



Business Brand Blueprint

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WHY DO YOU NEED A BUSINESS BRAND AT ALL?

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So, you have been in business for a while and you are doing OK. If you are lucky enough to be in this situation, you might ask yourself "Why Do I Need A Business Brand At All?"

The simple answer is, if you are doing OK in business with no brand, imagine how much more successful you could be, with a strong and attractive brand?

And the simple truth is, many businesses are not lucky enough to be in this situation.

Whatever reason they give for that, such as the current economic situation, the fact they are just starting out, the fact that they don't like selling, don't know how to market themselves, aren't very techie..... when you look at their websites, their marketing materials, their non-existent USP, it comes down to one thing.

They don't have a powerful enough brand to distinguish themselves in the mind of their potential future customer.

They don't have a powerful enough offer to make that customer put their name and email in a box, so that the business owner can come back to them again and again

They don't have a compelling enough lead product to make that customer put their hand in their pocket, pull out their wallet, get their credit card out of that wallet and spend the bloomin' cash!

Perhaps this is starting to sound like you and your business?

Well, great, because you are going to LOVE this report.

Let's go back to the beginning there. What is a powerful brand?



A powerful brand is something that immediately identifies you in the mind of your customer, a brand that says who you are, what you stand for, what you believe in, what your customer can expect from you, what your customers can buy confidently from you!

Even reading that last paragraph should be making you feel excited, because that's what a strong brand will do for you – make you more excited about doing your business, and it will make your customer more excited about doing business with you!

Presumably that is why you downloaded this report, because you are doing OK with your business but you would really like to be doing much, much better.

Or perhaps you are just starting out in business and you want to give it the best chance of success, or you are still looking for your direction, your passion, your purpose, beyond that of just simply making money.

You might be a little bit down the road, have been to a few big seminars and have got a feel for which direction you might want to head in.

You might have a glimmer of understanding that it's all very well to know about 10 different social media strategies, have 100 different PLR products on your desktop and have bought 3 different big-launch shiny boxes in the last year, but without a coherent business plan, a strategy to tie everything together, you will be continually going round in circles without the ability or momentum to move forward.

When you have a coherent business plan AND a strong brand, nothing can stop you. There is no doubt that you WILL become successful sooner or later. No doubt at all.

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Business Brand Blueprint

Because you and your business will get a momentum all of your own, a reason to get up in the morning and the ability to know what to do when you sit down at your desk, rather than just sitting there, feeling despair and overwhelm.

You and your business will become very, very attractive, your mission and sense of direction shine through, opening doors and attracting people who want to help, even people who can open doors that were previously firmly shut to you.

Because now you can articulate who you are, what you do, what you can do for others and which direction you are heading in.

You and your business become irresistible.

And even more than that, you will gain the ability to look at every new opportunity and say "Will this move my brand and my business forward or is it just a nice new shiny distraction?"

You become an arrow speeding towards your destination – SUCCESS - rather than a dandelion puff blowing whichever way the wind wants to take you.

With a strong brand, your marketing materials, your website and your communications become so much more powerful and focused.

And, by the way, when I talk about brand, I'm NOT talking about a logo. If I had \$100 a 100 dollar for every hour wasted talking about logos and letterheads I would be a much richer woman! No, I'm talking about you, your business and your marketing message.

One of my business mentors says "if you have a strong marketing message, you never need to sell anything again".

Another mentor – actually a pair of them – used to use a fishing analogy and described the activities of one of them as marketing.... "I get them in the boat Nicola....." and the activities of the other as selling ".....and he clubs them over the head...." which is a little crude and "old school" but it's quite funny.

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I prefer to define the activity of marketing as creating a clearly defined mission for your business, a clear and concise customer journey, from the arrival at your website, the ability of your IDEAL future customer to self-select themselves, through to them becoming a repeat happy customer / raving fan and member of your tribe.

I define the act of selling as nothing more than making it really, really easy for your customer to buy your lead product first, then your front end product, then your back end product, then the opportunity to stay in your tribe, no matter how many little steps there are along the way. And no clubbing necessary!

On arrival at your website, you are not so much selling, as demonstrating that you understand your customer's pain, problem or passion and you are simply recommending, from the position of a trusted advisor, which of your products or services would be right for them, at first, at that time.

Treating your potential future ideal customer as an intelligent grown up who will make their own best decisions.

So how do we actually DO all this?

And more importantly, how do we do it online, where we have the potential to reach the billions of potential future ideal customers, on broadband right now?

Well, I have some good news for you!

That's what the rest of this report is all about.

I hope you enjoy it!

Nicola

p.s. And if you do, please pass it on or recommend people to our website.

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7 KEY STEPS TO YOUR BUSINESS BRAND BLUEPRINT

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1 Brand You

When I do one of my "Marketing MOT's" on a business website or marketing materials, one of the first things I look for is a sense of personal identity around that business.

Who is the business owned or run by?

Can I find a photo, a biography, a constantly updated blog, to give me a little bit more info about who I'm going to be doing business with?

You would not believe how many businesses have no clue about who they are owned or run by...no human identity at all, just a corporate feel that is cold and inhuman.

That just will not work nowadays; with the internet getting bigger and bigger (there are apparently more people online on broadband in China than there are ALIVE in the entire USA right now!).

There is a growing need by internet users for a sense of connection, of friendliness, of a global community divided up into small special-interest tribes getting stronger and stronger. Blood families are becoming more fragmented but friend families are getting bigger and stronger.

We may be more distant geographically, but we are more connected emotionally than ever before.

