Information, ideas and inspiration is simple and cheap and customers are crying out for it!
- Offering discount offerings or exclusive ranges to make customers feel special.
- Thinking outside the square. Some of the cheapest and best relationship builders aren't your standard email. Offline/direct/mail are still great ways to engage with customers.

WORD OF THE DAY: 'Wowie'



An Experience or object that makes the person feel amazing, awe-inspired. This whole process is about making each and every customer and potential customer think "Wowie". This is fundamental to any good marketing strategy. **Challenge for you:** How do you ensure all your customers go "Wowie"?

PLANNING THE JOURNEY

If there's one thing we know from 17 years running multiple businesses, it's that your marketing strategy can't get you anywhere without a plan. You want to ensure that your marketing strategy has a clear plan on:

- Where you currently are.
- Where you want to get to.
- What is the quickest, easiest path to get results?
- What are the short-term tactical improvements in what you currently do?
- What are the long term strategic steps to scalable revenue growth over 1, 2, 3+ years?



STRATEGY STEP 4

ANALYSIS

Analysis of the current situation

This is your current reality and provides insight as to where you are today. To do this properly, you need to have the right analytics in place so that you can measure the exact outcomes to your business. It involves getting the data capture and integration right between your systems (POS, CRM, financials), and getting your website and marketing channels talking to Google Analytics so that all the data passes smoothly and you can track exactly what activity is generating revenue for you. By doing this, you will know the good, the bad and the ugly and where the quick wins are to obtain revenue growth.

A strong marketing strategy will ensure you are tracking data on three levels:

- 1. Overall business:** What are the outcomes 'by source' to your business in revenue, leads, foot traffic, growth and database?
- 2. Marketing by channel:** Of each of your marketing avenues, how are they performing in terms of generating revenue for your business? That's offline, online, your database, word of mouth and advertising. Have transparency on how well is each one of those performing for your business so that we can start to analyse what's working and what's not.
- 3. Individual campaigns:** Within those channels and then for each of them individually. Get granular with each aspect of your campaigns to determine how well they're performing.

Today, you have the technology available that allows you to track and report on nearly everything that you do.

For more information on analytics and how you can use them in your business, read Chapter 2.



STRATEGY STEP 5

SMART TARGETS

Set SMART Targets/Objectives

S	Specific
M	Measurable
A	Attainable/Actionable
R	Relevant
T	Timely

The next step in your marketing strategy is to define where exactly you want to get to. Use SMART goals to ensure your marketing goals align with your business goals and to keep you on track by challenging your thinking at each step. Using SMART goals will also help you determine if your strategy is working and if you have to change course along the way.

Example of a **poorly** defined objective:

- To be better than my competitors
- To be the number one provider of organic dog food in Australia
- To create more brand awareness of Toggie Doggie

Examples of **well-defined** goals would be more like:

- Launch our new widget by Sept 30th and grow sales to \$1Mil by June 30
- To increase sales of organic dog food across all states by 10% before the end of the year
- To increase hits to the Toggie Doggie website by 30% by Quarter 2



STRATEGY STEP 6

PRIORITISE

Prioritise objectives and spending

The big challenge is how you find a happy medium of the tactical short-term work that drives revenue growth today overlaid with the long-term investments such as systems, process, strategy, relationships, people, resources and skills that drive scale over time.



SHORT-TERM WINS THAT DRIVE RESULTS TODAY

If you're like most businesses, you want everything done yesterday. But realistically that is not achievable with time and resourcing restraints.

That's why your marketing strategy should prioritise your objectives, spending and focus on the areas of your customer journey that are going to give you the biggest return in the short-term. This doesn't necessarily mean you need to spend all of your focus on the top of the marketing funnel – building awareness.

For some businesses, focusing on customers further down the funnel may provide quicker wins in the short-term. To determine what these are for your business, use the analytics output from Step 5 to help inform your decisions, as this is what's going to tell you what's working well (so you can do more of it), what's not working (so you can create/build out what might be missing), and what you should stop doing altogether, which is equally as important.

LONG-TERM SCALABLE INVESTMENTS THAT WILL DRIVE GROWTH OVER THE AGES

This is the investment you need to make today, next week and next month that's going to allow you to scale the business over time. Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither is significant growth in your business. You need to identify and execute the strategies that are going to generate year-on-year growth in revenue and invest in the resources to make them happen. These may include identifying:

Systems and processes to take you from 3 sales reps to 10 sales reps.

- A clearly defined sales process
- CRM scoping and design
- Integration with systems internally and externally
- Management of your sales team
- New target audiences that you don't currently service
- Product expansion opportunities that you need to test and trial
- The customer loyalty program you want to implement next year that is going to increase the revenue you get from repeat clients by 20%



STRATEGY STEP 7

RESOURCES

Plan your resources

It's no good having a plan if you don't have anyone available and equipped to help you implement it. You'll need to think about what resources, processes and systems are required to help you execute.



HOT TIP

Most businesses will need to work with external partners at some point, there's no way around it. You'll need a great web design development company, a digital advertising company typically for Google Ads, Google Shopping, Remarketing and Socials, and you need cash because marketing a business is not a cheap exercise! Google and Facebook continue to grow massive profits and they've become the default advertising mechanism. If you're not advertising on them, your competitors are so it's one of the things you should be considering if you're not already.



PEOPLE

People within a business are everything and you need to ensure that you've got great people on your team, whether that be full-time, part-time or casual staff, contractors or agencies. Think about what can be done in-house versus what can be outsourced.

SYSTEMS

You can't scale a business without the right systems and processes in place to capture and report on the data you need to make big decisions. Once you've reviewed what systems you have in place like Customer Relationship Management (CRMs), Point of Sale (POS), finance, operations and marketing, etc. you can determine where the gaps are and what you need to build, buy or integrate.

SOFTWARE

Underpinning the systems is your software. Investing in software that integrates your systems is worth its weight in gold and will do amazing things for your business. These days there are a range of cost-effective options on the market.

PROCESS

Having the right processes in place is a lifelong challenge for all businesses, yet they're essential to producing good results. From customer service to sales, your processes should cover everything from KPIs, scripts and step by step guides for every staff member.

STRATEGY STEP 8

ROADMAP

Create the roadmap & project plan

The project plan – it's one of the most important yet surprisingly overlooked steps in the marketing strategy. It's how you know who's doing what, by when and allows you to hold people (and yourself) accountable.

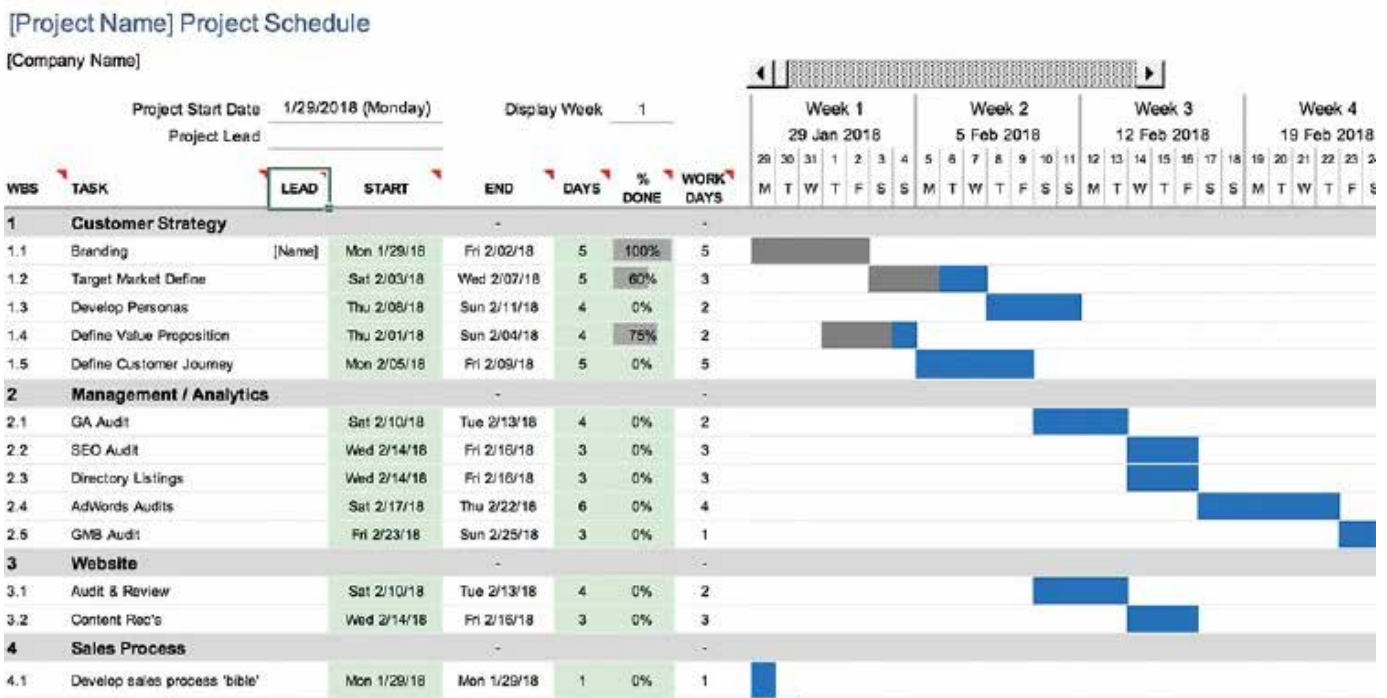


HOW TO CREATE A PROJECT PLAN

So, how do you take everything listed above and put it into a project plan? We generally like to work to a 90-day rolling tactical plan because it provides a good timeframe to get things done.

It gives you enough time to see if things are working and time to adjust and improve things if necessary. It should be broken down into who's responsible for all the tasks and when they're going to do it so that everybody is clear on deadlines.

Use your weekly and monthly meeting cycle to check in with your team and use this as an opportunity to discuss any challenges that arise. You can even put it in a timeline or Gantt chart to ensure everybody is on track.



1.2:

ANALYTICS

Analytics must be at your core!

“Information is Power”

“You manage what you measure”

“Seek and ye shall find”

We could go on with quotes about how important data, tracking, reporting and analysis is for your business. There is nothing truer in marketing - you need to know what's working, what's not, why isn't it working and how are you going to fix it.

The information every business owner needs to see is the performance of their business across marketing, sales and revenue.

- **How effective is your marketing?** Half the battle is knowing what is and what isn't working in all marketing you do.
- **How well can you sell?** How well does every staff member convert a potential customer into revenue?
- **Revenue analytics** For every marketing dollar you spend, do you know how much revenue it generates?



Turn feelings into power

Do any of these sound familiar?

- The sales team aren't performing as well as they should, but I can't pinpoint why
- I know some of our marketing is working, but I don't know which parts
- My team can't provide the data to show where things are falling
- I don't know why is Jim converting more leads than Jane
- I can't tell you how much revenue I made from Google Ads last month
- I know we are leaving revenue on the table but I don't know where to start

The simple reason you get these 'feelings' is that you don't have the right tracking and reporting framework in place. Once you've spent a bit of time setting up this framework properly, you'll capture the right data that will provide the information and answers you need, therefore giving you the power to start optimising, improving and steering your ship on to greater things!

Establishing a reporting framework to maximise business growth

If you don't already, it's essential to establish tracking systems and a reporting framework to help you report on data and integrate analytical outcomes into your business. It's needed to help you understand how your marketing is performing and this helps you make more informed decisions. This way, you can scale what is working and improve what isn't gaining traction.

Quantitative analytics

Data doesn't lie! Quantitative analytics shows us in numbers the good and the bad of your sales and marketing results. It provides pinpoint accuracy of high priority projects and tasks.

Qualitative analytics

Qualitative analytics are all about the quality of your marketing campaigns and sales process. The major focus is on what you do better than your competitors and then comparing it to best practice across all industries.



Insights

Insights provide us with the analysis, ideas and recommendations of how we do more of the things that are working, fix the things that aren't or start doing the things you're missing.

Revenue analytics

It's vital in this day and age that you have complete tracking across all marketing and sales so that you can answer the all-important question:

“ *If I spend \$100 on marketing campaign 'x', I will make \$4,567 in revenue?* ”

Let's face it, every business owner that ever walked the planet would like to see their businesses make a tonne of cash. Believe us though, it won't happen unless you have a solid tracking and reporting framework in place. It's so vital for business growth!

The process you follow:

Step 1. Define your reporting requirements and framework. Get clear on exactly what you need to report on and why.

Step 2. Analytics provisioning – set up all of the tracking data capture points and ensure accurate tracking.

Step 3. Integrate – bring all of the data and tracking together into a centralised system for easy access.

Step 4. Reports and dashboards – present all of the information in an easy to understand and quick to access way.



ANALYTICS STEP 1

FRAMEWORK

Define your reporting framework

The first step of the puzzle is to define what your reporting framework needs to look like. Then you can work backwards to figure out what you need to do to build this framework. At the touch of a button, you need to be able to see all the key data and metrics that show you how well things are working.



HOW TO CREATE A REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The hierarchy or structure of your reporting framework needs to take into account

- Department
- Campaigns/People
- Tracking requirements = purely numbers
- Metric required = Ratios of core numbers

Here is a sample of what one might look like:

Campaign/Individual	Tracking Requirements	Metrics Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Google Ads ○ Organic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors to the site • Cost per visitor • Enquiries/Leads generated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Online form ○ Inbound phone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost per visitor • Cost per enquiry • Cost per sale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook ○ Insta 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach • Visitors to the site • Site engagement • Leads generated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost per visitor • Cost per enquiry • Cost per sale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lead nurture ○ General database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of database • Open rates • Leads generated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Click through rates • Conversion rates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bounce rate • Time on site • Conversions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation rate • Conversion rate by source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue by marketing channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost per revenue • Cost per client



ANALYTICS STEP 2

ANALYTICS PROVISIONING

Get the right tracking in place

After you develop a Business Intelligence Framework specific to your business needs, you need to make sure that you have the right tracking in place to record accurate data from all your digital assets to produce the reports you need to see what is working and what isn't in your sales and marketing.



CURRENT REALITY

You need to identify and determine the status of your business, including:

- What tracking is in place?
- What reporting do you need?
- What analysis are you currently undertaking?
- What do you need from your data and reports and within what timeframe?
- How are your finances vs. resources placed?
- What gaps do you see across the functional parts of your business activity, including whole business, business units such as marketing and sales, and individuals?

THE DATA

Once you've set guidelines for what you want to report on, you're ready to put systems in place that let you easily capture the information you're after. What systems do you need to gather your information? This may include data you capture from the following areas:

- Digital Marketing: Google Ads, Google Analytics, social, email
- Offline Marketing: Materials, inbound phone tracking*
- Sales and Service: CRM and POS, sales data, individual data, business unit data, pipeline management data, conversion rates, customer contact (foot traffic, inbound enquiries)
- Financial: Revenue, Costs, Transactions

*Not all will be relevant or necessary for every business, but we should say that inbound phone tracking is an exceptional way of obtaining vital insights very easily. Every business on the planet should have this set up.



DATA COLLECTION

Where you source your data from will depend on the nature of your business, but it could be from across any of the key areas listed above and will depend on what tracking, if any, is already established.

DATA INTEGRITY

Ensuring the data is clean and accurate

For you to use data effectively, you need to make sure the data you record is clean and accurate. This starts at the source. Manual data entry can result in errors that compromise results meant to guide business decisions. That's why personnel with access must be appropriately trained on data entry protocols.

Things to consider on data integrity:

- Digital data capture is open to spam, robots and internal traffic that can skew results.
- Staff need to be trained, managed and understand how important capturing the right data is.
- Auditing processes should be put into place so that individuals can be held accountable for any inaccurate data entered into the system.
- Protecting information from accidental variation and ensuring security and quality assurance is a key requirement for accurate analytics.



INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

Key questions to explore as part of your information architecture are:

- Who needs to see what information?
- What decisions need to be made?
- What analytics is required to produce these reports?

IDENTIFY THE GAPS

By doing this you can easily identify the gaps in what you need in an ideal world versus what you have today.



ANALYTICS STEP 3

INTEGRATION

Pulling it all together

To ensure you generate reports effectively and efficiently you want to bring all the main data together to allow for easy generation of reports and dashboards. So, you want to create a centralised area of data so that with the press of a button, you get the reports you want.



MARKETING CHANNELS

Each marketing channel is going to have its own reporting feature so you need to pull all this data from those channels into a centralised area:

- Google Ads
- Facebook/Instagram/Other Social
- Google Analytics
- Offline

CRMS / POS

You need to get conversion rates, sales figures and revenue out of your CRM and/or POS as this is what closes the loop on marketing and sales and is important. Answer 'how are we pulling data across out of the system', or, 'are we pushing marketing data into this system?'

A LITTLE NUGGET OF GOLD

Dynamic inbound phone tracking

While this bit of technology is not all that new, we're still dumbfounded as to why so few businesses have implemented it into their marketing and sales. In its simplest form, you can now track and report on every inbound phone call into your business and what marketing channel generated this enquiry. For example, you can now see that Google Ads last month generated 42 inbound phone enquiries into the business, whereas Social generated two.

And best of all:

- It's cheap
- It's quick and easy to set up
- It integrates
- It automates

The benefits: complete lead tracking and reporting for marketing return

Quite simply, this gives you the ability to see every single lead that comes into the business, therefore providing you with complete return on spend reporting.

You can see exactly how many phone leads are coming into a business, e.g. what marketing campaigns are generating what leads, right down to detailed levels. For example, you can see that this keyword in Google Ads generated 62 enquiries, this keyword generated no phone enquiries. Last month's email campaign generated no enquiries, the one before generated 20 enquiries.

It also integrates with CRMs easily so you can get the complete picture of revenue generated by marketing source.



ANALYTICS STEP 4

REPORTING

Reporting & Dashboards

Your reporting framework has allowed you to determine the information you need as a business owner. Let's generate the reporting requirements so you have access to the RIGHT information.

Look at the following components and establish what systems you need for each report. Will you use excel? Which CRM system will you use? It's also important to establish the timing of each report and the personnel who will be responsible for compiling these reports.



DAILY REPORTING

Primarily about activity and high-level results

These reports should answer questions like:

- How many phone calls did the sales reps make?
- How many leads did we get?
- How many people walked through our doors?
- How many sales did we make?

WEEKLY REPORTING

Are we on track?

These reports should answer broader questions like:

- What did we achieve last week?
- What do we need to do this week?
- Are our results on track?
- What's working well?
- What's not working well?



MONTHLY REPORTING

The devil is in the detail

These reports are much more comprehensive and granular. They cover:

- Revenue and sales
- Marketing stats
- Conversion rates
- Results by product, location, department, person, unit, etc.

DASHBOARDS

Bring everything together with real-time insights

The final piece to the puzzle is setting up dashboards so you can see quickly and easily the KPIs across your business and quickly identify:

- Are we on track?
- Where things are going astray?
- Indications and forecasts

The beauty of technology is that these are all now fully automated and easy to set up. So that by the click of a button each sales rep and the sales manager can see exactly where each person is in the pipeline and where things are being missed.



