

INDUSTRIAL MARKETING – A WHITEPAPER

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In the past 30 years marketing for industrial companies has changed out of all recognition - *there are now so many more opportunities for a small to medium sized company to promote themselves than ever before and at low cost* – so that now there is no reason not to successfully promote a company of any size – thanks largely to the internet and digital technology.

For those running such small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) this perhaps offers a somewhat confusing range of little understood activities, with the attendant question of “what will it cost?” always in our minds – and the implied fear that it will be more than can be afforded, that we might “get ripped off” or committed to something which we cannot get out of.

So *let's have a serious grown up conversation about marketing* – let us understand that it is not difficult to understand marketing – at least no more so than some of the products that are in the industrial/manufacturing arena – much less so than some! Let us also understand that today *it is both relatively inexpensive and measurable – as well as being highly desirable*.

The way we approach marketing can be similar to the way we approach any technical subject and as in any supplier/client relationship it depends primarily on trust – given this and a willingness to go through an appropriate learning curve *a great deal can be achieved to help grow small companies into much bigger ones* and to buffer them to some extent against the downturns that occur.

Given all this – you can do it all yourself – in fact you probably are already doing at least some of it, even if you call it something else – I would argue strongly that a specialist professional agency could do it better and take the load but that is your choice and I am aware that route may involve difficulties of its own, if only in finding a good one and developing a productive relationship with them – *let us then see in broad brush strokes our suggestions based on what we have found to work:*

1. *Do have a website* – host it in the UK, keep it simple, keep it quick to load and navigate, keep it technical, authoritative, informative and properly SEO'd.
2. *Do use P.R.* – by issuing product based releases, application based releases etc., properly written with good photos, well SEO'd.
3. *Do Social Media* – run an independent Blog – have a YouTube channel, use LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Slideshare, Pinterest – more if you wish.
4. *Do advertising online* – support your P.R. – with low cost internet deals, buy keywords and appropriately placed banners, keep a contingency for good deals especially in printed magazines.

5. *Do Pay-per-click - AdWords*
6. *Do exhibitions* – use pop up stands with some product and low-cost stand space.
7. *Do use directories* – free entries, company profiles – low cost, enhanced entries
8. *Budget your marketing activities* formally each year; maintain a flexible approach over its lifetime
9. *Commit to marketing activities as a long-term part of your business* – compare with sales costs, e.g. cost of sales engineer
10. *Use your website as your brochure*, your online enquiry feed, your technical library and your central company resource. Keep it current and comprehensive
11. *Use printed journal advertising* to lead people to your website, phone or e-mail
12. *Create a photo library* as core collateral – products, applications – use principal libraries. This will save you money and ensure that you can create those reports, presentations, newsletters, press releases, advertisements, brochures etc. at short notice and on limited budgets.
13. *Use your text and photo collateral as widely as possible* – in releases, website, blog posts and newsletters
14. *Use corporate branding* across packaging, paperwork, promotional material, emails
15. *Monitor results* where you can, but maintain a wide perspective. Blinkered thinking does not grow a business
16. *Establish the keywords and search terms important to your business* – use them everywhere – especially on the internet – build this up with experience, e.g. 100 to 300
17. Put yourself in the position of *the prospective customer who doesn't even know you exist* – yet! Then set out to provide what they need to select you as a supplier.
18. Consider *video demonstrations* on your website and elsewhere – also slide presentations and product pictures, also application pictures

Given these guidelines you may find it useful to look further at each facet of your marketing operation – perhaps by reading our other whitepapers. As they say “it’s not rocket science” but it does involve some careful work and a measure of understanding, and the sooner you start then the sooner you will see the benefits.