

January/February 2024

Issue No 48

Steer Your Business

**Maximise Tax
Saving
Opportunities
Before 5 April 2024**

Helping Businesses Thrive

New Year. New Start.

Housekeeping!



Editor's Review

By Business, For Business
#networkinginprint

Welcome to the first issue of Steer Your Business in 2024.

I don't know about you, but we're itching to get started on our plans for the coming year and the articles in this issue will definitely help with that from efficient tax planning to engaging staff and having a plan to guide us through the year.

Don't forget the social side of life as well with Valentine's Day in February and a wine guide to help you navigate the amazing selection facing you when you browse the shelves.

We have a fantastic issue for you with some great articles to really get you thinking about your business and what you want to achieve in 2024. Make sure you look at any tax efficiencies you can make before 5 April and if selling your business is on the agenda, Aly Young has some great tips to get everything in order.

Here's to an amazing 2024 for all small businesses.

Sally

WHAT'S INSIDE

News From The Beach

How a Strategic Advisor Can Boost and Improve
Your Business Performance

Maximise tax saving opportunities before 5 April
2024 - a tax planning guide

Helping businesses thrive

Create An Environment in Which Team Members
Can Prepare For Promotion

Know Your Customer

New Year. New Start. Housekeeping!

and so much more ...

News From The Beach



Happy New Year!

Welcome to 2024. What have you got planned for your business in the coming 12 months?

There's always a lot of talk about goal setting and business plans at this time of year but perhaps they have a point. Knowing what you want to achieve means that you can plan on how you want to achieve it.

I always tell my clients to work backwards from their goal so that they know what they need to do month by month and review their progress as they go and adjust their plans as necessary. It sounds simple enough but not many people actually do it.

If you only review your plans once a year, it's often too late to make a change and get back on track. If, on the other hand, you review your progress on a weekly or monthly basis, you can step up if you're not where you want to be.

For example, if you want to generate sales of £1,000 and you know that you need to make 5 calls in order to make 1 sale, you can easily work out how many calls you need to make in order to generate £1,000. If you can add a recurring income as another income stream, then it's easier to achieve the £1,000 without having to make so many calls.

Knowing where your best leads come from will also help. If you get sales from social media, then you can work out how many posts you need to make, how much time you need to spend on social media and what the returns are likely to be. If, however, social media doesn't generate sales, then focus your time and effort on other channels such as networking, calls or leafleting.

The more you know about your business and your customers, the easier it will be to create a plan that works for you and your business.

One size doesn't fit all so don't just follow what someone else is doing. Make the plan fit your business and get the results that you want. Document what you want and how you are going to achieve it and record your performance so that you can see in black and what what is actually happening. That way you can revise your plan as and when you need to.

Good luck and here's to an amazing 2024 for everyone.

Book a chat in my [diary](#) and let's have a virtual coffee



Sally Marshall

sally@sallymarshallgroup.co.uk

OPUS PURCHASES THE BUSINESS AND CERTAIN ASSETS OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRMS, SKSI LIMITED AND MLM CPS LIMITED

Opus Restructuring LLP the restructuring and insolvency arm of Opus Business Advisory Group, is pleased to announce the purchase of the business and certain assets of SKSI Limited and its subsidiary MLM CPS Limited the restructuring and insolvency division of SKS Business Services, which completed on 7 December 2023.

Opus Business Advisory Group assists businesses and individuals to take command and gain control of financial and operational challenges as well as supporting change and growth opportunities. The Group's services include strategic advice, business rescue, corporate finance, equity investment, capital raising, forensic accounting, and restructuring & insolvency.

As part of the sale two employees join the Group directly with a further eight indirectly and Fred Satow, the former CEO of SKSI Limited becomes a partner of Opus Restructuring LLP.

The sale does not affect the business of SKS Business Services, the fast growing accountancy services business founded by Sanjay Swarup, which continues to provide accountancy, audit and assurance and tax services nationally in England and Wales through a network of local offices. Tim Dolder, Group Partner at Opus said "We are very pleased to have concluded this purchase and welcome the new team and clients to the Opus Group. We look forward to continuing to assist SKS Business Services clients and to develop a strategic partnership with them."

Sanjay Swarup, the CEO of SKS Business Services said "We are delighted to have concluded this sale, which enables us to concentrate on our core business of advising businesses and individuals on accountancy matters. We look forward to working in the future with Opus and the SKSI team and wish them all the best for the future."

Opus Business Advisory Group
Opus Business Advisory Group has the largest independent practice of restructuring and insolvency specialists in the UK with 27 Partners and a head count of over 100, across 14 regional offices.

Opus Contact
Louise Barker
Head of Marketing at Opus
Louise.barker@opusllp.com
07976 241 424



MAXIMISE TAX SAVING OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE 5 APRIL 2024 - A TAX PLANNING GUIDE

With 2022/2023 tax returns needing to be submitted ahead of 31 January 2024, individuals and businesses should now be looking at final planning for tax year end on 5 April 2024.

Are you aware of all the tax reliefs and allowances that you may be entitled to?

If you are unsure, then you are probably paying more tax than necessary. With the end of the tax year on the horizon, **now is the time to act** to potentially reduce your tax liability.

In our latest tax planning guide, we cover a number of actions you may need to consider ahead of the tax year end (see below). Given that time is running out, you should start your planning now to maximise tax efficiency, which could ultimately lead to all-important cash tax savings as businesses and individuals continue to grapple with the economic challenges and uncertainty.



