

Strive for five...

Welcome to Growth Matters, a regular column offering practical advice and ideas to business across Glossop and Tameside

One area where I recommend you put real focus is making sure different parts of your business and marketing are "joined up" so that everything works together.

It is on precisely this theme that I kick things off. **Is Your Marketing Joined-Up?**

Answer five questions & find out!

- 3D Marketing
- Holistic Marketing
- Joined-Up Marketing

Whatever you call it, to be effective, your marketing needs to be consistent across your marketing mix. How joined up is your marketing?

These five simple questions will help you find out:

1. Do you have a strategy?

One of the biggest barriers to joined-up marketing is the lack of a strategy. Without a clear strategy as to what you want to achieve and how you are going to market your business to achieve your goals, it is very difficult to deliver consistent, sustained and joined up marketing communications. Without a clear strategy, marketing usually becomes a series of disjointed activities driven by the Next Big Marketing Thing (Adwords, SEO, Social Media, Content Marketing etc.)

2. Is your branding consistent?

Even the smallest business has a brand and that brand has an image. To be joined-up, your brand image should be consistent across all your marketing media:

- Website
- Printed materials
- Offline Comms
- E-mail
- Social Media etc

3. Do you have a communication plan?

Do you know what you are trying to communicate to your market? Do you measure your marketing content against this? When you put out a message through any media, you should be

clear if and how that fits in with the brand that you are trying to build within your marketplace. Furthermore your communications plan should look ahead to tell you:

1. What you are going to say.
2. When you are going to say it.
3. What tools/media you are going to use.
4. Who you are targeting.
5. Why you are sending this message to these targets.

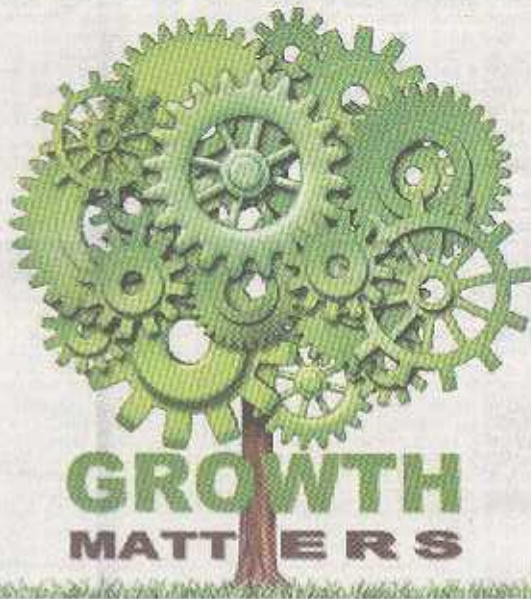
To be joined up the plan should look at least 6 months ahead. 12 months is better.

4. Do you stick at it?

When you commit to pro-active marketing communications (e.g. E-mail, Twitter, Social Media, Offline (don't forget mailshot, telemarketing etc) do you then consistently feed this with great content? It's not so much about how often you communicate as being sustained in consistently putting out great content that reinforces your position as an expert delivering real benefit to your marketplace.



DAVID AND DUNCAN WRIGHT: Marketing strategists.



5. Do you review and refine your activity?

A strategy and its associated communications plan are no good if they are written and then put on a shelf. They should be living, working documents. Are you doing what you said you'd do? Is this getting you where you want to go? Your marketing activity should be continually reviewed as a core element of your management process and refined and tuned as you get feedback from the marketplace on your activities.

Answer YES to all five of these questions and your marketing is truly JOINED-UP - Congratulations!

If you think your marketing could benefit from being more joined-up, give us a call on 01457 851111.

You can follow Growth Matters (@growth_matters) and BSA Marketing (@bsamarketing) on Twitter.

I am also happy to answer your business questions, so feel free to tweet us or email me at davidw@growthmatters.net.

If you can't wait for next week's column, you will find more hints & tips for SMEs looking to grow on the Growth Matters blog at www.growthmatters.net

All the Best
DAVID