And you need to realise that this can be make or break for your business – just this sense of connection (or lack of it) with your customers. You can gain a competitive advantage just by NOT being afraid to be you, by being proud to be associated with your business.

Because, after all, if you are not proud to be associated with your business, why would your customers want to buy from your business?

Many business owners are reluctant to expose themselves personally to their customers, their sense of privacy shrieks in horror at the idea of “going public” and having their name, photo and biography on their website, much less splashing themselves all over the internet.

But you have got to get over yourself – that or create an alter ego as the face of your business. Not something I recommend by the way, unless you really have a good reason to keep your own identity a secret (like personal safety, or confusion if you are already a public figure for example).

You might have a business partner who would feel more comfortable in the limelight, being the face and heart of your business.

But find one you must, as you will need one identity to create profiles on the social network sites and to interact with your existing customers and your potential future customers.

To sum it up, all of your social networking activity should be about building your personal brand, which then attracts people to your online HUB, where you deliver even more value.

So where do you make your money then, you might ask?

By advertising your own products – specifically your LEAD product - around the outside of the value driven content. Banners, text links within your copy, sidebar ads work well, especially with graphics and you should experiment with using all of them.

You can also advertise other people’s products and services – and you should, in the early days while you develop your own, but you should follow certain guidelines and I’m going to go into that in a later section of this report.

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As soon as you have your own products or services to sell, you should consider moving the ads for other people's products or services down the page, below the fold, or to a "Recommended Resources" page.

You will also make money from promoting your own, and other people's products and services to your mailing list, that will grow from people exchanging their name and email for something of value on your HUB.

** (Claim your free "[Marketing MOT's](#)")

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2 Brand Your Business

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If you are starting from scratch and educating a new market about a new product or service, then attracting actual paying customers can be more of a slow burn. This can be frustrating for some, especially if revenue is needed immediately.

On the other hand, if you have an existing product or service, for which there is already a demand from an educated market, you can generate more revenue online very quickly using this Business Brand Blueprint system but you need to make sure that all of the parts are in place, and that as much of the process as possible is automated.

This might mean that you are going to be the person who puts it all into place or there needs to be a person at your company who is a bit techie, or a bit design orientated, and who loves to learn new skills - in which case they can learn to do all this for you.

Or there needs to be a bit of an investment, and someone at your company who is willing to liaise with a company who can put all this together for you.

I warn you though, it's a bit of an uphill learning curve and it's not for the faint hearted! There is work and dedication involved but once learned, the system and skills can be used over and over again.

You could tackle the Business Brand Blueprint for just one area of your business, then roll it out to other areas if you like your results.

And when you see the results dropping straight to your bottom line, in the form of profit with minimum overhead, you will be so pleased that you learned this new 21st Century way of doing business.

Your USP

Branding your business is a complex but fascinating process and one of the first steps is to develop your USP (unique selling point or unique selling proposition).

What makes you different from the other people doing what you do? What will make your Ideal Future Customer want to do business with you rather than anyone else?

Ideally, your USP should be articulated in 10 words or less, and this phrase is sometimes called your Mission Statement or Elevator Pitch.

To give you an idea mine is currently:

“Passionate About Enabling Entrepreneurs To Create, Build And Grow A Successful, Sustainable, Ethical Business Online From Something They Already Do, Know Or Love”

(not sure about the ethical bit yet, but it's in there for now!)

Your Ideal Future Customer

When you first go into business, either on- or off-line, in order to make successful sales, you need to ask yourself some crucial questions. I got a few of these from the EXCELLENT business book “Ready Fire Aim” by Micheal Masterson and added a couple of my own.

Who is your IDEAL customer?

By which we mean the person who has a burning pain or problem, that your product or service solves or soothes. They must also be able to afford your product or service. What do they look like, how do they make their money, how do they live their lives, what do they do in their spare time?

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Where are you going to find your customers?

If you have answered the question about the ideal customer fully, you should have a pretty good idea of where you will be able to find them, but I want you to think specifically where they hang out online. You can reach a great number of people online, whereas if you limit your customer base to your home town....well, it's not going to be so profitable.

If you think that your ideal customer will be hanging on on Google, looking for a solution to their problem or pain, that's the first place for you to look too.

You may have come across the Google KeyWord Tool , but here it is again for your convenience

<https://adwords.google.co.uk/select/KeywordToolExternal>

People either search by the problem or pain, or their perceived solution to the problem or pain.

For example: I've got bad spots (keyword "spots" or "bad spots") or "how can I get rid of my spots" or "fast spot relief" (new keyword "spot relief" or "fast spot relief")

Google will tell you how many of your ideal customers are searching for you right now and what words they are using, specifically, to search with. You might find that quite motivating!

What product will you sell them first?

So, by looking at the phrases that are getting the most searches per month, globally or nationally, you will be able to think of things to sell them – and the first one of those is your lead product.

You might have a few free products to give away first, but the important one is the first paid product.

Michael Masterson, in his superb business book "Ready Fire Aim" says that "until you have a lead product that you can sell profitably, to your ideal customer, you don't have a business.

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How much will you charge them for it?

This is an easy one to answer – you test three different price points, and you do that using a simple bit of code, that fires one third of your customers at one sales page, with a price at X, the second third at a second page with a price at Y, and the final third at a third page with a price point of Z.

How will you convince them to buy it?

Now, this is getting a little more complex, but once you know the elements of a sale, you will do very well.

First up, you will need a long-form sales page – and before you groan and say you hate them....we have all tested them and they sell the most so GET OVER IT.

Even if you are going to make one of those gorgeous funky videos to walk your prospect through your offer, you will need to plan that out first and a bit of sales letter writing software is very useful for that, as it makes sure you cover every element and don't miss anything.