We are here to help

Some of the suggestions are time sensitive, therefore please seek advice as soon as possible. Please get in touch for a copy of our full tax planning guide, or scan the QR code below. To discuss any of the areas below in more detail, contact Rick Schofield, Tax Partner at Azets. Rick.schofield@azets.co.uk

Income tax

- Capitalise on the tax advantages of marriage
- Sharing assets with your spouse
- Beware of rising income
- If you have a share portfolio, consider using your £20k a year ISA allowance
- Get ready for the basis period reform

Employment tax

- Considering a new car? Think electric
- Salary sacrifice
- Changes to National Insurance
- Are you a remote worker/hybrid worker? (Travel and subsistence)



Overseas aspects

- Leave home
- Stay away

Carryback planning

- Can you convert capital losses to income losses?
- Use trading losses before you made the loss
- Don't pay your capital gains tax
- Charity begins at home

Capital gains

- Make the most of your annual exemptions
- Thinking of selling an asset?
- Act now to beat the (possible) changes
-

Inheritance tax

- Give it all away
- Make more smaller gifts
- Invest in IHT-favoured assets
- The importance of an updated will

Pensions

- Consider making big pension contributions...
 - ...but don't make contributions that are too big
 - You don't have to buy an annuity in retirement
 - Ask someone else to pay into your pension
 - Set your grandchildren up for retirement
- You don't have to draw on your pension

Investments

- Consider alternative investments
- Invest seed capital in small business
- Invest in venture capital trusts
- ISAs are an easy way to save taxes
- Consider a family investment company

Rick Schofield

Rick.schofield@azets.co.uk



Have you subscribed to our newsletter?

<https://steeryourbusiness.com/subscribe/>

Advertising Feature

HELPING BUSINESSES THRIVE

Now that we are in 2024, it's time to think about the financial solutions for your business

Whether you're at the beginning, middle or end of your business journey, it's important to make sure your business is thriving. Running a successful business relies on hard work, determination and clear goals. I'm sure you'll know as a business owner, that the highs can be high and the lows can be low!

I don't think anyone truly understands what it's like running a business, whether that's as a company owner or sole trader, until they have experienced it themselves. Spinning multiple plates comes to mind, making sure that you do not drop any of them. But sometimes "dropping a plate" can't be helped, it's just making sure it's the plastic ones, rather than the fancy crockery! You need to make sure that you are working with likeminded business owners who also understand this, which is where financial advice can be very valuable to a business.

Along your business journey you'll probably need to think about:

- You as the director/owner, along with other directors/owners.
- Your shareholders.
- Your company and whether it can run without your involvement.
- Probably most importantly, your staff and keeping them happy.

So, what's the secret? There's no magic formula, but it's about making sure you consider your business strategy top to bottom.

You may work with other professionals like an accountant, business coach, marketing etc.

Just think of a financial adviser as another cog in the machine.

So, you're probably wondering, how could a financial adviser help? For me it's about 3 core areas; directors/owners, the company, the staff.

Directors/owners – Don't forget it's your business! Make sure that your thinking of future you and putting your hard earned profit to work. You may be taking a salary and/or dividends, but maybe aren't making pension contributions.

Pension contributions can be an alternative way to extract profit from the business. If you're not in a position to move the profit away to a pension but want to make it work harder than cash, then an investment vehicle for your business may be an option. The Company – When was the last time you considered who are the most important people in your business? What if they were to die or suffer a serious illness? What's your back up plan? It's important to consider back up plans like relevant life, key person and succession planning i.e. shareholder protection, to help try and make sure your business is safe for generations to come.

The staff – Could your business fall apart if your valuable staff leave? Financial advice and well being is vital for your workforce, so having a financial adviser offering support could be valuable. But also, thinking of other employee perks like enhanced pension contributions, death in service and private medical cover could also be an important factor. Believe it or not it's not all about the salary!

THRIVE



Working with a financial adviser like me, will help you to establish the what and the where of the above, slot into your business and help it continue to thrive for years to come.

So, in summary... not one size fits all! It's important to establish what's right for your business depending on size and plans.

Contact me to help your business thrive!

The value of an investment with St. James's place will be directly linked to the performance of the funds you select and the value can therefore go down as well as up. You may get back less than you invested. Equities do not provide the security of capital which is characteristic of a deposit with a bank or building society.

McMillan Wealth Consultants Limited is an appointed Representative of and represents only St. James's Place Wealth Management plc (Which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority) for the purpose of advising solely on the group's wealth management products and services, more details of which are set out on the group's website www.sjp.co.uk/products

The 'St. James's Place Partnership' and the titles 'Partner' and 'Partner Practice' are marketing terms used to describe St. James's Place representatives.

SJP approved 14/11/2023



Joe Parker

Managing Partner Practice

**St
James's
Place**


McMILLAN
WEALTH CONSULTANTS

Advertise here

Email sally@steeryourbusiness.com

for more details

How a Strategic Advisor Can Boost and Improve Your Business Performance

As business leaders contend with many external factors and operational challenges, they may not always be able to focus on strategy. This is where a strategic advisor can help, identifying key areas for development, collaborating on problem solving and identifying the best solutions.

Our Azets Boost facilitators, help **you** find the solutions to your business challenges, and fulfil **your** strategic objectives. You know your business, and your industry best, but our advisors help channel that wealth of knowledge into action.

Eddi Taylor, Partner at Azets, has highlighted some simple, but powerful, tools that can be used to help you achieve your ambitions:

Now-Where-How

This tool forces you to think about where you are NOW and WHERE you want to, before then analysing HOW to get there.

A common pitfall of the NOW analysis, is to start fixing things straight away.

This approach often results in dealing with symptoms rather than root causes.

The WHERE analysis, is often much harder to do. However, using a more thorough process will identify what is truly important.

Once you have clarity, we can move onto the HOW, and start turning strategy into action.

Force Field

A Force Field analysis is used to drive strategies into action, by discovering how to double the impact of the positive forces, and halve impact of negative forces.

Change will not occur when both positive and the negative forces are equal, or where the negative force outweighs the positive force. For change to occur, the positive forces must overpower the negative.

Mind mapping

Mind mapping is one of the simplest, yet most powerful tools to problem solve. It's designed to help organise your ideas by capturing the natural flow of your thoughts.



At Azets, our Azets Boost advisors understand that no two businesses are the same. Solutions are tailored to you and your business, using our experience, tools and techniques.

We help you track your business performance KPIs to measure progress. Our Azets Boost advisors can facilitate you achieving your strategic ambitions; supporting business leaders to identify key areas for development, and solutions.

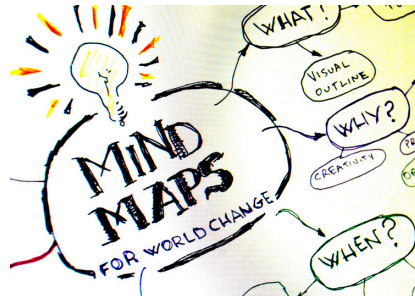
We want to be your partners in success, and boost your business performance.

