

The background features a light beige and cream color palette with intricate, stylized floral and scrollwork patterns. A large, light grey floral design is prominent on the right side, while a smaller, olive green floral design is in the bottom left corner. The text is centered in the upper half of the page.

Maximise
Your

Marketing

By Leigh Frost from Truesilver Coaching & Marketing

Want to get more customers?

We've written this little e-book in order to help you think of some new ideas for your business and find the best ways to really maximise the time and money you're spending on your marketing. It's written with business owners, managers and sales people in mind.

We'll take you through fundamental steps of putting together a really great campaign: helping you find out who you and your company are; who your ideal clients are; how to reach them and set goals; how to create your own ideas and put them into action; and taking you through some of the main dos and don'ts which will mean a really successful campaign.

If you are short on time, please go straight to the **'Busy Person's Page'** to give yourself a quick kick-start.

If you have any feedback about this book, or you'd like to arrange a free marketing session, contact us via our website (www.truesilver.co.uk) or email info@truesilver.co.uk.

You can also find other free resources on our downloads page.

Thanks for reading

Leigh Frost
Truesilver Coaching & Marketing

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Please feel free to
forward this on to friends or colleagues
who may also like a few extra ideas to grow
their business.

1. What is marketing?

You'd be forgiven for questioning what marketing actually is in the world of business today. Strictly speaking, marketing is all of the activities involved in the transfer of goods - including promotion, selling and distribution.

However, in this day and age, when people talk about marketing they generally mean all communication between business and the outside world. That means 'marketing' has become an umbrella for anything from advertising to telemarketing to public relations to branding.

Truesilver has spent years helping businesses fight their way through all the marketing options that are available (there are over 96 different ways to market your business) and creating focus so that you can find your customers and make sure your message is what they really want to hear.

We believe marketing can only be successful once you have a complete understanding of people and what makes them buy. From there the rest is relatively easy. However, that first step is what takes all the experience and knowledge. It involves having knowledge of psychological profiling, learning styles, language and current trends.

Use this handbook as your guide to making marketing successful for you so that you can have a consistent stream of customers coming to you.

2. Market Research

You'll have heard the old adage "people don't plan to fail, they fail to plan". The same is true for marketing... the more you use the correct knowledge and planning, the better your results will be.

So, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do you have a mission statement?
2. Do you already have company literature?
3. Can you describe in 10 words or less what you do?
4. What makes you stand out among your competition and why? (if you're including good or friendly service in your answer, you need to be able to quantify that statement.)
5. Who are your competitors?
6. Have you won any awards or accreditations?
7. What do you specialize in?
8. How do you sell yourself in front of a customer?
9. How many enquiries do you receive per month or week at the moment?
10. What is your conversion rate of those enquiries?
11. Where do those enquiries come from?
12. Who are your ideal clients?
13. If they are businesses give details: how many employees, turnover, geographical area, statistics, type of company, etc.
14. If they are consumers: type of house, geographical area, age, job type etc.
15. What is your lowest common denominator?
16. What is your minimum & maximum order value?
17. What objections do you have to overcome?
18. What are problems does your service solve?
19. What are the benefits of using you over your competitors?
20. What key things do you look for in a client (unrelated to statistics eg attitude, personality, their current situation)?

21. How many new clients do you want over the next year?
22. Over how long?
23. Can you cope with the growth you're planning or will you need to find more employees?
24. Do you have a proven track record with current clients?
25. Have they given you testimonials?
26. Why do they buy from you? (ask them if you don't know for sure)
27. Who are your best clients?
28. How did they contact you and where did they find your details?

Although there are a lot of questions, you will find referring back to your answers while developing your ideas will mean the difference between a campaign that gets you a little extra business, to one that means real growth for your company.

Take the time to do it well.

If you want to go that extra step further, ask as many people who know your business as possible (friends, family, clients and suppliers):

- To describe in their own words what your business does.
- What makes you special?
- What problems do you solve?