I use Armand Morin's Sales Letter Generator to write mine, but I've also heard great things about Brett McFall's "Burpies" software too.

When I've written mine, I give it to someone else to pretty it up and get it online, then we link to it from emails, from our website, in our ezine.

The sections of the long-form sales page are covered, in logical step by step sequence, in the Sales Letter software but the most important elements are:

- **Social Proof** – this means testimonials from happy customers – video and pictures prove that they are real people and if some of them are well known...so much the better!

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- **Proof** - this means specific proof that your product or services does what you say it does
- **Reciprocity** – If you do something for someone else, like give them lots of great free stuff, they tend to want to do something for you. It's human nature to want to return the favor.
- **Risk Reversal** – this is your crucially important guarantee and it needs to take all the risk away from the customer and put it onto you
- **Urgency** – people need a reason to buy now or they will never make a decision.

Sales Aversion

Many business owners suffer from an aversion to selling!

This is crazy as without sales, your business will die. And if your staff don't see the boss devoting himself to bringing sales in the door, what will that do to their motivation to sell too?

Everyone in your company should be focused on sales but as I said in my introduction, if you also focus on a brilliant marketing strategy that includes strong branding, then sales will become effortless and almost automatic.

MY ACTION STEPS

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3 Brand Your Social Presence

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Wow! Isn't Social Networking and Social Media big news right now? Anyone organising a social networking seminar has to stand back for fear of being buried in the crush!

Seems like just about everyone in the business world wants to find out how to harness the power of the millions using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, ideally for free.

Whereas a year ago, any "serious" business person would laugh at you if you suggested using Social Networking in a business context.

Whereas now, just about everyone uses one social networking site or another, even if just to keep up with distant relatives overseas.

Which social networking sites should you get started with, building your personal brand?

It might help if you think of each social networking site as a separate community or world if you like, with the inhabitants of that community only rarely venturing outside their own little world.

The great news is that you can hook up each of those separate worlds to reach all of them with your business brand message, effortlessly, by using the power of online leverage.

The better news is that you can get started building your personal and business brands online, before you even have a website, product or service of your own!

First of all you will need a Twitter account, because your Twitter activities are the easiest ways to leverage your online activity. Twitter connects every other social networking world in a very simple powerful way. That's why I jumped on it, in about 2007, because I realised the power of leverage – you Tweet once (often from your mobile) and it updates all your other social networking profiles.

Which social networking profiles do you need initially?

I recommend initially creating a personal **Facebook** profile, a **Twitter** profile and a **YouTube** profile (called a Channel) and if you – or your ideal future customer - are in the corporate / business world you will want a **Linked In** profile and I also recommend an **Ecademy** profile.

Here are some tips to get you started.

Twitter

- 1** Put your picture on your profile, include your main key words or phrases in your description and don't forget to include a link to the specific page of your website that you want your potential future ideal customers to see first.
- 2** Set up your mobile phone so you can Tweet on the go, you will be more likely to use it if you are more of a phone person than a computer person or if you spend lots of time away from your computer.

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- 3** Tweet on topic – using variations on your most searched key words or phrases - about 80% of the time but don't sell, include links to your value driven content on your main HUB site. Occasionally give stuff away via links in your Tweets but concentrate more on using Twitter as a traffic generator and list builder than marketplace. 20% of the time, share stuff about your personal life, hobbies or interests. You never know when you might attract a customer with the same esoteric interest in feminist sci-fi, raw food or Texas Hold'em poker.

Facebook

- 1** On your personal Facebook profile, only accept real people that you know and like as friends, and set most of your privacy settings to "Friends of Friends" except for your basic information which should be set to "Everyone"
- 2** Create a Facebook Page for your Lead Product, or if you ARE your lead product (such as a speaker or consultant) create a Facebook Page for yourself as a Public Figure. This will be your main focus of activity on Facebook, as you will have the ability to easily contact everyone who "Likes" your page, whereas you can't do that with your personal profile friends.
- 3** Find out how to link your Facebook Page with your Twitter account so it gets regularly updated, as well as importing your new blog posts from your HUB (see later section).

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YouTube

- 1 Start looking for great videos in your niche and “favouriting” them and adding them to your playlists.
- 2 Hook up your YouTube channel to your Twitter account and Facebook page, so that every time you favourite or playlist a video, it gets broadcast to your followers in the other communities.
- 3 Create a really great channel profile, full of your key words, and either choose a channel name that says what it does on the tin (mine is UKMarketingMentor) or use your own name.

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4 Brand Your Website

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What do I mean when I talk about your website or as I like to think of it, your online hub?

It's the place where all of that traffic, generated by your personal branding activities on social networking site, comes to first. It's the center of all your activities online, it's your business shopfront if you like. It's your business address online.

- 1** The first point of your website is to collect the contact details of your potential future customers.
- 2** The second point of your web business is to set out, clearly and simply, your solution to the pain felt by your ideal potential future customer.
- 3** The third point of your web business is to allow your potential future customers to have a chance to get to "know, like and trust" you.

People buy from people, and they especially like to buy from people they know, like and trust. As I've said before, so many websites are impersonal, cold, impossible to navigate and even downright distant. It's almost as if the owners are scared to be associated with their own products or services.

You need to be brave about letting some of your personality and character shine through your website.

The internet is popularly thought to distance people – stop them using the phone and face to face meetings, and many traditional business owners or sales people don't like it for that reason, use it that much or trust it particularly.

However, 35 million people on broadband can't be wrong (Sunday Times, March 2006), and it is growing exponentially.

