

## Welcome



Welcome to this edition of the newsletter for marketers who work in the small business sector.

This edition's theme is the changing framework of business support and how growth may be achieved in an increasingly turbulent UK economy. The year dawned with the announcement that the economy had shrunk by 0.5 per cent in the final three months of 2010 reducing final year annual growth figures down to 1.4 per cent – well below forecast. But with the majority of actions from the Government's spending review still to take effect it's heightened fears that the country is heading for a double-dip recession.

The first Local Enterprise Partnerships have been given the green light and news on the overhaul of the Business Link service has just been announced. With the emphasis being placed firmly on the private business sector to provide long-term growth – the challenge for the small business community has probably not been greater since the recession at the start of the 1980s. Marketers in the SME sector will have plenty of challenges in the year ahead.

**Christine Boswell-Munday**  
Regional Director South West  
and SBC lead

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# Business Link announces its future

**The Government has announced its plans on a new framework for business support and the future of the Business Link service. The new framework of business support includes an overhaul of the [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) website for online business information whilst announcing the regional Business Link advisory services will close by November 2011.**

The 'Bigger, Better Business: helping small firms start, grow and prosper' report, published on the 5 January 2011 outlines significant changes to the way information, guidance and advice to business is provided. The government states its focus is on improving small business performance and growth with a greater emphasis on further and better private sector provision.

Business and Enterprise Minister Mark Prisk commented: "In the current economic climate, it has never been more important to promote an enterprise culture in the UK. It is vital that businesses have the information, advice, and mentoring they need to grow and expand. The best people to advise small businesses are those who have already started and run successful companies, so it is particularly important that this new framework for helping businesses to improve focuses on providing access to business mentors."

The key changes to Business Link services are:

- 1** An overhaul of the [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) website. This will include:
  - A Business Startup Hub, including access to online company registration.
  - Notification of public procurement opportunities through a 'Contracts Finder'.
  - A business tax 'dashboard' enabling businesses to get set up for tax and keep up with their tax position.
  - Better, clearer information on Government regulation.
  - New training services and online tools for business to use on the move from their own computer or handheld.
- 2** A national contact centre.
- 3** A network of at least 40,000 experienced business mentors who will offer practical advice to existing businesses and people who want to start a business.
- 4** Business Coaching for Growth, backing high growth SMEs to enable them to realise their potential.
- 5** A New Enterprise Allowance to help unemployed people set up their own businesses.

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**Business Link announces its future** *continued from page 1*

Within The 'Bigger, Better Business: helping small firms start, grow and prosper' report, the Government announced they are working with 24 trade associations, institutes and mentoring organisations, to develop a single web-based gateway for mentoring. This network aims to bring together 40,000 mentors, who will provide practical advice and hands-on mentor experience under a shared code of practice. Although not included in the initial list, The Chartered Institute of Marketing are in conversation with Business Link on how they can be a part of their future strategy.

Chris Daly, director of membership explains: "We are currently in discussion with Business Link on how the Institute and our consultancy members within the SBC can play a valuable support, resource and advice role to the new central Business Link service. We are reassured their strategy is still a work in progress and is dependant upon many other factors at this stage."

Historically, CIM has supplied marketing fact sheets, online tools and information for Business Link websites and at a regional level worked on partnering initiatives. Regionally, SBC members have been active running training events and seminars and delivering consultancy via the Business Link brokerage service.

Ray Lambe, programme director at Business Link stated: "The Chartered Institute of Marketing has been a key contributor to the quality marketing information and advice provided by Business Link. Our continued collaboration ensures businesses and members have access to valuable information and support." Daly adds: "Business Link understands that professional marketing advice is central to SME success and growth and it will be core to its online advice centres and mentoring approach. Our hope is to work together to share resources and benefit from each organisation's established networks to provide professional

marketing information and advice to businesses across the country and that I hope will include the mentoring network."

Download 'Bigger, Better Business: helping small firms start, grow and prosper'.

**Business Link timeline of change activity**

Deadline	Re-organisation Businesslink.gov.uk activity schedule
April 2011	Businesslink.gov will have completed the migration of content from over 170 publicly funded business facing websites making Businesslink.gov.uk the single government website for business.
June 2011	New online training capabilities that will enable hosting of externally developed training modules. The Mentoring Gateway will go live.
September 2011	Businesslink.gov.uk to host content developed by private sector suppliers. Launch the National Call Centre.
November 2011	Launch new Start Up Hub. The Regional Business Link advisory service will close.
January 2012	The New Enterprise Allowance will have rolled out to all target areas. Business Coaching for Growth will be launched.
June 2012	Migration of online tools that customers found useful from the regional sites to the national site.
March 2013	Hosting more externally developed content and other websites which host BL content will be updated automatically.

