

OUTSOURCING MARKETING

In normal times outsourcing some marketing activities is the norm rather than the exception. There are few businesses which have in-house graphic designers, their own mailing operation, web developers or copywriters. However in abnormal times, such as during a recession, outsourcing may be the difference between continuing to market your business or donning what is effectively an invisibility cloak.

Five arguments for outsourcing stand out. Consider whether these could apply to your business.

1. Outsourcing reduces costs

Adam Smith argued as long ago as the 1790s that specialisation was the cornerstone of efficiency. Not much has changed since then. For example, a web site can cost you thousands of pounds or just hundreds and few would see the difference. Print is another area where the savings can be considerable if just minor changes are made.

2. Outsourcing gives you access to expertise

Businesses always have needs beyond their in-house capabilities. There is nothing unusual in that. Keeping an in-house resource that has to be fed and watered . . . and managed and trained . . . and housed . . . doesn't make sense if it is only used for a short period each year. In the increasingly complex world of marketing using outside expertise to supplement your in-house resources makes good sense.

3. Outsourcing lets you focus

There is nothing like subcontracting to focus the business on exactly what it wants from a function and from a supplier. Good, strong, quantifiable objectives can be set, strategy agreed, return-on-investment evaluated and all done in an atmosphere which is non-partisan and focuses on the real job to be done.

4. Outsourcing frees your in-house resources

If marketing is about finding, winning and keeping customers then outsourcing the 'finding' will release your in-house staff to concentrate on the 'winning' and 'keeping'. For many smaller companies that the task of finding new customers is not a full time function. Outsourcing this will free resources to focus your efforts on selling and cash flow generation.

5. Outsourcing counters peaks and troughs

Most businesses experience peaks and troughs. You could argue that they are inevitable but is it our own behaviour that is their root cause? Consider this. In busy times you have no time to market your business and in quiet times it's already too late. The solution is to market constantly whatever the state of the economy. Outsourcing your marketing solves this problem at a stroke by delegating the function to a supplier whose job it is to market your business however busy you are so helping to smooth those peaks and troughs.

Five good arguments for outsourcing some of your marketing but that is not to deny that there are also negatives. Product knowledge can be a problem as can liaison with someone based at a separate location but the latter can be overcome with the use of technology.

But considering the cost advantages – most businesses will only need a two day a week commitment – the positives far outweighed the negatives. Contact us on 01621 818555 to discuss.

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