The same article said that it was predicted that there would be 35 million Chinese people on broadband within 5 years.

Online business is going to be worth \$7.6 trillion by 2007 – so how do you get your hands on some of that revenue?

How do you differentiate your business from all the others?

By being uniquely you, by showing your “you-ness” in your business and allowing that to show through via your web business and blog.

Many people feel that by showing their personality they are somehow being less professional. But consider this, many huge corporations now run blogs. Google allow Google staff to contribute on their blog.

Bob Parsons, founder of GoDaddy.com, the biggest domain registration and hosting company in the world, runs a personal blog in which he shares business challenges, successes and musing. You can find it at www.BobParsons.com

Blogs allow your customers to get access to you and your company in a very friendly informal way. It enables them to comment on your company (you can moderate comments) and reply to those comments.

Your website might be your existing business website, except that most traditional business websites will not be capable of acting like a hub just yet.

(And be warned, most traditional web designers neither see the need for a HUB or want to get involved in setting one up (and often don't know how to)).

It might be a personal blog website, that is then linked to your business website.

It might be a blog installed in a sub-directory of your business website, linked via your sites' navigation and back again.

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I'm not going to go into the details of how to install a blog website, either on your own name domain, or a sub-directory of your site, because there are many videos on how to do that on YouTube and in the Resources section at the end, I've recommended someone who can do it all for you.

If you are going to do it yourself, I will just recommend you use the free software available from Wordpress.org - or you can quickly install your Wordpress blog via the Control Panel of your existing hosting (look for Blog Installation or Fantastico).

Why do you need a Wordpress blog website?

- 1 *The variety of looks that you can achieve (via plugin Themes) is amazing and your blog can easily be customised to look like your existing site*
- 2 *The search engines love blog websites due to the "constantly updated relevant content"*
- 3 *Blogs enable you to express your personal opinion – and you should! This enables your potential future customers to get to know like and trust you.*
- 4 *Blogs enable your customers to interact with you, using the comments box on any individual blog post. This creates a powerful connection with your business and you get valuable feedback.*
- 5 *You can integrate a Wordpress blog with a mailing list effortlessly*
- 6 *You can find a Plugin that will give you just about any functionality you desire on your blog website. From Google Analytics to contact forms, from sidebar widgets to revolving 3D clouds of topics, from Sexy Bookmarks that enable your readers to spread your content around the web (gaining you valuable backlinks) to Twitter toolbars that enable you and your visitors to tweet from your blog.*
- 7 *Because when it comes to building your tribe (Step 7), you are going to need some membership site software and in our opinion and after extensive research and heartache with trying all the software out there, that is WP Wishlist, that bolts right onto your existing Wordpress blog website.*

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Social Proof

Your online HUB website should have examples of what's called "social proof", real live case studies and ideally testimonials of real live people who have benefited from your product or service.

Make them specific stories and not only include outcomes but how those people felt about the outcomes.

It's best if the folks that supply testimonials are willing to be contacted – it's a bit of a challenge with the Money Gym as members often don't want people to know about their money and how much more of it they have!

Always include full names if possible, website addresses (it's also nice way to drive traffic to your clients websites too) and contact details if the customer is willing – phone is best rather than email as it minimises the spam problem.

You can include testimonials and case studies in your ezine, on your blog, on your site, in your academy profile, in your press releases....maximise everything you do.

Traffic, Traffic, Traffic

The next thing you need is traffic to your HUB website. There are many easy and affordable ways to drive traffic to your website without spending a fortune on any of the overpriced services offered out there.

Offline

Offline, you can do various inexpensive yet effective things to promote your website and drive traffic to it.

Use your Business Stationery – particularly your letter head, invoices and business cards. Make sure your business card addresses the pain that your idea client is feeling. Make sure it speaks to them not shouts about you. Put your photo on your card – that really helps people remember you.

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Put something on the card to intrigue the reader and encourage people to go to the website – like “Visit our website for a free “White Paper” PDF report on.....” You don’t even have to write the report yourself but can also use a ghost writer from www.Elance.com

Make sure your business stationery is current. You would be amazed at how many networking events I go to, where people give me their cards, and the first thing I do when I get home is try to look at their website to find out more about them, and it’s not there! Or it’s the wrong web address! Or there is just a holding page - or even worse an “under construction” sign!

Networking is great for building advocates for your business. It’s a bit nerve wracking if you think you are going to get a sale but if you go in to each event, thinking that your only goal is to add value, help other people and share resources, it becomes a lot easier.

Your ideal outcome from networking is to enable people to know what you do and who your ideal client is, and for them to have experienced some of your expertise. However, networking is very time intensive considering the numbers of people involved, so you need to remember that each of those people knows another thirty odd people, then it will feel more worthwhile.

Speaking to crowds of your ideal clients is one of the best ways to drive traffic to your site. It’s the USA’s most popular phobias incidentally, but if you can overcome that fear, speaking in public is a great way to become a perceived expert, to get in front of a lot of people at once, and you can offer an incentive from the stage to encourage people to visit the site and subscribe to your list.

PR is even better – reach large numbers of people, very inexpensively. You can learn how to do it yourself, very effectively. Paula Gardner from www.DoYourOwnPR.com is brilliant at this and you can put a Press Release up online at www.PRWeb.com for free.

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All the newspaper, magazines and tv researchers use PR Web when they are looking for ideas or experts – it's indexed by the search engines on an hourly basis and key word searchable. One of my Money Gym clients was invited onto a Channel 4 programme as an "expert" within 3 weeks of putting up her first press release on PR Web.