Source: 'Bigger, Better Business: helping small firms start, grow and prosper'

**Get Britain Trading campaign**

The Forum of Private Business is launching a campaign to Get Britain Trading. Get Britain Trading will raise awareness of the massive contribution that small businesses make to Britain's economy and aims to create a brighter future for small firms for the benefit of the economy and everyone who lives in Britain. The Forum is focusing on making it easier and more profitable for businesses to buy and sell on a local, national and international basis.

The Forum will be lobbying the Government on a number of issues and is calling on business owners across the country to sign the Get Britain Trading pledge. The Chartered Institute of Marketing is supporting the campaign and has provided some top tips on marketing for small businesses. These top tips are included in an advice booklet covering topics from accessing finance and training and developing staff, to exporting, cost-saving and credit management.



**Marketing guides and resources for small business**

**Growth strategies for business**

The Chartered Institute of Marketing's (CIM) **growth strategy guides** focus on the many options for growing a business, whether through encouraging existing customers to buy more, appealing to a new group of customers or extending your product or service range.

**10 minute guides and fact files**

A series of short guides and fact files covering marketing-related subjects. These guides include practical techniques and checklists to help your business grow.

**Gain government funding to attend CIM training programmes**

CIM offers a wide range of one day workshops in highly relevant subjects for small businesses. Find out how you can access government funding towards attending training and to search for a course that meets your needs.

For more information on the above click here.

# Green light for 24 LEPs

Just 24 of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) bids submitted from private businesses, organisations and councils across the country got the green light from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills at the end of October 2010.

Part of the government's bid to rebalance the economy and promote sustainable economic growth fairly across the country, the successful partnerships are now able to bid for a share of a national £1.4bn regional growth fund. This aims to support communities currently dependent on the public sector to help them make the transition to private sector led growth and prosperity over the next three years. But competition will be tough. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills announced it received nearly 450 bids in the first round which closed on 21 January 2011. The bids will now be assessed by the Independent Advisory Panel, chaired by Lord Heseltine (a former president of the Institute).

In total, the government assessed 62 LEP proposals from across the UK and the bids were given either a green light to proceed immediately or were given feedback on how to develop their proposals further and resubmit at a later date.

The Chartered Institute of Marketing's South West regional director, Christine Boswell-Munday, commented, "The current economic environment is still proving challenging for both the public and private sector but for any marketer, this also presents opportunities. The ways in which the regional growth fund will be allocated and distributed will have an important impact on the economic development of our regions over the next decade and beyond. I think businesses should be seeking to get involved with their local LEP partnership or revised bid to ensure the private sector is properly represented while there is still time."

The first 24 local enterprise partnerships are:	
✓	Birmingham and Solihull with East Staffordshire, Lichfield and Tamworth
✓	Cheshire and Warrington
✓	Coast to Capital
✓	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
✓	Coventry and Warwickshire
✓	Cumbria
✓	Great Cambridge and Great Peterborough
✓	Greater Manchester
✓	Hertfordshire
✓	Kent, Greater Essex and East Sussex
✓	Leeds City Region
✓	Leicester and Leicestershire
✓	Lincolnshire
✓	Liverpool City Region
✓	Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby and Derbyshire
✓	Oxfordshire City Region
✓	Sheffield City Region
✓	Solent
✓	South East Midlands
✓	Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire
✓	Tees Valley
✓	Thames Valley Berkshire
✓	The Marches
✓	West of England

# Top tips for growing your business

We asked fellow small business consultants and business support organisations for their top tips for small businesses looking for growth in the current economic conditions.

## Keep it simple

“In current economic circumstances, it is critical to keep things simple and uncomplicated. That doesn't mean that sophisticated marketing plans cannot be executed, but the marketing mix and communications, for example, should avoid unnecessary complications. Team building and setting priorities are invaluable when circumstances can rapidly change in unexpected ways. Investigate innovative management models that will refresh the business when it is under more stress than normal and offer prospects for customer winning initiatives to be deployed.”

**Jonathan Nason, Quay Directions Limited**

## Be creative

“Now is the time to think hard about what your customers need and think of creative responses – it doesn't have to be just discounts. It may be additional time to pay over the normal terms and conditions – this can have a huge impact on cash flow, especially for small businesses.”