3. Past

Think about what has worked for you in the past. We often forget where we started and ideas that we had when the company first began. Think about how you got your first clients... Did you knock on doors? Did you deliver leaflets? Did you advertise? And, most importantly, did it work?

Go through each and every campaign you tried and work out what worked, why and whether it's relevant today. Bear in mind that concepts change and marketing techniques have undergone massive changes over the past couple of years. Some ideas that worked when your first started (even only 12 months ago) may be considered old hat now. But you may be able to revive other concepts and bring them up to date.

4. Present

What is or isn't working for you now? Do you advertise, do you send out direct mail, do you have sales people? Are they performing the way you want them to and if not, why?

It is very easy to blame your sales people or the newspaper if things don't go the way you hope, but find a way to make sure the service you are providing is standing up to what you are promising.

Find someone who will test your service for you. There are mystery shopper agencies, but friends or family may be just as easy (and less expensive). Make sure they are not known to your staff, that they know what to ask for and what to pay attention to.

Things that could cost you sales:

- Phones being answered unprofessionally
- Answer machines
- Emails being ignored
- Promises not being fulfilled
- Lack of information available
- Too many obstacles between enquiries and the sale (make it easier for your customers to order)
- Inconsistent service

And the main one... unfriendly staff

Find out if your company has slipped slightly and get responses back from past clients and unsuccessful enquiries or quotes. Get testimonials from current clients too. Their comments could give you ideas for your next campaign.

5. Future

If you're not moving forward, you're going in reverse.

The worlds of business and marketing speed forward at an astounding rate. Things like interest rates, the economy, trends, fashions and the environment all affect the future of your business. Big businesses, or the successful ones, plan for all kinds of eventualities.

Gillette, for instance, are constantly developing their products making sure they are always one step ahead. They ensure they have the next product waiting to be launched and sold as soon as their competitors release a product similar to theirs. This means they have a reputation for being leaders in their field.

Think about how you can make sure you're constantly moving forward. Staying up to date with your own industry is one thing, but keeping in touch with public perception is also hugely important. There is a reason why big companies are going out of their way to reduce their carbon foot print... so they have a chance of staying ahead of their competitors.

Think about what your competitors are doing.
How are they advertising their services?
What customers are they targeting?

Don't just copy them, try to find a way of being innovative and become known for being even more relevant to your customers.

6. Your challenge

With the background information you now have you need to consider how you can get over the main 3 challenges...

- One: Putting your marketing in front of the right person**
- Two: Making them read it rather than discard it**
- Three: Then getting them to take action**

It may sound simple, but if one of your campaigns has not had the return you want the chances are it didn't cover all three points.

Putting your marketing in front of the right person...

... Means considering who the right person is. Simple questions like are they too busy to read newspapers or direct mail will help you. Think about who they are, what they do, where they go in their spare time and you will probably strike upon a back door into their life.

Making them read it...

Write and design your advertising or marketing in such a way that they will want to read more. A good strap-line or headline is essential. Something that very simply says why they need you – now!

If you are just telling them who you are and where you are, they will most probably ignore what you're trying to say. If you tell them you understand them or you have exactly what they need, they're going to be interested.

Then getting them to take action...

... can be the hardest part. The reason so many companies use sales people and telesales is because it ensures success. Passive marketing (ie marketing that you send out and wait for a response from) is less costly and time consuming, but it's also less personal and less consistent. An offer or a guarantee can help you minimise the risk.

Be wary of offering discounts though. Too many companies offer a discount as a way to get more turnover and at the same time slash their profits.

Offer something more, rather than something less.

Stay away from giving away free things that will cost you money. Free time, free help, free samples may be a good way to go, but make sure you can afford to hand them out.

7. Theory

The theory of marketing is that if you understand your clients well enough, and position your service or product in the right way, then your business will boom.

Basically, this means dressing up your company in an attractive way. That can mean different things to different people.