Online

Moving online now, most people would say that Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is essential. And they pay heavily for the service.

I largely ignore most of the traditional methods espoused as essential – as far as I'm concerned SEO is a black art, the search engines are always changing the way they index sites, and it's all too slow and time consuming. I would never dream of paying for such a service.

We ensure efficient indexing by the search engines by utilising the following tried and tested methods.

Meta tags are small bits of code that sit in your index page HTML source code, and tell the search engines what your site is called, what it's about, how often to come back and crawl your site, and what your relevant key words are.

The little entries you see when you do a search on Google are exactly what those sites have entered in their meta-tags and it's one of the most overlooked areas when getting a website built. Then people wonder why they are not listed in the search engines.

Just go to any website and click on the background part of the site, and click "view source". You will see meta tags there (if the site has them). If you have a site yourself, right click on your index page to see if you have meta tags, a meta description or not, and if not, fire your web designer!

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Try a search on Google for Nicola Cairncross and you will see how powerfully my sites have been indexed over the years due to having simple metatags and constantly updated relevant content.

Frequently updated and relevant content also drives your site higher in the search engines.

We find that attaching a Blog (web log or web diary) to your site, and linking back from your blog to your site, creates a virtuous circle that the search engine spiders can move around. Every time you create a new "post" on your blog, the blog software "pings" the blog directories, alerting them (and the search engines) that there is new, relevant content on your site.

Local Business

Most town halls have a CD Rom or DVD based directory of local businesses which you can buy for a very small amount of money. You can then send a personal and direct email to each of those companies, with a short text-only message, telling the recipient what you can do for them (think benefit or outcome to the recipient rather than the dull old features of your product or service).

Encourage them to click through to your site by offering a free "White Paper" report, to be able to attend a free tele-seminar or preview evening or even to enter a competition. Team up with another local business to offer a prize of a meal out, a case of fine wine or a weekend away – it benefits both businesses and costs pennies.

Google Local / Maps

Google Local is gearing up now and it looks like they are aiming to be the Yellow Pages of the online world. You can submit your business for free at <http://local.google.co.uk> or <http://local.google.com> – click the Add / Edit My Business link in the bottom left corner.

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Pay Per Click

Pay per click is the “big daddy” of driving traffic to your site. It’s a cross between an art and a science and the good news is that it’s very easy to learn how to create an effective ad campaign. I recommend “The Definitive Guide To Google Adwords” by Perry Marshall.

And then you can attract traffic to your site within 15 minutes and you typically pay about 5 cents per click (always set your campaign in US \$ rather than UK £ - it’s much cheaper!

So if you start from the average well performing website statistics; your site needs in excess of 1000 visitors to convert 100 of those visitors to your mailing list and make 1 sale of a low priced product – perhaps an ebook at around £30.

If you are paying 5 cents a click, 1000 clicks will cost you \$50 (around £27) so one sale will cover your advertising costs.

But the real sting in the tail – and the part that most website owners miss - is that you have acquired 100 warm leads to follow up, essentially for free!

Turning Visitors Into Potential Future Customers

The real challenge with most websites is that they are just too confusing for the visitor.

Couple this with the fact that most sites shout “me, me, me” when all the visitor wants to know is “do these people “get” my problem, can they help me and what will it cost me?” you have a recipe for disaster.

Most websites are either created by web designers (ex graphic designers obsessed with design or worse, Flash!) or by techies (too hung up on the software). They are not created by internet marketers and they are NOT making money online.

So they don’t know how to do that or how to help you do that.

NOTES

Internet marketing is a lot like direct mail, except that it's much cheaper and instead of converting at an average of 1% it converts at an average of 10%. Like direct mail, it requires a knowledge of basic buyer psychology, copywriting skills, technical skill and the ability to track and test results.

Your web business should speak directly to your ideal client. Not any old visitor, or any one, but to your ideal client. Your most profitable client, one who not only needs your solution to their problem, but who can afford to pay for it.

Your web business should offer a short list of options on each page – no more than three. "Give us your name and email" or "buy something" or "click for more info". This is called the "most wanted response" online.

Your visitors should be very easily able to find what they are looking for – within five clicks ideally. They should be able to discover your range of products (no more than three initially) find out what they cost and get very clear instructions on how to buy or what to do next.

Your "Terms & Conditions" should be accessible easily from your site and you must draw your customers attention to them prominently, with a notice to the effect that, by buying your product or hiring your services, they are agreeing to those terms.

Your web business must be "sticky" thus encouraging the 90% of visitors who left without taking action, to return again, giving you another chance to capture their details.

Stickiness can be achieved by adding Free Resources, Articles, relevant new content and making it interactive. Again, blogs are brilliant for allowing you to add all of the above easily and regularly – thus helping in your search engine positioning again. Even large corporations are adding blogs to their sites – it gives the CEO to have a unique insight into, and feedback from, the customer on the ground.

NOTES



Creating a community around your web business is a very sticky thing to do.

Set up a free Google Group for your visitors and many will join that, rather than giving you their name and email, giving you another chance to interact with them and let them know that you have the solution to their problem.

Connect your ideal customers with a group of like-minded people and they will thank you and your good standing will be enhanced in their eyes.

Email support and discussion groups enable people to interact, swap resources, hints, tips and recommendations.

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MY ACTION STEPS

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5 Brand Your Product Funnel

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Most businesses start out with just one product or service and then develop further offerings down the line. By having a simple "Product Funnel" which moves from Free to Low Cost to Medium Cost to High Cost, you can move your list gently through the process, enabling them to say yes, and yes, and yes again.