For more information on how our Azets Boost Advisors can support you, please get in touch.

Eddi Taylor

Partner at Azets

Eddi.taylor@azets.co.uk





KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER ("KYC")



Kevin Artlett FCICM ACII
www.pecunia2016.co.uk

One of the first calls we received after starting our business was from a client who said they were having trouble securing payment from a customer for goods they had delivered and asking if we could help. After a few moments of asking the client some questions, we established that the business had taken a call from a mobile phone number for a couple of pallets of their products to be delivered to a warehouse in southeast England.

No payment was taken, no other contact details or customer names were obtained, and the delivery simply went ahead as requested. Unfortunately, we were unable to assist the client in collecting payment in this instance, but it did mean they learnt, albeit the hard way, about the importance of knowing your customer.

For onboarding new clients, I would recommend you ask them to complete a Credit Application Form (either on-line or manually), which you should pre-populate with the information you need to obtain from the customer. For instance, is the client a limited company, a partnership, or a sole trader? This information is vital as it determines who is legally liable for the debts of the business.

Also, make sure you acquire the contact details of the personnel who are responsible for authorising your invoices, the relevant addresses i.e., delivery address, address for invoices, registered office, as applicable. For sole traders and partnerships, it is also essential that you obtain the home addresses of the individuals concerned just in case you have to take legal action to recover a debt.

Not only does KYC help you to understand and manage potential risks with new clients but it also demonstrates that you are a professional and trustworthy entity which might attract more customers. After all, no-one wants to enter into a bad relationship in business or in our personal lives.

KYC is also about building relationships with your customers so you should aim to find out more about their business, what they do with the products they buy from you and what their future objectives might be. This can be built into your regular communication with customers whether it be for another sales order or when you are asking them for payment of the account. Cultivating relationships in this way builds loyalty which can lead to further business from these customers.

Customers will feel they are being afforded a personal service and research has shown that customers rate their experience just as much as the goods or services they are purchasing from you.

For some organisations such as banks and insurance companies, KYC processes involve carrying out customer due diligence and identification and verification so that they know exactly who they are dealing with. This minimises the risk of taking on customers who might be involved in money laundering or fraudulent activities which could expose them to high losses as well as potentially being fined or even facing criminal prosecution themselves.

Therefore, I would urge you not to underestimate the importance of KYC. It could prove valuable in the collection of payments as well as securing more business.

LET'S THRIVE

Together

Whether you own café or an online clothing boutique company, you want your business to thrive. But with everyday business challenges and the constant shift in customer expectations, it's hard to keep up. To meet these new demands and market challenges, you must adjust how you do business, too. Without the right partner, you may be concerned you won't have the solutions to compete in this new world. It shouldn't be this hard to find a holistic partner who provides scalable commerce solutions that can meet your needs now and in the future. culture.



At Worldpay, we understand how to meet the complex changes that are occurring each day. Leveraging our scale and expertise, our no-nonsense approach is trusted by over 1 million businesses today. We're prepared to evolve the commerce experience with you. No matter where you are in your business journey, Worldpay can guide you to meet changing customer demands and embrace new innovations.

Worldpay can make it easy for business owners to accept 300+ payment methods and access faster funding through a complete set of innovative value-added solutions that unlock opportunities to help drive customer engagement and increase business & revenue growth.

Let's thrive and grow together. First, get to know us. Then choose the right technology so you can start accepting payments, quickly. Finally, select from a dynamic variety of payment enhancing solutions to help boost your business.



With Worldpay's innovative value-added solutions and our colleagues focused on delivering recommendations, you can help your business monitor its cash flow, engage with customers, and enhance operations. All these pieces are critical to deliver a unique experience for your customers.



Your payment experience needs to leverage speed, loyalty, and technology to attract new customers and retain the ones you have. Are you growing faster than you anticipated?

Our integrated payments solution can enhance the customer experience by linking payment and software applications.

Once your customer makes the sale, the speed of funds and cash flow management are essential as you continue to build and grow your business.



We've built informational dashboards that track trends and help you understand insights about your business. We also provide simplified, on-the-go technology and payment acceptance methods that allow your customers to make payments anywhere, in their selected currency.

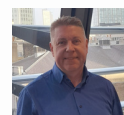
Our security solution, FraudSight, helps to protect you and your customers against fraudulent transactions.

Worldpay is a market leading provider of payment solutions, with a wealth of experience catering for small independents right up to large corporate clients.

We're ideally placed to support you with end-to-end solutions for standalone card terminals, technical integrations, online payment gateways and everything in between.

Which, in simple terms, means helping you reach more customers and allowing them to pay in the way they want to pay. Contact us today to learn more about how we can meet your unique business needs.

Get in touch to find out more



Tony Saxby

worldpay

©2023 FIS and/or its subsidiaries. All rights reserved.

Worldpay (UK) Limited (Company No. 07316500 / FCA No. 530923 & 712965), Worldpay Limited (Company No. 03424752 / FCA No. 504504), Worldpay AP Limited (Company No: 05593466 / FCA No: 502597). Registered Office: The Walbrook Building, 25 Walbrook, London EC4N 8AF and authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority under the Payment Service Regulations 2017 for the provision of payment services. Worldpay (UK) Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for consumer credit activities (No.712965). Each of Worldpay (UK) Limited, Worldpay Limited, Worldpay AP Limited and Worldpay B.V. is part of the FIS group of companies including Fidelity National Information Services, Inc. (a Georgia company).



NEW YEAR. NEW START. HOUSE-KEEPING!



If you are a business, who is thinking of selling or exiting their business sometime in 2025, now is the time to start planning. At Aly Young Law last year we saw a 100% increase in the number of business sales we handled from the previous year and there is no sign yet of that slowing down.

When you sell or transfer your business, the buyer will carry out detailed investigations known as due diligence, to make sure they fully understand how the business has been run and whether there are any issues with it.

As an owner-managed business, you are often so tied up with marketing, sales and service delivery, it is hard to keep on top of compliance and paperwork. The trouble is that if you don't do that and a potential buyer finds issues within your business, at best, give them an opportunity to reduce the amount of money they will pay for it. Something known as "price-chipping". At worst this can threaten to derail the whole deal.

