

ON TARGET

Quarterly Marketing Bulletin

in association with

The McAlpine Partnership - *graphic design consultants*

Issue 6/2004

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The Open Golf Championship will be held in Troon in July 2004, and will provide myriad opportunities to businesses and organisations in the West of Scotland to interact with many new contacts.

The bogey with this is that you need to know who to interact with, and how to do that most effectively for your business to get a clear shot at maximising this opportunity. Is it sensible to run a competition? To hold an event? Change the look of the premises? Advertise to tourists? It's easy to be daunted by the marketing options facing you.

Marketing is a key business tool, which is often neglected, either through lack of time, lack of available budget or lack of knowledge and understanding. We can help by bringing you high quality marketing advice, support and activities in a down to earth, understandable and accessible way, to help you drive things forward.

With this in mind, we have produced an easy to follow marketing information pack to help you focus on your objectives and stay out of the rough this summer, which we will be happy to send to you.



The pack helps you to focus on what you really want to gain from any activity and to prioritise them so that you and your colleagues can all pull in the same direction. Included are step by step guides on many marketing activities, and tips on trying out new marketing activities on your own.

Once you have your marketing underway, you will be able to enjoy the atmosphere of the event and be confident that your business or organisation is truly Open for Business!

LYNN KELLY - MARKETING MANAGER
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IIP CASE STUDY

#3: Abbeyfield Residential Home

We continue our series of case studies of businesses that have benefited from following the Investors In People programme with Abbeyfield Residential Home. The series aims to illustrate the real business benefits achievable by working towards and maintaining the standard.



Abbeyfield Residential Home, located in Irvine, provides accommodation for up to 22 elderly residents. It enjoys a superb reputation within both the local and wider communities. The decision to become involved in IIP came about when team leader, Isabel Muir, attended an IIP seminar. She decided that by taking the organisation through IIP they could streamline their systems and illustrate their professionalism. The company was first recognised in 2001 and has since successfully passed its review this year.

MS Muir stated, *"IIP has been a and continues to be a positive experience for us and is something I would encourage other organisations to consider. IIP gave us much more focus and allowed us to take an overall view of the organisation and where we are taking it"*

For more information on how to become involved in IIP, please contact Graham Stevenson at AME Marketing on 01292 670164.

Fraser Cowden - MARKETING ASSISTANT
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STEP BY STEP

#5: Customer Feedback

If you have been following this series of articles and implementing each one, you will know your market, be aware of what activities are useful, have a plan of marketing activity and have come up with some really creative ideas.

Now I'm going to give you a few pointers on how to find out if it's all going to plan using customer feedback.

Step 1 – What do you want to know?

List all the potential questions, then be quite ruthless in selecting only those whose answers will have a bearing on business decisions. Stick to the 'need to know' rather than the 'nice to know' as clients will tire of endless questions and may start to give rash responses to get it over with.

Step 2 – Who should you ask?

Steer clear of asking all & sundry about everything you've ever done. Be focussed in the profiling of clients to target, but do not pick only specific clients which you know will give a positive response. Complaints and suggestions for improvement are more useful than praise.

Step 3 – The methodology

The most appropriate way to contact your clients will depend on your target group. You may choose electronic methods such as via the web or by email or even by text message, or a more traditional method of post, fax or telephone. Face to face street interviews may be a more effective way to identify and interact with some client types.

Step 4 – The questions

Questions should be phrased so as not to be

leading or vague while being easy to understand and answer. Try to make questions interesting for the respondent – remember that they are doing you a huge favour by entering into a conversation which will ultimately improve your strategy.

Step 5 – The Analysis

How you deal with all the useful nuggets of data you have collected is very important. For short and simple studies, a spreadsheet may suffice, depending on how in-depth an analysis of different client groups you need. The main thing is to remember exactly how the initial question relates to the analysed answers. This will help you make sense of the statistics and explain them to others.

Step 6 – Make it useful!

Now that you have some great information from your clients, put it to use! Consider how the results affect your business and what realistic changes can make a beneficial difference to the way you operate.

Lynn Kelly - *MARKETING MANAGER*
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JUST TRY IT OUT!

#6 – FOCUS GROUPS



A focus group is an in-depth interview with a “group” of 6-10 respondents, “focusing” on specific research topics. Focus groups can be very useful when there is a need to collect descriptive and detailed information about opinions. They can be somewhat difficult to manage, however, but with the following tips and with some practice, you will be able to get the most from your focus groups in no time!

Plan & Prepare

Formulate a set of objectives for your focus group and write a topic guide well in advance. This is very important and will form the entire structure of your focus group, so invest some time to get it right. Set a time and a place for your focus group that is a conducive and comfortable. Plan your agenda so that your focus group lasts for approximately 60-90 minutes. Also make sure you have access to reliable recording equipment and test it beforehand.

Recruit & Confirm

A combination of postal, telephone and face-to-face invitation methods will be useful when recruiting potential group participants, although you may have to offer a financial incentive of some sort. Remember that the group’s characteristics should represent those of your target market. Spaces are obviously limited, so be choosy. It’s a good idea to keep a few ‘potentials’ at hand, just in case of any last minute cancellations. Make sure you confirm attendance a few days before the planned focus group takes place.

Facilitate & Participate

Before commencing, introduce yourself to

the group and explain what your role is. As you progress through your topic guide, it will be your job to ensure that all group members have an equal chance of expressing their opinion and that all topic areas are fully explored. Be prepared to interrupt those who have had their say and bring forward the more reserved members of the group to state their viewpoints.