**David Thorp, Director of Research and Professional Development, The Chartered Institute of Marketing**

## Plan for growth

“Now is an excellent time for small businesses to look at their plans for the year and focus on growth. Sales and marketing, export, tightening credit management, cost saving, staff development and securing finance for new projects are all areas that should be looked at for growing companies. But above all, ask yourself: am I putting my customers first?”

**Jane Bennett, Head of Campaigns, Forum of Private Business**

## Be daring, be different

“Compete on service, quality, quirkiness, or a combination of all of these. Lock your customers into your unique offering that they can't get anywhere else.”

**Amanda Law-Lyons, Law-Lyons Consulting**

## Plan and review

“Even more important in current conditions is that the business needs an action plan for success, which is reviewed regularly against targets and budgets. It's the old saying 'Fail to plan, plan to fail'.”

**Sally Steadman, Business Link Yorkshire**

## Remind customers about what you do

“Never make the assumption that your customers know about your company, products and services. With the pace of modern business life, employee turnover and range of product choices, some companies will lose touch with what you do. Remind your customer base what your company stands for and what you do.”

**Ian Lockyer, Easimarketing.com**

## Regional ambassadors' reports on news and events

### Scotland

**Carl Gardiner**  
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The Scottish economy is showing signs of growth and small businesses operating in Scotland are recognising the importance of marketing to ensure their business can diversify and grow in difficult market conditions.

The activities of The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) in Scotland are geared to providing opportunities for small business to get the latest marketing knowledge and how to apply it to their business the next day. Many events have been focused on digital marketing given the opportunities this provides for companies with limited marketing budgets. Topics include online branding, web casting, social media and future trends in digital marketing.

Partnerships have been further developed with Chambers of Commerce in Scotland to provide access for small business to our marketing content. For example, we jointly hosted an event on branding with some 150 attending. Our local teams will continue to provide mentoring and sign posting to key services that can assist small business teams utilise the opportunities effective marketing can offer.

### Yorkshire and North East

**Sally Steadman**  
s.steadman@businesslink  
yorkshire.co.uk

The Humber branch is celebrating The Chartered Institute of Marketing's (CIM) Centenary year by running a series of events focused on business growth called 'Growing Your Business in a Downturn.' The first event being held in February brings Will Kintish, renowned networking guru to the region to demonstrate how confident networking can help grow and develop your business.

The Institute showcased marketing at Venturefest 2011 in York on 16 February 2011. This annual event brings together the region's science, technology and knowledge entrepreneurs and the professional services who support them. The Institute held 11 marketing clinics which brought in 19 leads.

### North West

**North West**  
**Gillian Cosser**  
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**Cheshire and Merseyside**  
**Amanda Law-Lyons**  
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**Cumbria**  
**Suzanne Caldwell**  
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The North West continues to make great strides in reaching the SME audience. In November 2010, in conjunction with Cumbria Chamber, we reached 100 SME delegates in the 'Focus on Food' event. CIM clinics were also popular at the Chamber's B2B events around the county – with this year's round of B2Bs kicking off in West Cumbria in April.

CIM Lancashire will be supplying 12 marketing workshops to SME members of North and West Lancashire Chamber throughout 2011. Workshops will be half day and aimed at Chamber members, CIM members and other SMEs. In March, Kirsty Henshaw will be presenting on how she researched, developed and launched her new business – with help from TV's Dragon Peter Jones. Definitely a must for all SME owners and managers.

The CIM Cheshire SME ambassador, Amanda Law-Lyons, is actively involved in marketing the NWDA Business Mentoring programme, helping to recruit SME clients and promoting the programme across the North West. CIM members, who volunteer as members, can earn valuable CPD hours for taking part.

Chartered Marketers continue to provide marketing clinics at business fairs across the North West. Activity in Manchester is engaging with SMEs in the form of clinics at the Salford and Manchester Business Fair and the North West Business Fair.

In addition to providing marketing clinics at business fairs, Merseyside branch increases its SME reach by working with the three Merseyside-based Sirolli projects: Dream High, Waves and Enable, and we are delighted to have representation at the FSB National Conference in Liverpool, enhancing the existing close relationship that CIM has with the FSB in the North West.

### South East

**Ian Lockyer**  
i.lockyer@sky.com

Things are going apace in the South East region. Firstly, we are really pleased to welcome onboard Anneke Edmonds, marketing director of Scientio LLC who has taken on the responsibility of Small Business Community ambassador in the vibrant Thames Valley region. She joins the South East team of Sara Orchard in Surrey and Sharon Wilding in Kent.