For this reason, we recommend that you carry out a thorough audit of your business BEFORE you allow a buyer access to it. That way you can find any problems before they do. And more importantly fix them, so everything is squeaky clean and tickety boo when the time arrives.

We have listed some of the things below that apply to most businesses. There may be others if your business depending on what sectors or specialisms there are within your business.

- Contracts – part of the value within our business are within the relationships you have with clients and suppliers. Buyers will want to see copies of your terms and conditions and any long-term contracts or supply agreements. Make sure you have these and read them first to check they are correct and put you in the best legal position possible. If not, get them re-written and signed up to
- Claims and disputes – the Buyer will want to know whether there are any issues within the customer and supply relationships. A buyer doesn't expect perfection here, but it is important to know whether there are any problems with these groups of people, show a pro-active response to dealing with any issues and keep good records
- Intellectual property – Goodwill is another important area. Makes sure that your branding, including any names or logos are properly registered



- Employees – in most cases, employees will transfer with the business, so it is important again to check you have complied with all legislation and have good records of all your staff, their benefits and length of employment etc.
- Assets – these are also where value lies. Buyers will want a good inventory and to know whether any of the assets are charged to banks or other lenders
- Finance – this is probably the most important area. Information needs to be up-to-date and accurate. Buyers will want to see previous accounts and up-to-date management accounts. And know that all taxes have been paid

Selling your business is exciting but can also be extremely stressful. Do talk to us at AYL if you are thinking of going down this path. We can support you and make the whole process as easy as possible, making sure you get paid for all the hard work you have put into building your business.



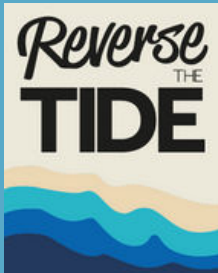
Solicitor specialising in shareholder and partnership agreements and business sales.



M: +44 (0)7922 042 816

E: aly@aly-young-law.co.uk

W: aly-young-law.co.uk



Do you have a story to tell?

Launching Soon!

A new magazine to focus on charities, not for profits, independents and producers

Email sally@reversethetide.com to find out more

A FRESH START: WHY BUSINESS OWNERS SHOULD PRIORITISE WILL REVIEWS IN THE NEW YEAR



Sara Sheppard

<https://www.slswillsandmore.co.uk/>



As the calendar turns to a new year, it is not only a time for resolutions and fresh beginnings but also an opportune moment for business owners to revisit important aspects of their personal and professional lives. One often overlooked but crucial task that should be on every entrepreneur's checklist is the review of their Will. While it may not be the most glamorous or exciting resolution, ensuring your affairs are in order can provide peace of mind and protect your legacy.

Changes in Business and Personal Circumstances: Business landscapes evolve, and personal situations can change rapidly. Over the course of a year, your business may have experienced growth, acquisitions, or shifts in structure. Similarly, personal milestones such as marriages, births or divorces can significantly impact your estate planning needs. A Will review allows you to align your testamentary wishes with your current circumstances, ensuring that your assets are distributed to your latest intentions.

Protecting Your Family and Assets: A comprehensive Will is a vital tool in safeguarding the financial future of your loved ones. By regularly reviewing your Will, you can identify and address any gaps or changes needed to provide for your family's welfare. Business owners, in particular should consider the implications of their business assets on their estate and ensure a seamless transition of ownership or control.

Tax Planning: Tax laws can change, affecting the financial implications of your estate. By staying informed about tax updates and regularly reviewing your Will, you can incorporate strategies to minimise the tax burden on your estate, and this proactive approach allows you to take advantage of any new legal provisions or benefits, to ensure that your heirs receive the maximum inheritance possible.

Succession Planning: For business owners, a Will is a crucial component of succession planning. Whether passing the business to family members, selling it or appointing a successor, a well-drafted Will can facilitate a smooth transition. Regular reviews help you adapt your succession plan to any changes in the business environment, ensuring the continuity of your enterprise.

Legal Compliance and Validity: Laws governing Wills and Estates can vary, and staying compliant is essential. Regular reviews ensure that it aligns with the current legal requirements, reducing the risk of disputes or challenges. Even if no changes are needed, by carrying out this exercise, confirming the validity of your Will ensures that your wishes are carried out as intended.

The New Year serves as an excellent reminder for business owners to prioritise the review of their Wills. By taking the time to assess and update their testamentary documents, entrepreneurs can adapt to changes, protect their family and assets, optimise tax planning, and ensure a seamless succession of their business. This proactive approach not only provides peace of mind but also contributes to a solid foundation for a successful and well-planned future.

Here at SLS Wills and More Ltd, we have over 37 years' experience to help guide you in the construction of your Will, so if you would like to chat with one of our experts, please call us on 01304 577998 to book an appointment.

NAVIGATING THE MARKETING LANDSCAPE IN 2024: KEY FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Introduction

As we step into 2024, the marketing world continues to evolve at a breakneck pace, driven by technological advancements, shifting consumer behaviors, and an increasingly competitive environment. Businesses and marketers must adapt to these changes to stay relevant and effective. This article delves into the key factors to consider when formulating marketing strategies in 2024.

1. Embracing Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) are no longer just buzzwords but essential tools in the marketer's toolkit. In 2024, these technologies are crucial for personalizing customer experiences, optimizing marketing campaigns, and predicting consumer behavior. Marketers must leverage AI to analyze large datasets, gain insights into customer preferences, and automate repetitive tasks, thereby enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.

2. Understanding the Privacy-First Landscape

With increasing concerns over data privacy and the implementation of stringent regulations like GDPR and CCPA, marketers in 2024 must navigate a privacy-first landscape. This shift requires a balance between personalization and privacy, emphasizing transparent data practices and securing consumer trust. Marketers need to focus on first-party data and contextual targeting strategies while respecting user privacy.



3. Integrating Omnichannel Strategies

The distinction between online and offline channels continues to blur in 2024. Consumers expect a seamless experience across all touchpoints, making an integrated omnichannel approach essential. This strategy involves understanding the customer journey across various channels and ensuring consistent messaging and experience. Marketers must leverage data analytics to understand channel performance and customer preferences.