Weekly

- How did we go last week?
- What's this week looking like?
- Big fish to get across the line

Monthly

- Past month
- This month
- Where are things breaking down?

You and your team need to get into a regular rhythm of seeing where your key business metrics are at, where are things falling down and what can you do every day to get better and better, week after week and month after month.



1.3:

EXECUTION

Time to get sh@t done well!

Getting things done is a vital component of a great marketing system. Results can only come when you complete the right work, launch great marketing campaigns, create first-rate messages.

And this all boils down to one thing:

Having a crack marketing team

The solution to all business problems is having the right people on the bus doing what they are bloody good at. Your mission as an owner/manager isn't to be the quarterback, doing all the doing. It's to be the coach who finds the right people and builds the right culture and work environment so they can do what they are great at!

Both internal and external!

This involves engaging both internal and external people, who, when combined, ensure that you have all the gaps covered. They have the grey hairs of 'being there and done that' and have learnt the hard way.

The beauty of external: There are a couple of things we love about using external people.

“

Your mission isn't to be the quarterback, it's to be the coach.

Scale as you need them

- It's quicker and easier (actually saves you a lot of time and money)
- No staffing headaches (no recruitment, no sacking, no wrongful dismissal cases, no sick leave, no my dog ate my homework, my girlfriend left me)
- Life is too short to try and do everything yourself

Start external and transition internal as the business case dictates

It's our belief, that it's best to start using external partners and freelancers and then shift to internal people over time as the business case and core competency/competitive advantage dictate.

For example, you'll start running Google Ads with an external agency and if it becomes a vital part of your business and you start spending a lot of money (like \$100K+ per month), you are going to want to bring this in-house as it's such a core part of your business that you need to own it. If you're only ever going to spend \$5K on Google Ads, there is no point in bringing it in-house (costs you too much with too many HR headaches to warrant it).

They become your battle hardened army

They will do what's necessary to get the job done well, on time, on budget and to the quality required. They have your back when things don't go right, and are always two steps ahead of you, letting you know why things haven't gone right and what we need to do to right the ship and correct course.

Don't be cheap!

Good people are worth their weight in gold. Don't try and save 10%, 20% even 50% just to save money. This will cause you nothing but heartache. Find good people, pay them well (and what they ask for) because they'll provide much better value. It will be done faster, better and will provide your business and customers with improved outcomes.

1. TODAY'S MARKETING TEAM

With the ever-changing world (especially with technology) that we currently live in, it's vital to have a diverse and varied marketing team working for you. No matter the size of your business, you need somebody working in all these spots to ensure your marketing system delivers the growth in new customers that you are looking for:

- **Marketing Manager:**
Somebody to oversee and steer the ship with lots of experience.
- **Marketing Coordinator:**
Get lots of general and diverse tasks done (you'll be really surprised at how much there is)
- **Digital ads:**
It's our opinion that all businesses need to be doing digital ads (Google, Facebook, etc.) and you need somebody that has the technical skills to do it well.
- **Web development and design:**
You need a great website and that comes with having a great web developer and designer on call.
- **Analytics and BI:**
The technical nature of software means you need to be able to pull all data points together in cohesive and easy to read, analyse, interpret reports and dashboards.
- **Creatives:**
Good designers who can craft outstanding material.
- **Content:**
With content being the lifeblood of the digital economy you need to be producing information that engages your target audience.
- **Social:**
Time to get social and engage with target audiences.
- **Email:**
Every business needs to be running email campaigns. It provides the best return on marketing spend bar none!



Two core facets to execute

- Get more of your target audience to find out about you.
- Build a lasting relationship with them that adds real value over time (that addresses a real need and real pain point).

2. YOU NEED TO OWN SEARCH!

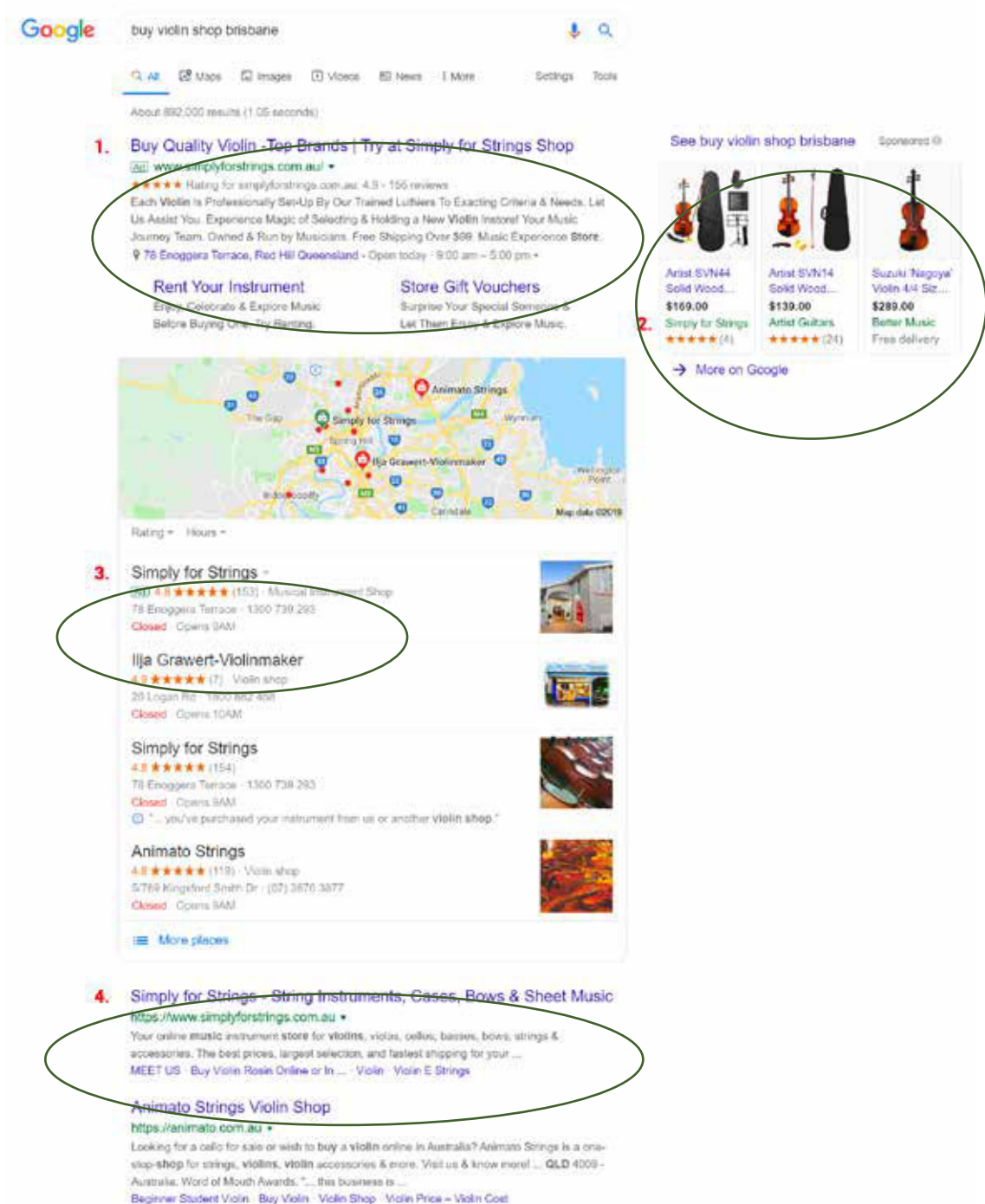
Your top priority is to own search. I.e. to own the real estate that is Google. Every day hundreds and thousands of potential customers are searching for your products and services and you need them to find you over your competitors.

When they search, they find you

Getting more of your target audience to find out about you is what 'owning' search is all about. But there is a lot more to owning search than just doing SEO or Google Ads. Owning search requires your whole marketing system to be working a treat:

- **Marketing strategy:** Your marketing strategy needs to be spot on the mark so the right people find out about your business through search. If you get 10,000 visitors per month to your website, but that 10,000 people aren't your target audience, it's pointless.
- **Analytics:** You need to know exactly what is and isn't working in search, which keywords are generating enquiries, and which keywords are a waste of money.
- **You need a great website:** You're never going to perform well with a poor or mediocre website. Conversion rates go up with a better site, more leads are generated, Google likes you more and will bring more visitors to the site, which in turn convert better, and leads/sales skyrocket.

- **You need great content:** Content that engages your target audience, content that they want to share with their family and friends. Content that online media pick up and run on their site because it's so good. This also fuels SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) which grows organic visitors.
- **You need to run a great business.** You need to win awards (Google loves them, so does your target audience). You need to be socially responsible and support the causes that you are passionate about (Google loves them too, so does your target audience), you need to sponsor and engage with your local community (who would have thought; Google and your target audience love that too!)



3. LONG LASTING RELATIONSHIPS

It's time to build a long, lasting and value-adding relationship with your target audience for life.

Once you've captured your target audience's attention, you then need to build relationships with them for life! You want to make sure that you are always top of mind whenever they think about a possible topic that you're an expert at. You want them to continually refer customers to you because they love who you are and what you do. And you want to do this on different levels:

Give me VALUE for free!

You need to continually give things away for free that show "we are the best at what we do". You need to continually entice them to want to use your services, and continually entice them to share what you give them with others. This comes in the form of eBooks, videos, case studies, education, etc. And this is where getting clear on your value proposition is very, very, very important!

The Trojan Horse

It's time to go on the second date. You've won them over enough with free value, they're happy to test and trial your services for a small fee. You need to build a \$50 - \$10K trial product/service that allows them to sample the wine before they buy a dozen cases of it. It's the trojan horse to a long and lasting relationship. Remember, it needs to add more value than what they are paying for.

The Full Monty

Over time you want to work on getting a 100% share of their wallet for the products and services that you offer. You continually impress, engage and deliver on what you promise and your customers keep coming back for more.

The cream on top!

Now it's time to go above and beyond to ram home the value you provide so that the customer never leaves! You introduce amazing partners that they can work with, you educate on all related topics, you build a lasting, intimate and personalised relationship that they can't get from a competitor.

1.4:

OPTIMISATION

The process of getting better and better and better and better and better

Optimisation as a term applies to everything you do in life. Whether it be work, family, health or learning, it's all about how you get that little bit better every day, week, month and year. It needs to become a fascination, a passion, a compulsive disorder. All successful marketing implements a process of continuous improvement that generally follows:

- **Reporting:** You need clarity on the the numbers to tell you how well everything is (or isn't) working.
- **Analysis:** Deep diving into the numbers to interpret each component to determine exact outcomes.
- **Recommendations:** How do we do more of the good, improve the mediocre and stop doing the bad.
- **Strategy and Plan:** Once you know what you are going to do, you need to add it to your management process.
- **Execute**
- **Repeat!**

“*The eighth wonder of the world. He who understands it earns it; he who doesn't, pays it.*” - *Albert Einstein*
On the topic of Compound Interest

'**Optimisation**' is the process of implementing compound interest in your Business.

...That's the real power of optimisation. Little increases along each part of the marketing journey make big increases over the whole.

STEP 1: REPORTING

Following on from the Analytics Framework you have built, you now have access to accurate reports and dashboards that provide you with all the info that answers all the mysterious questions of what's working well and where things are failing.

We generally recommend four stages of reporting:

Daily – Two or three high-level metrics that tell you how yesterday went and any major alarm bells. You might look at Total Visitors, Leads and Sales for example.

Weekly – Taking it to the next level, you want to look at approximately 5-7 core metrics that tell you how well last week went and if there is anything urgent that you need to address or change course.

Monthly – Once again drilling down to the detail, you want to look at all campaigns, all channels, all components of these campaigns and how well they have performed.

Quarterly – Detailed review of the whole quarter across all major touchpoints.

The numbers provide the clarity that tells us how well everything is (or isn't) working.



STEP 2: ANALYSIS

Once you have the reports, you need to deep dive into the data to explore a few core concepts:

- **Green lights:** What's working well and how can you do more of it?
- **Orange lights:** What's mediocre and how do you fix/improve?
- **Red Lights:** What's performing terribly and do you need to get rid of it?
- **Insight:** Marketing is all about how you improve things. It's not about how you create things. If you want Marketing to get you 5,000% increases in the short-term, you're barking up the wrong tree – that's a red light.

STEP 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Once you know what's working and not working, you can then work on how to get better results such as:

- Shift budget to things that are converting well
- Stop doing campaigns that aren't producing the required outcomes
- Improve messaging and content for mediocre campaigns
- Improve landing pages as they aren't converting as well

STEP 4: STRATEGY, PLAN & EXECUTE

Once you know what you are going to do, you need to add it into the marketing system so that the outcome is improved results:

- What exactly needs to be done?
- Who is going to do it?
- When is it going to be done by?
- How are you going to report on it to make sure it works?

STEP 5: REPEAT

Then repeat the whole process!



1.5:

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Underpinning all great marketing systems is a management framework that virtually guarantees success.

Central to every part of your business, including marketing, is putting in place the right management framework that ensures long term success. Setting and forgetting anything is not a good concept. So you need to install a process:

- Tracking what is and isn't working regularly (and quickly)
- Getting through the required tasks promptly
- Evaluating the quality of everything being produced/performed
- Brainstorming ideas ('Two heads are better than one')
- Identifying roadblocks that are slowing things down
- Looking at overall performance
- Determining budgets versus actuals

Ultimately this comes down to setting the right management process and having the right meeting cadence that ticks all the boxes as required:

Daily Meeting: Quick check on results, yesterdays' work and the plan for today.

Weekly: Results for last week, WIPS (work in progress) review and plan.

Monthly: Results for the month, detailed campaign analysis, last months' work and plan for the coming months.

Quarterly: Strategic review of last quarter (results, work, campaigns) and plan of attack for the next 90 days.

Annual: Strategic planning for the coming year and analysis of the last 12 months.

As a client working with any consultant, agency or advisor, you probably want but don't always get a clear insight into the management framework they

adhere to in the process of managing the work they're undertaking. What's their process for communicating how they're tracking – weekly, monthly, quarterly results? How do they stay on top of what tasks have been completed and what's outstanding? How do they assess how the tasks being performed are contributing to the overall business objectives and targets?

Below are the activities that need to be performed to successfully manage and report on the marketing projects you undertake. This management framework is designed to provide maximum transparency and visibility around every aspect of marketing – primarily the tasks performed and planned and the results achieved.

1. MARKETING MANAGERS

Every business needs a marketing manager! They are responsible for creating, overseeing and driving your marketing project. Equipped with a broad range of skills and years of experience, marketing managers are capable of both creating the strategic direction and executing the plan. They work closely with speciality teams/staff to deliver on all aspects of the plan. They will work closely with you to monitor, review and adjust the course where necessary.

If you're a small business, you can find a marketing manager that may do one day a week (freelancer, consultant, etc). There are many creative ways you can get this resource at a fraction of the cost of full-time staff. But, you do need one if you're keen to grow your business over time.

2. MEETING RHYTHM & CADENCE

It's important to make your meeting rhythm part of your business DNA. It's mandatory and vital to do every single day, week, month, etc. You won't get it right from day one, and you'll need to try different things, different agendas, have virtual meetings sometimes, offsite/retreats other times. But they are vital to driving growth.

Daily Pow Wow

It's important to have a quick check-in with the team to make sure everything is proceeding as planned, to help overcome any hurdles and identify problems before they snowball:

- A quick check on top metrics: The 2-3 top metrics that show how marketing and sales performed yesterday.
- What work/tasks did we get through yesterday (or didn't we get through)
- What are the roadblocks slowing us down and what do we need to change/adapt/get help on?
- What do we need to get through today to make sure we stay on track to the weekly plan?

Weekly WIP

Every week, you need to review last weeks results and work and plan out next weeks based on your priorities. It needs to identify/highlight any red flags or issues. It's also a great opportunity for you to provide input, ask questions and influence efforts on specific tasks.

- A dashboard of marketing and sales results (high level, not too in-depth) so we can see within 15 seconds that last weeks' results up, down, stable.
- Review of all tasks completed.
- What tasks are we still working on?
- What tasks are stuck and need some push?
- Any major declines/setbacks that need addressing.
- A quick review of the monthly plan to make sure we are on track.
- Planning out the week ahead – who is doing what and when?

Monthly

Analyse, dissect, discuss, brainstorm and replan! One of the more important meeting points, the monthly meeting gives everybody a good chance to stop, review, plan and get cracking with the next month's work.

- Dashboards of high-level results, metrics in both sales and marketing.
- Detailed reports on each campaign and how it has performed.

- Analysis and recommendations into each campaign component:
 - What's working well and how do we do more of it?
 - What's not working so well and how do we get it performing?
 - What's f***ed and let's stop doing it because it can't be fixed?
 - A review of work completed last month.
 - What got completed?
 - What's delayed/roadblocked?
 - What didn't even get started?
 - Review of the quarterly plan and mapping out what next month needs look like.
 - Who is doing what & when?
 - What are our expected results?
 - Brainstorm and be creative on things we can be doing better, faster etc.

Monthly Work in Progress As at: 30 Jul 2019	
<p>High Priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Moso (Web Task Implementation) <p>To be completed in the next week or 2</p>	<p>Next on the list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-location pages implementation • Top 10 priorities for the month • AdWords - Competitor analysis review • Liaise with julia/johanna re creating social content calendar • SEO Competitor Review - update web content "storage units" <p>To be completed in the coming month</p>
<p>Down the track</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Box Shop Review • Round 2 keyword rankings & content 	<p>Completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-location pages review & rec's • Quarterly Plan of Attack • AdWords - Weekly Bid and Budget Management • Location Page Images - Modification Brief for Moso • Upload new blog post (bubbly beauty's) • Upload new blog post (recognising the great) • Live Pricing Goal Setup • Backlinks SEM report (from client) • Fup Moso re json/aggregate reviews coding • AdWords - Set up wine storage campaign • Competitor backlink analysis



Quarterly

Time to get strategic. This is where the long-term focus becomes integral to ensure we are staying on track. This also requires a bit of time set aside to ensure you cover everything you need to.

- Preparation for the meeting
- Gather all the data by 'marketing campaign' and sales performance
- Analysis of the good the bad and the ugly
- Recommendations on what to do better
- Projected pay-offs of results

Quarterly Meeting

- Review all results and campaigns.
- Dissect analysis.
- Review & prioritise recommendations.
- High-level plan of attack for next quarter.
- Review and set budgets.
- Cash.
- Time.
- Resources.
- Post Meeting.
- Strategic marketing plan updated.
- A project plan for next quarter.
- Roles and responsibilities.
- Project management and software updated.

Annually

Ultimately annually is the same as quarterly, but just on steroids. You want to take it to the next level on all fronts that analysis the last 12 months and plan out the next 12 months. And most importantly it is aligned and strategised within the bigger picture of the whole organisation and the amazing opportunities that your business faces moving forward.

It's the 70 – 20 – 10 Rule with your annual management

- 70% of your time is spent on the status quo and day-to-day that makes you the money today.
- 20% of your time should be spent on developing and expanding your product/service offering that is very closely aligned with your current offering (what's your "Do you want fries with that").
- 10% of your time should be spent on pie in the sky, game-changing, competitor-beating work that will see your world revolutionised in three years.



