



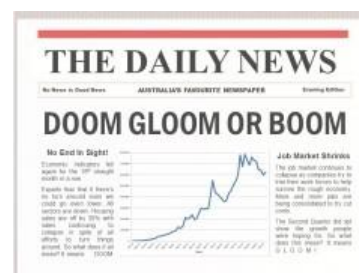
WELCOME TO THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE RECESSION BUSTER!

The COVID-19 pandemic not only triggered a global health crisis, it also plunged Australia into recession for the first time in three decades. As such, these economic conditions are unfamiliar territory for most business owners and we are here to help you navigate your way through this extraordinary and challenging period.

As we reopen our businesses we are being confronted with a new ‘normal’ with many people now working from home and increasingly, staff and customer meetings are being conducted online rather than face to face. Consumer behaviour has also changed and we have seen a massive shift to online sales. Going forward we genuinely believe your marketing could be the difference between gloom, doom and boom.

As an accounting, tax and business advisory firm we do more than just ‘keep the score’ for our business clients. Given the current environment we aim to help you build a more robust, valuable

and profitable business and the purpose of these ‘Recession Buster’ newsletters is to provide you with some practical, low cost marketing strategies to help you survive, revive and hopefully thrive.



To grow a business you need a combination of strategic thinking, the right tools and people who implement. Make sure you share the newsletter with your team and read each article with the mindset - how could this apply to my business? Take notes, create an action plan and allocate tasks to your team. Make sure you set deadlines for implementation.

Most importantly, if you have any queries or need assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

4 WAYS TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Everyone wants to grow their business but there's no magic formula. The truth is, no amount of enthusiasm, passion, hard work or talent can guarantee business growth. Having said that, there are fundamentally only four ways to grow a business:

1. Increase the Number of (Ideal) Customers
2. Increase the Number of Times your Customers Come Back and Buy from You
3. Increase the Average Value of Each Sale you Make to your Customers
4. Increase the Effectiveness of Each Process in your Business.

If you could increase each one of these four factors by just 10%, the compound effect would be a staggering 46.4% increase in your revenue. While it theoretically sounds simple, marketing in the digital and social age is complex because there are so many moving parts. The internet and social media turned marketing and advertising on its head and offline marketing tactics like TV, radio, newspapers and direct mail have lost their marketing mojo. Online tactics like Google searches, content marketing, social media, videos and email marketing are the new marketing magnets and they are the focus of these newsletters.

A lot of business owners make the mistake of focusing almost exclusively on attracting new customers (clients or patients), however, it's only one part of the marketing jigsaw puzzle. If you're looking for exponential growth you need to consider all 'four ways to grow your business' and in this edition of the Recession Buster Newsletter we're going to examine the fourth way to grow your business – Improve your systems and business processes.

Four Ways to Grow a Business



Grow Your Business by Improving Your Systems & Processes

The fourth way to grow your business is to increase the effectiveness of each process in your business. This is really the last piece of the jigsaw and glues the whole series together. The truth is, your business will never reach its full profit potential without efficient systems and processes.



It would also be very difficult to implement the ideas we discussed in the first 3 editions of the Recession Buster unless the business is functioning smoothly. Technology can help, the right people are critical but without proper systems and processes your business 'machine' won't function very well. Are your processes streamlined, documented, consistent and standard?

In business, the definition of a process is 'a series of steps and activities that transform an input into an output that is valued by the customer'. Basically your business is a series of processes including production, marketing, selling, distribution and planning. The quality of

these processes really determine the quality of the outcomes. For example, increasing the number of customers will depend on the effectiveness of your marketing processes while retaining your customers will hinge on how good your customer service processes are.

To illustrate the importance of efficient processes let's assume your business is struggling to win new customers. You might think the solution is to give your website a makeover or ramp up your marketing budget to drive more leads. However, the issue might not be the number of leads you are getting, it could be the failure to convert those leads into customers.

That's a sales process that needs improvement and the solution might be to get your sales team to perform more effectively or respond to emails and telephone enquiries faster. The secret is to identify the inefficiencies and make changes, not necessarily throw more money and resources at your website, advertising or marketing.