4. Leveraging Video and Interactive Content

Video content remains king in 2024, with a growing emphasis on interactive and immersive experiences. The rise of platforms like TikTok and the continued popularity of YouTube underscore the importance of video in engaging audiences. Additionally, interactive content such as quizzes, polls, and AR/VR experiences are becoming increasingly significant in capturing consumer attention and providing value.

5. Email is Dead, Long Live WhatsApp

The landscape of direct messaging has undergone a significant shift in 2023. With the decline of traditional email marketing effectiveness, WhatsApp has risen to prominence in the UK. This change reflects a broader international trend towards instant messaging and chat apps for business communication. Marketers are now focusing on these platforms for direct engagement, leveraging their immediacy, high open rates, and the ability to create more personalized and conversational exchanges with customers.

6. Harnessing the Power of Marketing Automation

In 2024, automation has become a cornerstone of effective marketing strategies. From automated email campaigns to chatbots and programmatic advertising, automation tools are being used to increase efficiency, personalize customer interactions, and scale marketing efforts. Marketers must understand how to effectively integrate automation into their strategies, ensuring that they enhance, rather than detract from, the customer experience.

7. Utilizing Influencer and Community Marketing

Influencer marketing continues to be effective in 2024, but with a shift towards authenticity and niche influencers. Brands are leveraging influencers who resonate deeply with specific audiences for more targeted and genuine engagement. Additionally, community marketing, where brands build and engage with communities around shared interests, is gaining traction.

8. Keeping Up with Rapid Technological Changes

Finally, the rapid pace of technological advancements means that marketers must be agile and continuously educate themselves. Whether it's the latest in blockchain technology, the evolving landscape of social media platforms, or emerging digital marketing tools, staying informed and adaptable is crucial.

Conclusion

Marketing in 2024 is a dynamic and challenging endeavor, requiring a blend of technological savvy, ethical consideration, and creative strategy. By focusing on these key factors, marketers can create effective, engaging, and responsible campaigns that resonate with their audiences and drive success in an ever-evolving landscape.



Sam Howard & Simon Fowler
Two Thirds Different
www.twothirdsdifferent.com

Fall into...
THE HONEY TRAP

- Stuck in overwhelm and craving HEADSPACE?
- Need some CLARITY and LASER FOCUS?
- Want ACCOUNTABILITY & COLLABORATIVE INTELLIGENCE with a peer-group you TRUST?

Taste the
Rebel Hive Mastermind
for only £33!

"I cannot recommend Rebel Hive enough; it's transformed how I do business"

"I feel safe with this group and I'm amazed at the magic that happens every single time. It can be a lonely place being self-employed"

BOOK A CALL

<https://linktr.ee/EmmaChiefRebel>

EasiChat
Customer service, made easier

www.easichat.co.uk
e: hello@easichat.co.uk
t: 0204 568 5561

EasiChat is an online customer service platform that's changing the way businesses and brands service their customers.

Our blended solution uniquely combines the speed of AI with the empathy and understanding of a human agent.

The power of AI, the value of people

Take advantage of the efficiency and speed of a chatbot, without the risk of unhelpful responses.

Wait times are reduced as a single agent can manage up to 10 conversations simultaneously using EasiChat.



Benefits

- Generate up to 65% more leads
- Staff efficiency: more productivity, lower costs
- More satisfaction, more spending: happier customers spend up to 140% more with an organisation and are 88% more likely to renew their services

"I searched from top to bottom of the chatbot market to find a product I could trust and recommend to my valuable telephone clients, with no success. Until that is, I discovered EasiChat and never looked back."
Claire Burroughs, Managing Director, AnsaCom

With Gartner predicting that chatbots will become the primary customer service channel for 1 in 4 of all organisations, can you afford to miss out on the EasiChat revolution?

Why not see for yourself how EasiChat can help to transform your business and arrange a demo? [Let's chat!](#)

Better customer service. The EasiChat way.

Who Are TQB?



Overview:

TQB Ltd is an award winning, leading provider of Tailored Quality Assurance solutions specialising in Human Resources (HR), quality and compliance services. Established with a vision of optimising organisational performance through customised QA strategies, TQB has developed as a trusted partner for businesses seeking excellence in their field.

Mission Statement:

"At TQB Ltd we are committed to empowering organisations with tailor-made solutions that enhance HR efficiency, ensure uncompromised quality and foster compliance excellence. We strive to be the catalyst for our clients' successes by delivering innovative and personalised QA services that will drive continuous improvement."

Core Services:

Human Resources (HR) Solutions:

TQB specialises in creating HR frameworks that align with the unique needs and goals of each client. Our HR solutions cover positive culture, productivity outputs, employee engagement, performance appraisal and HR analytics. By leveraging technology and industry best practices we assist organisations in building and sustaining a high-performance workforce.

Quality Assurance:

TQB takes a holistic approach to quality assurance, offering comprehensive services to ensure products, services and processes meet or exceed industry standards. From ISO standards and quality control to processing optimisation, we tailor our QA solutions to address specific challenges and goals promoting efficiency, reliability and customer satisfaction.

Compliance Excellence:

Ensuring compliance with industry regulations and standards is paramount in today's business environment. TQB provides specialised compliance services that cover a spectrum of industries. Our experts work closely with clients to navigate complex regulatory landscapes, conduct risk assessments and implement and sustain robust compliance management systems.

Key Differentiators:

Tailor-Made Solutions:

TQB understands that one size does not fit all. Our strength lies in crafting bespoke solutions that align with the unique requirements of each client, ensuring maximum impact and value.

Innovation and Technology:

By embracing cutting-edge technology TQB integrates innovative tools and systems into its services, enhancing efficiency and accuracy across HR, quality and compliance functions.

Experienced Team:

Our team comprises seasoned professionals with extensive experience in HR, quality assurance and compliance. Their expertise allows us to provide insightful and practical solutions that drive tangible results.

Clientele:

TQB Ltd has successfully served a diverse range of clients across industries including manufacturing, healthcare, finance and technology. Our client portfolio is testimony to our adaptability and effectiveness in meeting distinct, unique needs of all sectors.