Our clients are happy campers.

“ 3,000 to 60,000 website visitors.

Their online strategies and reporting have been a huge weight off our shoulder, not having to worry about all of the google advertising and promotion that goes on now days – they are fantastic to deal with and a pleasure to recommend.

SAM CAIN | OWNER



20x

Growth in Visitors



“ Immediate results!

Due North have been able to assist us to implement initiatives that have had a direct impact on our annual targets as well as improving a number of business processes..

BEN WATERMAN | MARKETING MANAGER



63%

Growth in Registrations



02

WEBSITE

Your Number 1 Asset – Your Website.



The 3 Most Important Words of Wisdom Every Business Owner Needs to Know.

Who would've thought Apple would show up in a marketing book

I know, I'm a bit sick of apple too, but this piece of advice is something that you don't hear very often, and it is absolute gold!

In the very early days, when Apple took on their first round of angel investing, it came with a very wise man named Mike Markkula. He shared, instilled and ensured a great mantra would be the guiding principles of what was to become the world's most successful company. We believe there are some amazing takeaways in these three words of wisdom that all business can implement today:

In reverse order of importance:

3. Empathy

An intimate connection with the feelings of your customers. "We will truly understand their needs better than any company." This is what drives your offering and your delivery, it ensures you deliver better value than your competitors.

2. Focus

"In order to do a good job of those things that we decide to do, we must eliminate all of the unimportant opportunities." Trying to do too many things does not but distract you. You have 100% to give, give it all to fewer but more important things, and not giving a little to lots of things.

1. Impute

Emphasise that people form an opinion about a company or product based on the signals it conveys. "People do judge a book by its cover. We may have the best product in the world, the highest quality, the most useful software, etc. However if we present them in a slipslop manner, they will be perceived as slipslop. If we present them in a creative, professional manner we will impute the desired qualities."

It's this concept of **Impute** that is at the very centre of great marketing!

It's what we believe is one of the most important aspects of business today and is at the core of everything we do here at Due North.

Impute: How you impress the socks off your customers from the very first contact right throughout the marketing and sales journey.

Stay with me for one minute while I take you on a quick journey of discovery... Let's start by exploring a few things that Apple does amazingly well, that will put shivers down your spine because they're so impressive. It's what makes you go – I need an Apple!

These are the things that have made them the amazing success they are:

- Patenting the iPhone packaging box with no less than 17 designers named on the legal document
- A dedicated packaging box engineer with a small team (just so the box is amazing, that it opens right each and every time
- They airfreight most of their product to ensure quality and timely delivery

“Yeah, but that's Apple” I hear you say! “I'm not Apple and I don't have the resources (people or money) to do what they do.”

Well guess what – you don't need to be. Using this one rule, you can set the foundations for great things for your business. This one rule says:

You Need a Sh^t Hot Website!



The most important marketing asset of your business is now your website

It's your business' face to the world and is the single most important aspect of how you will "impute the desired qualities" for your potential customers.

Features of your website that will gear it for success include:

Value: It must smack me in the face with the value you offer me.

User Journey: It needs to provide me with a great user journey.

Confidence: It needs to fill me with confidence in your ability to deliver your products and services.

Information: It must provide me with all the information I am looking for on your product/service.

Social Proof: Demonstrate your proven track record with other customers like me.

Tells Your Story: Brings to life the brand and instils a sense of who you are and what you stand for.

A common oversight I see all the time with my clients is the 'set and forget' mentality towards their websites. No! Your website is a living, breathing, growing asset of your business, and you need to treat it as such.

This is your #1 marketing priority!



Your website is SO important!

In today's digital age, it's so important for your website to be a super impressive asset that blows the socks off your target audience. It's no longer okay to have a mediocre website, it has to be a great website. Your website is the central asset to your marketing, and arguably one of the most important parts to your business.

“Blow the socks off your target audience.”

Face to the world

Your website is the face to the world. Everybody now looks at your website, whether that be a potential customer, whether that be an existing customer, whether that be potential staff, suppliers, you name it. Everybody's looking at your website and they're judging you by the appearance of the website.

So, if it's a poor or mediocre website, people are going to think you're a poor and mediocre as a business. It's super important that your face to the world is a great one. It's your new retail shop front. It's the most important part of your marketing arsenal.

Judge a book by its cover

People do judge a book by its cover. Unfortunately, it's the truth. It's how you decided to meet your first girlfriend or boyfriend. It's how you chose who you work for. It's how you choose so many things. The website is the cover of your 'book', so it's important that the initial and first reaction is one that's impressive.

It's the centre of your marketing universe

Your website is the central plank to all your marketing. It's the pivotal piece that connects everything together. It's the one main part that you own. Obviously, you don't own Google and you don't own your Facebook account or your Instagram page, or your EDM platform (e.g.: Mailchimp), they can be shut down. Whereas your website is yours. It connects everything together.

So, when you put an article up, you share on Facebook and send out on email, it's the central, pivotal part. It's also the core to what Google judges. Your SEO results are based on how good your website is. It's the centre of your marketing universe and you need to treat it as such.

It supports all areas of your business

This is not just about marketing! A great website will support all areas of your business. Your sales team should be referring to education pieces on your website when conversing with potential customers, your procedures and systems are housed on your website so your current customers can find accurate guides, etc. Your FAQs should be housed on your website; your customer engagement information should be found on your website. Your website supports all areas of your business, not just marketing.

It must be great

No longer is it okay just to have a mediocre or poor website. In today's day and age, it is now vital for businesses to thrive and grow, they must have a great website and that will just become more and more important.

70% of people have chosen whether they'll use you before they even speak to you. That startling statistic is only going to get bigger. People will choose whether they're going to use you or not based on their research. They're going to spend a heap of time on your website, so they need to see that you are as good as you think you are.

Don't skimp

Don't skimp on it. Don't try and build a \$2,000 website by outsourcing it to somebody in India. Don't think near enough is good enough. This is the core to your marketing and your business success. So, don't skimp on it, invest in it, like it is the most important thing in your business. In our book, it is!

Be proud of It

You need to be proud of your website, and if you're not proud of it, it's time to keep working on it, building it, improving it and growing it until you are proud of it. This is your brand to the world. It's your face. As a business owner or a marketing manager, you need to be really proud of your website.

It's an amazing asset

Having a great website produces amazing returns to your business. Amazing returns in terms of more leads or sales through the door and in terms of impressing your customers and your target audience. It also means Google will give you more and more business as a result of it. Your suppliers will choose how creditworthy you are based on it. Your potential employees will choose whether they want to work with you or not, all based on your website. It really is an amazing asset that produces great returns for your business, and you need to treat it as such.



2.1:

STRATEGY

Getting your website strategy right

It's so important that you get your website strategy right from the start. One of the biggest mistakes we continually see with websites is that they don't get the strategy right. They just think it has to look good. While that's a component of it, there's a lot more to it than just the looks.

“ *They just think it has to look good, but there's a lot more to it than just looks!* ”

1. It all starts with the right strategy

Getting the right strategy in place will then mean you're able to build the right website, which means it produces the right things for your business, which means it gives you the right outcomes long term, which is what we're after. It's so important to have the right strategy in place.

2. Customer Strategy

Define your target audience

The first step in building a great customer strategy involves getting crystal clear on who you are selling what to. To tap into your target market, you need to get to know them...intimately.

It's all about defining your 'who', that is your target audience (and it's not female 18-65 by the way). It needs to be way more specific than that and should consist of at least 3-4 different segments of ideal customers that have all of your different needs and wants. These segments obviously won't account for all of your customers, but you want to define them as best you can.

Define your customer personas

Collating the data on your customers is really important as it will help you define your customer persona. Your customer personas are fictitious profiles of your ideal customer, segmented into target audiences that we want the marketing strategy to focus on.

It brings together all of the information you've captured about who they are, where they are, what they like and dislike, and how they are likely to find out about your product or service.

Customer personas help you and other people in your organisation understand them better and are a great reference tool to ensure that any marketing you're undertaking is targeted specifically to each of your appropriate audiences.

Define your value proposition

One of the hardest parts of a marketing strategy is defining your value proposition; what value you as an organisation are providing your target audiences. Another way to think of this is what are you being hired to do for them?

A value proposition is a promise of value to be delivered.

3. Business strategy

You can't get the right customer strategy without having the right business strategy in place, they're all vitally aligned with each other. This means you need to get the business strategy right, which then drives the customer strategy, which will then drive your marketing strategy, which will then drive your website strategy. Obviously, these are core things to get right.

4. Objectives

So, what are the objectives for the website?

- **Drive Revenue Growth** – There's the obvious, you want leads and revenue to come from it. If it's an eCommerce site, it's revenue. If you're a lead generation type business, you want some leads coming through, but what are the other objectives for it?
- **Cut Costs** – For many business, the website offers an ability to cut costs in a business. It allows for things like online ordering, automated customer service, answer questions online so you can reduce customer service staff. Today's technology now means you can cut a lot of costs out of the business by having the right digital strategy in place.
- **Automate** – What's the automation process that you can incorporate to really drive efficiencies in the business?
- **Improve Customer Experiences** – What are the improved customer experiences that you we want to include?
- **Other Stakeholders** – What are the other stakeholders you need to take into account. Recruitment might be one, investors might be another and suppliers another. what are all those objectives.



5. Functionality

Based on our objectives above, we need to scope out the detail functionality that we need to build into the website to ensure these objectives are met. So, what is the search function or the eCommerce function or the SEO functions, or the ordering functions, or the resource functions, or the blog functions?

Make sure you're crystal clear on what those functional aspects of the website are. How important is it for you to be able to update it internally, versus using a web developer? And obviously the more you can do internally the cheaper it's going to be cost wise over time.

6. Your Target Audience vs SEO

One of the big challenges we see with web builds these days is people try and build it for Google, not for their target audience. Everything you do, you do for your target audience when building a website.

You have to make sure you're providing a great user journey starting from the homepage. You need to have areas dedicated to each target audience throughout the site. You need references made to them and who they are. We want social proof that speaks direct to each target audience.

All those things are really important. You don't ever build it for Google and SEO. You want to overlay a few technical things as you go, but certainly the website build is all about your target audience and how you're going to impress their socks off.

THE CORE ELEMENTS

Once you've got the right website strategy...

Then it's time to start breaking each down into what are the core elements of the website that you need to really nail to make sure you end up with a great asset for your business.

1. User Journey

What steps are you are going to take your visitors through, throughout the website, to impress them and allow a user to get the information they need really quickly?

- **Home Page** – On the homepage, how do you take each target audience to the right section that they're looking for? How do you get them straight to the category pages? How do they navigate to the sub-category pages? How do they navigate to the product pages or the service pages? Whatever it may be. Really, a homepage is the most important page on your website, so you need to spend a heap of time getting that user journey right.
- **Category Pages** – People have come to the category pages generally from the homepage or from a search, they've come through to the subject matter of the main part to your website, so then how do you take them to the next level? What's the subcategory or product pages that you need to take them through to? What's the part of that page that's going to really capture their attention and say how good you are in this?
- **Subcategory Pages** – If your business is big enough, you'll then have subcategory pages, which summarises the products and services or groups them together.
- **Product/Services Pages** – This is where the nitty gritty starts to come in, so getting a really good overview of the product or service itself (who it's applicable for, what's it made of, the metrics, the technicalities) and then you know what? You drill down.

The more information you can provide the better. Some people just want high level, some people want a lot of detail, so you really need to build your website for that. How can you provide more and more detail is the main aim of the game.

- **Blog** – People want to be educated, they want to know who you are and that comes out in the content you produce. This means your blog section becomes really important.

2. Design

Design is super important.

You don't want a crappy looking website, you want something that's really impressive throughout. Design is a very personal thing. It needs to reflect your brand, your business, your ethos, your target audience. Ultimately, you want a great design that marries up and ticks all those boxes. It's a bit different throughout, so you don't want the same design for every single page. Your homepage will have its own design. Your category pages will have its own design, your product pages will have its own design and so on.

It's about providing a great experience because it's visually pleasing to the eye and communicates all the right information. An important point to note is that you want to design things around great content. This means you've got to write your content first and then you design pages accordingly. The old days of designing first and then writing content are well and truly over.

3. Structure

The structure of your website is super important and needs to make sure you capture and communicate all of the right information. Ultimately that rolls around three core areas.

- **The Business** – What's the information you need to communicate about the business in terms of who you are, what you stand for, the management team, your background, case studies and testimonials.
- **The Target Audience** – Your structure needs to support and appeal to each audience you are targeting. This means that they have their own dedicated areas with relevant information that communicates their pain points and opportunities and appeals to their wants and dreams.
- **Google** – Google tells us what your target audience are typing into the search box, and you need to create the right structure around content that's going to answer those questions and topics that people are typing into Google.

4. Social Proof

Social proof is the real-world proof that clearly communicates to your target audience how good you are. This is all about the justifications like case studies, testimonials and the awards you have won that demonstrate you're really good



at what you do, and preferably demonstrate you're the best at what you do. Let's break these down.

- **Case Studies** – People want to know what you've done for other businesses. They want to know the results, they want to know the process you took them through, they want to know the trials and tribulations. So once again, the more information you can provide in a case study the better. Videos and photos are all really important too.
- **Testimonials** – It's still really important to have people saying how good you are. Obviously, your customers are the most important, and you want real names and real addresses if you can. You don't trust a quote from Sarah, but you'll trust a quote from Sarah Jones from Smith & Co, Warana. Full names, full addresses, full business names are what you really need to classify testimonials.

Just a little word of warning with that is you don't want too many. My real estate agent has over 400 five-star reviews on Google. You know that something is up there because there is no way a real estate agent has that many five-star reviews, right? You just want a nice, real number of good testimonials.

- **Awards** – Win some awards. Once again, that's your peers in the industry saying how good you are, and they're worth their weight in gold. People love awards, so make sure you're screaming from the rooftops that those are awards you've received.
- **Industry** – How are you involved in the industry, in helping to grow and improve it? What's the industry association that you're part of? What engagement do you have in the industry? How are you pushing the industry forward? Once again, they're all amazing bits of social proof that people will be more and more impressed with.
- **Thought Leadership** – How do we help educate people more with great information that you're producing? How do you drive the industry forward with ideas and concepts? This means sharing great wins that are coming out of the US. That's all about social proof, which is really important that we

incorporate. Because otherwise people don't trust people anymore. If you just say, "I'm good" without backing it up, people don't trust that.

5. Assets

What are the marketing assets that you need a website to house, that are going to add real value to your target audience and your customers?

- **eBooks** – Most businesses should be producing eBooks in different formats that clearly demonstrate who they are, how they operate, what the processes are, what the products are, what the benefits are, and what thoughts you need to consider. All these sorts of things become really important to put into eBooks.
- **Videos** – Videos are a great way to communicate your ideas, the benefits and other information really quickly. It's also gives people a short glimpse into the people they're going to be dealing with. Your blog articles are all assets too, so the more information we can get out there, the better. There's just a heap of assets that you want to start producing and then make sure they're a core element of your business moving forward.

6. Foundations

How do we get the foundations of your business communicated well throughout the website? This foundational information includes your 'About Us' section, your team, the history of your business, and your credentials.

This also includes describing all your products well, having a good 'contact us' page and including all of the privacy policies. This is all really important to get right and pictured well throughout your website because it communicates authenticity, for want of a better word.

7. Backend

You want a well-built backend of the website, so it's very simple to use, it doesn't break, it's technically sound, it's easy to update. But most importantly, it's easy for the business to use on an ongoing basis.

All too often you'll end up with a dog's breakfast of a backend because you've gone cheap or lazy, but over time it will cost you a lot more than investing upfront.

8. Everybody is Different

You need to keep this in mind when you're building a website.

Everybody is different and everybody wants to see different things and are impressed by different things. You want to start with good summaries, so those that just want summary information will get it quickly, they'll be happy and move on.

And then there's those that love a lot of detail, so you want to give them the summary version, then you want to give them the middle road amount of detail, and then you want to take them through the entire detail.

Everybody takes in content differently, so you want it as a written article, you want it as a video, you want it as an infographic, whatever else it may be. Everybody takes in different amounts of information, so you need to accommodate every single one of those touchpoints.

9. Your Story

Probably one of the weaker points of most websites is telling your story. What's your background? What's your history? Where have you come from? What mistakes have you made? What are your wins? What are your credentials? Why should I choose you? People love a great story and we need to tell one with your website.

10. No Risk!

Once again, your website cannot be or produce a risk to your business. It's an asset that you need to protect and cherish and invest in. Some examples include if you're not backing up a website or you're not updating the website software. These become real risks of losing the website.

Using a custom CMS, which is somebody else's bit of software that you're just building your website on, is risky because they own and control it. If their business goes belly up, then you're up sh*t creek. You want to use good, open source platforms and code to minimise any risk to your business..

2.3:

CONTENT IS KING

This is so true in today's day and age, and it's just going to get more and more important.

The content you produce is vital to the future success of your marketing. We cover content in more detail in the next chapter and also have a whole eBook related to it on our website.

1. Products & services

You need to communicate your products and services really well and then you need to take that to the next level. You need to break each product down, to explain the pros and the cons, and the more detail you can provide the better. Once again, your products and services need to be communicated really well.

2. Foundational content

We've referred to this already above. This is really about making sure your whole website communicates exactly who you are, what you do, how you do it, what you offer, your products and services, and the benefits on why they should work with you.

“*So, what is the content that your target audience is searching for?*”

3. SEO Content

There will be some topics that aren't in your foundation content that people would like to know about, that they're typing into Google. So, we need to find out what they're typing into Google, and then we need to start producing the content so that Google can see that you're relevant.



This shows Google that you're an expert authority, so they're actually going to show your business in the search results. That's really all about how we generate the right SEO content.

4. Thought leadership

This is really where we need to bring you to the fore.

When you've ticked all the other boxes, then it's time to show how you are actually adding to the body of knowledge in your industry. What are the insights that you share from them? What's the trends and topics that are coming out through the media that you can answer? What's the latest and greatest coming out of America or the UK or Europe? It's really about how we turn you into a thought leader in the industry.

5. Whole encyclopedia

Ultimately, we want to turn your website into your industry encyclopedia.

The more information the better. The more we open up and share, the better results will be for you, for your customers, for your leads, and for Google who will reward you accordingly. All your product information, your processes and your systems should be on your website, producing an amazing encyclopedia of an asset for you.

2.4:

IT TAKES A WHOLE TEAM

This is not just marketing...

It takes the whole team to be involved in building a great asset. The reason is because we want the whole website to be reflective of the whole business.

1. Whole Business Involved

This is not just marketing; it takes the whole team to be involved in building a great asset. The reason is because we want the whole website to be reflective of the whole business. From the individuals to the processes to the tools to the systems to sales and operations to customer support. Whatever it may be, they all should have a hand in producing content and building the website as a whole. There's a little bit required from the whole team in the build part, but more importantly in the ongoing website growth and improvement process where the whole team will combine to produce a truly great website.