Review & Conclude

Review what the group has discussed to make sure that there have been no misunderstandings. This can be done as you go along, by repeating what has been said and asking for clarification if you need to. Alternatively, you might want to summarise at the end of your focus group. All that remains is to conclude the meeting with a sincere “thank you”!

These are just a few basic tips to get you started and like many marketing projects, practice makes perfect. Learn from what worked well, what didn’t and most importantly, keep trying!

Graham Stevenson - CLIENT MANAGER
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Who We Are and What We Are Doing...

AME Marketing is an independent full service marketing consultancy firm based in Prestwick, Ayrshire. We work with a diverse client base throughout the West of Scotland.

APPROPRIATE MENU ELEMENTS



The exciting À La Carte Marketing Programme is now available thanks to European support! Clients can access a wide range of marketing activities, of which substantially more can be provided than is possible out-with the Programme at the same cost.

The Programme initially provides clients with a Marketing Overview and Tailored Marketing Menu at no cost, which is a report providing observations and recommendations on their specific marketing requirements in the form of a Marketing Menu. Clients can then choose activities from the Menu to meet their own objectives.

The Programme is supported by Scottish Executive via the European Regional Development Fund, Western Scotland Objective 2 2000 – 2006 Programme, which is administered by Strathclyde European Partnership.

The À La Carte Marketing Programme is currently available to Ayrshire SMEs in Objective 2 areas. To check your eligibility and find out more, call Lynn Kelly on 01292 670163.

Available Marketing Menu activities include:



Lynn Kelly - MARKETING MANAGER
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Marketing Myths Debunked

THE MYTH:

Increasing sales whilst cutting the marketing budget is a good idea in times of hardship.

THE REALITY:

This is a dangerous route to take which, although might bring about a short-term solution, is likely to create bigger problems over

the long-term. It is a fact that effective marketing will make the selling process easier over time, whilst a reduction in marketing activity will inevitably lead to sales becoming progressively more arduous. In any business, integrating the sales and marketing departments so that their efforts complement each other:



DESIGN CASE

the **McAlpine** partnership - graphic design consultants

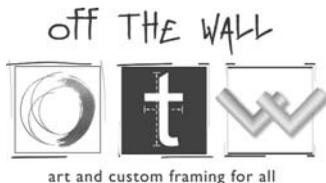
“ Off the wall but NOT off the shelf ”

Robert Grier, proprietor of the innovative art dealership and framing service, Off The Wall, first approached the McAlpine Partnership two years ago. The brief was tough; create a brand to complement the forward thinking and contemporary attitude of the company. Another problem was also added to the mix. It was essential that work be carried out within a tight time frame, since the shop refurb was well underway with the opening date looming.

Off The Wall and The McAlpine Partnership connected quickly through their shared vision and ground breaking ideas. Robert chose the inspirational name before putting the McAlpine Partnership on the 'Design Case'.

Gary McAlpine... *“The name was a good starting point, presenting us with an understanding for the direction the business was going, and giving inspiration for a series of preliminary ideas that would help OffTheWall differentiate itself from its competitors.”* Each design was very distinctive and highlighted OffTheWall's more radical approach to art dealing. Robert made the final decision as he felt the logo was, *“very unique, instantly recognisable and versatile enough to be used in almost every aspect of the shop”*.

After the logo was chosen, The McAlpine Partnership produced some business stationery. However the main focus was now on designing the shop frontage and using state-of-the-art digital printing technology to produce vibrant signs that stand out from the crowd in Ayr's bustling Sandgate.



Off the wall is now a thriving enterprise and there is no doubt that the creative images designed by The McAlpine Partnership have played a major part in increasing and growing the identity of the company.

Fraser Cowden - MARKETING ASSISTANT, AME MARKETING

To discuss how The McAlpine Partnership can transform your business identity, call Gary on 01292 318028.

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Shawfarm Road Prestwick

'Freeport is arguably the most central location in all of Ayrshire and possibly the most accessible' is the assertion made by Stewart McKay, Director of the Company which is based in Shawfarm Road, Prestwick. 'From here you can be in the centre of Irvine, Kilmarnock or Ayr within 15 minutes and even the centre of Glasgow is only 35 minutes away. And yet it does not suffer from the parking problems of any of these places'.

Already within the Freeport estate are established businesses Woodward Aircraft Controls, Daily Bake, AME Marketing and airport secure parking but there is still room for a few more. Immediate neighbours are GE Caledonian, Belcher Food Products and a number of freight forwarding companies.

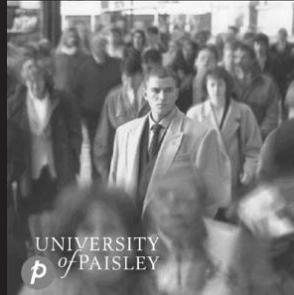
Presently available for rent with an early entry date is one unit of 4,000 square feet and if you are in the market for something to meet your own specification the Freeport can accommodate units of from 3,000 to 50,000 square feet. 'We are very flexible in our response to customer requirements', states Mr McKay 'for we realise that this is a major decision for any business and it is essential for both landlord and tenant to be completely satisfied with the final product.'

Details can be obtained from enquiries@freeport-scotland.co.uk.

The Placement Centre



PAISLEY BUSINESS SCHOOL



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**Tel: 0141 848 3370 Fax: 0141 848 3879
email: placement@paisley.ac.uk**



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AME Marketing provide advice, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in:
Market Research, Advertising & Promotion, Marketing Plans, Direct Marketing, Event Management and Marketing Training.
ISO9001, Investors In People, Members of Chartered Institute of Marketing & Market Research Society.

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