Contact Information:

TQB Ltd

The Cottage Marine Walk Street Hythe Kent CT21 5NW

01303 205559

info@tailormadeqa.com

www.tailormadeqa.com

In conclusion:

TQB Ltd stands as a trusted partner for organisations seeking to elevate HR practices, ensure quality excellence and achieve regulatory compliance. With a commitment to customisation, innovation and a client-centric approach TQB is pledged to continue making a significant impact in the field of tailored quality assurance services.



THE RESILIENCE COACH

“Proactive” Resilience versus “Reactive” Resilience



Unfortunately, many people don't tap into their Resiliency, nor find out how Resilient they are until something unpleasant happens to them or life throws them a Curve Ball.

Why wait for this to happen? How about you make the choice to work upon your Resilience now, in a way that you find interesting and enjoyable?

How will your life be better when you choose to be Proactively Resilient?

What will you have more of?

Resilient small business owners learn how to turn mistakes into opportunities. They learn to look past the immediate setbacks and keep their eyes firmly on the long-term goal.



The details of the setback or the finer points of the mistake don't matter. Instead, what matters is how business owners deal with those setbacks and keep moving forward.

In all workplaces there are two types of people – those who are proactive, recognising opportunities in advance and seizing them to secure the best possible outcome; and reactive, those who take a more 'laissez-faire' approach bumbling through each day with no real plan but caught off guard when challenges come their way.

Oxford Languages - the world's leading dictionary publisher, with over 150 years of experience creating and delivering authoritative dictionaries globally in more than 50 languages – defines proactive as “creating or controlling a situation rather than just responding to it after it's happened.”

Being proactive is taking charge and making things happen instead of waiting for someone else to do it or reacting to events. It's an essential skill, from work and school to relationships and personal finances.

Your ability to be proactive means taking the initiative and responsibility for your own life, setting goals, and taking action to achieve them. It's about controlling your destiny and making things happen instead of letting them happen. It's a positive, can-do attitude that can make a huge difference in your life.

On the other hand, reactive is defined as “acting in response to a situation, rather than creating or controlling it.”

So, let's now apply 'proactive' and 'reactive' to the concept of resilience.

Proactive resilience requires a holistic, company-wide risk management approach that results in sustained superior performance, maintaining a high performance and self-renewal over time through innovation and agility.

Rather than defending against the unpredictable, truly agile organisations move towards leveraging opportunities for growth. Leaders need to shift away from multi-layer reporting structures, rigid annual planning and budgeting cycles and a compliance-oriented culture.

The more leaders are personally prepared for future events (predictable and otherwise), the more they can support themselves and those around them.

On the other side of the coin there are those leaders who – whilst demonstrating key traits of resilience – do so in a reactive fashion.

There's been no strategic planning to prepare themselves for challenges; or scanning of the marketplace horizon to see what lies ahead.

They might be able to demonstrate resilience and recover from the adversity, however, they will be starting from a reactive position which means they're immediately on the 'back foot,' – already playing 'catch-up,' and potentially losing the opportunity to secure competitive advantage and retain their leading industry position.

This is another reason why I am not a fan of the term bounce back and promote the idea of Resilience being about "Springing Forward with Learning". There is a risk that when you bounce back you and your organisation will go back to the "old ways" and not have adapted or learnt.

To be able to Spring Forward, pausing, reenergising, reflecting and, therefore, learning needs to be part of the ingrained Culture of your Teams, your Organisation and your personal Leadership style.

Podcast Episode 1 Series 1 (all episodes available on website)

Website – www.theresiliencecoach.co.uk



Russell Harvey -The Resilience Coach



Employee Engagement and Culture – Successful Employee Engagement Strategies

A recent survey highlighted that with engaged employees, a company has 21% more profitability and suggests that employee engagement increases productivity by 17%. With the average UK engagement rate of 49%, 51% of employees therefore not engaged, these statistics should definitely not be ignored!



In my previous articles, I have discussed in more detail 4 of the 5 successful employee engagement strategies that an employer should follow to increase engagement with their business:-

- Investing in their employees' careers
- Recognising achievements
- Involving employees
- Give employees a voice
- Ensure a healthy work environment



Low employee engagement will usually result in higher than average turnover of employees and this alone can have a significant impact on an employer's costs – not just the cost of re-hire but the hidden costs involved. This includes the impact to other employees taking on additional workplace, their morale, lost productivity, absence levels increasing, risk of even more employee turnover, lost custom and reputational impact to the business.

On average it will cost a business 20% of the employee's salary to rehire however the hidden costs could increase this to around 40-50% which isn't a statistic that employers should ignore when cost savings is so key right now!

My 5 strategies to increase the morale of your employees and in turn their engagement, are simple but very effective and low cost strategies and this article will cover the fifth strategy, ensuring a healthy work environment, in more detail

Unless you've been living under a rock for the last couple of years, we have all seen and heard a lot of talk on the importance of a healthy workplace culture.

Healthy workplace cultures can provide many benefits to an organisation including increased productivity, increased customer satisfaction, reduced employee turnover and absence.

In turn, toxic workplaces affect employees' mental health and wellbeing, it can affect their personal lives, not just their professional lives. As a result, this can increase absenteeism, employee turnover and lower productivity all of which have cost implications and can also impact on the reputation of an organisation.

In a 2022 survey of job seekers, 21% stated that "poor company culture" was their top reason for leaving their job in the previous 12 months and a worryingly high 34% reported that they left their job within the first 90 days because of "company culture not as expected".

Below are some strategies employers can implement within their organisations to increase engagement of their employees and create a healthy, happy work environment.

Flexible Working / Worklife Balance:

Encouraging your employees to have a healthy work life balance is one of the best ways to keep them happy and motivated.

One way to promote a healthy work life balance is allowing employees to have flexible working hours. This isn't always possible in all roles or industries but in many roles flexible working can be considered and can work perfectly well for both employee and employer.

Earlier start and finish times, later start and finish times, time off to attend a child's sports day, grandparents paid day off following the arrival of a grandchild, later start for parents of a child on their first day of school – all contribute to a more balance between work and home and employees will be valued as a result.

Open and Transparent Culture

Having an open and transparent culture allows people to feel "safe" within their workplace without fear of speaking up. This is useful when identifying and raising concerns, issues with unacceptable conduct or behaviours without fear or repercussions. This will also build trust amongst your workforce if organisations are encouraging employees to speak up.

