

SUMMER 15

# THE PROFIT IMPROVER



Helping you realise your full profit potential



## INSIDE:

- Getting started on social media
- Maximise your word-of-mouth marketing
- The art of persuasive public speaking
- Don't let bad behaviour ruin an event
- And more

## Stop networking and start building

*Traditional networking tends to focus on meeting and connecting with as many people as possible in a business setting.*

However, simply handing out your business card or talking up your business to others does not necessarily foster trust or build strong relationships. Those who attend regular networking events but feel they are not making true and honest connections with others need to shift their goals from simply increasing their number of business contacts to building quality relationships.

Since the overall purpose of networking is to connect with others who can help you, as well as you help them, having strong relationships, communication and trust is fundamental. After all, there is no point knowing 100 people if you only feel comfortable reaching out to one or two of them.

Business owners should view interactions with others at networking events as opportunities to develop true relationships. This kind of approach can help get to know others on a deeper level, and create more meaningful, natural connections. Having no expectation or pressure to connect with someone means that when or if you do connect, it is genuine and authentic. There is also no obvious underlying motive for the connection that only benefits one party, which can increase the development of trust between two people.

To transition from a networking to a building approach, individuals need to focus on giving rather than getting. If the focus shifts towards helping the other person and listening to their needs, you are more likely to develop a better connection and will naturally be rewarded for your efforts.

Focusing on building relationships also makes the process of following up with contacts a whole lot easier. Spending more time communicating and sharing with two or three people, instead of 10 or more means there will be less people to contact. And when you reach out to these contacts, you may find that you have something interesting or important to say, which has carried on from your previous interactions.

Here are some key points to keep in mind at your next networking event that can help you steer clear of the traditional networking mindset and help foster genuine relationships with others:

- Strive to spend more time having sincere and genuine conversations with others, rather than aiming to have shorter talks with many people.
- Spend time getting to know the people you talk to, and think of how you could help them. Giving a little now can help in the long run if you ever need their help.
- Aim to just talk to people. Don't think about whether or not the person you're talking to will help you become more successful in your career. Make the effort to engage in conversation with them about topics or subjects that don't relate to your business.
- Think of some interesting ideas or experiences that you can share with others. Keeping these in mind can help when striking up a conversation with someone new, as they allow you to start a conversation. Don't be afraid to talk about and connect through different topics and experiences, such as school memories, hobbies, pets or even television shows.



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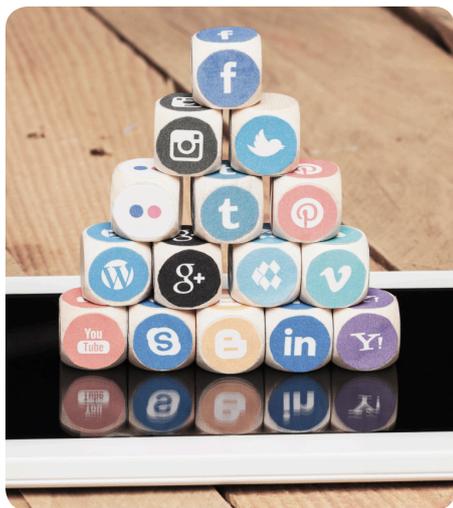
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## Getting started on social media

*Creating a strong presence on social media is fundamental when it comes to a business's online marketing strategy.*

Unfortunately for those who are new to, or inexperienced when it comes to social media, knowing where to begin to achieve a strong online presence is not always clear.



While the overwhelming availability of social networks has made it easier than ever for businesses to connect with customers, the amount of information shared on how to use these platforms effectively for professionals can make it seem confusing and complex for those who don't know where to start.

Here are five tips for businesses who are just starting out on social media:

### Create a profile on multiple platforms

Businesses with a strong social media presence don't create one or two profile pages and leave it at that. They target multiple platforms; along with Facebook and Twitter, they also have profiles on LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest. While this may seem unnecessary if customers don't use those social media sites, it can help impress potential customers who search for the business and find a full list of social media profiles, along with the business's website.

### Fill out your profiles

Incomplete social media business profiles give visitors little reason to like or follow

the business. Make sure that all business contact information is clearly visible.

### Add some share buttons to your blog

The easier it is for people to share your business's content, the more likely it is that they'll share it. Include share buttons on your blog posts, website homepage or anywhere else that your content provides value to visitors.

### Connect with your audience

While it is not necessary to reply to every single comment, businesses should try to stimulate customer engagement by responding to questions or providing further value when they can.

### Ask for reviews

Many people take online reviews into account when deciding whether or not to make a purchase. If your business doesn't receive many online reviews, ask current customers to post one on a particular social channel. Not only will this help potential customers, it is also a great way for businesses to find out what their current customers think about their products or services.

