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## **THE EASIEST WAY TO GROW A BUSINESS IS TO KEEP WHAT YOU'VE GOT HAPPY!**

You can only lose your reputation once. Research has shown that if you upset a customer they may tell 11 other people about it!

If you keep a customer happy they are likely to tell 4 other people about their positive experience and they are highly likely to refer you to others. Remember referrals cost nothing to market. The most important business system you can put in place is customer satisfaction.

So here are some of the things to think about when designing a system for keeping customers happy and getting referrals:

1. Regularly review your customers needs and wants, either by survey, face to face or telephone, be prepared to adapt your products or services to changing circumstances.
2. Install customer care as the number one system in your business, discuss this with all employees and agree a system that puts the customer first.
3. Get regular feedback – ask customers “How are we doing?”
4. If the response to (3) above is positive – ask them “Do you know anyone else we could help?”
5. Measure how many referrals are given to you, it is quite simply the most cost effective form of marketing you can do.
6. Regularly review your policies.

....and what happens when you have built up that reputation?

1. Deliver. The easiest way to build and keep a good reputation is to promise a high-quality product or service and then to produce the goods consistently well.
2. Keep everybody in the business “Onside”. It is not enough that owners and employees are simply aware of the importance of reputation. Unless you all buy into it completely and with conviction, it will not work.
3. Plan – for the worst. The easiest way to turn a minor crisis into a major disaster is not to know how to handle it. In every area of your operation, ask what could happen that would be most damaging to your reputation. Then, plan for that worst case scenario (and any other less fatal but still damaging possibility).

## Team Update

Congratulations to our colleagues here at Paul O'Donovan & Associates. Vicky gave birth to a baby boy named Fionn and Siobhain gave birth to a baby girl named Kelly. Best wishes to both families.

## IS APPLE'S iPad THE NEW MUST-HAVE DEVICE?



New technology offers new ways to market to potential customers. Apple has been at the forefront of technological development since the introduction of the iPod and its latest offering, the iPad could revolutionise the way we interact with potential customers.

A recent survey by changewave.com asked respondents whether they would now be purchasing the iPad instead of a different Apple product. 1 in 4 potential iPad buyers indicated they've put one or more of Apple's other products on hold because they plan on getting an iPad. The survey also asked existing owners of e-reader devices such as the Amazon Kindle if they would have purchased an iPad if it had been available when they bought their e-reader. 1 in 4 said yes.

So what does all of this mean for people like us when it comes to marketing our services? Simply put – the iPad looks like it is going to be a very successful product. With potential customers set to use iPads in the near future, now is the time to optimise your firm's website so that it displays perfectly on the iPad. While you're at it, you could also consider getting an iPad app (application) developed which your potential customers can download from your website and use on their iPad. Perhaps a budgeting tool or tax calculator that users can download and install on their iPad would work well. Once again Apple offers us a new way to expose potential customers to our brands. The big question is, will the iPad be even more successful than the iPhone? Time will tell...

## IRISH BUSINESS COMPETITION - €100,000 IS UP FOR GRABS!

Your Country, Your Call is a competition designed to ignite imaginations and inspire creative thinking. The idea is to encourage new proposals for Irish economic success. The initiative aims to choose two proposals that will help Irish businesses, create employment and ultimately benefit the economy.

The winning proposals will be awarded €100,000 each and both projects will be supported by an independent working group which aims to implement each idea. A development fund of up to €500,000 will be available to the working group to help implement each project.

The competition is open for entries until 30 April 2010, after which the entries will be reviewed, assessed and filtered down over the summer to a point where two winning entries are selected in the middle of September 2010.

For more information you can log on to <http://www.yourcountryyourcall.com>



## Useful iPhone Applications



QuickOffice  
Connect  
You can Create,  
Open & Edit  
Microsoft Word,  
Excel & PowerPoint.

Excel & PowerPoint.



Business Card  
Reader  
Business Card  
Reader scans

and "reads" the picture using text recognition technology and enters the data into appropriate fields of the iPhone address book.