Awareness of Health and Wellbeing

It's never a bad idea to promote your employees living healthy. Encouraging employees to be healthy shows that you genuinely care about their wellbeing and could lead to lasting commitment on their behalf. Employee assistance programmes provide support and guidance for employees such as counselling sessions, Occupational Health support or financial advice.

Positive and fulfilling workplace cultures don't just appear overnight – it takes time and some work! Creating a healthy workplace culture where everyone feels valued, welcomed and respected is vital to any organisation's success.

Please contact me if you would like to find out more about the services we provide at Saxon HR Consultancy Ltd including a review of your employee turnover and data to identify trends and support to implement highly effective strategies to increase morale and engagement.

Maria Wilson - Saxon HR Consultancy Ltd
maria.wilson@saxonhrconsultancy.co.uk or call

01795 390010

www.saxonhrconsultancy.co.uk



Maria Wilson



Create An Environment in Which Team Members Can Prepare For Promotion

In the last issue we talked about the importance of succession planning. This edition, we are covering how you can create an environment in which team members can prepare for promotion.



Pam Molyneux



The first area is to look at is what we talked about last edition, have a succession plan and communicate it to staff. Let them know of the possibilities and what the prospects are. Without such a picture, they don't know! As part of the policy decision making, this needs to extend to have an internal policy that means all role opportunities are advertised internally before being advertised externally. There may be exceptions which need to be clearly communicated why to create an open and transparent approach.

As part of regular touchpoints with the team, ensure that constructive feedback is part of such conversations. This helps to improve performance real time, no waiting for those elusive annual reviews. Constructive feedback also needs to be provided in instances where an internal candidate isn't selected. Make sure this is a two-way conversation though and allow the team the opportunity to express any areas that maybe hindering them, actual or perceived.

Ensure training is up to date on all the of basic requirements for the role and services provided in their role and also in line with trends and developments for the industry. Think along all lines such as qualifications, seminars, online courses, secondments, shadowing, networking events and networking opportunities with other colleagues – all such opportunities help with development, help to raise their skills, confidence, and profile.



Look at ways to introduce and then continue with team building opportunities. This can be through traditional away days, but think of cross team working, think of projects that can bring resources and great minds from across the organisation together.

These all need to feed into a formal career development framework. This can be done internally through HR or Managers or through external agencies if the business are able to offer such.

The framework would include conversations that focus on career development; discussions with a mentor someone who is seasoned, who is inspirational; and leadership development opportunities that introduce team members to supervisory/team leader responsibilities.

All such activities can bring the whole picture and development journey together for your team member. For the business environment, this can help increase performance and potentially innovation, engagement and retention due to increased motivation as they move towards their longer-term goal (s); all of which helps reduce costs associated with turnover, low productivity and staff absences.

I will leave you with the wise words of Sir Richard Branson, "Take care of your employees and they'll take care of your business".

Join me next time when I will be sharing top tips to help your team members to prepare for management promotion.

In the meantime, if you would like to discuss this further, please do get in touch - 07487 380714 or pam@pmbusinesssupportservices.com - we love partnering for HR Excellence To Unleash Your Company's Potential



Pam Molyneux



PROMOTIONS!



Evolution of a Planner – The Story of How I Came to Be



Nature or nurture? That age old question can apply to just about anything. I'm Kath Parrington, my business, MyMasterplan is all about Business Plans. Writing Business Plans for the right reason and making Business Plans simple. But where did all that planning come from? Was I born with it? Or did life make a planner out of me? It's an interesting question to ponder as it highlights some things about planning.

I want to take you back to 1980. 1980 was an important year for me. I turned 11 years old that year, and it was a year of great change for this pre-teen. I remember The Dukes of Hazzard on TV. I remember Atomic by Blondie on the radio. It was the year I went up into the Big School, in the Steel Town that was Scunthorpe.

Now most people in the UK remember the miners' strike 1984-85. But less well remembered is the steel strike that preceded it. January 2 1980 the strike started and lasted 14 weeks. It was the first run in that the Conservative government had with the UK's unionised industrial workforce. It didn't end well for the Steelworkers. The following year, the Normanby Park works were closed. This was one of the two big Steelworks in Scunthorpe at the time and steel was by far the biggest local employer. My dad was a Steelworker and dad, like half the town was made redundant. At the age of 11 that had a massive impact on me. I saw how worried my parents were that we might lose everything they had worked so hard to achieve. We were never penniless. We didn't starve. Mum was a schoolteacher. Dad ended up running his own business for a while, and then moved on to driving jobs. But it never felt quite so free and easy again, as it had in the late 70's.

From that point on, I worked, I saved, and I learned to value experiences over 'stuff'. And I became obsessive about security. I was determined to always have enough of a safety net below me that I would never have to worry about losing my home.

It was that experience at a key point in my life that made a planner out of a carefree young girl.

Breaking that down then:

- As a result of a fear, I set a goal – to own my own home outright, as soon as I could
- That goal was measurable – I would know when I got there
- It was easy to break down into smaller steps – hmm, that's starting to look like a plan
- It gave me focus – it was easy to filter out what might get in the way of achieving the goal



Now, just because you might not have had that huge event early in your life, it doesn't mean you've missed the boat. Anyone can become a planner at any stage in their life. I do think it helps if there's a strong emotional connection to that plan. For me, it was fear. I now know that a healthier driver is a positive desire for something. But it's the powerful emotion that made a planner out of me.

So, what's the thing, the need, want or desire that's strong enough to make a planner out of you?



Kath Parrington

<https://www.mymasterplan.co.uk/>



A new complexion on equality

How to unlock the equity in your business

As business leaders, we are privileged to be able to draw on the talent pool that is within our organisations, within our networks as well as our friends and family. Blended with access to supporting resources, we can bring our visions to life whilst making a tangible difference in the quality of life of others.

But hand on heart, can you truly say you are focused on getting the most from that talent?

As we rightly pursue diversity and inclusion in an increasingly multicultural world, this still seems to be a lack of understanding when it comes to delivering equality in the workplace.

One of the main contributors to this is a lack of attention to equity, the third tenet of DEI, increasingly a critical success factor for a modern business.