2. Resources

Getting a website up and running takes people's time, energy, effort, commitment, and then everyone has to continually grow and evolve that website. The business, as a whole, needs to assign the appropriate resources to do it, because it is a big investment both in terms of the cost of getting it done, but also the time. The amount of time it takes to get all the content together for your business is quite staggering.

3. Commitment

The 'powers that be' need to commit to this process. Both in terms of dollars and people. Without it, this doesn't work as it's slow and you don't get the results you want. It needs to be seen as a priority for the business and actioned accordingly.

4. Priorities

It is a big priority, it's an ongoing priority that's going to be forever in your business, but once again, it's worth its weight in gold when you get it right.

5. The Right People

You need to have the right people that are working on this. It's no good delegating this to a junior person when it needs to have the 'big guns' shape and develop the website and its content. You need the right people on the right seats on the right bus, which comes under resources, commitment and priorities.



2.5:

BUILT WELL & GOOGLE

The central plank of having a great website is that Google loves it, and rewards you accordingly with bringing more business to you.

That means you need a really well-built website, both from an end user perspective, which is really all the topics we've covered above, and from a technical perspective. This will ensure that it has everything that Google needs to tick all the boxes.

1. Technically Sound

It's important to make sure Google can crawl all the information on your website. This means he can find it all, it loads quickly and there's no broken links. Every page has to have titles on it and headings on it, correctly done. That just tells Google that it's a well-built site. It shows you've taken the care to invest in it, so therefore he's going to say, "These guys are saying this is important." That also reflects your target audience, right? They want the right headings on your website. They want to be able to navigate it well, they want it to load quickly. So, there's a direct correlation between Google and your target audience.

2. Great Backend

You want a great backend that's easy to use, easy to update, easy to add new pages, to add new content, so anybody in the business can add and subtract to it. All too often you end up with a dog's breakfast of a backend that's really hard and lumpy to use, and you're left paying exorbitant fees for other people to update it. That's a really big oversight that most people have when they're getting quotes and looking into website rebuilds.

3. Mobile First

Google's shouting this from the top of their lungs, all the web developers and digital marketers are as well, and you need to take note that your website now needs to be designed for mobile as your first priority. And then desktop, and then tablet.





Ultimately you are designing and building for three different versions of your website, but mobile now needs to come first because it accounts for so much of the traffic on the Internet. So much of the traffic that will be coming through your website for all businesses, are majority people on their mobile devices. That's why you need to design it mobile first.

4. SEO

There are some technical things you're going to need to do from an SEO perspective. We always suggest these come secondary to everything else that we've covered, but there are some boxes that you do want to tick in terms of SEO audits and technical onsite. But that certainly comes close to when you're ready to launch or just after launch, depending on your site transitioning etc.

5. Growth

Once you've built your site, it's now time to grow it. This is not a set and forget proposition. It's every day and every week and every month, and every quarter and every year. How are we adding, growing and improving that website for your target audience? And Google rewards you accordingly.

6. Growth Analytics

Using Google Analytics, tracking and reporting is vital

This enables you to determine what's working well on the site, what's not working well, where are people exiting the site? What pages have a high bounce rate or people aren't engaging with? All that information becomes really important in terms of how well the results come through for your website.

2.6:

LONG TERM

It's a long-term proposition that you're continually adding and evolving.

Once you've built your website, you're going to need to continually grow and improve this asset.

1. A living, breathing thing

If you don't nurture your website; feed it, water it and take care of it, it will break and die. You need to treat it as a living, breathing part of your business.

2. Optmise

You need to continually improve and optimise your website from:

- A user journey perspective
- A content perspective
- An SEO perspective
- An analytics perspective

Once again, it's no different from every other part of your business. How are you continually getting better and better and better and better?

3. Encyclopedia

How are you adding another bit of knowledge to your industry's encyclopedia every day and every week? This becomes really important for long-term growth and it produces an amazing asset. It's worth a lot when you come to sell your business down the track.

4. Thought leadership

This is where you will really come to the fore long-term. By positioning yourself as a thought leader in the industry, both as a business, and also as individuals, through content, that's when the big bucks start rolling in from a marketing perspective.



5. Bigger picture

Yes, your website is important, but it is part of a bigger picture, so it has to be part of your complete business and your complete marketing. It's communicating the right value proposition and messages. It's not a standalone, it's part of a bigger picture.

6. Amazing asset

It's an amazing asset. It will drive long term growth for your business, and you need to invest in it accordingly.

Conclusion

Amazing Outcomes for Your Business

Ultimately, the whole purpose of having an amazing website asset, is that it produces amazing outcomes for your business over time. That includes more revenue, more repeat revenue, bigger assets when you come to sell your business, better staff recruitment processes, better engagement with clients, and that all adds up to amazing outcomes long term to your business. Once again, this is why it's so important to have a great website.



03

CONTENT

The gift that keeps on giving,
Great Content.



The 3 questions that stopped me dead in my tracks.



I was lucky enough to attend a seminar that's really stuck with me (Thanks [EO Brisbane](#) & [Jon Burgess](#))

Jon's presentation went for a few hours and covered an amazing array of topics, that go through and determine how 'connected' you and your team are. This determines where you are today and how successful you will be. Not so much the volume of connections, but how effective and strong your connections are...how powerful? (there is a lot more to it, but you get the gist).

The 'Freeze' Moment!

So, Jon proceeded to go through the ins and outs of it all and there were three questions he asked that absolutely smacked me in the face. After all this time in life, I couldn't believe that I hadn't considered these questions before.

The Captain Bloody Obvious Moment

You know when you start beating yourself up because it's that obvious and simple that you should have learnt it 20 years ago? Well, this was one of mine (and I tend to have a lot of them at the moment).

It's at the very heart of great marketing

And do you know what? These three questions are at the very heart of marketing, but they're not taught in any classroom. They are the very things that must underpin everything your business does with sales and customer service. They will ultimately determine your success or failure.

Drum Roll Please...

So, funnily enough, this is all about connections. How many you have and how strong those connections are. It's these connections that will determine:

1 What value are you bringing to these people and how often: to your clients, staff, stakeholders, leads and prospects?

The most important component of marketing - how do you continually add more and more value to everybody you come in contact with? How are you making their lives better with each touchpoint you have? This is what drives marketing, and ultimately the success of your business.

2 Who and how many people are thinking about my business right now? How do I get more people thinking about my business more often?

Marketing is all about getting more people to think of your business, brand, value and offer more often. We want to do this by providing more and more value as outlined in the first point above.

3 What are these people saying about me/my business? What do I want them to be saying about me/my business?

You need to nail your pitch so that people are referring to you accurately, they aspire to be part of it, and they spread the word on your behalf. Advocacy is the best type of marketing there is.

That's it!

They are such powerful questions that very few of us have answers to. Once we do, they provide an amazing blueprint that will drive the growth of every business! Answering these will have more and more people talking about you and sending business your way.

And they are super interconnected...

They are all interdependent on each other. Can't work on one without the other, and the last one is the most important of them all.



Content is worth its weight in gold

Content may take time to craft, but great content is worth its weight in gold once completed. Content continually adds value to your business from day one, from day six, day 12 and day 1,000. It continually adds, and adds and adds. When people search Google with a question that your blog answers, it will come up, even if it's dated from back in 2005, 2010, or 2016. So, it really is an asset that can add tremendous value to your business, literally forever.

“We’re only talking about great content here. Average content just doesn’t cut the mustard!”

Introduction

It builds the trust with your target audience

Great content demonstrates how good and knowledgeable you are. It shows that you really care about your target audience and that you're continually improving and growing your business. Most importantly, it adds value to your customers. Ultimately, what great content does is it builds the required credibility and customer trust in your brand so they choose you over your competitors.

It's the fuel for long-term business success

Today, great content is the central plank of all successful marketing. It's what fuels the success of your business long-term, both in terms of marketing and your business as a whole (more about this later).

It's the pivotal plank in your marketing arsenal

Without great content, marketing just doesn't work in this day and age. Businesses that don't jump onto the content marketing bandwagon, or gravy train, or money train, whatever you want to call it, aren't going to survive long in this technology driven, highly competitive environment. It's the pivotal plank that brings your whole business together and it's what your target audiences are desperate to find.

It supports all areas of your business

Content isn't just about marketing. Content is how you demonstrate how good your whole business is - how good your operations are, how good your deliverables are, how good your products and services are. It's all underpinned by great content and you need to communicate that throughout the marketing journey.

It's great for sales

The content you produce becomes an amazing sales tool that every single person in your organisation should be using. When a lead or prospect asks a certain question, you go, "Well, here's a blog article we wrote about it", or "Here's an eBook we put together that will answer your question". It's amazing how well it can support the sales process, which significantly increases your conversion rates, driving long-term sales.

It's your encyclopedia

As stated earlier, your content is your business's encyclopedia. Throughout your website, your content should be laid out to bear: what you're good at, what you do well, where your thoughts are, where the industry is heading, what you do, how you do it, your processes, and your systems. All this should be documented throughout your website. So, content becomes an encyclopedia to your business for you, your customers, your stakeholders, and your potential customers.

Share everything

It's our opinion that you should be sharing everything*. We threw a little asterisk in there around some really significant intellectual property, but barring that, you should be sharing everything. This is about the greater good. You build trust for your target audience by sharing and adding value to them, not by hiding things you do. So ultimately, you should be sharing everything in your

business, the good and the challenging. This builds empathy and shows the humanity behind your business.

Don't reinvent the wheel

Chances are, you've got a heap of content already, produced in different formats such as manuals, user guides, etc. This means, you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Use what you have to the best of your ability. And then you can start creating new things in new formats once your current content/resources have been exhausted.

Repurpose

You can repurpose the one bit of content on numerous occasions. So you can do a video on a topic, which then can be turned into a blog article, which can be turned into a chapter in an eBook, which can then turn into a guest post somewhere else. There are all different ways and means you can repurpose content, which is a great way to communicate to different people. And more importantly you are leveraging the content over and over again.

It's a long-term investment that will pay off

This is not a get-rich-quick proposition. This is a long-term investment that will continue to deliver value, value and more value for your business. And you're going to need to see it as an important priority for your business, because that's what's required to create great content.

3.1:

CONTENT STRATEGY

There's no point in generating content for the sake of generating content.

Far too often, we see people who generate content because they're told they need to create content. That's baloney! This is all about creating great content that your target audience is going to engage with because it adds real value to people's lives.

“ *We're going to repeat this point – its not just about creating content, its about creating good and great content!* ”

1. Overview

It all starts by building the right strategy

Without the right strategy, you're just going to create average to poor content that doesn't help anybody.

Without the right strategy your destined to fail

Not having the right strategy won't add value to your business, won't grow your business, and won't add value to your target audience. So once again, we keep coming back to how important the right strategy is, and content is no different, right?

A great content strategy is based on a great digital marketing strategy

You need to build a great content strategy for your business, and a great content strategy starts with having a great digital marketing strategy. Until your digital marketing strategy is right, there is no point in looking at your content strategy. And guess what?

Your digital marketing strategy is based on a great marketing strategy

You can't build a great digital marketing strategy without having a great marketing strategy in place. So ultimately, Marketing Strategy comes first, Digital Marketing Strategy comes second, and your Content Strategy comes third. We've highlighted how to build a Marketing and Digital Marketing Strategy already, but let's do a quick recap.



2. Marketing Strategy Recap

Who - crystal clear clarity of the emotional needs and wants of your target audience

You need to be crystal clear on who you're talking to, who your target audience is, what their emotional needs and wants are. You also need to be crystal clear on the emotional connection that you want to create.

Their fears: Fear is an amazing motivator.

Their opportunities: What are their hopes and dreams.

Your value: What value are you adding to your target audience. This is your value proposition, how well defined is it and how well are you sharing it?

What change are you making: How will you change your customer's lives for the better?

How you make their lives easier, better, simpler: How are you looking to make their lives easier, simpler, better, cheaper, faster, quicker, or whatever else it might be. So once again, answering those two core questions is fundamental in developing a great content strategy.

3. Content strategy is defined and underpinned by the value you are going to add

The content strategy is really all about how you are adding value to our target audience.

Start to define what content is needed to generate what value

What is the little nugget of gold that you're going to produce today, this week, this month, and this year? Ensuring each piece continually adds to your value proposition that you created for your target audience. The content strategy defines why you're generating what content.

Think of it as an aeroplane

What you do is really complex, there are lots of moving parts

Your value proposition, like an aeroplane, is a really complex piece of machinery. No different to your business, there are lots of moving parts.

What you want to do with your content is share a little nugget of gold around each of those parts. It's not creating a whole massive book that describes the whole aeroplane, it's about breaking it down. For example, what does this little bolt do that's in the cupboard that connects to the wall that holds something?

How do we share nuggets of gold that add value to my understanding of how an aeroplane works?

Over time, we're going to have more and more nuggets, and more and more moving parts. Ultimately, over the next 12 months, two years, five years, 10 years, we're going to describe the whole aeroplane, but we're starting with one little part. That's really what the content strategy is defining. How you are going to communicate little nuggets of gold throughout.

4. Content Pillars

Content Pillars should be your first port of call once you're happy with our digital marketing strategy.

Building blocks and foundations to great content

Once you've defined who you're talking to, what value you're going to add, then it's time to create a few pillars or foundations that really give you guidance and direction as to the type of content you're going to create and why you're going to create it.

There are all different versions of the content pillars, but ultimately, they fall into the below four core categories that you can tweak and twist until your heart's content.

1. Product - technical information

Technical information about how the product can be applied or how the product/service is delivered that's going to add value to your audience.

What are the things people need to think about? What's the post-sales information that people need to know to maintain the product or service? What are the things that are really going to add value to the experience in using this product or service?

2. Authority and expert - add to the body of knowledge

How are you becoming the expert that you are, ensuring you're adding to the body of knowledge in your industry? You need to continually demonstrate how good you are at what you do, that you're doing this for a greater good, that you're actually contributing to building a better industry, or better product or service.

3. Help me

What other bits of information related to your product, service or audience can you share or help with? Are there trends coming out of Europe, that will affect you? What's the latest bit of technology that's going to bring real value to the end user?

4. Viral

The last pillar is to go viral. So how do you get some creative juices flowing? How do you inspire your target audience in a way that is related to your product or service? This is really about how you can bring life to what you do and bring excitement to your target audience's day.

5. They ask, you answer

There is a great book by Marcus Sheridan called They Ask, You Answer. This is what you want to build for your business. Every single question that you get asked by a lead or a customer, write it down, and you're going to answer it. Because if one person's asking it, chances are 10 or 100 people are asking it. So write them down and start writing a blog article about them, do a webinar about it, create a video about it. Every single question customers or prospects ask, write an answer to it because that's what others will be searching for too.

6. Your target audience is searching for it

Think about it, what content, information, tidbits or questions are your target audience searching for? Google has some great keyword tools to help you with that and there are also third-party applications and websites that can assist. Create a list on the 42 big questions that your target audiences are asking, then you need to produce content around them. Let's go!

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE

There are some really big challenges that all businesses face, and you're certainly not alone in this space.

Creating content is not an easy, quick, simple proposition, and you need to be prepared for some of the following challenges.

1. Most people don't want to do it

Unfortunately, people aren't inclined to just produce content. Those that do are doing it, and they're making a living out of it. For the rest of us, we don't see it as important in the first instance until we come around to it. We see it more as a chore, where other things are more important. This is one of the big challenges, and you need to shift your mentality to say:

“ You know what, man, this is a major asset to our business, and it needs to be given importance and urgency.”

So, let's make it a priority for the whole team to do, so it's not just one person. Everybody in the business should be producing some content throughout the year.

2. People underestimate the time it takes

Creating really good content takes time across the board. From brainstorming the ideas, to actually writing or producing the content, to formatting it, to jazzing it up with catchy headings and bullet points, to formatting it live on your website, to making it functional for desktop and mobile, to choosing the images to go with it.

Then you need to share them on your social profiles as posts for engagement. So, you need to write a headline for it, and use an image for it. You need to make it look good on your social channels, then you need to promote it by spending a bit of money boosting it to reach more people.



Then you need to do an Electronic Direct Mail (EDM) for it, which includes writing the content, selecting the images, and creating it into MailChimp, SendinBlue, etc. So, there is an immense amount of time that goes into producing each bit of content. And you need to factor that into people's time, resources, and the plan of attack required to do it.

3. Making it a habit

What is the cadence and rhythm you need to do every day, every week, and every month to get this content produced? Creating that habit in stone, and pushing that habit is one of the biggest challenges. Once you make it a habit, it becomes really easy, and simple, and like clockwork. That's what needs to be built.



3.3:

FOUNDATIONAL CONTENT

Priority Number One.

Before you get stuck into the long-term growth of content, first step is what we call the foundational content. This means making sure you've got a really good website that's describing all the foundational things that you do.

1. Everything about you

You need to describe everything about who you are, what you do, how you do it, and why you do it.

This is broken down into three simple formats:

The Why

Why do you exist? What are you trying to achieve? What are your big, hairy dreams and goals that your target audience would want to know about? That's really important.

People buy why you do what you do, not what you do

People buy why you do what you do, not what you do. Simon Sinek really ran this home, so if you haven't seen his YouTube videos, it's highly recommended that you watch them.

You need to clearly demonstrate your why - your passion, that greater cause that is driving you. That's what people are ultimately going to buy. The enthusiasm, excitement, commitment and striving for excellence.

The What

Once you've explained the why, then you need to explain the what. What do you do as a business? What is the problem that you solve?

The How

How you do it? How do you go about fulfilling the wants, needs and dreams of your target audience?

Answering these questions will help you customers to be crystal clear on why they want to do business with you.



2. Your story

Your story is one of the most overlooked areas of content on your website. This is your business origin story. How did you start out? What has the journey looked like? How long have you been in business? What were the ups? What were the downs? So, your story really adds character to who you are and where you come from, and people love that.

People want to know more about you, because ultimately when you choose a provider, product or service, you choose the people that are behind it. The product and service are important, but the people who are providing it is more important, because good people produce good products and services. You need to make sure that you're seen as a really good person, so your story is really important.

Your history

Take people through your history. Where you've been and where you come from.

Today

Give people a good overview of who you are today.

The team

The most important part is describing the team. Share how good they are, where they've come from, what their qualifications are. What's their story?

One of the most important bio tidbits is to share each team members favourite food, people love hearing about this. Add some real character in communicating who your team really is.

3. Your Products and Services

Your products and services need to be communicated really well. They need to have an immense amount of detail in them. The more detail, the better. You can never have enough detail.

High level

What's the summary of your products and services, the features, the benefits, and how they operate?

More detail

What's the next level of detail? So, each of those points you've raised on the above summary page, you need to break them into more detail and more detail. You might have four pages of the next level of information. And then, you know what?

More detail

Then you take it to the next level. What's the material you use? What are the safety ratings? You can never produce enough detail. Some people just want the summary, which is great, but other people will really drill down. And the more information you can provide them, the more people will like and trust you.

