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BUSINESS

MARKETING MATTERS

Columnist Jackie Cook of Sheffield's CQ Strategic Marketing shares some trade secrets on business promotion...



Focus and target your marketing to get the best result

Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning may sound like marketing jargon but these will help you understand who your customers are, how they make their decisions, who makes the decision to purchase, and how to best you can answer their needs.

Segmentation is about breaking up your potential customer base to enable you to focus your marketing efforts and target particular industry sectors and locations with messages that are tailored to their needs and will hopefully persuade them to want to buy your product or service.

You need to build a profile of your customers - where they are geographically, who their decision-makers are and how often they purchase - so you can then identify the benefits your products or services have for your customers rather than put your efforts into selling them the latest gadget.

Having identified who your customers are, you need to look at the attractiveness of each segment to start to establish priorities. This is Targeting and some of the factors to consider include market size, whether it is a growing or declining market, profitability, your market share, your competitors' activity and strength; your route to market i.e through a distributor or agent, selling direct, your existing order base and capacity. If you are already busy, can you get resources onboard to cope with increased orders or do you need to train people up in advance?

Having looked outwards from your

company at the marketplace you operate in and your competitors, you now need to look at Positioning your product or service offering. Keep in mind what your competitors offer and what problem is it that you are solving for your customer.

If you have established different segments of your overall customer base, they may well have different needs so may need a different marketing message or service offer.

Marketing Planning must always be in line with the overall business objectives and take into account goals for growth, budget for marketing activity and production capabilities, for example.

While developing your marketing plan with campaign themes across a range of communication channels, remember to stay realistic when looking at frequency of communication.

Think also about how much you have to say and whether you have the resource to staff it, either inside the company or outside via consultants for specialist elements.

For example, you are better starting with a quarterly newsletter and building up to monthly rather than launching a monthly newsletter and not delivering - which would send out a negative signal about your service.

You also need to ensure you build and update a database of potential customers and, after your marketing campaigns, ensure you report on and evaluate their success, adjusting things for your future campaigns.



Plan to create jobs for traffick survivors



Rachel Salway, of Roseannah.com, wants to set up a safe workshop for trafficking survivors in Sheffield

WORKING TO NEW LIFE

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A Sheffield woman who set up her own jewellery brand to raise money for global victims of trafficking now plans to employ female survivors on her own doorstep.

Rachel Salway, 40, quit a 15-year career in leisure and retail management and recruitment to sell Fair Trade jewellery and fashion online and by party-plan after visiting India and Africa.

"The poverty and suffering I saw changed my life. I decided I wanted to empower people in those countries by giving them trade, rather than aid," said Rachel, of Westfield.

She set up in business in June 2013, initially sourcing fair trade products to sell via her online store Roseannah.com by forming partnerships with trade organisations. Then after being shocked by the case of a woman who was trafficked into Sheffield from Uganda and was held captive for six years, she turned her focus to helping support traffick victims.

She started a website campaign, STOP the



Stop The Traffick! bracelets

Traffick!, to raise money for five survivor charities, including Sheffield's Snowdrop Project, the only one in the UK to provide extended support to victims after their 45-day programme of UK government support ends, plus the Salvation Army's Victim Support Programme and Sheffield charity City Hearts.

Rachel designed a collection of STOP the Traffick! bracelets - with £5 from each sale going to charity - and began employing Asian survivors of trafficking to make them.

Now she is determined to set up a safehouse workshop in Sheffield where survivors can learn the art of jewellery-making and earn income, as many don't receive any state benefits.

"When I started the campaign I wasn't aware of

the extent of the trafficking problem here. When the Rotherham sex scandal and similar problems were exposed across the country, it opened my eyes. The UK Government Home Affairs Committee estimates that between 100,000 and 800,000 people are trafficked into the EU each year and in 2015 I want to help survivors who end up in Sheffield," she said.

Rachel aims to take on two women initially and acknowledges the HR issues of employing people at such a vulnerable time in their lives will be great: "They have gone through such trauma. I've done caseworker training with the Snowdrop Project to assist me and hope to use my managerial skills to devise personal development plans and vocational training schemes for the women I employ."

She hopes other local companies will follow her lead. "These people have a lot of worth. They just need their talents to be brought to the surface in a safe and supportive work environment," she said.

There are now 40 different bracelets on Rachel's website, including a limited edition to support her local employment project. She hopes Human Trafficking Awareness Day this Sunday, January 11, will boost sales.