Consider which attracts you:

- Improving your image
- Improving your lifestyle
- Securing your future
- Saving money

You need to understand whether your product is about status, lifestyle, security or saving money. Once you know that, use words that really get that across to your customers in everything you do.

Remember though, less really is more.

Give enough information to get an enquiry, but not enough to make them decide whether they want to buy or not.

8. For every business

All businesses are different and will approach this handbook in their own way. However, that said, there are 12 things all businesses should have in their marketing plan in some form or another.

1. Networking
2. Free listings on the web
3. Press releases
4. Charity donations and collaborations
5. A web presence of some kind that **adds** to your credibility
6. A database of customers and prospects
7. Business cards with brief details of what you do
8. Leaflets or postcards to be handed out when required (these are more important than brochures as they will invite people to seek more information)
9. Strategic alliances with similar trades and businesses that can pass you customers and that you can help similarly.
10. A consistent plan to stay up to date with current affairs and develop new business ideas.
11. Business plans & goals
12. Signage on all things available – your car, shop, home, customers sites, awards etc.

These on their own will mean more business and more enquiries. If they are presented in the right way, and backed up by a great service, these may be all the marketing you need do!

9. Your goals

We all know that setting goals is important. It is drummed into us that to succeed, our goals need to be written down, measurable and attainable. So think now, what your goals are for your business...

For the next :

30 days	_____
3 months	_____
6 months	_____
1 year	_____
2 years	_____

Then think of your own “Mad, Bold Goal”. It should be something that inspires you, that brings a smile to your face and that you can visualise, feel and almost touch, just by thinking about it. No matter how mad or how far in the future it is, write it down...

Now the most important question: Are your goals realistic and how will you reach them? Think about how many customers you need to find (and keep) in order to attain each of your goals. Remember that once you have set a goal, you need to focus on the action it takes to achieve it rather than the results.

To help you here is a tool we often use in our own campaigns. Each marketing avenue has a general conversion rate as follows:

Direct Mail

200 mail outs will mean approx 1 to 2 enquiries
36p postage each (as at April 2011)
20p (approx) paper & envelope cost.
Total cost = around £56 per enquiry

Leafleting

1 in 300 response
£40 per 1000 delivered
10p per postcard / leaflet
Total cost = £12 per enquiry

Emails

1 in 200 response
£0 costs for marketing material
30p approx per contact
Total cost = £60 per enquiry, though data can be reused

Telemarketing

1 in 80 Dials converts to an appointment
30p per contact (can be reused)
10p per call
Total cost = £32 per appointment

These are conservative statistics but they will give you an idea of how to assess your goals. If you improve your conversion rate you're doing really well. But be conservative and find a way to test your campaign before spending huge amounts of money on it.

At the same time, consider return on investment. If you have more time than money, then use a way that suits you to find the business yourself. If you're busy and you want to sustain the amount of business coming in, think about outsourcing or using one of the many passive ways available to bring in leads while you work.

Be aware that prospects need to be able to contact someone to ask questions. If they are only likely to get voicemail your conversion rate could **drop** immediately.

In this day and age the personal touch is paramount to beating your competition. Make sure your clients can talk to a real person – even if you need to hire a call answering service!

10. Your client

Business to Consumer

If your main business comes from the general public then your marketing avenues are going to be different from a business to business focus.

Who are your ideal clients?

- Male / female
- Age
- Job type
- Income
- Where they live
- Their hobbies & interests
- Do they have children?

You must be specific. If you want to target a wider audience then chances are you'll need to design more than one campaign to cover the different types of person.

Business to Business

If your main business comes from businesses (or you would like it to) then you need to consider both the type of person and the type of company you want to deal with. Look at the list above for ideas on how to approach the person. Then consider other ways of targeting the business itself.

Think about what you can offer a business. You may assume that all companies want to cut costs, but in reality companies are cautious of going with the cheapest service.

Use ideas like the ones below to offer more.