4. Process and journey

Your process and the journey you are going to take your customers on

What's the experience your customers are going to get? What's the seven core steps they're going to go through? What should they expect at every step? What's required from them, from you? How are they going to see it? When is it going to be delivered? What's the follow up process? What's the customer service support, if required?

You want to detail out exactly the experience your customers are going to have by buying your products and services.

5. Bringing together your content calendar

Once you've defined what the foundational content you need to create is, it goes straight into a Content Calendar that you can start working on it. This foundational work is priority number one. Once you've got that right, you can move on to the other things, which is the next chapter, content for SEO.

3.4:

SEO CONTENT

Priority Number Two.

This is your second priority once you've created the foundational content. This is the content that will drive the long-term growth in terms of more organic search visitors finding your business, meaning you can convert more into leads and online sales.

1. What is your target audience searching for?

You need to be crystal clear on what the core topics and themes your target market are typing into their Google search, so that you can make sure they find you.

2. Keyword research

This is a great Google and third-party tool that provides you with a list of all the possible topics that people are typing into Google. Start with a list of keywords, and brainstorm 5-10 minutes. What are the top 10, 20, or 30 keywords that you think your target audience are searching for? Then put them into the keyword planner, and that keyword planner will spit out 4,000 possible ideas for you to consider.

Then you want to start wading through them. This means deleting, rearranging, sorting, and making sure that you end up with a good list of 200–400 keywords that are relevant to your business.

3. Theming

While Google provides you with exact keywords that people are typing, it's not a real human thought process. They're not based on keywords; they're actually based on themes and ideas. So, what we want to then do is group relevant keywords that are similar to each other into a theme. So out of the 400 possible keywords that you've identified, that might break down into 30 or 40 themes, which really summarises the sort of search queries that people are typing in.

4. Keyword rankings

Now, for those themes, there'll be predominant keywords in each, that are ranking higher. You can then break those rankings down into three core categories:

- “We’re on page one, which is great, so we just need to fine tune and tweak that content”
- “You know what? We’re on page 20 to 50, which means we’re being recognised for this, but Google’s not seeing us as a relevant authority figure relevant to those keywords”
- “You know what? We’re ranking 50 plots, which means Google doesn’t see us as important, so we need to do something about it.”

5. Gap analysis

The rank gives you a blanket of the 40 things you’re going after. Where do you currently rank, so that the gap analysis can then analyse what is needed to improve things.

6. Recommendations

Recommendations fall into the below three core categories.

Update current content – If you are currently ranking on page 1 in the top 10 positions for some keywords, your aim is to improve that position. To do this, add more content to that specific page, go into more detail, explain more pros and cons, give people a really good experience on that page so that it moves from position eight to six, or position six to position two. So really, this is all about how you refine the content on that page.

Add more content – Or if you’re ranking on positions 20 to 50, Google’s really saying, “You know what, You don’t have enough content on that page that is good enough.” Add a lot more relevant content about that topic.

Create new pages – If you’re in position 50+, Google’s really not identifying that keyword with who you are according to what’s on your website. So, you need to create a new page that’s purely focused on that keyword. You’re not going to create a page for the sake of creating a page, you want to create a page that shares really great information around that keyword that your target is going to find engaging.

7. The content calendar

Your content calendar includes the what (content you are producing), when (the timeframe you are producing it over), how and the who (who is doing what).

3.5:

TOPICAL & TRENDING

They ask you answer.

This is all the subsequent information, and this is really what brings you to the fore in terms of making you the experts that you are.

1. Every question should be written down

Every question someone (leads, customers or the general public) ask should be recorded and developed into a blog post or other type of content that addresses the question. Why? Because that's exactly what people will be typing into the Google search box. Some of these will include, What is this? How does this work? Where can I go for this? There are fundamental questions that people ask Google every day. You need to answer these questions so that Google shows your response to those questions in the top position of the search results. So, write down every single question and produce a bit of content around it. And as mentioned, this really supports the sales process as well.

2. Topical

What are the topical things that are happening in your industry at the moment that you need to write about? With the pandemic, there were a whole host of COVID-19 articles that came out across different industries. We had a plumber client produce a great article around what not to flush down the toilet when there was a toilet paper shortage, this went viral on Facebook, it was awesome.

3. Trending

What is trending in your industry, the group of customers you serve or society as a whole? Producing content around this, provided it is relevant, shows you're on the ball and an expert in your field. It shows that you're part of the community and trying to address it.

4. Tools

There's a heap of tools out there to help you address those trends and topics, and we'll list them here for you so that they provide some great guidance on how to do it and what to do:

- Google keyword planner
- Buzzsumo
- Keyword.io
- Answer the public

3.6:

LEAD MAGNETS & FUNNELS

This is a whole eBook in itself...

So we won't delve into too much detail here. I'll just give you a high-level overview of it.

The value of your database

Building a database of your target audience is extremely valuable, so too is communicating on a regular basis and nurturing that database. Long-term leads are worth their weight in gold. Determine how you can build a valuable database that you continue to communicate and give value to through your content.

Lead magnets and funnels aren't for every business

I get really sick and tired of hearing that every single business should be having lead magnets, sales funnels, lead funnels, and every term under the sun. It's not true. We don't subscribe to that.

For us, this is about a considered purchase process. So if you're selling a dog collar, it's just got to look good, right? I need a dog collar, I'm going to see one I like, and I'm going to buy it. You don't need to create an eBook around the benefits of why a blue dog collar produces a better environment. That's not real, right?

Considered purchase process

You need a lead magnet funnel when there is a considered purchase process. If people spend time researching, looking up all different competitors and there are consequences to buying the wrong product/service - this is when you need a lead magnet or funnel.

If it's a transactional quick and easy purchase, you don't need it. You just need a really good website that clearly communicates what you do and why your products are better. But for wanting that more considered purchase process, it's great to have these things.



3. Valuable Content

This is content that people actually want to read. All the tools that are listed in this section of the eBook will help you produce valuable content that people will be prepared to give their email address for.

But you don't just need to create it - you need to promote it on your social channels to capture email addresses and grow your email database.

4. Nurture Leads

Everything piece of content you create, must be shared to your current leads. So how do you do this better?

By adding more value. It's that simple. Adding more and more value to your target audience is what's going to make them long-term customers.

Conclusion

Content is king

Once again, the content is super important in today's day and age. Those that get it right will make a lot of money long-term. Those that don't do it, or don't get it right won't be around for long. In general, the market is changing rapidly, and people need to do great marketing.

Content is a long-term investment that will pay back in spades

If you're not producing great content, you're not doing great marketing. Your business won't survive long-term. Content is a long-term investment that will pay off in spades.



04

SEO

Organic search and the demise of SEO.



Have you earned the right to be considered great?

I recently had the pleasure of meeting Steve (Steve's name has been changed from Bruce, whose name was changed from Neil to protect the innocent), he's a lovely guy that I get along really well with.

Steve runs a really good company, that produces a really good product that gets really good reviews. As we started to dissect Steve's business and his marketing, they are arguably the 2nd or 3rd best and biggest in the market. His biggest concern was:

"We're on page 3 of Google when we should be on page 1!"

I enquired: *"Do you know why you are on page 3?"*

Steve: *"Not really"*

Me: *"What sort of SEO work has your SEO agency been doing?"*

Steve: *"SEO – not really sure to be honest"*

Me: *"Do you know what tasks they have been doing for their \$2k per month?"*

Steve: *"Not exactly"*

Me: *"Do you think you've earned the right to perform well?"*

Steve: *"What do you mean by that?"*

Me: *"Do you think you've earned the right for Google to believe you are an authority/expert in your industry?"*

That seemed to Stump Steve... a few seconds later, he says:
"Probably not..."

Me: *"So why do you think you should be ranking in the top 3 then?"*

Safe to say he got the point pretty quickly. Unfortunately, this story is very common.

I need to be honest

Unfortunately, I didn't come up with the question: **Have you earned the right?**

I'll never forget it, it was from a former business partner who asked me, and it kicked me in the guts. It was one of the most valuable lessons I've ever learned. His point was, we hadn't earned the right to perform as I thought we should perform. I knew we were good, but we hadn't earned the right to be called great.

Ultimately that's what Google is judging.

Google's judging on how much of an authoritative, expert and relevant business and person you are. And by "doing SEO", you're short cutting that process. You actually haven't earned the right for Google to see you as the authoritative, expert person/business/website that you are (or could be).

This has started a chain of events and thinking, and the most interesting thing has dawned on me...

We believe it's time to earn the right.

*“We believe it's time for all businesses
to do Great Marketing.”*

Part 1: Why 2021 will see the death of SEO.



So, I've realised... it's time to kill SEO

I've been running our own businesses for 17 years now:

- 9 Years of being a client of numerous SEO companies and Digital Marketing Agencies
- 8 years of running two Digital Marketing companies offering SEO services

There aren't too many people in Australia, and indeed the world, that have more knowledge and experience with Digital Marketing and SEO than I do.

My latest epiphany: I truly believe it's time for the demise of SEO

- I believe it's in a business' best interest that we no longer 'do SEO'
- I believe it's in the marketing industry's best interest that SEO disappears
- I strongly believe it's in SEO professionals' best interest that SEO be killed off

I'm ready for the tirade of comments and trolls who are devout SEOologists, but it's also time for us all to face the realities, to move on from SEO and craft a niche in the complimentary field of doing what you love to do (more on this at the end).

“Following are the facts about SEO...”

SEO FACTS

#1 CONFUSION REIGNS SUPREME

When you ask someone “What is SEO?” Every single person on the planet will give you a different answer. When you pay somebody to do SEO, they all do different things and without a clear overriding mandate of what’s involved. Most customers don’t know what’s good SEO and what’s bad, and nearly all get a general feeling of unease – read ‘smoke and mirrors’.

- **Doctors** – they fix you
- **Engineers** – they build cool stuff (I do love engineers)
- **Architects** – they design things
- **Solar Installers** – they install solar panels
- **SEO Specialists** – “No idea what they actually do” is most people’s response

There is literally no other industry on the planet where this sense of confusion exists, and this drives really poor behaviour across the board (by both businesses and agencies).

#2 SEO FLIES IN THE FACE OF WHY GOOGLE EXISTS

When you break it down to its essence, ‘doing SEO’ actually goes against the very thing that Google is trying to achieve. It’s the search engines mission to categorise the world’s information so that when you type something into the search box, it’s job is to show the most relevant, authoritative and expert website first, and so on down the list.

SEO is trying to short circuit/circumvent the system so that google places you in high esteem. And this is at the expense of long term results.

So it’s time to switch this up. Let’s work on turning you into the authoritative, relevant, expert business/individual that you are, and let’s stop trying to circumvent a system that is getting better by the day.

#3 NO STANDARDS

There are no standards at all in this industry – none, and that relates to point 1 above. This is because nobody really knows what goes into Google’s secret herbs and spices, hence there can’t be any standards, and you end up with a few bottom dwelling feeding sharks who add no value whatsoever and rip people off. This happens all while the good honest ones who know their sh^t, get lumped into the same boat.

Malcolm Gladwell was definitely onto something with his 10,000 hours of *experience required* – that’s what it takes to become a real expert. Yet you have ‘SEO experts’ with three months experience saying how they are going to skyrocket your revenue – that’s just not cool!

#4 SEO IS JUST TIDYING UP OTHER PEOPLE’S MESS, MISTAKES & LAZINESS

This point is going to hurt the most.

Ultimately, SEO exists because other people haven’t done their jobs well. Every single SEO task I’ve ever seen needs to be done because other people aren’t doing their job correctly. While this is a relatively new thing in the past 3-5 years as Google’s algorithm gets better and better, today SEO people are just tidying up other people’s mess and mistakes. For example:

- **Onsite Work** – means either the web developer hasn’t done their job correctly (which is all too common – sitemaps, robots, load speed, interlinking etc.) or content hasn’t been produced and uploaded well, which means your marketing/comms person needs to pull up their socks.
- **Building Backlinks** – No you don’t need to build backlinks! You need to market your business on the main business directories, you need to join and become active in your industry (and the respective websites), you need to get social and engage on social channels with your target audience. You need to sponsor the local footy/netball/chess team. You don’t need to build backlinks; you need a good marketing person to do better marketing and digital PR.

- **Focus on 10 keywords** – No you don't need to focus on '10' keywords. You need to know your target audience intimately, what information they are searching for online, answering every single possible question they may ask and adding so much value that you impress their socks off all through your website (and that's your Marketing Department's job). You need to do great content marketing.

So, if you just hire the right people to do the right work (and pay them well), SEO actually becomes redundant.

#5 SEO IS A LAZY PERSON'S MARKETING (& A LAZY AGENCY'S SOLUTION)

Because most businesses don't understand it (primarily because the industry has created so much smoke and mirrors), here's the chain of events that transpires:

- Business owners throw up their hands saying "This is too hard, can't I just pay somebody to do it for me?"
- SEO cowboys come along and say "Sure, I'll take your money. Outsource it all to me and I'll make the problem disappear. I'll get you on page 1 of Google, guaranteed! Trust me, I'm an expert"
- And so it just gets outsourced, with the expectation of results and value being delivered
- Most people think they can get results by circumventing the system (see #2 above)
- That's not doing good marketing and that's certainly not doing good business

Ultimately you haven't earned the right to perform well in Google organic search:

- You haven't demonstrated you're an authority in your industry
- You aren't the expert at your craft
- You aren't adding value to anybody
- You can't expect Google to reward you for doing lazy marketing

Now please don't get me wrong. There are certainly some good SEO people out there doing good work, but my experience is that they are few and far between.

#6 NO BARRIERS TO ENTRY

There are no barriers to entry, which means any dog can do SEO (and indeed if my dog is as good at SEO as he is cute, he'll be awesome at it). Speaking of which, I saw an ad on Facebook advertising an education course to take somebody from 'Zero to SEO Hero in 90 days and make \$150K per year'. That's not cool! That doesn't do anybody any good and just digs a bigger hole for the industry to get out of.

Digital Marketing is a hard game that takes real skill, it's not something you can learn in three months and be an 'expert' – as we said earlier, it takes 10,000 hours to be really good at it, just like anything else.

LUCKY #7 “DOING SEO” ACTUALLY DOES NOT WORK

After researching over 1,000 businesses, the data all shows that “Doing SEO” simply doesn't work. It doesn't work doing it in isolation. Just paying somebody \$2K per month to “do SEO including create four blog posts for you” doesn't work. It will not get you the results you want.

SEO doesn't work when you have a mediocre website, when you outsource your content, when you treat digital marketing (and all your marketing for that fact) as an afterthought, in a half arsed approach. SEO is just a component that won't work if the rest of your marketing isn't working as it needs too.

SEO only works when your whole marketing is working as it should, when the sum of the parts is greater than the whole. When you know your target audience intimately and you continually add value to them. When your reviews are so good because your whole business is working like a dream.

“I know what you (the SEO people that is) are going to say...”

I hear these arguments all the time:

- What about low word count on a page? Or low keyword density
- Broken links are important to fix
- Backlinking is still so important
- We need to be producing content with a word count of 1200 per page
- Blah blah blah...

Well, let me tell you something... Google doesn't give a sh@t!

Google really doesn't. It's job is to:

- Analyse your business relative to your competitors
- Decide on which one is more important
- Decide which one is engaging with their audience better
- Decide which one is more authoritative
- Decide which one is contributing and adding to their industry more
- Decide which one is supporting the local community better
- Decide which one is marketing their business better

Do you know what Google does give a sh@t about?

Which business is marketing their business better!

That's exactly what Google is analysing and that's exactly how they are going to rank you versus your competitors – it's based on your marketing. Ultimately, SEO results are driven by how you market your business better than your competitors.

So how do you market your business better?

Now that's a great question, and one I'm glad you asked. For I have the perfect answer for you:

“The one who adds the most value wins!”

Nothing more, nothing less. Your mission is to add the most value to the most people (e.g. your target audience, your industry, your staff, your customers). You need to help them, educate them, develop them, lead them, manage them and Google will reward you accordingly.

Word of warning: You don't get to define what “value” is – that's for your customers to decide.

Now, I told you I'd come back to this...

So, what does this all mean for the SEO experts out there? It's time for you to quit your day job and do what you really want to do, what you were born to do and what you love doing.

Have real clarity so that an everyday Tom, Dick and Harry can understand what you do, that has no smoke and mirrors, and most importantly, a role you are proud of. Removing all the 'SEO' bulldust, and that is to... find your digital marketing niche.

Rather than 'doing SEO', let's do what you love to do in an 'old school' style career. For example:

OLD	NEW
I love the onsite technical website aspects of SEO	Become a 'Web Dev Analyser and Finisher' (new position description I've just created) who goes through all websites and adds those amazing finishing touches that blows people's socks off. Someone who dots the Is and crosses the Ts and ensures a great user journey throughout the site for all.
I love keyword research and mapping content to keywords	Become a Content Strategist who will ensure businesses add more and more value to all their stakeholders (this means creating content that adds value, and not create content for the sake of creating content).
I'm the backlinking King/Queen	You're now the Digital Marketing PR King/Queen who helps share people's gifts throughout the internet, and we are going to share great information with our target audience!

This is why I believe it's time to kill 'SEO'!

To start this journey, we need to go back to basics, to first principles of SEO. This allows us to the plan the right journey forward to outstanding organic search results.

Results achieved when you kill SEO.



“ **Doubled retail sales.**

Due North has boosted our traffic and doubled our through the door customers! I am a very busy small business owner and have very little time in my day and they have managed to take control and push business through the door. Highly recommended! And Ben (the marketing genius) always buys the coffee!

BEN PERRY | OWNER



157%

Growth in Leads



“ **An agency that delivers.**

I can't recommend Due North enough to any business – we switched over late last year and the results have been nothing short of impressive.

ADAM DI FLORIO | MANAGING DIRECTOR



43%

Growth in Visitors



Part 2: What you need to do about it now.

What is Google's objective/aim/purpose as a search engine?

Google's aim is ultimately to categorise the world's information. When somebody types something into the search box it's Google's job to show what it feels is the most accurate, relevant, authoritative, trustworthy, and important piece of information first and so on down the list.

So it's Google's job to...

Filter through everything that's available online (and Google's trying to do offline too) and to say this piece of information is the most important to the person who is sitting in front of their computer. This bit of information is second most importance, this is third and this is fourth and so on down the list.

Therefore, what we need to do is transform your business into an authoritative, trustworthy, important, relevant website. One that is much more so than your competitors.

That is the aim of the game

And there's no short cutting that process. There's no just paying an outsource provider \$2K per month to do their "SEO thing". That doesn't work in this day and age. You can get some results but ultimately it becomes a real partnership of how you get the right digital marketing team together to take the action required to build you into that authoritative, trustworthy figure that google loves. Ultimately that's what your target audience loves too. People buy from people they trust and like.

Google is constantly assessing who is the best business

Who has got the most trustworthy information that the target audience is searching for? Who's got most accurate and relevant information, that you should trust and believe? That is what we need to build your business' digital asset into.

Stop the old school SEO BS!

It's time for everybody to stop the old school SEO BS! Trying to shortcut or dodge the system, or trying to circumvent Google doesn't work anymore. It's going to get harder and harder and harder and harder and you're ultimately just wasting your time and money. It's all about how do we create a great digital asset that delivers time and time again for you, that impresses your target audience that ultimately impresses Google.