Most business owners and managers don't see their business as a series of processes. However, it's important to examine each of your processes and identify what's working, what's not working and what needs working on. The rate of technological change has forced us to review our processes because there always seems to be a better, more efficient way to do things on the horizon. In the above example, you could measure and monitor the average time your staff take to respond to emails and phone calls plus measure the sales conversion rate for every member of your sales team. There may be no need to spend any money, just improve the processes so your team convert more leads to sales.

It is an ongoing challenge to improve the processes in your business but they can drive productivity and improve your profitability. This might involve automating processes, improving facilities, upgrading technology or even implementing new technology. Training staff can also reap rewards. The processes also include the administrative side of your business such as the potential to use cloud-based software, the process of recruiting and employing staff, and distribution of your products.

The Four Ways to Grow your business that we have covered in these first 4 newsletters work best



when all four cogs are working together. In fact, if you could increase each one of the four factors by just 10% the compound effect would be a staggering 46.4% increase in your revenue. What would that do to your bottom line profit?

The mistake many business owners make is they focus on just the customer/sales process and ignore the other processes. For example, we find a lot of businesses are focused on winning new customers and almost ignore their existing customers who should be targeted to come back, buy more often and increase their average sale value. A report prepared for the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) in connection with the public inquiry "Reconnecting the Customer" suggests business owners should address customer retention strategies before acquisition strategies because:

- Increasing customer retention by only 2% has the same effect on profits as cutting costs by 10%
- Reducing customer defection rates by 5% can increase profits by as much as 125% and
- It costs 5 to 7 times as much to acquire a new customer as it is to retain a customer

If you're looking to grow your business we invite you to contact us today.

WHO NEEDS A WEBSITE?

You only get one chance to make a good first impression. Increasingly your website will



be the first thing people 'meet' and an amateurish website (or no website) is not the type of impression you want to make with a potential new customer or employee.

Although building a website can seem incredibly daunting to most people, it really isn't that difficult and doesn't have to be expensive. All too often we see businesses with websites that are simply electronic brochures - they simply list the who, what and where of the business and they don't attract new business but they should!

Your website is your marketing heart and is accessible 24/7 and should present your business and your products and services in the most positive light. It needs to be more than just a billboard and if you don't have a website you're not in the game. If your online presence is still an electronic brochure it's time to invest in a makeover or replacement.

If you don't have a website, chances are your competitors do. If you're thinking your business is just locally based and how can the 'World Wide Web' really be relevant to me - think again. Increasingly your marketing will revolve around technology and a website is compulsory if you are serious about growing your business. Aside from the obvious marketing benefits, a web presence is almost a necessity for any business that wants to compete in the 21st century electronic business world. If you don't

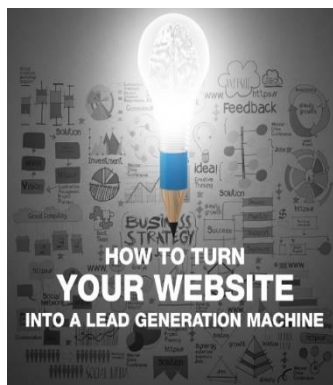
start appealing to the next generation of younger customers then a few years down the track you're probably going to be playing catch up which is always an uphill battle.

There is significant opportunity to use your website to develop customer relationships and provide real value and information to both customers and visitors to the site, including any potential employees. Think of your website as your marketing hub and here are six reasons why you need an outstanding website.

- 58% of buyers indicate they are 'very' or 'somewhat likely' to identify and learn more about service providers from their website
- 80% of buyers typically visit the service provider's website before buying
- 83% of buyers report that the website holds at least 'some influence' over their decision to engage in an initial discussion with that service provider
- 74% of buyers said that the service provider's website holds at least 'some influence' over their ultimate decision to buy services from the provider
- Customers place a high priority on convenience so being able to purchase online could mean the difference between you and your competitor - local or otherwise.
- Businesses that are focusing on improving customer service through their websites are going to be a step ahead of their competitors. Your customers see the web as a very real part of their lives and your competitors are using it in a number of ways to take business away from you - what's your website strategy going to be?