DocScanner  
DocScanner  
enables users to  
scan documents

on the road. Take a picture and convert it to pdf, email to the office



Skype – Free  
Call and instant  
message anyone  
else on Skype for

free. You can also call landlines and mobiles and send SMS anywhere in the world, at great rates.



RedLaser  
Aim your iPhone  
camera at a  
barcode and  
your phone

searches Amazon and Google for instant access to online prices.

## TOP 5 TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

The goal of advertising is to cost-effectively reach a large audience and attract new customers. Here are 5 tips to help you get the most out of your advertising:

1. Monitor your ads. It is very easy to ask new (and existing) clients where they heard about you. As simple as this is, many of us neglect to do it. If you know where your customers came from then you know what works and you can develop an effective campaign to attract more new business.
2. Highlight your unique selling points. One of the keys to all advertising is to focus on the benefits that your customers enjoy as a result of doing business with your firm. Too many ads are clever but fail to sell the benefits of the product or service.
3. Establish an image. You can recognize a Nokia phone just from its distinctive ring tone. Likewise, there are plenty of products that you recognise by their packaging or logo. Image counts when it comes to advertising and promoting your business. Too many advertisers do not work to build a consistent image. Make sure your logo appears in every ad and keep your corporate image consistent.
4. You have to spend money to make money. It is all too common for business owners to choose the best place to advertise based on price and potential rate of return and then stop after a short period of time. There are ways to save money, but typically advertising is not the place to cut corners. It will affect sales, and that affects the bottom line. Successful advertising may cost some money, but that is because it works.
5. Advertise to the right people in the right places. Your favourite magazine, radio station, or even television program might not be a favourite of your audience. Know what they read, watch, and listen to, and advertise in media that reaches your target market. No product or service will appeal to everyone. As is the case with investing, you do not want to put all of your eggs in one basket. Spread your advertising budget around but don't spread yourself too thin. Identify your target market and be everything you can be to that audience.

## WEB 2.0 UPDATE

The service being touted as "Twitter's Nemesis" has arrived. New social networking site [whispurr.com](http://whispurr.com) has entered the micro-messaging sphere and offers a service that enables messages of 300 characters or less to be broadcast to your audience. Twitter has recently reached its milestone 10 billionth "tweet" and has over 60 million users around the globe.

Whispurr.com aims to offer a little bit more by combining its online messaging with a free sms messaging service. The website allows users to send an sms to a phone by email, and also allows video messaging, contact list building, import of RSS feeds and more. The site aims to connect phones, email, public and private messaging through one single portal. Like any social networking site, the value for businesses lies in the way you can advertise your company website for free.

Building traffic to your site increases awareness of your brand which ultimately makes the phone ring. Whispurr.com offers a very efficient way of doing this.

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## SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE PR FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Public Relations (PR) is the practice of managing communication between an organisation and its public. Public relations gain an organisation or individual exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that provide a third-party endorsement and do not direct payment. Common activities include speaking at conferences, working with the media, crisis communications, social media engagement, and employee communication. It is something that is not tangible; which is what sets it apart from advertising.

PR can be used to build rapport with employees, customers, or the general public. Almost any organisation that has a stake in how it is portrayed in the public arena, employs some level of public relations.

Here is one idea that seems to work for smaller businesses:

Review the local newspapers or magazines for other local business owners that have been featured and have a success story.

- Allocate someone the responsibility of reviewing the local newspapers
- Select successful businesses, award winners, new premises, new employees and promoted individuals and write to them.
- Ensure all businesses/individuals are entered on the database of potential clients. Send them regular information e.g. Newsletters about your products / services.

An example letter to send (for use when you see a success story about a local business or individual in a local newspaper)

Dear

Name of newspaper and date

I was reading the (name the newspaper) the other day and I saw your article about (describe).

It is always good to see a local (firm/individual) doing well and I just wanted to drop you a line to say "well done!"

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

(Your Name / Firm)