You need to think of Google as your ideal potential customer.

That's it – nothing more, nothing less. It's our job (yours and mine) to impress the socks of your ideal potential customers. With a better website than your competitors, better content, better social engagement, better email campaigns, better blog and education articles, just better all round.

It's all about impressing socks off

Impress your potential customer's socks off with each and every possible touch point you have with them:

- When they come to your website
- When they look up True Local
- When they read blog articles from your industry association
- When they receive their product/service
- When they leave reviews because you were awesome!

Ultimately, that's what Google's going to measure you on and he's getting better and better and better at it.

That's the secret sauce

You just need to be better than your competitors and Google will follow. That old quote:

“Build it and they will come”

Is so true of Google. That's our mandate: pretend Google is your ideal customer!

Let's build the digital assets that he would like to see.

Google wants to understand

Who's the best business, who's got the most trustworthy information that the target audience is searching for? Who continually shows up and adds value to their customers, the public at large, their industry, their niche?

So that's what we are going to build

Digital assets that add lots of value to your target audience, that impresses their socks off every time. That's what Google's going to measure you on and he's getting better and better and better at it.

You can't control Google, so don't even try

Trying to control Google is a complete waste of time, it's time to focus on what you can control. We want to do the right things, be found in the right spots and provide the right information. That will ultimately impress the right people and Google will follow suit over time.

OBJECTIVE 1: A SUPER IMPRESSIVE WEBSITE

People do judge a book by its cover

As we've already said, your website today (in our book) is arguably your businesses most important asset. It's the face of your business to the world. It's how everybody judges you, it's their first impression. Whether it be a potential customer, a potential employee or even a supplier, they will all judge whether you are credit worthy based on your website.

It drives business growth

Your website is the central plank in all your marketing and sales. Done well, it fuels the growth of your business, done poorly, will ultimately lead your business to failure. It's so important in this day and age that you invest heavily in your website to ensure you have a great website.

You don't want just a good website

This is all about how do we have a website that is significantly better than our competitors and how we continually grow and improve that website. That's the ultimate goal. When you have that great website, your standings with Google will follow suit. Google will know that you're investing in it regularly. Google knows that you're updating it. Google knows that you're sharing cool information. Google knows that you're doing some videos and eBooks and whatever else it may be. Google loves that and rewards that. We need to do more and more of it and better quality of it than what our competitors are doing.

Google will reward you accordingly

By doing this, Google will bring you more and more customers. People that will come knocking on your door and say:

“Shut up and take my money!”

1.1 TECHNICALLY SOUND WEBSITE

You need to have a technically sound/strong/effective website. You could have the best designed website in the world, but if it's not technically sound, it's never going to work well both for your target audience or for Google. Having a technically sound website is all about how we do the traditional SEO technical work, AKA "Onsite SEO".

- **Google's got to be able to crawl it:** and find all the information on the site. That includes all the sitemaps and robot files, title tags and meta descriptions etc.
- **It's got to load quickly:** If it loads slow, Google is going to penalise you just as your target audience will.
- **Content needs to be optimised:** We need to have good headings and descriptions for all the main content that you want your target audience and Google to find.
- **Navigate easily:** We need to be able to intuitively find our way around the site and link through to all relevant information as you mention things throughout.
- **Optimised for mobile:** With more than 50% of traffic now on mobile devices, you need to have a well optimised site for all types of devices (and once again Google rewards you for all this).

You see how all this is logical right?

There are no smoke and mirrors in this game (contrary to what a lot of SEO agencies try to suggest). If it takes 10 seconds for a page to load, your target audience is going to leave. It's got to be developed for all types of devices – if I come to your website and it looks crap on a mobile, I'm not going to think very highly of your business, neither is Google. When you think of the logic of this, it all makes sense - you build it for your target audience and Google's following suit. Now, with so much web traffic being mobile, Google's gone with a mobile first policy – they're actually going to rank your pages based on its mobile design and layout first and then desktop.

Technical requirements are very important

Technical requirements of a great website are really important and unfortunately they do cost some money. So you need to invest in building a technically sound website that's got the right headings and the right titles and so on.

1.2 BUILD YOUR WEBSITE FOR YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

This is not about building it for Google. It's about building it for your target audience and then overlaying it with some of the technical requirements that Google has. Ultimately, those technical requirements are shrinking in importance as Google gets better and better at what they do. Then we want to optimise all the new content on the site so it's got the right headings, the right description, the right layout. If it's a visual product it's showing that the images have got good titles. All those sort of things are still important.

So how do you build a great website for your target audience?

The not-so-secret sauce to building a great website, thankfully, isn't rocket science. Once again it's all common sense, and follows our own logic of what we look for in how we chose a company to work with.

- They need to be impressed with what they see
- They need to emotionally connect with your value proposition and core messaging
- It's got to answer their questions
- It needs to address their concerns and fears
- They need to see 'your story'
- They need to completely trust in your ability to fulfill their needs
- It must be simple, clear and easy to understand your products or services
- It needs lots of detail – some people want lots of detail, some people don't
- They need to have a really good user journey and user experience

It adds value to me!

Ultimately this is all about how you continually add value to your potential customers. So let's give them some great information that continually impresses them through their time on your website. What does a great user journey and experience look like?



Take me on a journey

Like a good book, your website needs to take people on a great journey. On the homepage you're clearly spelling out your core messaging and value proposition that you're providing your target audience. Then you want sections dedicated to each specific target audience and where you want to take them. Consider what other parts of your business are really important that we want to communicate really quickly to the target audience – these need to all be on the home page.

Your category pages provide great summaries of your offerings, you're telling stories so people remember your brand. There are a few different types of category pages - one is obviously products or service, so we need a good overview and summary of the products or services you offer. We want target audience specific pages that demonstrate the value, benefits and features that you bring to each audience. For example, if your target audience is small business, you want a whole section dedicated to small business and how you help them and what the outcomes you're going to generate for them etc. You must also have a great about us page. You need to be impressing me on every page.

I need to trust you

We need to be providing all the social proof that shows you are as good as you say you are. What are the trust markers that demonstrate we are the best in the game? What are the case studies, testimonials, logos, awards, media coverage and history of our business (and all those sort of things) which all add really great trust to my decision making criteria?

Tell your story

You need to tell the story of where you've come from, what your learnings have been, how your business has evolved, how has it expanded, how it's contracted, who are the core staff you've got? Tell their story too! That's equally important (including what's their favorite food? Funnily enough, favorite food is the most looked at part of an about us page).

Some people love detail

So delve into detail as much as you can. What's that next level of detail for each and every product and service? The more information you can give people, the better. It's no different from everything else you do in your life when you're looking for information, you start high level, then go to the next level, and then the next level and then the next level and then the microscopic level. So let's start with a summary section and then I want the ability to delve deeper, so how do I then click on the next bit of detail and then from that, the next bit of detail and then from that next bit of detail.

Everybody is different

We need to cater to everybody's needs when we're giving more and more information as we go through the mix. So ultimately for each product and service, we want to have a really good amount of quality, solid information around features and benefits. But some people want to get technical, right? So let's give them as much technical information as we can around those products and services and how each will benefit them.

People learn differently

We've all heard this, and its no different for websites. So we need to provide all key information in all different formats.

- Videos are mandatory
- Infographics are great
- Blog articles are standard, but very important

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...



Share your gift and educate your target audience, industry and the public at large. How are we continually adding really good value for free to our target audience? That comes down to your blogs, your free resources, your eBooks and your videos. These build an immense amount of trust in whether I should choose you versus your competitors. We want to make sure we have a great active blog and education section. And that's really what the next section is all about.



1.3 IT'S TIME TO BUILD AMAZING DIGITAL ASSETS

Wrapping all those things together is what builds our businesses great digital assets that produce financial returns today and well into the future. These assets are things that can continually add value to your business and to your target audience. This happens throughout the marketing and sales funnel, especially around awareness, interest and decision making process. You want some great digital assets that continually add value and build up the impression people have of your business and your services.

It comes down to great content, great eBooks, great free resources, great little tasters. What's the:

- **First free piece** of content that is going to make me go “Wow I need to check these guys out”;
- **Second digital asset** that is going to make me go “Hmm that's really good advice that I can implement into my life today”;
- **Third trojan horse:** What's the relatively cheap and quick way to add value to your target audience by allowing them to put a toe in the water, but also opens the door to lots more products or services down the track?
- **Fourth:** Shut up and take my money because you impressed my socks so much with the three things above.



OBJECTIVE 2:

AWESOME CONTENT

The second not-so-secret piece to outstanding organic search results is having great content that engages your target audience.

As we've established earlier, content is where you get the long term growth of organic search results and is all about how do we continually grow, build, write, video record and dictate really valuable content that our target audience finds useful and that they're looking for online.

There's a lot in all of that which we'll start breaking down into bite size chunks shortly.

Great content builds trust and attraction

Great content builds you into the authority and expert in your field (that you know you are on the inside). This great content in turn builds trust and makes people naturally like you. The more I like you and trust you, the more I'm going to choose to use your services over competitors. Now, it doesn't mean I'm going to buy from you today, I may not have a need for your services today, but I will most certainly some time in the future.

This is all about how we start and nurture a great long term, value adding relationship

Business is all about relationships. We need to start a relationship build with your potential customers. And that comes down to how are we adding value to them. By adding value to your potential customer (and expecting nothing in return in the first instance), they will like you more and they will trust you more.

How we add value...

In digital marketing (and marketing generally today) we add value by helping people. And we help them by educating them, by providing them information, resources, guides, how to's, etc.

WHAT VALUE DO YOU WANT TO ADD?

That really circles us right back around to your value proposition. We need to have crystal clarity on your target audience and the value proposition you defined, and then we can create great content that fulfills this value proposition to this target audience accordingly. The long term aim is how are we building the complete 'wikipedia' (for want of a better word) of your industry, your products or services and your business – both what you do and what you know.

Why your marketing strategy is so important

If you aren't clear on who your target audience is, and what value you are going to provide them, you can't be clear on what great content is for them. So you need to get this right to be able to create a great content strategy.

This builds a great asset

Great assets add money into your pocket every day, week, month and year. Content is this great asset that will continually drive leads and revenue for your business for years to come. And that's actually worth a lot of money. Your ability to continually generate new clients and repeat clients is ultimately the value of your business. And that all boils down to how good your content is.

Great content starts with great foundational pillars

Knowing your target audience and the value you want to add, this then allows us to produce what we call 'content pillars.' The whole point of content pillars is to define the framework and categories around how we add value, information, education, ideas to our target audience that's going to make them like us more and more. Here is one example:

- 1. Guide Me:** Given the uneducated nature of the market, we need to be producing great content that guides the beginner through the minefield of how to choose and what's best for me.
- 2. Techie:** There is a real opportunity for you to own your space, so we want to show our thought/industry leadership with our, and others, technology advances.
- 3. Let's Get Healthy:** This is all about how we help the general public get healthier, so let's share ideas, recipes and habits that are going to help them.
- 4. Inspire Me:** It's time to show case how important healthy food is to life and how we are contributing to a better world.

THEY ASK, YOU ANSWER

This is a cracking book that I suggest you read by Marcus Sheridan. We want to overlay some of what this awesome book covers, which literally is just that for every single question you get from anybody about your products or services, you should be writing it down. From customers, staff, stakeholders, friends and family – write it down. Then you should be making a blog article out of it or a video out of it or a screen share out of it or a webinar out of it or whatever it may be.

Every single question you get asked, you should write that down and answer it because if they're asking it, chances are somebody else's going to ask it, and chances are, somebody is going to type it into google, and google is going to show them your answer. Chances are half your customer base is going to ask it. So that illustrates the amazing power in the sort of content we want to create.

You're great at what you do

Let's not be shy now. You really are an expert at what you do. You've done it for a long time, you're good at it, you've learned the hard way. Now its time to share that expertise with the world. There'll be ideas in your head of what you do, how you do it, better ways of doing things that's contradictory to what your competitors do - these are all the things you should be sharing. How do you bring in what you learned from the last trade show in Las Vegas that you went to? How do you get ideas out of your whole team's head? Because once again they've got a plethora of knowledge that needs to go onto your website, which is worth its weight in gold. And ultimately they all form amazing assets and resources that can be shared throughout the business.

Great technical tools

There are some great technical tools you can use that give you an indication and guide to what people are actually typing into the search box that we want to get your content ranking for from your business. We need to make sure that there's some decent volumes coming through that we can write some good content about. This then drives the priorities of what content we're producing and when we're producing it.

Keyword research

You put in ten seed keywords and it spits out the 4,000 possible variations. Then you go through and start categorising them together and that starts giving you some good themes of the type of content that you should start producing. Next step, content design and plan. We need to then put that all together into a plan of attack so we know that who's doing what, when and how through the process.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE

The biggest challenge is to actually produce the content. Everybody has great intentions, and most will get the first piece or two under the belt, then it falls by the wayside. Customers get in the way, staff grab your time, etc. Making content production a priority and building the working habits is one of the biggest challenges.

Point of note: We strongly recommend content gets produced internally. We're not big fans and haven't seen it work all that well when content is purely outsourced. There's ways and means of doing it so that comes out of your head and you get help with the finessing. But ultimately the bones and the main points need to come from you, the business owner or the marketing manager or the people that eat, live and breathe the business.

Then it can be spiced up or made more attractive by external people to help make it sound better or smoother or nicer and bullet pointed and make it simpler to read, etc. But ultimately the crux of all good content, it's got to come from you. So it comes back to quality over quantity any day.

We want great content, not just content

You want to produce a good amount of great content, not just lots of average to good content. This is all about how we would use great, unique, interesting, informative, educational, bits of content. Habit, cadence, rhythm. The most important thing out of all life in general is how do you get in the right habits, the right cadence, the right rhythm of every day, of every week, of every month, of every quarter, every year we're doing the right things that are going to get us to where we want to go.

So how do we make sure that every week we're producing one piece of content that looks good, that reads well, that goes up on the website, that looks great on the website, on all devices that we then share and promote on, such as all our social channels and on our email campaigns to our leads or customers.

Everybody learns differently

We want our content in all the different formats as everybody learns differently. We want:

- Standard blog articles
- Videos for quick and easy digestion
- Images and infographics

It's leveraged!

We're not creating new bits of content for each, we're re-purposing it. The more we can use the same bit of content, the easier and quicker and more useful it becomes long term. So how do we do a video presentation that we can turn into a blog article, it gets shared out, that's one of 10 that we do together that we can all package up into an eBook. That eBook can then be packaged up into a master bible of instructions or encyclopedia or whatever it may be on something. Once again, it's continually used in all different formats for different benefits. Ultimately, we continue producing amazing assets for your business.

It's shared and promoted!

Once we've created it, we need to share and promote it (it's no good for it just to sit there and do nothing). So we need to share it on your social channels (both the businesses and yours personally) and we want to pay to boost it. We want to email it out to your database, and we want to put it on blog sites, industry sites and discussion forums.

Note: you must pay to boost your posts, no point in putting it up if your not prepared for the world to see it and put money behind it.

It's individual!

Share it with individuals. People love you thinking about them, so share specific bits of content that are relevant to people at different times in their journey with you. One article is just as relevant to a lead as it is to a networking colleague or a friend.



HINT

These should be used throughout the relationship you have with all different people.

OBJECTIVE 3:

BE SEEN MORE ONLINE

Web presence (aka back-linking)

Web presence, web branding, back-linking, citation building... It's got numerous names, but ultimately it's how we get your business found more and more throughout the Internet. However we want it on good quality websites, not crappy irrelevant ones. This is not about how we get on the Russian bakery website that links back to your website.

It's got to be real and it's got to be legitimate

And it's got to be relevant – a website where we would want our business to be found, or associated with. It's really important to stop paying a lot to “SEO companies” to just do back-links. That's just absolute garbage. It's crap. It doesn't make sense. You wouldn't want to do it. Some websites you just don't want your business associated with. So don't do it. This is all about how do we build you a really good web presence and web brand that grows and adds value to your business (and Google follows suit).

Step 1: Back-link Analysis

The first task is to get a good idea of what your current back-link profile is like. Is it good and healthy coming from positive sites or is there some links coming from spammy sites. We want to be crystal clear of your position today. We want to pull a list of all the domains that link through to your domain. We use Google Search Console to do this.

- **Great tools:** There are a couple of other tools you can use as well that do it. Either way we want to identify any really spammy, dodgy, poisonous back-links to your site and we want to disavow those through Google Search Console.
- **Do this regularly:** We now recommend doing this quarterly. There's more and more things popping up on the Internet. It's growing, and unfortunately there's just crap everywhere. There's good stuff everywhere too, but there's still such crap everywhere. We need to regularly remove the crap and then let's move on to getting stuck into how we build all the good web presence and back-links to your website.

It starts with strong foundations

What are the foundational websites you should be on? That's all the main business directories and citation sources. So True Local, Yelp, Yellow Pages etc. There's 20 to 40 that we want to get your business listed on because it's the right thing to be doing. You should be found on those sort of websites.

Maps, maps and more maps

Then there's all the Google My Business, Bing Maps, Apple Maps. So what are all the map engines that you need to be on, including obviously Google My Business being the prime one. But yes, Apple Maps is just as important, and Bing maps, and so on. There are also a lot of secondary search engines. So how do we make sure you're found on all of them?

Your industry

Next, it's time to get more specific about the industry you are in. What are all the industry associations, industry directories etc, that we can get you on? How do you get active within your industry?

- How do you help run some training seminars for your industry association?
- How do you get on the board of it?
- How do you put some workshops on?
- How do you share your content?

One thing, and this is all really good business practice, is to get active in your industry because you'll learn from them, you'll see what they're up to. It's really important for you to do that. Obviously we want to benefit accordingly with better and better organic search results.



It's time to do good!

Then there's your local community and sponsorships. How are you actively contributing to your community? What's the local football team that you're sponsoring and how do we make sure we get on their website with a link through to yours. How do we then obviously promote that on your social channels? How do you have a webpage saying you're sponsoring the local scout group or whatever it may be?

It's just great!

They're all really important things to be doing. It's great for your business, it's great for PR and Google loves it. And we want to see if you can win some awards. So once again, like with all the really important things we do in life, there's got to be some awards that we can win. Potential customers love seeing nothing better than awards you have one by your peers and the wider business community. And so does google, he will reward you like there is no tomorrow with outstanding organic search results. It's great for morale internally. It makes us look good. People trust it, it's great for the website, and it's really good for organic search purposes. So once again, these are really good business practices. Nothing dodgy about you. Just do the right things and Google rewards you.

It's time to get social!

In-line with content generated above, it's time to engage socially with your target audience. It's time to get them to be your biggest fans, your promotion army as they share your ideas, education and information with others because they love it so much.

OBJECTIVE 4: BE BETTER THAN YOUR COMPETITION

Final piece to the organic search puzzle: Competitor Analysis.