- 24 hour service
- Guarantees
- High service level
- Hassle free
- Simple to use

Think about what the impact of current issues is having on your target market. For instance, contacting accountants during December and January is a recipe for disaster and contacting builders in the summer won't get you far either.

11. Budget

Although it would be nice for money not to be an issue, often it's what will mean the difference if you want a really successful campaign. At the same time you should make sure that your money is going where it will be useful... don't assume that you get what you pay for!

Free advertising you should be using: If it's free, why wouldn't you use it?

Online Social Media

Free web listings (Google Maps and Yell.com as well as a whole host of other websites offer free listings)

Free web registration with Google.co.uk & other search engines

Ecademy.com

Local directories (you'll need to search for ones relevant to you)

Leaflets in areas where your ideal clients go (eg. Coffee bars, hotels etc.)

Low cost avenues

Vehicle signage

Local village / town magazine advertising

Low cost web advertising (eg. £10 a week)

Adverts in local newsagents

Other avenues (just some of the many available)

Posters
Catalogues
Corporate Gifts
Direct Mail
Email
Exhibitions
Logo-d Clothing
Seminars
Sponsorship
Street Stands
Telemarketing
Text/SMS

Whatever ideas you develop, make sure they fit with your ideal clients and their buying habits and then test each one before you invest your money in a substantial way.

12. Writing copy

Copywriting (as in the text for marketing not registering legal copyrights) is a wide and varied skill. All writers have their own style and the difference in inflection and tone of each one is the key to the success of journalists and novelists all over the world. Writing your own copy is perfectly acceptable, however adhere to these main points:

Think of your audience and what they **want** to read - not what you need them to read.

Try not to use the words 'I, we, us' and your company name. Instead re-write your copy using 'you, your, together' to make it relevant to the reader in include them in your subject.

Less is more. Keep it short.

Ask friends, colleagues or family to read your copy and give you honest feedback on everything you write. It will help if they know very little about your business.

13. Advertising

Advertising agencies are paid fortunes to design and manage ad campaigns with varying degrees of success. The main rule is **don't pay too much before you are sure of the return**. Other rules are:

Make the headline simple and to the point. Don't be clever, don't be funny. Say what you are offering in 5 words or less.

Have a great offer that will make people contact you. Use whatever tricks you have. But make it powerful. Give all your contact details. People and companies have different contact preferences. Include your email, Facebook and Twitter links, mobile, website, fax (if it's relevant), address and if suitable allow them to SMS you. Make it easy for your customers to reach you in **their** preferred style rather than yours.

14. Telemarketing

Often best left to the professionals, telemarketing can be great way of finding more business. It is still the most effective way of pinning your clients down. If you are attempting it yourself then where you find your data is crucial. You can spend half your time calling wrong numbers or the wrong market.

Secondly, use a script. We use a conversation opener which takes the prospect through a couple of easy questions with the aim of getting **them** talking. Telemarketing and telesales is about listening. Not reading blithely from a prompt.

Thirdly, attitude is all-important. You will be judged within the first few seconds and dismissed accordingly if you do not sound like an intelligent person worth talking to. Record yourself on the phone and critique your tone, repeated

words and your overall manner. If you are already in sales, chances are you'll understand the basics. If not, just try to make friends with each person and the rest will follow.

15. Email

...Is still a cost effective, useful tool to keep in contact with your prospects and customers, though it is important to use the medium well. We recommend phoning companies for their email address or holding a competition to get consumers contacting you. Build your database and use it in an intelligent manner.

- Don't contact them more than once a month unless requested.
- Keep visuals to a minimum otherwise your email could be mistaken for spam.
- Keep the content brief and to the point with links if prospects want more information.
- In order to get responses from email you must have a great offer or call to action and send out at least 100 to get 1 response. Bear this in mind when you are starting your campaign.

16. Direct Mail

Less used now because of cost, direct mail is actually becoming more effective. There are some great ways of standing out and if targeted right, can be a great way of contacting your ideal client.