## Maximise your word-of-mouth marketing

*Word-of-mouth is a valuable form of marketing that provides business owners with the opportunity to leverage technology such as social media to generate buzz around their business.*

Word-of-mouth is generally thought to be organically created through recommendations from friends and family. However, businesses can drive these kinds of conversations by incorporating word-of-mouth tactics into their marketing strategy.

Customers are more likely to trust a third party source than a business's advertising which is why word-of-mouth is a crucial aspect not to be ignored. Word-of-mouth is powerful, and can cut through the noise of modern-day marketing quickly and effectively.

Here are some ways to incorporate word-of-mouth in your marketing strategy:

### Establish your influencers

Influencers are specific key individuals that have the ability to influence your target market. An influencer could be a journalist, blogger, public figure, respected community member, or even a sports star. Influencers can bring many benefits to your business such as drive traffic to your site, increase your social media exposure and attract customers to purchase your products and services through their own recommendations.

Establishing a list of your target influencers is

a good starting point. Before approaching your influencers take the time to learn about them and why they are influential to your business. Influencers have to be willing to promote your business on their own merit so avoid badgering them with endless calls and emails.

### Plan for online and offline

Word-of-mouth is accelerated online due to the speed in which messages are shared. Social media plays a large role in providing users with the ability to share your business's content, post reviews and recommendations and generate brand awareness with the use of hashtags.

Online word-of-mouth can dramatically affect your business's reputation as recommendations and criticisms are openly available to the public. Designating a professional to handle your social media affairs may benefit your business as you can quickly respond to customer feedback, both negative and positive, and monitor customer engagement.

Although, online communication is ever-increasing, offline communication should not be ignored. Offline conversations are more likely to have an impact as they involve emotion, a key part of the purchase of a product or service. Businesses need to create experiences for customers that are both topical and emotional.

### Encourage reviews

Reviews and referrals form a central part of

word-of-mouth marketing and can lead to increased credibility.

Online reviews may be considered as trustworthy as personal recommendations. Reviews appearing on external sites or your own site, can be a great way of monitoring conversation and developing customer confidence in your products and services.

Negative reviews can help your business to identify and fix weaknesses and address customer issues promptly. The way your business responds to negative feedback can provide customers with a good indication of how much you care about customer satisfaction.



## The art of persuasive public speaking

*Public speaking can be a daunting experience for some; nonetheless it is unavoidable in a business environment whether it be a meeting, presentation or an interview.*

Fortunately, there are ways to improve your public speaking to adopt a more persuasive and engaging style.

### Know your target audience

Your target audience will provide guidance to not only tailor the content of the speech but also the delivery. There are three known persuasive appeals to influence your audience including ethos (credibility), logos (logic) and pathos (emotion).



### Credibility

To develop credibility, the audience must trust and respect the speaker. Some ways to build credibility may involve following through on promises (creates trust), showing up early to a presentation and making yourself available after a presentation. Speaking to your audience in familiar language and using appropriate jargon helps to create similarity, further increasing your credibility level.

### Logic

Most importantly, the argument presented should be logical, that is, understandable and make sense. If a speaker is not logical, they cannot be persuasive. The language conveyed such as the words, phrases and examples need to be understandable and delivered in a sequential order to avoid confusion. It is important to make the connection between premises and conclusions explicit to clarify important points.

### Emotion

The speaker can create an emotional connection with the audience (pathos) to anticipate an intended response. A common way to engage with emotion during a presentation is the use of stories. Stories are memorable and a quick way to gauge rapport. To further improve your storytelling consider adding in humour, visuals and analogies to relate to the audience. The better you know the people you want to persuade, the better you can use examples to motivate them.

## Don't let bad behaviour ruin an event

*Employers should remain mindful of how they plan to manage the behaviour of their staff at a work related event, should things turn sour.*

Workplace related functions are an enjoyable way of developing better relationships with the people you work with in a relaxed environment. But having too many drinks that may leave an employee swearing or inappropriately touching others can spoil the occasion.

Employers who remain aware and are adequately prepared for any potential unintended consequences of a work gathering, are in a far better position to eliminate the risks associated with such events. Just like in the normal workplace, employers do have a responsibility to ensure an employee's health and safety, as well as to provide an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.

Some tips for preventing anything inappropriate from happening include:

- Ensuring adequate workplace behaviour standards and policies are in place and that all staff are aware of this.

- Reminding staff (prior to work functions) that workplace policies do extend to workplace events that are outside of working hours.
- Remind managers to model appropriate behaviours and address improper employee conduct at the earliest opportunity.
- Suggest a dress code for the function to maintain a level of professionalism and appropriate behaviour.