The ultimate performance in organic search is all about outperforming your competitors. You need to be seen as better, faster, quicker, smarter and stronger than your competitors. That's what Google is evaluating: are you more of an authoritative expert, relevant person, company, business than your competitors.

That's what we need to build

And to do that we need to spend some time analysing competitors. We need to analyse what they do, how they do it, when they do it, why they do it, and make sure that we're doing it better and smarter than they are. So similarly, as with everything above, we then want to do it for competitors.

- A better website that engages better
- Better content that impresses people more
- Better back-links

A better website

We need to analyse your competitors website. What can we learn from their user journey, their content, their social proof, etc. How have they structured their site, how much detail do they have on their products and services, how good a story are they telling?

Better content

We need to see what they're producing, why they're producing it, what can we learn from them, what can we do better than them? And let's do more of it.

Better back-links

What websites are they linking through to them? How do we get on them? What are the better ones we can get on and grow and do more?

It's a never-ending process...

...of how we get better and better and better and better by getting better and better and better than our competitors. While we won't spend a massive amount of time on competitors, we need to spend some time. But at the same time we just need to do our own things better and smarter and faster and quicker and simpler and more beautiful-er.

05

GOOGLE ADS

The Power of Google Ads.



Realising the power of Google Ads.

Google Ads has the ability to be a money-making machine for most businesses

Imagine a tap of flowing money that every day of every week of every month puts more money into your bank account.

Over 80% of campaigns don't perform well because they have the wrong optimisation and management process. This means that most Google Ads campaigns doesn't produce the return on spend and results that you want. It's time for that to change!

“We've spent \$2 million of our own money on our own Google Ads Campaigns.”

We've spent this on our own Google Ads campaigns. That's right, we've been running our own businesses for over 17 years. That's 5 businesses in different industries and a hell of a lot of Google Ads.

We know how to produce amazing results for your business

Whatever your business, industry or niche, nearly every business should be using Google Ads. Whether you are selling \$2 widgets or \$250,000 manufacturing equipment, your potential customers are searching for your products and services. Ultimately, it's become the default advertising mechanism for most industries, and if you're not on there, your competitors are!

The reasons behind the power of Google Ads and why you need to be running them for your business

- **Every single person is searching for information**

Whether they're a consumer looking for a new washing machine, a business looking for a bit of software to fulfil their manual processing needs, or even a tradesman looking for large earth moving equipment to complete a job, everybody now searches online.

Usually it's their first step to find a solution to their problem or challenge. Google is the default mechanism for answering people's questions and providing solutions to their problems, challenges or opportunities. Which is why nearly all businesses need to be using Google Ads.

- **Google has become the encyclopedia for all information**

When people search, they'll pick the top three to six search results as answers or solutions for what they're looking for (and attracted to). That's why the top three or four positions in a google search is so important to be in. It gives you a chance to grab people's attention before or alongside your competitors. It's most important that if you want to be found online, you're using this as a channel to market for your target audience to find you.

- **It's virtual real estate**

Similar to growing up playing Monopoly, my uncle taught me to buy as much property as you can. The search results are ultimately the same proposition. It's how you can acquire the most virtual real estate on that first page. That's why having those prime positions in the top three are so powerful in reaching your target audience and obviously in allowing you to communicate clear value to that person.

- **It's become the default advertising mechanism**

It's no longer newspapers or radio or television or anything like that – Google search has become the default advertising mechanism for all businesses. Ultimately, it is where you will need to be found because so many people are using it, and it is such an effective mechanism.

- **Your competitors are there**

When I search for something, I look at the first result and then the second result and then the third result to see which is going to suit my needs or which one grabs my interest. Your competitors are being found in those results. So, if you want to compete with them, you need to be found there.

- **Make no mistake, this is a competition**

The only way you can win online (and in Google Ads) is if you can compete with your competitors with your products and services (sounds obvious, but equally a major floor in most people's approach to Google Ads). You don't want to focus on ALL your products and services, you only want to focus on the products and services that you can compete on in that initial engagement with the customer. What products have good profitability? What do you do really well? What can you do better than your competitors? That's exactly what we want to go after.

- **When done wrong, you'll blow a lot of money**

If you don't build and manage a Google Ads campaign the right way, you will blow a lot of money. I think a lot of companies have experienced this over time. They've either tried to do it themselves or they used people that are crap and they haven't been able to make it work. It's costing them a lot of money and they haven't made back what they've spent let alone profit out of it.

- **When done right, it's a licence to print money**

When you build a really tight and smart campaign to start with, implement the right optimisation process, then grow and scale up based around the right metrics and return on spend, it's an amazing channel to market that drives a lot of revenue, a lot of profit, and hence is a license to print money.

- **An amazing marketing asset**

An asset is something that continually puts money in your pocket week on week, month on month, year on year, and that's exactly what Google Ads does when you do it well. It will continually bring the right target audience, will communicate the right messages to the right people so that they can convert them into leads and revenue for your business.

- **The goal is to build a variable cost model to acquire customers**

The goal is to build a Google Ads model that can generate a variable cost model to acquire customers. We want to get to the stage where I spend \$10 on Google Ads, I make \$100 in revenue. Therefore, I can spend \$100 and make \$1,000 in revenue. Therefore, I can spend \$1,000 and make \$10,000 in revenue, if that makes sense. It becomes a great way to build a variable cost model that you can scale up and down on a dime based on where your business is at. For example, if this month you're too busy, you don't need customers, you pull it back. Next month, you're not so busy and you want more customers, so you dial it up.

- **It's an amazing testing ground**

The beauty of Google Ads is you can have an ad live within an hour or two that tests the new messages, that tests a new product, that tests a new offering, comes through to a new landing page with new messaging. You can do that really quickly, so it allows you to test and trial all sorts of different things really quickly. Whether that be a new product, new messages, new targets, whatever it may be, it becomes an amazing testing ground for everything you do.

- **But you do need a great website**

No different from anything else you do in your business' world; mediocrity will be your undoing. If you bring people through to an average website that doesn't communicate good messaging, that doesn't add real value, that isn't better than your competitors, it's not going to work. This is all about bringing the right visitors, which Google Ads is all about, to the right website, which is what is needed to convert and engage those visitors into leads and revenue for your business.

Ultimately, it needs to be better than your competitors. It needs to communicate better messages. It needs to show them more information. It needs to help them more. It needs to show that you are better than your competitors.

- **You need a super strong marketing strategy**

You can't do Google Ads well without having a really good search strategy. You can't have a really good search strategy without having a really strong marketing strategy. That all comes down to getting crystal clear on your value proposition, your target audience and the journey you want to take them on.

Finally...

Google Ads is one of the best marketing assets your business can have. It can drive qualified leads to your business and drive sales, literally overnight.



Results you can expect.



35%

Growth in Leads

25%

Growth in Sales

30%

Growth in Website Visitors

“ I set Due North a target of growing my business by 25% within 6-12 months. They delivered in just 4! Their professionalism, communication and results have been excellent. It is extremely refreshing to find a company that takes the time to guide you through the process, understand your requirements and then deliver a solution in a timely fashion. I'd recommend them to anyone.

GUY WILSON | GENERAL MANAGER

smartpay

100%

Growth in Sales

120%

Growth in Enquiries

50%

Growth in Website Visitors

“ Our business has used Due North for over 2 years now for our digital marketing and CRM/sales support and it's been fantastic. Forget a large agency, get personalised service and clear plain English about how to improve your digital marketing and sales methodology.

**PETER THOMAS | HEAD OF DIRECT SALES,
MARKETING & CUSTOMER SUCCESS**

SEARCH STRATEGY

The first and foremost starting point to any success in Google Ads is having the right strategy in place.

This is to know exactly why we're going to do what we're going to do and when we're going to do it to ensure the best chances of success.

1. Objectives and targets

We need to be really crystal clear on why are we going to do this. What are our objectives in doing this and what are the targets we're going to use to measure if we're on track or not? Once again, objectives can be warm and fuzzy. Targets however, are going to use the SMART system, being specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely.

We want to be crystal clear. We want to generate 10 new clients a month. We want to generate \$4 million in revenue, whatever that may be.

“ We need to get crystal clear no what the objectives and targets are to succeed.”

2. Financial model and metrics

Once we're crystal clear on what those targets and objectives are, how we can we actually start to build a financial model and the right metrics you need to achieve that financial model. An example is that we want to generate \$100,000 as our target, so therefore we start working backwards. \$100,000 in revenue might mean we need 200 new clients. If we need 200 new clients that means we need 1,000 new leads coming through the door (based on a lead to client conversion rate of 20%). If our current website is converting at 4%, that means we need to get 20,000 new visitors through to the website. You get my gist. These become our activity targets or working targets, for want of a better word.

Then we can start putting metrics to that. So if the new client is worth \$1,000 to us, therefore, if we're converting one in five, we are able to spend \$200 in that cost per acquisition marketing costs to acquire that customer.



If that's one in four, that means we're happy to spend \$5 per visitor to get the number of visitors we need to get the leads we need to get the sales we need. Therefore, financial model and metrics are really important.

3. Target audience(s)

Coming back to that strategy proposition, it's imperative to be crystal clear on which target audiences we are going after. Once again, we don't want to be going after every single person under the sun, but we want to be very clear on who we're going after. For example, 24 to 28 year olds who are this way inclined, who are looking for this solution, who have these pain points. You can't run a great search campaign, a Google Ads campaign, without having that clarity around target audience.

4. Value proposition

This is, in our book, is the most important component of business and marketing. You need a really strong and attractive value proposition and Google Ads campaigns need to communicate that throughout. They need to communicate why I'm going to buy from you versus your competitors:

- Your ad copy needs to have it.
- Your landing pages need to communicate it.
- Your website needs to communicate it.
- Your thank you email on your eComm site needs to communicate it.
- When that phone rings, you need to be oozing your value proposition.

Once we are clear on target audience and value proposition, we can start to shape what a great customer journey will look like.

5. Customer journey for each target audience

We need to build out and define what sort of journey we want to take these people on by using Google Ads:

- What core messaging in the ads is going to grab their attention and make them click on your ad (is your ad more attractive than your competitors)?
- Your website needs super engaging landing pages that convert well
- You need a good, impressive website overall

Attractive Ad Copy

How are you going to catch their attention with great ads? What's the attractive messaging that's going to create some emotion in them? What's going to grab their attention so they actually click on the ad? What's that special something that's going to impress them right from that first ad they see at the top of the page?

Engaging Landing Page

The first page they come through to your website needs to impress and engage them. It needs to communicate exactly why they should choose you. It needs to communicate the value they're going to get from working with you. It needs to give them a bit of a taste for how you work. It needs to show that you're different from your competitors. It needs to be backed up with strong social proof. What are the quotes and testimonials and awards we've won and industry logos, etc. If you can demonstrate that, it just really adds that personality to their experience with you.

Impressive Website Overall

Then you want to look at current website overall. Do you have current pages on the site that can do what we need them to do? Do you need to tweak the current pages a little bit? Where do you need to create new pages? And what are those new pages that you need to create, depending on what sort of journey you need to take people on? Obviously the preference is to use current pages if you can, but sometimes there will be topics and themes and ideas and different messaging that we need to create new pages for.

Sales and Value Propositions

Then throughout that process, what are the strong calls to action on those pages that's going to get them to buy or make contact or reach out or leave their email address? Once again, we need an outcome from this because you're paying good money to a company like us and Mr. Google. How do we get those outcomes to your business and ultimately the rest of the website? Most people won't convert on that first page. Very few will. But then we need the rest of the website to do its job. This comes back to the fact that you need a really good website to make Google Ads work really well for you. That's what we need to build.



6. Action

You need to get all of these things built and a lot of them take time. What do you need to do to the rest of the website to get it up to scratch? What are the landing pages you need to build? Because they're the things that will really eat up time for what we're doing. We need to obviously get them into motion ASAP.

7. Focus

You don't want to be all things to all people and you generally don't want to be running Google Ads on all your products and services. You need to get smart and choose the ones that:

- a) You can compete on. Either you have a really good strong offering in the market that will win out over competitors a lot of the time. It needs to be a good margin. Once again, there's no point in doing something that you're going to make no money on. You're wasting time.
- b) What is going to give us good margin. What's going to have a long, healthy lifetime value as a client.
- c) What are the products or services that we can use to start a long lasting relationship that means they're going to come back and purchase a second, third, fourth, and fifth time from us?
- d) What is the 'Trojan horse' product that while we may not make enough money from day one, it starts the relationship we're going to build with a customer so that down the track we're going to make more than enough money.

8. Keyword Research

The final part of a great search strategy is making sure you do the right keyword research. So taking everything you've done thus far in the search strategy phase, we then put that into a couple of tools by Google and a few other third parties. We put in the 10, 20, 30 what we call seed keywords. The seed keywords are just off the top of our head what we think people are going to search and then Google and these other tools spit out possible 5,000 other options based on their data.

Then we need to sort and sift through that to group them and clump them and get rid of the things we don't like. Then that spits out a really big spreadsheet that we need to go through and prioritise. Once again, making sure that we actually implement the right search strategy, we need to prioritise the keywords that we want to go after to ensure that we're following through on that strategy so that we know we're getting biggest bang for our buck from day one.

5.2:

BUILD & GET LIVE

Now is when the rubber hits the road, so to speak, and we need to build and get the campaign ready to go live. Then obviously flick the switch.

1. Structure

We want to develop an effective structure so that we can manage the campaign well moving forward, that makes sense, provides foundations of good quality score and tightly groups/themes relevant keywords together.

How do we want to structure all the keywords so that they make sense, but allow us to easily manage the campaigns? The main priority is to how we can shift budget from one campaign that's converting better to another. So we break them down. Generally from the keyword research, we break it down into groups, that could line up with a product structure. It could be a service structure. It could be description structure. There's all different ways of doing it, but we want to make sure we've got the right structure that's going to allow us to grow and scale as required.

Then under each campaign we have the Ad Groups. What are the ad groups that we need? You can liken this to a pyramid. What's the foundational baseline, which is the Ad Groups, which lead up to the next level, which is the campaigns, which add up to the whole account itself. But once again, what's the ad groups structure that we need? That's really all around keeping things tightly themed and together. So we don't want in one ad group all different topics because an ad group, we write the ad specifically for that ad group. We only want relevant keywords in that ad group that are relevant to that ad group if that makes sense. You don't want pen in a pipe ad group for example. You want pins, pen leads, pen buddies, whatever that may be.

2. Ads

We need to write great, engaging ads that take into account your target audience, your value proposition, your calls to action and your core messaging. It's not as easy as it seems. You've got very limited characters, but we need to obviously get all the messages in there, write them, review them, approve them. That also includes adding all the links, call outs, extensions, et cetera, that really take up more and more real estate.



We want different variations

Once again, this is all about testing and trialling what's going to work and what's not going to work. You might try three different variations depending on the focused keywords, target audience and core messaging.

3. Landing Pages

We've touched on landing pages above. We obviously need to get them built and live and then reviewed and over time we can do split tests to work out what landing pages are going to convert better for us, what landing pages aren't cutting the mustard.

4. Tracking and Reporting

One of the most important steps in this whole process is to ensure that we can track and report on everything that we need to. This requires looking at three levels of tracking reporting. One is Google Ads itself, so that provides a heap of data information, but not quite everything we need. The second thing is Google Analytics. Once we get people to a website, we need to have a look at exactly what they're doing, where they're going, what pages are working, which ones aren't. So in terms of good site engagement and conversions, we need Google Analytics site data.

Thirdly, the most important one by far is outcomes to the business. What are all the leads and sales that we're getting through all this activity? We need to make sure that tracking reporting is all set up. Note, one of the most important ones is setting up inbound phone tracking or dynamic inbound phone tracking. We now can see by keyword what is generating inbound phone inquiries to your business and what isn't.

5. Auxiliary Tasks

There's a heap of auxiliary tasks to get through just to get the campaign live. There's billings. There's getting the campaign uploaded. There's linking Google Ads in Google Analytics. There's all those sort of things that just take a bit of time to get live and get ready and off and running.



5.3:

THE FIRST 6 WEEKS

It's important to get everything pumping as quickly as we can and as efficiently as we can so it drives revenue ASAP.

1. Be All Over It!

It's so important to be all over the campaigns like a really bad rash and making sure that we're adjusting course quickly rather than waiting a month to see what's working and what's not working. This is all about being all over everything to ensure that we're flying through the improvement process to get better and better and better and better, quicker and quicker and quicker.

“*Ultimately this is all about data.*”

This is all about how we capture more and more data to see what's working and what's not working. To do that, the first instance is all about getting a good volume of visitors through the campaign. A lot of the first six weeks is focusing on how do we get more and more visitors through, so we can see what's working and what's not working. But also keeping a very close eye on the outcomes (leads and revenue) and are we on track to generating the outcomes we want. And then what do we need to do to adjust course accordingly.

2. Daily Checks

First thing we do, especially for the first two to four weeks, is implement daily checks on the campaign so that we know, yes, we're on track, or no, we're not.

Day one, we're live. How many visitors did we get? What did it cost? Is it working? Is it not? What do we need to do to adjust course really quickly. We might need to increase bids ASAP to make sure we get more and more people through. We might say we've gone too hard with bids so we actually need to cut them back. Are we getting enough visitors through?

3. Daily Optimisations

The daily optimisation process is really important:

- Increasing or decreasing bids
- Checking on budget. Are we spending too much or too little?
- Are we getting enough visitors through?
- What is the quality of visitor coming through?

Once we're starting to get more and more visitors through, then we start to look at what's the quality of that visitor. Once again, we'll do this every couple of days for the first couple of weeks and then get in a more formal weekly routine over time.

4. Weekly SQA

Weekly 'Search Query Analysis' is super important and analysing every week the search query terms that people are typing into Google for your ad to show. This gives a very good insight in to the intent of the visitor that is clicking on your ad.

Negatives

We want to go through that SQA on a weekly basis. Depending on the size of the campaign, we might do it more regularly for larger campaigns. But definitely weekly as a minimum to see what are the negative things that are in that search query that we don't want your ad to show for. If we're selling pens for example and somebody types in "jobs with pen companies", we obviously don't want your ad to display. We'll negate out jobs, so anytime any search relates to jobs and pens together, your ad won't show.

Intent

All right. Second thing we'll look at is the right intent. Going through the search query tells you a lot about the quality of what people are searching for and if they're the right sort of person for us. We always check to see that most of the terms have that right intent. That they are the sort of customer we would like to come through. Equally as important is we get to see what we've missed if anything. While the strategy piece is quite in-depth, there's times when you will miss things. It's just unfortunately human nature. Search query analysis allows us how to delve into some areas and ideas that we might have overlooked or missed or not seen as important. So it gives us some really good ideas on how we can grow and improve things.





5. Weekly Optimisations

Product/Service focus

Are we hitting the mark? Are the products and services we want to focus on getting traction or are some of the lower skewed keywords taking up too much budget. We want to keep a really close eye on that. The answer will be either yes, we are hitting the mark in terms of the keywords we want to perform, (which is great and lets continue) or no we aren't hitting the mark, so let's adjust course.