Treating people equally should be a mandate for a fair society but the rationale for this in business delivers a far greater return on investment. By inspiring diversity around the table, we see far more innovation and creative solutions that emerge faster, with far greater relevance to the emerging generations. This can only be good for your business and the wider community.

By bringing diverse teams together, you will be drawing on the equity each of those contributors brings with them. No two people have followed the same journey to be in that one place with you and this brings with it an amazing array of different perspectives that, when applied, can result in far better solutions that will work for a wider range of people.

As a leader, you have to lead the way in unlocking the equity in your organisation.

You need to lead by being an ally.

Based on work at Harvard, here are 10 habits of Highly Effective Allies:



You may consider yourself adept at any number of these but they all come with different degrees of depth and is always worth developing each area and maintaining vigilance on these.

Imagine yourself on the receiving end of any one of these. How would you feel? Would you perhaps be more confident in your own value, more bold with your unique perspectives and more at one with your colleagues?

Would that in turn lead to a more positive outlook for the task at hand and be a context for more input, fresh ideas and new approaches?

Oh, how we need more of that in this crazy world we live in right now.

Barnaby Wynter is the founder of The White Allyship Collective – A New Complexion on Equality. His mission is to enable a new approach for leaders, who recognise the value of running a truly multicultural organisation, by embedding a different practical approach to equality. Building on the good work of DEI so far, he aims to blend in the 10 habits of Highly Effective White Allies into business behaviour and drive exponential outcomes for a more equitable world that pays dividends in creativity, productivity and growth for businesses.



Business Directory

For more details, visit [Directory - Steer Your Business](#)



Aly Young Law



www.aly-young-law.co.uk

aly@ay-law.co.uk

07922 042 816

Azets



www.azets.co.uk

Botanical By Brina



www.botanicalbybrina.com

info@botanicalbybrina.com

Calendly

Organise your diary and save time

<https://bit.ly/3MJY4aD>

Capsule CRM

<https://bit.ly/3KvDhWU>

CH Accountancy Ltd



www.ch-accountancy.co.uk

01233 329 545

Claire@ch-accountancy.co.uk

Cruise and Travel Holidays



[https://www.facebook.com/sh](https://www.facebook.com/sholtCHUK)

[oltCHUK](#)

Sholt@cruiseandtravelholidays.co.uk

EasiChat



[EasiChat – Customer service made easier.](#)

E-First Finance



David Faulkner

davidfaulkner555@btinternet.com

[com](#)

07971 595689

Go Cardless

<https://bit.ly/3OSSwPu>

Gossip Gals

<https://www.gossipgals.co.uk/?ref=SteerYourBusiness>

IT Manager Services Ltd



[https://itmanagerservices.co.u](https://itmanagerservices.co.uk)

[k](#)

tom@itmanagerservices.co.uk

01795 342 362

JM Hypnotherapy



jmhypnotherapy.co.uk

joolsbythesea182@gmail.com

07773 502399

Kay Downie – The Soul Mechanic



www.kaydownie.co.uk

Kay@thesoulmechanic.co.uk

07508 108865

Latte & Live



latteandlive.com

info@LatteandLive.com

07977229001

Lucro CRM

<https://lucrocrm.com/?affiliates=6>

McMillan Wealth Consultants Limited



[www.Linktr.ee/jparkermcmilla](http://www.Linktr.ee/jparkermcmillanwealth)

[nwealth](#)

joe.parker@sjpp.co.uk

07540 086324

Business Directory

For more details, visit [Directory - Steer Your Business](#)



Midlife Harmony Retreats



www.midlifeharmony.co.uk
Jodouglaswellnesscoach@gmail.com
07902565210

My Master Plan



<https://www.mymasterplan.co.uk/>

kath@mymasterplan.co.uk
07803 503710

Not Just Travel

www.ianandliz.notjusttravel.com
ian.liz@notjusttravel.com
07771 683778

PM Business Support Services



www.pmbusinesssupportservices.com
pam@pmbusinesssupportservices.com
07487 380714

Pecunia



www.pecunia2016.co.uk
info@pecunia2016.co.uk
0203 9090777

Ready Steady Websites

<https://bit.ly/3Fa0CMF>

RHL Business Vision



www.rhlbv.co.uk
jane@rhlbv.co.uk
07931 307156

Saxon HR Consultancy Ltd



www.saxonhrconsultancy.co.uk
maria.wilson@saxonhrconsultancy.co.uk
01795 390 010

Simplero

Membership sites
<https://bit.ly/3w0YjHv>

SLS Wills & More



www.slswillsandmore.co.uk
info@slswillsandmore.co.uk
01304 577998

SW Equity Release Services

www.swequityreleaseservices.co.uk
sue@swequityreleaseservices.co.uk
07970053739

The Good Therapy Practice

Counselling and psychotherapy for business owners (and their families). Based in Hythe, near Folkestone.
<https://thegoodtherapypractice.co.uk/>
paula@thegoodtherapypractice.co.uk
07534 984298

The Resilience Coach



www.theresiliencecoach.co.uk
russell@theresiliencecoach.co.uk
07887 602000

Business Directory

For more details, visit [Directory - Steer Your Business](#)



TQB Ltd



www.tailormadeqa.com
Catherine.perry@tailormadeqa.com
01303 205257

Your Virtual PA



www.kellyyourvirtualpa.com
admin@kellyyourvirtualpa.com
07922 197614

If you'd like your business listed in the business directory, please email sally@steeryourbusiness.com for more details

Utility Warehouse



<http://www.Uw.partners/s.marshall>
Sally@steeryourbusiness.com
0777 171 4221

Your Virtual Assistant Solutions



<https://yourvirtualassistantsolutions.co.uk/>
emilie.naiker@yourvirtualassistantsolutions.co.uk
07981 918 458

Ventoux Digital



www.ventoux.digital
07940 516482
mark@ventoux.digital

Viral Marketing Stars

Canva templates to make content simple
<https://bit.ly/39IU15U>

Your Smart System

<https://bit.ly/YSS-Sally>

Increase Profits By Knowing Your Numbers

Understand what's working for you

FREE ONLINE MASTERCLASS

- Key numbers for YOU
- What's working
- Get an holistic view
- Actions you need to take



WhatsApp
Automations
for my
business?



• TWO THIRDS
DIFFERENT •