## Wise Words

*Success is walking from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm*

*- Winston Churchill*

## Your break-even point

*Knowing your business's break-even point is fundamental in determining whether or not your business venture is successful, failing or ultimately worth pursuing.*

A business's break-even point is the point at which the business's total revenue equals the total costs and expenses of running the business.

Knowing your business's break-even point is crucial when determining product prices, setting budgets and preparing business plans. It is the number that determines how much a business can spend and how much it needs to make. Even if a business turns over a lot of money, it could still be making quite a loss. Using the break-even point can help determine this.

There are several ways owners can calculate their business's break-even point. A simplified way of doing so is dividing the business's fixed costs by its gross profit margin.

Every cost a business incurs that doesn't vary in relation to sales is a 'fixed' cost i.e. rent, wages, power and insurance. The gross profit margin is the percentage of sales money that is left over after subtracting the production cost of goods sold from the total sales figure.

While this formula can help determine a business's break-even point, owners should remember that it has been simplified, and they may benefit from speaking to a financial professional when considering their business's profitability.

# How your office environment can impact productivity

*Business owners looking to increase productivity shouldn't overlook the important role of the office environment.*

Office design is directly linked to employee wellbeing, and can significantly affect overall employee motivation and morale. A well-



planned office space can assist employees to carry out their daily tasks effectively.

Some important influencing factors include:

## Lighting

Lighting is a primary aspect in good office design as it affects employee focus and concentration. Natural daylight should be complemented with internal lighting to best maximise productivity. Be wary of windows that are blocked by office equipment as exposure to daylight is critical to employee performance.

Artificial lighting such as ceiling mounted lights should provide substantial illumination without glare or reflection. Fluorescent lighting can cause eyestrain, headaches and irritability; whereas, dim lighting can produce fatigue.

## Ergonomics

Office furniture may be the cause of physical pain such as stiff necks, migraines, back pain and sore wrists. Seating should be comfortable and adjustable to minimise discomfort and prevent injuries. When using desktops ensure the screen is positioned correctly and consider

a palm rest for the mouse.

## Noise

The noise level of your office is dependent on the size of the team, company culture and office design. High noise levels can be a cause of frustration for staff but can be reduced by designating silent areas, soundproofing meeting rooms and encouraging the use of noise cancelling headphones.

## Temperature

The temperature of the office can dramatically impact on employee's concentration levels. Although it can be difficult to find a temperature to suit everyone, generally warmer office spaces lead to higher levels of productivity.

## Layout

The spatial arrangement of office furniture is important. Cluttered and disorganised workspaces can contribute to unnecessary stress. To avoid noise and minimise distractions, employees should be positioned close to the tools and equipment needed. The office can be divided into different working areas depending on the task.

# Improving employee attendance

*Employee absenteeism can create an unhealthy business culture and burden your workplace with lost productivity and high replacement costs.*

Employee attendance can be a sensitive issue for employers to deal with and when not managed properly can escalate into a chronic issue frustrating both employers and other staff members who do the right thing.

Below are some ways to tackle employee absenteeism in your business:

## Highlight attendance expectations



To help eradicate attendance issues, employees first must be made aware of their attendance expectations and the consequences of their non-attendance on other staff members and productivity.

A clear policy should be implemented with explanation of the procedures to follow when absent such as:

- Who the employee should inform of their absence, for example, their manager. It should be clear how they are expected to contact them, for example, a phone call rather than a text message.
- The employee should advise the contact person within a certain time frame of the nature of their illness and when they expect to return to work.
- If a medical certificate or statutory declaration is required, employers must keep up to date with employment laws regarding evidence requirements, as it may be considered unreasonable to request employees produce evidence in some circumstances.

## Analyse records and identify trends

Keeping track of when employees are absent can help to identify patterns such as certain days of the week that employees are absent, or whether it is before or after a public holiday. Monitoring trends can assist in identifying whether there is a problem and if it is appropriate to discuss the issue.

## Improve your communication

Communicating with employees is in a business's

## About us

# KRS

*Achieving better results for your business*

At KRS Accountants, we can:

- positively help you identify opportunities to improve your profits
- work with you to achieve your business goals
- give you more time to run your business

We use our business advisory experience and expertise to monitor your business and give you proactive advice on how you can improve your bottom line and business value.

Our services include virtual CFO, tax agent, financial accounts, salary packaging, budgeting & cashflow analysis, management reports, business health checks and corporate compliance.

best interest to better understand employee's needs and situation. Effective communication can help identify root causes of excessive sick leave, such as family issues, not coping with workload, drug and alcohol problems and so forth.