TURN YOUR 'ELECTRONIC BROCHURE' WEBSITE INTO A LEAD GENERATION MACHINE (PART 3)

During the industrial revolution there were tremendous changes to the way people did business. To name just a few, the advent of paper made from fibres rather than rags, the typewriter, printing, the telegraph, photography, newspapers, mail systems plus the start of radio and the telephone. All of those changes must have seemed daunting and confusing at the time and that is precisely how many people feel now with the digital revolution.



The internet and social media have revolutionised the way we live, work, communicate and play. They have also turned advertising and marketing on their heads. Offline marketing tactics like TV, radio, newspapers and direct mail have lost their marketing mojo and have been replaced by online tactics like Google searches, content marketing, video, email marketing and social media.

Courtesy of the internet, your customers have access to more information in a day than their grandparents did in a lifetime. They had to spend hours sifting through their Encyclopedia Britannica collection to research something we can Google in seconds. The pandemic has also seen online sales and e-commerce explode so your website is now a vital tool for every business and is arguably your most important marketing tool.

Given the primary purpose of your website is to drive traffic and create leads, a basic website that simply lists the who, what and where of the business isn't going to perform. Given the shift in consumer behaviour to online purchases, it

could be time for a website review, reconstruction or makeover. You need to treat your website as an investment, not a cost and remember, it will always be a work in progress. To help you, in these Recession Buster Newsletters we are examining the key website ingredients that could turn your 'electronic brochure' into a lead generation machine. In previous editions we examined videos, blogs, responsive design, calls to action and lead magnets but here are 4 more must-have features.

1. THE HEADLINE



The headline on the home page of your website is basically the pitch to your target market and usually the first thing your visitors notice when they come to your website. You need to spell out the end benefit they will receive if they choose to deal with your business. It could be more sales, more revenue or more customers. It might be quality advice, improved performance or time saving. Whatever the benefit is, make it crystal clear.

Of course, before you can script the right headline for your website you need to identify your ideal customer or client, understand what they really want from you and tell them you can deliver! Your headline will tell them the problems you solve or the results they can expect from your products or services.

Of course, your prospects aren't going to buy based on your headline but the mission is to hook your ideal customers and let them know

they've found exactly what they're looking for. Convincing them to contact you or hand over their contact information is the next challenge but we covered the importance of having lead magnets in a previous edition of this newsletter.

2. LIVE CHAT

The world has changed courtesy of the internet. People demand instant results and are impatient. You need to be able to provide the best possible customer experience and helping someone with their problem in real time is now expected. Customers are demanding!



Live chat reduces expenses because it is built into your email system and staff can multi-task and assist several leads at once. This feature can also help sales conversions and improve customer service and loyalty. Overall, a live chat feature can improve the website experience for customers and prospects because with live chat, they don't have to stop what they're doing and pick up the phone or send an email when they have a question. Instead, they can have their questions answered immediately by a real person. This is important because research suggests 57% of customers abandon their purchase if they can't get their question answered quickly.

3. SOCIAL PROOF & TESTIMONIALS

The best way to establish credibility with visitors is to provide evidence that your product or service really works. The most effective form of social proof is testimonials from satisfied customers who express how your product or service has solved their problems and delivered on your promise.



The testimonials can be written or video recordings and be sure to include the names of your satisfied customers, their location and business name. Make sure the client has also given you authority to use the testimonial. With written testimonials, ideally you should also post a small picture of the person(s) beside the testimonial to add more credibility.

There's no doubt that satisfied customers can help convince reluctant prospects to take the next step. If you still need convincing about the importance of Google Reviews to your business' online success, consider these points:

- Review signals account for 13% of the overall ranking factors for a website
- 90% of customers say buying decisions are influenced by online reviews.
- 32% trust online customer reviews as much as personal recommendations.

Google Reviews are now vitally important for search engine optimisation (SEO) and Google's support site actually states, "Google review count and score are factored into local search ranking: more reviews and positive ratings will probably improve a business's local ranking."

4. SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

Of course, positive social media comments are also excellent content and research suggests that users log into Facebook more than 7 times a day on average. This means you have to be on these channels and you must have them integrated into your website. Users can like your pages directly from your website and the channels you probably need to consider are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google and YouTube. Of course there are other like Pinterest and Instagram that may be relevant to your business and industry.



