


APRIL '11 NEWSWIRE

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Welcome to our monthly newswire designed to provide you with some marketing tips for your business.

We hope you enjoy reading it and remember, we are here to help you so please contact us if you need further information on any of the topics covered.

[IPAD 2 LAUNCHED](#)

Although it seems like only yesterday when Apple launched the "category defining" iPad, they have just announced the launch of the new, improved iPad 2. The device you never knew you needed until you tried it out has just gotten twice as fast and 33% slimmer - quite the diet then!

It still comes in 16GB, 32GB, 64GB and Wi-Fi or Wi-Fi + 3G spec. The base 16GB model is probably a bit short on storage if you intend on using the device for multimedia, music, films, etc. However, for strictly business use, spreadsheets, pdfs, email and documents the base model is probably adequate. However, the 64GB model makes more sense if your budget can stretch that far.

At the heart of the stylish iPad 2 is the A5 processor - a dual core 1Ghz chip. This should handle multi tasking much better than the old A4 processor. The iPad 2 is also available in Black or White (the original was only available in Black).

Screen size remains at 9.7 inches (LED backlight, glossy display) and battery life is an impressive 10 hours. The iPad 2 is also designed to work with the magnetic iPad cover which is yet another example of great Apple design.

In summary, the iPad2 is a great device for business or personal use. For business travellers it offers true mobile office facilities without the bulk of a laptop. The 3G connection on the "Wi-Fi + 3G" is a great extra which allows the device to connect to the internet using a sim card when you are out of range of a Wi-Fi hotspot. This new version can also connect to a projector for PowerPoint presentations and is a surprisingly versatile presentation tool.

Do you really need one? Probably not. Is it worth upgrading from iPad 1 to iPad 2? No – the only gains are a faster processor, improved multi tasking and video cameras for video-conferencing. However, if you haven't already taken the plunge and invested in an iPad – this is undoubtedly the best tablet computer that you can buy.

[TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS](#)

Making an effective presentation is an art in itself.

Communication is more than just what you say, it is also about how you say it. Here are a few general tips for giving your next presentation the X-factor

- ◆ [Eye Contact](#) - Failure to make eye contact can make people doubt your sincerity. Try to scan the audience with your eyes but try not to focus directly on the same part of the audience for the entire presentation as this can make the rest of the room feel neglected.
- ◆ [Organise Your Thoughts](#) - In order to communicate your message clearly, it must be properly organised in your mind before you deliver it. The best way to do this is to have a "dry run" at the presentation the night before. This means you will be familiar with the order in which you will make your points.
- ◆ [Notes and Slides](#) - Ideally, you should rehearse your presentation to the point whereby you no longer require any notes – this suggests you know your topic extremely well and allows you to focus on the audience. Slides are there to support you. They should reinforce your message with a few short bullet points and some strong visuals that back up what you are saying.
- ◆ [Avoid Speaking in a Monotone](#) - You will lose the attention of your audience if you speak in a monotone. Try to speak as though you are having a normal conversation. Emphasize important points and don't be afraid to raise and lower the volume from time to time. At the very least it will be more entertaining for your audience.
- ◆ [Tell a Story](#) - Don't underestimate the value of a good story or two. Stories allow the audience to connect with you through common experiences. They are an effective way of passing on important values, concepts or illustrating a point. Stories can also create empathy between you and the audience, allowing you to hold their attention and convey your message more effectively.

APRIL '11 NEWSWIRE

GET YOUR MARKETING MESSAGE RIGHT

No matter what type of industry you operate in, you must ensure that your marketing message is tailored for your target market. Many businesses make the mistake of trying to sell a product or service. The marketing message does not really need to communicate what that product or service is but instead the message needs to illustrate that the firm is selling a benefit. That benefit may be a solution to a problem, something that makes life easier or something that saves money for customers.

Take for example a Blackberry phone. The marketing message does not focus on the fact that they are selling you a piece of plastic and metal with a glass screen. Instead, the marketing message focuses on the benefits of the product to the customer. For example, the blackberry marketing message may focus on the benefit to the customer of being able to receive and reply to emails at any time and in any location. The message may also focus on other benefits like being able to take calls, send and receive texts and so on.

Don't fall into the same trap that so many other businesses have fallen into. Don't sell the product, sell the benefits of the product.

Next, it is important to focus your marketing message in order to make it appeal to your target market. Be specific about who your audience are and make sure that your message contains enough detail so that they can see how your product or service can be of benefit to them. Emotions form an important part of a purchase decision. Create a marketing message that appeals to your target audience. Use imagery and ensure that the detail of the message shows that your firm understands the requirements of the customer and displays how your product or service will benefit them.

Finally, your marketing message should be as simple as possible. Keep it straightforward as complex marketing messages can prove ineffective. Take a billboard for example. A potential customer who may be driving past a billboard will have about 2 seconds in which to read and interpret your advert. Therefore there is no point listing the top 10 benefits of your product or service as they simply won't have time to read it all.

UPDATE YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

Most businesses create a business plan at the start of each year which outlines where the business is today, what happened last year and where they want to be at the end of this year. As we approach the end of Quarter 1, 2011 its time to pull out the business plan and update it. Every business prepares monthly accounts, but what about a monthly or even quarterly update to the firm's strategic plan.

Constantly updating your business plan ensures that the business's long term plan is always up to date and can be adapted as new issues arise. By constantly updating the plan management are always creating new goals and objectives which can be managed and tracked.

One concept worth considering when updating the plan is the possibility of expanding the business. Expanding the business may not necessarily involve taking over competitors or hiring in more staff. It could just as easily involve introducing more products and services, going national/international or simply beginning to target new market segments.

The important thing to remember when updating the business plan is the fact that no business plan is ever final or finished. The world of business is constantly evolving as markets grow, currencies fluctuate and supply/demand levels change. As a result, updating the business plan is an ongoing exercise.

By constantly updating the business plan, the business is acting and thinking proactively rather than waiting for something to happen in the market and then reacting. This will ensure that the business is prepared and ready to adapt when changes in the market occur.

