

How to Market Your Small Business

Most of the advertising we see on TV today is 'brand-driven'. Brand-driven advertising tends to follow a similar pattern: Grab your attention, entertain, and finish with a logo and tagline.



McDonald's reckons "I'm lovin' it"



Nike wants me to "just do it"



And "Coke is it". ¹

But is that it? Is that how everyone should 'do' advertising? A smart logo, a slogan and a Justin Timberlake endorsement?

The problem is that if 'Basingstoke's banana market stalls' think they can advertise their 'brand' as "I'm likin' it"... And 'Trev's Garage Repairs' as "I just fix it" ...Then they're in for a big fall. And an expensive fall at that.



Justin Bananalake says, "I'm likin' it"

Now the point I'm trying to make is this. **Brand Advertising should be handled with extreme caution. And even more so for small businesses.**

Listen to these statistics.

*In 2002, there were 3.8 million business enterprises in the UK. Of these business – 99.1% were **small** (0 – 49 employees). And 69.3% of ALL businesses had zero employees. ²*

For a small organisation, mimicking the marketing and branding techniques of a large organisation can be a costly business. Mass marketing techniques just won't work for the small business.

The Niche Market

Small organisations have niche markets, which will mean that a non-targeted, non-response promotion will have a weak effect. No matter how "entertaining".

So what is the RIGHT way to market for a small business?

Why not start by asking these two questions:

1. Can you **prove** your marketing promotions are making a profit?
2. Can you **measure** your marketing performance **accurately** and **reliably**?

If scientific 'proof' of your marketing's success is thin on the ground, then how will you ever know if your marketing promotions are working?

That's why Direct Marketers insist on a Return on Investment measurement for measuring success.

What is the Return on Investment?

A Return on Investment (ROI) is the financial measurement of a marketing campaign. Most often expressed as a ratio, it compares the cost of a campaign to the income directly received.

Only Direct Marketing gives accurate Return on Investments for promotions because only Direct Marketing has financially measurable campaign results.

In other words. by knowing your Return on Investment you can know if you're making a profit on your marketing promotions. Or wasting it!

Now I'm not saying you should ignore Branding. But what I am saying is

that Direct Marketing can tell you whether your Branding and marketing messages are actually working.

Let me finish with this quote from the renowned Marketing Guru, David Ogilvy:

*"Nobody should be allowed to create advertising for press or broadcast until he has served his apprenticeship in **direct response**. The experience will keep his feet on the ground for the rest of his life."*

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1 - In fairness, Coca-cola's most recent slogan is "Life tastes good". "Coke is it" was the slogan in 1985, the year Michael J Fox went Back to the Future.

2 – Department of Trade & Industry, News Release, 28 August 2003