FUNNY BUSINESS

For those days when things have gone astray take heart - At least you didn't say this ... "I have reiterated over again what I have said before."

Robert F. Wagner



TEAM WORK

In the last edition of The Recession Buster we talked about building a champion team in your business. Here are some more ideas that could help you build an awesome team and business:

1. Offer an incentive to team members for bringing in new customers (of the type you want)
2. Celebrate your successes. When you win a big order or quality new customer mark the event by ringing a bell, breaking out the Tim Tams or call a team meeting.
3. Give business cards to every member of the team. Your team members, just like you, meet all sorts of people at all sorts of places, many of whom might be potential customers.
4. Give credit where it is due. When you win a new customer make sure you acknowledge the team member responsible. Recognition in front of their peers is a great 'reward' and discussing the process might unlock opportunities for other staff members.
5. Thank your team members. The words "thank you" are usually lacking in most business places. A "thank you" said every single day to each team member on their way out the door can make all the difference.

DIGGING FOR GOLD IN YOUR CUSTOMER DATABASE

As a business owner or manager, you're constantly looking for new people to sell to, however, too



often we spend our time in pursuit of new customers at the expense of our existing customers. You already know people who want your products and services, people that appreciate that you offer value for money. Your customer database including a detailed list of customer names, addresses personal details and in some cases, spending patterns is so important to the future of your business and your marketing.

Marketing groups keep telling us that it costs 5 or 6 times more to win a new customer than it does to get an existing customer to come back and buy from you again. Marketing directly to your existing customers makes good business sense. You see, customers who have purchased from you before will be more interested, curious even, to find out why you're contacting them. Why then is this obvious opportunity to tap into the database lost time and time again? Is it because we feel we're already too busy to add anything else for that customer? Is it because we don't know how to capture the all-important customer details needed to make this strategy work for our businesses?

For the most part, we don't set up systems like this because it seems more important (and so

sometimes easier) to concentrate on continually pursuing new prospects, instead of tapping into the hottest list in town - your existing customers.

The Database Process

Your website should include lead magnets – something of value you give



away in exchange for the prospect's email address. It could be an e-book or even a free sample or white paper. Ideally it should be a high quality or a signature piece of content that your prospect will value.

What is the process then? Simple, collect names and the email address from every single customer (or soon-to-be customer) to create your database. In doing so, you'll be building your most valuable marketing asset. In fact, an asset so valuable it can be sold. Many business owners shy away from creating a customer database thinking it will be too difficult but it really just involves asking a few simple questions about the customer - name and email address. You can also ask questions to track

other important information, such as the source of your inquiries. (This in turn can help you make better decisions regarding your marketing strategy.) For example: "And before you go, can I just ask, how did you hear about us?"

Other valuable information you can gather include what was purchased and customer profile information including age, income level, suburb, occupation etc. Other ways to capture this information is via regular prize draws. Offer to give away something your customers would love to have and ask your team members to encourage every customer to complete an entry form or drop a business card in a bowl.

Let's quantify the financial impact of successfully marketing to your customer database. Let's assume you have 875 customers who visit you 4 times a year and spend \$100 each time they visit - maybe a hairdresser, restaurant or clothing shop. Based on a few assumptions such as an 80% profit margin what would happen to your sales and profits if you could get the customer back one more time each year? The answer is, sales would increase by \$87,500. Clearly, your customer database is gold and you need to start mining it to reap the rewards.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS NEWSLETTER ...

Be sure to read each article with your business in mind. Take notes as you read and commit to having the ideas implemented by the time the next edition arrives. Circulate the newsletter to all your team members and to maximise the

results, arrange a meeting to discuss the ideas and set a timeline and schedule for getting them implemented. Doing that should really get your business moving in the right direction.

DISCLAIMER

While every effort has been made to provide practical and valuable information in this newsletter, this firm and any related suppliers or associated companies accept no responsibility or any form of liability from reliance upon or use of its contents. Any action should be carefully considered within your own particular circumstances as the information is intended as general information only.

The Recession Buster Newsletter is produced exclusively for members of the Accountants Accelerator Group. This is a group of proactive accounting firms across Australia who do more than just keep the 'score' for their clients. They are committed to helping their clients through the pandemic so they not only survive, but actually thrive.