- Include a title. Something that says very briefly what you're offering.
- Have a great offer that's almost a no-brainer.
- Make it relevant to them and what they will want from a company like yours.
- Use double spacing and an easy to read font.

17. Websites

Whatever design you settle on or how you want to use your website be aware that a decent design can cost as little as £200 from a semi professional. It is worth spending money on doing it right from the start. Here are some key points:

- Ease of use is crucial. Too complicated and your reader will move on to your competitor.
- Think about the image you want to portray. If you have identified that you are a small, family business, a complicated, detailed corporate type site is not necessarily the way to go.
- Your copy should be concise and to the point, giving only as much information as necessary to get them to call or email you.
- Call to actions and offers will make all the difference.
- Build trust. Websites are one of the few mediums where a big company can hide it's size and a one man band can seem like an international organisation. Whoever you are, use testimonials, guarantees and reply to enquiries **immediately**.

18. Leafleting

Think of door-to-door leafleting like ads with more detail. To get an accurate measure of the response you can expect you should have at least a thousand printed. We suggest you make your goal to get as many enquiries as possible rather than quality leads and use leafleting to target consumers rather than businesses.

Once you've got a good level of enquiries, you can then improve the quality of the leads your leafleting produces by focussing on higher value sales.

19. Seminars

It's your decision whether you make a seminar free or not. We prefer a minimal cost before the event with the proceeds given to charity. This means you have a solid commitment from your attendees as well as the credibility of giving to a charity.

Make sure the seminar is a subject of interest and that you really are giving valuable information, not just selling what you do.

About Truesilver

Truesilver was established 7 years ago by Leigh Frost. We offer a range of services aimed at helping real businesses get real results. Some companies want to learn how to grow their businesses themselves - so we offer business coaching and training. Other companies want to outsource their marketing - so we offer marketing consultancy, freelance sales, telemarketing, email marketing, social media management.

Most of our customers are small businesses that are great at what they do, but just need a little help to get them to the next stage in their growth plans.

Our Services

If you're looking to grow your business and you want to learn more about marketing techniques you can use yourself, what the outsourcing options are or even what government funding there is for a business like yours, you may like to visit our website at www.truesilver.co.uk.

We help companies with all aspects of growth:

- Government funding applications
- Marketing training
- Telemarketing
- Business Coaching
- Sales Training
- Marketing planning
- Business planning

The Busy Person's Page

Whatever you do... PLAN!

Questions to ask yourself

1. What do you want from your marketing?
2. How many clients?
3. How much are you willing to spend?
4. How much do you want them to spend?
5. Can you cope with the extra business?

The three main obstacles you need to overcome are:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| One: | Putting your marketing in front of the right person |
| Two: | Making them read it |
| Three: | Getting them to take action |

To do that you need to really get to know your clients and understand everything about them.

Decide who you are

Where you've come from, your ethos, what your company is really about. Look at your past successes and failures and learn from them

What every business should be doing...

All businesses are different and will approach this handbook in their own way. However, that said, there are 12 things all businesses should have in their marketing plan in some form or another.

1. Networking
2. Free listings on the web
3. Press releases
4. Charity donations and collaborations
5. A web presence of some kind that **adds** to your credibility
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Ecademy.com
Local directories (you'll need to search for ones relevant to you)
Leaflets in areas where your ideal clients go (eg. Coffee bars, hotels etc.)

Low cost avenues

Vehicle signage
Local village / town magazine advertising
Low cost web advertising (eg. £10 a week)
Adverts in local newsagents

Other avenues (just some of the many available)

Posters
Catalogues
Logo-d Clothing
Seminars
Sponsorship
Street Stands
Gifts
Direct Mail
Email
Exhibitions
Telemarketing
Text/SMS

Whatever ideas you develop, make sure they fit with your ideal clients and their buying habits and then test each one before you invest your money in a substantial way.