You need a product funnel, to move folks from "free to fee" products, in order to take these new leads you have generated and turn them into customers.

People are very scared of committing themselves to a meeting or a purchase straight away, especially a higher ticket so you need to make it a gentle effortless process with the customer choosing when to move forward to the next stage.

The whole purpose of a product funnel is move your mailing list subscriber gently from suspect to prospect to customer, in a series of natural steps, where the person at the other end is in control of the process.

They self-select themselves as your ideal future customer!

The components of the product funnel are often similar, even for very different businesses.

Here is a suggested sequence of products:

- 1** Downloadable PDF or audio report
- 2** Regular ezines and blog entries
- 3** E-programme delivered via autoresponder
- 4** Social proof in the form of testimonials
- 5** Video recordings of powerpoint presentations or workshops
- 6** Personal contact via a Free Tele-Seminar

- 7** 1:2:1 Complementary Call – call it a Strategy Call or Consultation
- 8** Workshop or Seminar Day
- 9** Weekend Bootcamp
- 10** Inner Circle type continuity programme

The product funnel can be spread out over your chosen time frame, so it can be as short as a month, or as long as a year.

We once calculated that it took our Money Gym Gold clients an average of 10 months to move through our product funnel, from the moment they subscribed to the moment they became Gold clients.

And of course, an extended product funnel extends both the life of your customer and their value!

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MY ACTION STEPS
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6 Brand Your Greatest Asset

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What your business needs to succeed is a mailing list. An ever growing, personally owned, responsive, great, big, fat, targeted mailing list.

A mailing list of thousands of people is the goal.

This list is not only the place that your future business is going to come from, but it's an asset in its own right. People in business regularly rent or buy leads for anything from £1 a name to upwards of £20 a name depending on the market sector the list is in.

Not that you will be renting or selling your list of red-hot responsive potential future ideal customers – oh no! It's far too valuable for that.

A responsive large mailing list adds to the intrinsic value of your business, along with your systems; making your business more appealing to potential investors, or your exit strategy more attractive to any potential purchaser.

(You do have an exit strategy, don't you?)

Ownership of your own list not only ensures that you never have to pay for leads, but you can create another source of income by cross-promoting to your list offers from complementary, non-competing businesses.

Almost best of all is that by creating your own list, you can market any future products or services to them, completely free of charge.

That's free marketing and advertising and it is almost unheard of in traditional businesses.

Building a Great List

The first thing you need to do is collect names and email addresses of your suspects (or “potential future customers” as I prefer to call them) in return for something of value. This is called subscribing to your mailing list.

Free reports, audio or even free tele-seminars are great for that.

You probably gave me your name and email in return for this report and I really hope you enjoy it, as I put a lot of work into it, to make it as valuable to you as possible. You have to deliver real value or people feel conned and unsubscribe.

This subscribing process needs to be effortless and easy, for you, as well as for your “potential future customers”. They need to be able to subscribe easily, change their information easily (people do change emails regularly) and unsubscribe themselves easily (people do change jobs).

Trust me, you do not want to be doing this manually and it puts people off subscribing and annoys them intensely when they can’t unsubscribe automatically.

The other thing to think about here is your Privacy Policy. You need one, it needs to be public on your website (apparently if you have one, along with a Terms of Use, it helps with Search Engine Optimisation as well) and it needs to be carefully worded.

The next thing you need to do is to collect more contact information such as addresses and phone number, in return for something of even greater value but still being offered for free.

After someone subscribes, you need an automated follow up system and this can be done with a series of pre-written emails called autoresponders. They go out to the subscriber at pre-determined intervals and can be customised with the customers name for example.

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Our top tips for autoresponders are to send a message containing information of value every day for the first two weeks, then every three days, then every week.

Only market one thing to the subscriber in the first series of autoresponders, and this should be your next free product.

Keep things simple. When people “buy” your free product, you can set it up so that they are unsubscribed from the first autoresponder series, and subscribed to the next one, marketing the low price item next.

You can also schedule automated broadcasts to go to some, or all of your mailing list. Ezines are sent this way, and special offers.

Follow Up

How frequently should you contact your potential future customers?

A lot more often than you will feel comfortable with at first, that’s for sure. The key is to be sure you are delivering value rather than selling to them.

I created a 101 day Financial Intelligence e-programme which I sold from my site initially. It was what turned out to be a life-changing programme, distilling the wisdom of many, many wealth creation books, woven in with my own experiences on my wealth creation journey and scattered with little exercises to do along the way.

I was looking for a way to set up an autoresponder series for new visitors to the site, without doing any more work myself, and suddenly realised that I should just give away the Financial Intelligence 101 series. 101 emails every three days.....wow! That would remind potential future customers about the Money Gym for nearly a whole year!

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Popular internet marketing wisdom says that, in the early days, a series of autoresponders should go out contacting new subscribers every day for the first 14 days, then reduce the frequency to every three or four days, then every week, then at least once a month.

Then you can add in broadcasts, at least fortnightly and ideally weekly, with an ezine full of value, or at the very least a snippet of an article of interest to your ideal future customer, featured on your blog, linking back to your blog.

You could also be adding content to your blog at least weekly. You don't have to write it yourself, you can use free online resources such as www.EzineArticles.com or even link to articles in the online versions of the daily newspapers.

As long as you link back to the source site and credit the author, there is not usually a problem. The more links incoming from other sites a website has, the more "important" a site is deemed to be by the search engines, so you are actually doing the other site a favour!

You can see that, if you can create original content, or pay a ghost writer from www.Elance.com to do it for you, and your content is picked up and used by other sites, this will also improve your site's search engine ranking.

