

HOW TO MAKE MARKETING WORK FOR YOU

Many small companies have had bad experiences with marketing. High costs, poor results and no long term benefit. But the solution lies with the customer. Put yourself in their shoes and see how your marketing looks from there.

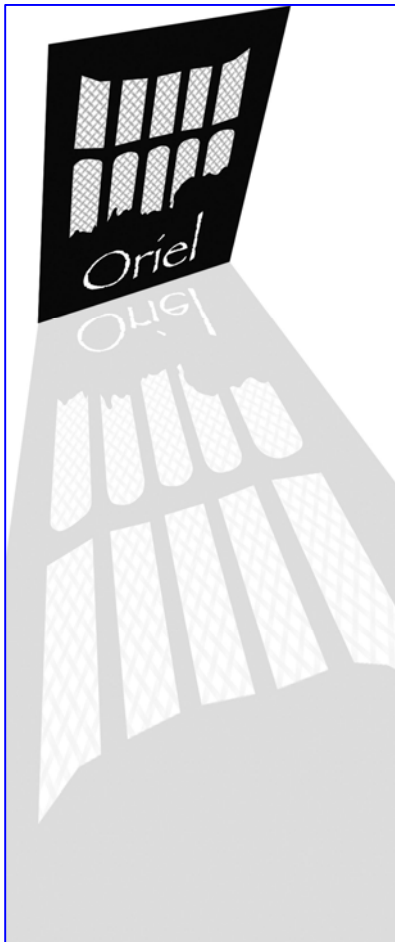
Picture the scene. You've just launched a new range of organic vegetable boxes and you need to build your customer base. You invest in some high profile advertising and direct marketing, and wait for the orders to roll in; radio ads, glossy brochures through the door and some really expensive telemarketing to persuade people to buy. But nothing happens. Thousands of pounds down the drain and not a single order to show for it.

“Marketing just doesn't work” you say to yourself as your business stagnates.

Let's try again, but this time looking at it from the customer's point of view. Angela is 36. She has twin boys aged four and a two year old girl. She works part-time in the City, takes her children to nursery in Guildford, before getting on the 8:15 to Waterloo, four days a week. She is an ideal customer, but your marketing just doesn't work for her. She's not listening to local radio, because she's in London all day; telemarketing doesn't reach her because she's too busy to answer the phone, and although she's seen your brochure, she isn't at home on the day you deliver.

But, she does care passionately about feeding her children quality organic food, she values the convenience of home delivery and most important, she has the disposable income to buy your premium product.

The scenario is a common one, in which companies pour money into the visible end of marketing, leaflets, advertising and websites, without doing the invisible bit – thinking and planning. When we advise fast-growing companies,



the first question is always about their target market. Who are you trying to target? How many of them are there? And what exactly are you offering them?

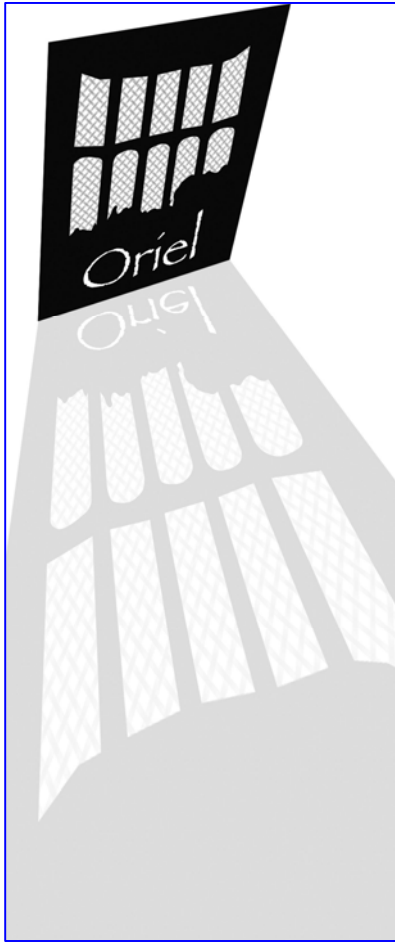
The most important step in your marketing plan is to decide exactly who you want to attract, and why. It is much more effective to target a small market well, than a large one badly. You need to be specific: age, location, life-stage and the reasons why they might need your product. Until we knew that Angela had a highly paid job and three small children we didn't really know her at all.

Being specific makes the next bit easier. You need to tell people why they need your services. Angela needs convenience and quality. And although you can convince her about quality, you need to build up the convenient aspects of your service. Can you specify time slots for delivery? Or deliver direct to her nursery?

Remember that you are competing with the supermarkets, so tell her what is different about you: fewer food miles, a local farmer contributing to the local economy or a weekly recipe card for that week's vegetables?

It is only once you know who you are addressing and what is going to grab their attention that you even start to think about the routes to market. We know that Angela has two separate parts to her life: as a professional in London and as a mother in Guildford. She doesn't have time to read the paper; she prefers Radio 4 to the local stations and puts junk mail in the recycling box. So how do you reach her? The trick is to put your message in all places she goes to regularly.

On her day off, she might give her children a treat. A visit to the local farm park? Perhaps lunch in her favourite café? Catching up with other friends with small children? Each provides an opportunity for you. Can you link up with the



farm park to give out your leaflets in return for putting a special offer from them in your vegetable box? Could the café offer an introductory discount on your boxes to their regular customers? Or could you offer an incentive for local mothers to recommend you? All are very low cost opportunities, very tightly targeted and delivering your key message direct to your potential customers.

As the world of communications becomes ever more complex, it is vital that you choose your customers carefully and make sure that you understand them inside out. Planning becomes even more important with the proliferation of on-line and traditional broadcasting opportunities. Careful planning and a personal approach allow you to grow your business profitably by focusing on the real opportunities and spending wisely on your marketing programme.

Oriel Marketing helps fast-growing companies to develop marketing plans that work, enabling you to concentrate on the customers you really want. If you would like a free marketing health-check for your company, visit www.oriemarketing.com or phone 01252 727625.

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**If you need to understand what makes your customers tick
call Oriel Marketing on 01252 727625**

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