Bid management

For the first few weeks we recommend doing daily bid management. As we get closer and closer to our ideal position, we'll slow this down and do bid management a few times per week. Bid management is all about maximising the quantity and quality of visitors for our ad spend. We don't want to be paying too much for each visitor and blowing cash, equally we don't want to be bidding too little and getting poor volume and quality of traffic. It's quite a balancing act!

We increase bids and decrease bids accordingly to make sure we're getting a good volume of visitors. There's a fine line here - we don't want to pay too much and be higher up in position one, but we don't want to be down below position four either. So the question is how do we make sure that we're not paying too much but not paying too little? Am I getting a good volume of visitors through that's a good quality of visitor? More about that later.

Budget

How do we make sure that we're spending the budget as best we can? The answer to this will come in the next topic, which is conversion optimisation, but how do we make sure that the budget's being spent well? That it's covering the parts of service that we want to focus on, that we're getting the learnings we need to so we're getting to see what's working and what not working. Over time we want to start shifting budget to a better converting campaigns. The ones that are converting better need to get more budget versus the ones that aren't converting as well.

6. Weekly Conversions & Site Engagement

This is really a pivotal component of how we get better and better results.

Site engagement analysis

From the keywords and the visitors are coming through, we can see how well they are actually engaging with your site. We tell that through couple of core metrics we use:

- **Bounce rate.** Do we have a high bounce rate or a low bounce rate? Bounce rate really refers to if somebody comes to your website, comes to the landing page but then leaves straight away. They don't do anything, they don't engage, they don't convert. Obviously lower bounce rate is better for us, it just means people are engaging better with this site. The lower bounce rate, the better.
- **Time on sites.** Which keywords are have people spending more time on your site and which ones are spending less time.
- **Pages per session.** Which keywords are people looking at ten pages on your site versus which keywords they're looking at one or two.

These are all very closely interrelated, which makes it a lot easier. You need to delve through the data to see these keywords are producing really good engaging visitors versus these keywords aren't. Then we need to either fix the ones that aren't converting or aren't engaging well, or get rid of them. Similarly you want to assign more budget and get more visitors from ones that are engaging well.

Conversions

We want to analyse what parts of the campaign are converting well and which ones aren't. This allows us to add more budget and focus to the parts that are converting well, to produce better results. And it identifies those parts that are converting poorly and what we need to do to improve.

7. Major Roadblocks and Opportunities

As with all other parts of your life and business, things just pop up. Both good and bad, that we want to address these ASAP. It doesn't do anybody any good waiting a month to see what happens, we want to know straight away.

Sometimes there are bad things and roadblocks. What are they? How do we overcome them? How do we improve them? This part of the campaign has got terrible bounce rate and no conversions coming through. How do we fix that? What are the ads we need to change? What's the landing page doing? How do we build a new landing page to test and trial things?

Similarly you get some great opportunities. How do we maximise those ASAP versus having to wait? This product campaign is converting like there's no tomorrow, so you're getting more and more leads or revenue. Let's go hard with it. Let's make hay while the sun shines and grab those opportunities.

5.4:

OPTIMISATION

The Process to the goose that lays the golden egg!

START

The 9 Optimisation Tasks You Need to Start This Journey

1

Give me the info!!!
The Right Tracking
& Reporting

2

Make it profitable
with Metrics

3

More of the right
visitors with less
budget



5

More of the right
visitors and less of
the crap!

4

Maximise Return
by maximising
revenue and leads!



6

Impress my socks
off with better site
engagement

7

More Leads, More
revenue, More,
More, More

FINISH



9

Get smarter!

8

Integrate Your
Software & Systems

OPTIMISATION TASK 1 TRACKING & REPORTING

Get me the info!

You can't do anything till you get the right tracking and reporting in place.

Tracking, reporting, analysis, recommendations and analytics are essential ingredients required to really grow all of your marketing channels, especially for small business owners. Google Ads for a lot of businesses is a major cost, so we actually need to get this right as soon as we can so that we can clearly identify what outcomes we are getting.

“*The beauty of Google Ads is that you can manage and grow your campaigns based on a variable cost model to your business so that it guarantees the returns you want.*”

Outcomes: it's all about the \$\$\$

Your outcomes are your revenue. The factors you want to take into consideration are:

- Your sales/revenue that you generate from your website / digital assets
- Leads/enquiries and online sales that come into your business
- Strategies to push visitors into your store for retail
- Your sales process to convert phone leads / walk-ins
- Strategies to build your database (e.g. enquiries, sales, email sign ups)

TIP: Your database is a really valuable long-term asset to your business, so while we want to be tracking and measuring how we're building that, we also want to be maximising the database through lead nurture and ongoing sales.

Tracking required & integrated with Google Analytics

- E-commerce tracking
- Inbound phone tracking
- Online forms completed

Integrate systems (more on this later)

- Integrate Google Ads with your website to pass keyword data through
- Website integrating with your CRM/POS
- Google Analytics integrated to analyse marketing data and leads

Now it's time to report!

- Weekly high-level reports that show visitor numbers by source, online enquiries, inbound phone enquiries, revenue etc.
- Detailed monthly reports that go into the detail of what's working and what's not working



Hot Tip!

For a service based business or a business to business based business, inbound phone tracking is a must. It basically tells us that we can now track every single inbound phone enquiry and where it came from, so from a digital perspective we can now say that this keyword generated this many phone calls, or this keyword generated no phone calls. We can really get granular on what's working and what's not working for your business.



OPTIMISATION TASK 2

PROFITABILITY

Make it profitable with the right metrics!

Metrics helps put the numbers behind the campaigns. It allows you to identify the financial return you need, and how you are going to manage these campaigns financially. You want to make sure that it is a profitable campaign each and every time and set the margins that we need to do this.

Here is a sample for you, if your business stats are:

- Life time value/revenue of a client: \$1,000
- Cost per acquisition: 20% (500% return, I spend \$20 on marketing and I make \$100) = \$200
- Conversion rate of leads to sales: 25%

Then your model looks like this:

- Cost per lead: \$50 (25% of \$200)
- Cost per visitor metric: \$5 (website converting at approx. 10%*\$50)

“ You’ve created the rules to the game!

All of a sudden you’ve created the rules to the game effectively. To recap:

- This is how much we’re prepared to pay to get a new customer
- This is how much we’re prepared to pay to get a new lead
- This is how much we’re prepared to pay to get a visitor to site

...because they will then convert into sales/revenue at the financial requirements we need them to.

How to get more leads/sales?

Working with \$50 cost per lead: any part of the campaign that’s converting at more than \$50 we need to start cutting back the costs or improve the conversion rates. Similarly, if it’s converting at \$20 per lead, we want more of them. Man, we’ll take as many as we can, so let’s maximise that component of the budget by putting it in its own campaign so that once again we can then manage the budget to that. This theory should also be applied to cost per visitor by increasing bids and decreasing bids.



Outcome:

Manage Google Ads by outcomes to your business so we can scale!

OPTIMISATION TASK 3

RIGHT VISITORS, LESS BUDGET

Maximise bang for your buck with more of the right visitors & less budget

Bid management is all about controlling the cost you pay per visitor to come through to your site. We want to maximise the correlation to volume of visitors, with what we pay for them and the outcomes they produce.

The first, quickest and easiest strategy is simply bid management (or sometimes referred to as bid optimisation) to raise or lower bids on keywords to get the most out of your budget. It is by far the most underused process to drive revenue growth quickly. It's all about maximising your budget with smarter bidding on your keywords.

Bid management strategy

There needs to be some reasoning behind what position you're aiming for and why. As a general rule:

- Your brand campaigns, we're going to aim for position 1.5
- Keywords and campaigns that you've got a strong competitive advantage on, we want to aim for position 2 to 2.5

“ *Bid management is all about aiming for a better position in comparison to your competitors.* ”

- General keywords we're going to aim for position 2.7 - 3

Bid management frequency

- Should be done daily in the short term (2-6 weeks until the campaign settles down)
- Minimum of weekly longer term



Outcome:

Highest volume of high intent/highest converting visitors for the cheapest cost.



OPTIMISATION TASK 4 MAXIMISE RETURN ON SPEND

Maximise return by maximising revenue and leads!

The second task is better budget management to maximise your return on investment. It's really saying you know what parts of your campaign is converting well.

“ Give more money to the parts of your campaign that are converting well, & let's take money away from those that aren't!

Restructure your campaigns

To manage your budgets, this can only be done at a campaign level. So, you need to create new campaigns of all the keywords and ad groups that are converting well so that they are more split out. This will create more campaigns to manage, but it also means that you want to pull out the high converting components of a campaign and put them into its own campaign so that you can manage the budget for that.

Budget strategy

Very Simply:

- More money to better converting parts of the campaign that are converting at a cheaper cost per lead or sales
- Less money to those expensive keywords that aren't converting as well

Budget optimisation frequency: Weekly

We want to shift money on a weekly basis from those that aren't converting as well as we would like to those that are converting better and a better cost per conversion.



Outcome:

Rapidly increase conversions by giving more budget to components that are converting better.



OPTIMISATION TASK 5

THE RIGHT VISITORS

More of the right visitors & less of the crap!

Search Query Analysis and Negatives: analysing what people type into Google for your ad to display gives us really good insight into:

- **Dud visitors** – visits you are paying for that aren't actually searching for your products and services or have a low intent to purchase (so let's stop your ad from showing)
- **Ideas** – gives us new keywords and ideas on how we can grow the campaign

Search Query Analysis (SQA) process

- Pull the Search Query report for the last 90 or 120, 150 days of the actual search queries that people have typed into Google for your ad to display
- Sort them from most visitors to least visitors
- You want to run your eyes down them to see what people are actually typing into the search box
- Highlight those keywords that aren't relevant to your business
- Add these as negative terms to stop your ad from showing and thus stop wasting money
- Highlight new keywords and get them added to the campaign

“ *Search query analysis is a really good eye opener for how you grow and identify opportunities in your business.* ”

Frequency

- For new campaigns you want to do this weekly for the 1st month or two
- For old campaigns this can be done monthly

With great power, comes great responsibility

Longer term, this process can highlight some great opportunities for you in how you can grow your business. For example, a client in the education sector created a new course based on high search volumes for similar courses to their existing course. This will do really well knowing that there is a demand for it.



Outcome:

Get more quality leads and sales at reduced costs.

OPTIMISATION TASK 6

SITE ENGAGEMENT

Impress my socks off with better site engagement.

Site engagement optimisation involves determining which keywords are generating a good visitor that engages with my website versus a bad visitor. By good visitor, we mean:

- They're spending more time on our site
- They've got a low bounce rate
- They're looking at more pages

It is really valuable to see which keywords or parts of the campaign are performing well for us and that our target audience likes us, versus other parts of the campaign that isn't good for us and the target audience clearly doesn't like.

“ We want to get more visitors from keywords that have good site engagement. This is where landing page optimisation and the website overall become really important.

Site Engagement Optimisation process

From Google Analytics pull Google Ads data for the past 90 days that includes:

- Google Ads Campaign, ad group and keyword
- Visitor volumes
- Site Engaging info: bounce rate, time on site, avg. pages/session
- Conversions
- Sort data by number of visitors
- Identify which ones have high bounce rate and low time on site

Then we analyse the data by campaign, then ad group, then keywords:

- Which ones have high bounce rate, low time on site etc
- Ad copy and keyword – is it attracting the right type of visitor
- Landing page – is it engaging and relevant to the visitor that has come from that keyword
- How do we improve each component



STOP!

When all else fails and you can't fix it, pause it and spend the money on better performing parts of the campaign.

Frequency:

- For new campaigns you want to do this weekly for the first month or two until it settles down
- For old campaigns this can be done monthly



Outcome:

More high intent visitors that engage well with your site, thus, increased conversion rates.



OPTIMISATION TASK 7

MORE LEADS, MORE REVENUE

More, More, More!

Conversion optimisation is a monthly process of analysing all the data by keyword, by ad group, and by campaign. We start with:

- What's converting well and below our cost per conversion target
- What's converting not so well above our cost per conversion target
- Assigning more budget to those that are converting well
- Reduce budget for those that aren't converting
- A plan for how to fix and improve everything above

Procedure for Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO)

Our first protocol is to pull the reports from Google Analytics for the last 180 days to show site engagement data and conversion data by campaign, keyword and ad group. We want to be looking at:

- Which keywords are converting well with good cost per conversion and conversion rate
- Keywords we should be giving more budget to
- Which keywords should be further explored

Frequency

Monthly is fine!

“ *Don't forget! Bid & budget management is a fundamental part of CRO, so make sure you're still doing it!* ”



Outcome:

More leads/revenue at a cheaper cost per lead/revenue.



OPTIMISATION TASK 8 INTEGRATION

It's all about integrating your Software and Systems

Technology today is what allows us to get a complete picture of a businesses' revenue generation capabilities. It allows us to integrate all of our systems and with the right tracking in place, produce reports that give us the information needed to make decisions to grow the business.

“ *You can now know exactly how much revenue each individual keyword generates for your business.* ”

Now that you can integrate Google Ads with Google Analytics and with inbound phone tracking, with your website and with your CRM. You can track each keyword so that it gets inserted directly into your database. This allows you to know that Jim Bob generated \$2,500 in revenue and he came to this sale from this exact keyword in Google Ads.

Determining life time value is really important

One of the main goals of a business is to know the lifetime value of a customer so that you can increase it over time. For example, the average client's worth today is \$2,000, but in six months we want it to be \$2,500, and in a year we want it to be \$3000. This is how you grow the revenue of your business.



Outcome:

Complete picture of exactly what parts of your marketing are generating what revenue.



OPTIMISATION TASK 9 TIME TO GET SMARTER

Okay, so not really an optimisation task, but your strategy is certainly a vital concept. And as much as you might dislike the way in which the word strategy is bandied about (overused and overrated in our opinion), what it stands for is spot on. Strategy is the plan that details where you're at today, where you want to be in 6-12 months, and the best path to get you there in the cheapest, quickest, easiest route, without skimping on quality. Once we've got some great runs on the board and the right management in place, then we can turn our attention to how we actually grow this longer term with the right strategy.

Strategy is all about: Who Are We Selling What To.

This is a really important proposition to get right because that then allows us to evolve your Google Ads campaign to be strategic, to be the right focus for you, the right messages, the right journey. Getting crystal clear on your target audience and who they are (there will almost always be 3-6 segments) and then how do we want to use Google Ads to make sure that we're capturing that right target audience.

Who:	What:
Clearly defined target audience groups (the more and more specific the better).	What value are you providing to them, what are they 'hiring' you to do.

Once we've defined the target audience, we need to determine what all the possible search term combinations are that users are searching for in Google and what information they're looking for. That requires in depth keyword research to identify every possible topic that your target audience is searching for.

Keyword research from your target audiences perspective

A quick note about keyword research. There's quick, shit, crappy keyword research, which 90% of people do. You could also spend a couple of hours going through it in a bit more depth, but ultimately within 6-12 months, you will be wanting to do a thorough in-depth keyword research analysis that will take anywhere between 10-20 hours. This requires drilling down on every single topic possible that your target audience could be searching for, and it gives us the search volume, which is basically an indication as to how many people are actually searching for these topics.

“ *In-depth keyword research analysis will take anywhere between 10-20 hours.* ”

Highest intent! Most profitable keywords first

We need to format the keywords into topics and themes, and then we want to prioritise based on the high priority, high intent people that are going to convert better, and that we have a strong competitive advantage on, versus the low priority longer term that will be nice to have. Focusing on your competitive advantage and the core USPs, we create keyword sets that will give us your biggest bang for our buck.

Grab my attention!

What's going to help you stand out and grab the attention of your target audience? Once we've piqued their interest enough to click on the ad, we then need to ensure that the landing page and website messaging is just as powerful, that we have three or four things that we can communicate that will convince our target audience that we are their perfect match?



Outcome:

Now you're on the path to generating more money from Google Ads that you can ever dream of!



5.5:

LONG-TERM SCALE

The beauty of Google Ads is that it becomes a channel that you can scale both up and down quickly and easily.

1. Scalability

The beauty of Google Ads is that it is very scalable, so you can go up and down to your heart's content once you've built it as a cost per lead and cost per sale model. You can say this month we're too busy, so let's scale it back. This month we're too quiet, so let's increase it. Ultimately, you want to continue to grow and add more money to it. You want to add more money to it because you're making more money. Once again, it's spend \$10 to make \$100, let's spend \$100 to make \$1,000. Let's spend \$1,000 to make \$10,000 and so on as you grow.

2. Lifetime value

Lifetime value is the most important metric in your business. It tells us how much revenue you make per customer on average over their complete life with you. We want to then start managing Google Ads campaign based around that lifetime value. It's not so much about what's that first sale you make with them. The first sale might be \$100 and you might spend \$10 to acquire that \$100, but ultimately if you're going to make \$10,000 out of that customer over their life, you're going to be prepared to spend a lot more than \$10. You'd be happy to spend \$1,000 to make \$10,000. We need to factor in what that long-term value is so that once again we can make sure we make the most of this as a channel to market.

3. Cost per acquisition

Cost per acquisition, or cost per revenue is one of the core metrics for long-term scale. We want to get crystal clear on what we're prepared to pay as a cost per sale amount, which comes from our long-term lifetime value. A rough rule of thumb depending on the sort of business you've got and the margins you make etc., is somewhere between 5-20%. Once again, some are a little lower and some are a bit higher. If you've got a low margin business that's super competitive, that is commodity based, you're obviously going to have a lot lower margin, so you're going to be able to spend less on that acquisition.



Versus a business that has a really high margin that's got lower competition that we can spend a lot more money to acquire customers. Once again, software is a good example of that because software companies are generally prepared to spend a lot more to acquire a customer because they've got a lot lower servicing base costs to do that. They could be closer to 20% or 30%, but basically somewhere between that five and 20% is a good starting point. Ultimately, spend between \$5 and \$20 to make \$100 in revenue.

“ *Ultimately, spend between \$5 and \$20 to make \$100 in revenue.* ”

4. Cost per lead

We can then start working that backwards to develop our cost per lead metric. Say for example we're converting one in four leads, and we're happy with a cost per acquisition of 10% i.e. I sell my widget for \$10,000 and I'm happy to pay \$1000 to acquire that customer. Therefore, our conversion rate is 25% so our cost per lead is \$250. Thus our mandate becomes to manage the campaign at \$250 cost per lead.

5. Variable cost model

The ultimate goal of managing Google Ads is to make it a variable cost model so that it virtually provides a guaranteed return on your investment because you are managing it on a cost per lead and cost per revenue model. Thus I scale up and down profitably no matter what is going on. It's takes time and a lot of work to get it to this model, but once you do, it's a beautiful model.

6. Expansion: New products and services

Google Ads is a great starting point for new products and services. It allows us to get marketing in a manner of hours to see how well your target audience will take to this new offering. It can drive revenue quicker than any other channel. It will tell you really quickly if you're onto a winner or its going to be a long road ahead.

7. Tests and trial

This is an amazing chance just to test and trial new things really quickly. Whether that be a new product as above, or new messaging to see if you can sell more. Test and measure is crucial for all long term growth of your company. It's quick, it's effective and steers you on the right path rapidly.

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