Which format should your broadcast be sent out as?

We have recently conducted a very interesting survey of our 5,000 odd subscribers. The results were very interesting and flew in the face of internet marketing wisdom. They wanted an HTML magazine format ezine.

Bear in mind that there are over 5,000 subscribers, divided up into three mailing lists covering wealth creation, internet marketing, restaurant owners and work at home mums.

The ezine has been going since 1999, it's been businesslike, it's been very personal, it's been through several re-brands and even stopped completely for six months.

7 Brand Your Tribe

Membership sites are big business online. Eventually you might be able to turn your community into a membership site – if your customers have common interests and concerns for example.

You offer a free entry level, then two further tiered membership levels. One at around £5 / \$10 a month, and one at around £27 / \$47 per month.

Membership software comes in many forms – paid for and free and our favourite is a Wordpress Plugin called WP Wishlist. If you can build your mailing list to 10,000 plus, then it's time to think about a membership site.

17,000 members giving you £5 a month = £1.2 million per year. That's an extra stream of income not to be sniffed at.

But more importantly, it speaks to those of your customers who want a community and who feel really connected with you and you will find that they turn into an army of raving fans if you deliver value within your membership site.

Lots of people worry about the amount of content that they will have to deliver to give value, but it can be as simple as picking just one or two of the following suggestions:

- 1** Monthly ezine or printed magazine
- 2** Membership of a Google email group
- 3** Membership of an online private forum (another Wordpress plugin)
- 4** Q&A / How To video a month, using a camcorder or Camtasia to record your screen
- 5** Telephone interview a month, with an expert of interest, recorded for download as MP3
- 6** Transcripts of any of the above (for people like me who can't handle audio and like to read)

NOTES

A COUPLE OF STORIES

As I'm coming to the end of this report, I thought it would be nice to include some case studies of clients who have been through the Business Brand Blueprint process and who are beginning to build a tribe around their business.

The Happiness Centre



First, Alexis Garnaut-Miller, a long term client of mine, who owns a holistic therapy center in West London called the Happiness Centre. Alexis is creating a membership site for holistic therapy centre owners who feel a bit lost about how to market their centres and create thriving businesses.

"I have only got free Members to date at my site <http://ThePracticeBuildingExperts.com> but I have picked up Practice-Building Mentoring clients, which was my initial objective!

I have also been doing more SEO & Internet Marketing Mentoring for clients from: UK - IT Consultant for Silver Surfers, a celebrity Personal Trainer, and a Direct Marketer. From New Zealand - a Nutritionist, from Australia, a Gliding Guru, Marketing Consultant and also from the Czech Republic.

I have almost finished my first ebook as a free Give Away for converting traffic into Members, called "How to do Health Marketing" which is a major personal milestone. I am finding the whole process fascinating, and know the Membership will rocket over time"



And here's Chief Happy Nurse herself Claire Westwood as featured in The Nursing Times

Claire Westwood, ex-nurse & founder of HappyNurses.co.uk sent us this update which is very encouraging for all of those people working on a Membership site.

Claire uses different membership club software, but we have been involved in Claire's business development from the first day when she stood up and said, in our Internet Marketing workshop, that she wanted to create a membership site that helped overworked, stressed nurses, become happier, healthier and wealthier!

"Well I think we have just about reached the tipping point for happynurses.co.uk!

Yesterday I spoke at my fifth nursing event and had 200 nurses to my talk. I made a brief reference to my coaching book in the talk and had a huge queue of nurses wanting to buy it – I only took 9 with me cos I had to carry loads of flyers and booklets too! However, in addition to my speaking fee I came home with £90 in my purse having had a really fun day inspiring other nurses – woohoo!

I have now sold around 200 of the first 500 books in 3 months. I have more links on global website coming up and the more I do the more I can get – I am now a contributor on 5 different sites and ezines, reaching around 140,000 nurses a week currently, with more to be added when the US ones are 'live' – they have access to 500,000 nurses a month! I do the content free in exchange for links to my site, book etc

I have around 3500 on my ezine list and 600 on my facebook page. I have a steady stream of clients form the ezine and am helping nurses all over the UK. I have also coached an Australian nurse who is soon returning to the US to start her authentic business, and will help to spread the word over there – can't wait till I do overseas conferences etc!!

I had a flash of inspiration yesterday on the train and am currently writing a 9 month coaching programme for people who want to 'give birth' to their business idea/vision.

Business Brand Blueprint

I am offering coaching and seminars, wealth info and mindset training plus website building, expert interviews and marketing advice from my years of learning/ coaching and experience. This will be for prospective entrepreneurs – those who want to go from 'idea' to business in 9 months....conception to birth!!

I am very excited about this and will run it alongside the happynurses things so I can teach other what I have done, and what not to do as well!

Money is flowing but I want to ramp it up massively (I have been listening to tons of inspiring wealth and marketing audios) and I will have other nurses soon to do the coaching of the nurses, then I will do more star/creator and high impact stuff like training, speaking and creating new programmes.

Off to Costa Coffee with my notebook.....oh, the programme will have an affiliate scheme and spaces for expert teleseminars of course too.....Planning to launch Feb 2010 to run till Nov 2010.

Love to all, Claire

Claire Westwood

<http://www.HappyNurses.co.uk>

Training Room for Hire – Winner of Money Gym Gold



And finally, here is Debbie Winterbourne, who sent this email completely unsolicited, just in time to make this report!

"I was delighted to win the Money Gym Gold competition in December 2008. My prize amongst other things was two hours of coaching with Nicola Cairncross per month.....

This was a great time for me to win such a competition as in April 2008 I had set up my own [training venue in central London](#) from which I was operating several different businesses. I had been feeling a bit overwhelmed and was in need of guidance.

www.NicolaCairncross.com/blog

Business Brand Blueprint

At the beginning of our coaching, one of the exercises Nicola assigned for me was to outline what my 'perfect Tuesday' would look like. I said I would be living in a flat in central London running my business largely from home. I would have a full time assistant and I would also be making enough passive income to pay the rent on the business venue.

One year later and I can truthfully say that from Nicola's coaching, **my income has quadrupled**; I have a wonderful volunteer who works four days a week, taking the pressure off me from working 'in the business' and enabling me instead to concentrate on ideas 'for the business'.

I work less, I think more and I have more free time than ever. My income is far greater than ever before in my life and I am living in a flat in central London! My business now creates enough income to pay the rent and more besides.

At the beginning of the coaching I learnt about how to be the 'general' of my business, rather than the manager. Now I have largely delegated most of the management tasks. Not without some pain of personal growth where I wondered whether anyone would care enough about my business to be trusted! But there are some great people out there, so with a bit of trust, my dream was realised.

I had a massive reorganisation of all my finances. I realised that I was mixing up all my personal money matters with my business and property matters all in the same bank account! No longer! I now have six different bank accounts and my income and expenses are much more streamlined so I can see at a glance what is going where. Nicola taught me about spreadsheets and projected forecasts of income.

We did some work on my property investments. I have a buy to let flat in South London earning me a good passive income, as well as two foreign properties. Nicola coached me on how to earn passive income from these properties, and they provide me with a very stable financial base. I am now in the process of buying another buy to let property.

Some of my best coaching from Nicola was in the area of internet marketing.

I learnt many tools and techniques on how to market and advertise to clients. I set up e-books for sale and for free download on my website. I streamlined all my six websites and ordered automated shopping carts. I learnt about Google adwords and attracted one hundred new clients from Adwords alone. I also started working more as part of a team with other workshop leaders. Nicola taught me not to undervalue myself and to charge the appropriate rate.

Business Brand Blueprint

I greatly benefitted from being part of the Money Gym community. Any time I had a query or needed some guidance I was able to send emails to a very knowledgeable and vibrant community who came straight back with a response. [Steve Watson](#) designed a very stylish website for me, and [Judith Morgan](#) gave me some absolutely invaluable business financial strategies.

Looking to the future, at some point I may be in a position to sell my business and retire to the sea!

With the help of Nicola Cairncross, I have a great portfolio of investments and know now how to make the best of my money.

Thank you Nicola for a wonderful year

Debbie Winterbourne

<http://trainingroomforhire.com/>

CONCLUSION

I really hope that you have found this Business Brand Blueprint report useful and that you will put some (or all!) of the strategies outlined into practice.

I've poured my heart and soul into this report but if you find any mistakes, or you have any suggestions on how it could be improved, I would love to hear from you

Especially if you take action on any of my suggestions – I want to hear how you get on.

Email me at **nicola [at] nicolacairncross.com** and confirm yourself through my SpamArrest programme – just the once.

Nicola

p.s. And if you did enjoy it, like I said earlier, please pass it on or recommend people to our website.

<http://www.BusinessBrandBlueprint.com>

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Books

- 1 "Crush It!" Gary Vaynerchuk
- 2 "Ready Fire Aim" Michael Masterson
- 3 "Get Clients Now" CJ Haydn
- 4 "Synchronicity" Joseph Jaworski (not about branding but you need to read it anyway!)

Websites

Business Strategy, Internet Marketing & Success Thinking

<http://www.NicolaCairncross.com>



Beautiful Websites That Work (& The Search Engines Love!)

<http://www.SteveWatsonOnline.com>



Entrepreneurial Community & Support & A Voice

<http://www.TheMillionEntrepreneurs.com>



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Taking things further....

There are a number of specialised trainings springing up, covering the different aspects of this report, from mentors through to seminars and distance learning products – some good, some rubbish.

We often recommend seminars, tools, products and services we are attending and use ourselves and have spent our own money on, in my Success Factor ezine, and you are already (by downloading this report) signed up for that.

Sometimes I get paid a commission – in fact you should always assume that I am getting paid a commission when I recommend something, as this is a major strand of my income.

This does not mean that you are paying any more for your ticket, product or service. It simply means that the creator of that seminar, product or service has chosen to pay some of their profits to the people who refer new customers to them. This is called referral or affiliate marketing.

And I promise you one thing, I will only ever recommend things that I wholeheartedly believe will move your business forward and that I think are good value.

Before you buy anything, ever, just ask yourself “Do I really think that this will help move me and my personal or business brand forward, or is it just a big shiny expensive distraction?”

That will help you keep focused!

WHAT NEXT?

Well, obviously, I wrote this report for a reason, above and beyond the desire to share some hopefully valuable information.

I would be failing in my job as a marketer if I did not mention that reason.

So here it is.

If you like what you read here, and you would like to work with me further to develop a Business Brand Blueprint for your own business, then of course I would love to work with you.

You can do that via my Business Brand Blueprint mentoring programme and there are three levels of membership, one to suit every business budget.

Find out more about that at

<http://www.NicolaCairncross.com/internetmarketingmentor/>

And I look forward to hearing from you!

Warm regards

Nicola



<http://NicolaCairncross.com>

**“Passionate About Enabling Entrepreneurs To
Create, Build And Grow A Successful,
Sustainable, Ethical Business Online, From
Something They Already Do, Know Or Love”**