For the past couple of years Sharon Wilding of The Purple Edge and the Kent branch has been supporting our Small Business Programme by running seminars with Business Link under the banner of 'Simply Better Marketing'. In 2011 Sharon will be expanding the programme and joining forces with Best Business Events who organise Kent 2020 – the biggest B2B exhibition in Kent – to offer monthly seminars to small businesses.

#### EVENTS North West

3 March 2011	Successful branding – win the hearts and minds of your customers <a href="http://www.sthelenschamber.com/events">http://www.sthelenschamber.com/events</a>	St Helens Chamber
15 March 2011	Liverpool Business Fair <a href="http://www.businessfairsuk.com/liverpool-business-fair-2011.php">http://www.businessfairsuk.com/liverpool-business-fair-2011.php</a>	Liverpool Anglican Cathedral
17–19 March 2011	FSB National Conference <a href="http://www.fsb.org.uk/conference2011">http://www.fsb.org.uk/conference2011</a>	BT Convention Centre, Liverpool
30 March 2011	A lunch date with Kirsty Henshaw <a href="http://www.lancschamber.co.uk/">http://www.lancschamber.co.uk/</a>	North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, Preston
19 April 2011	Salford and Manchester Business Fair <a href="http://www.businessfairsuk.com/salford-and-manchester-business-fair-2011.php">www.businessfairsuk.com/salford-and-manchester-business-fair-2011.php</a>	Maxwell Hall, University of Salford
4–5 May 2011	Business North West 2011 <a href="http://www.easyfairs.com">http://www.easyfairs.com</a>	Manchester Central
24 May 2011	Sefton & West Lancashire Business Fair <a href="http://www.businessfairsuk.com/sefton--amp--west-lancashire-2011.php">www.businessfairsuk.com/sefton--amp--west-lancashire-2011.php</a>	Southport Theatre and Convention Centre

## Regional ambassadors' reports on news and events

### Greater London

**Andrew Miller**  
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Since the last update we've run some successful activities on social media. Expert Warren Knight, took two, sold out, event audiences through a number of practical steps on how to commercialise the use of social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter. This medium is becoming so important to the small business community, as a way of creating a business presence and marketing on very limited budgets.

### East Midlands

**Richard Allsop**  
Richard@strategicbusinesspartnership.com

The East Midlands region will be holding a series of marketing clinics in their 2011 calendar, which will be designed and delivered by members of The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) Small Business Community. Watch this space for our new developments.

### West Midlands

**Sammy Rose**  
info@sammyrose.com

Our successful 'Find it in Sandwell Marketing Working Lunch' monthly sessions will be finishing in February 2011. A meeting with Sandwell Council is scheduled to consider their future amidst inevitable funding cuts. The programme

has included CIM's 10 minute guides as well as mentoring help from other CIM ambassadors; Richard Mooney, Derek Millward and Maxine Ward from Halesowen College.

**Richard Mooney**  
Richard.Mooney@nxo.net

Last October Birmingham and Coventry branch participated in Birmingham Digital Week, sponsored by Birmingham City Council and the Regional Development Agency.

Richard Mooney of nxo organised a shared CIM stand at the SME day of the 'Hello Digital' exhibition held in the prestigious International Convention Centre. The exhibition was held over two days; the first focused on corporate and major agencies, the SME day focused on the needs of smaller, specialist agencies, marketing services providers and small businesses. Richard provided a presentation on integrating marketing-led digital techniques across all activities within a small business. We found a large number of specialist firms had not considered that the benefits of CIM membership, training and CPD are as relevant to digital as quote "traditional marketing techniques". Richard's message was that the divide between traditional marketing and digital has gone. Application of customer-led marketing strategy encourages small businesses to adopt digital tools to deliver better differentiated products and services to their customers more efficiently. Keith Barlow, regional director, left the event with a number of enquiries and leads from the 350 delegates.

Birmingham and Coventry branch are planning a small business community

event in collaboration with the Forum of Private Business for June. "From Kitchen to Boardroom" will showcase small businesses that have succeeded from the application of best marketing practice. Richard, SBC ambassador in Coventry and Warwickshire, is currently visiting a number of FPB members to research and create interest for the event, in addition to demonstrating the benefits of employing CIM qualified consultants for advice on marketing strategy.

**Jonathan Nason**  
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Looking back over the past six months, some discernable trends are emerging amongst SMEs and start-up businesses who are exploiting social media.

Adroit skills are being introduced by these forward-thinking businesses to exploit the sharing, knowledge expanding and promotional opportunities that are presented. These smaller enterprises are skilfully using the new media, searching out the best styles and formats for their promotional exploitation.

These businesses are able to keep up-to-date and yet avoid being overwhelmed by the vast volume of information that is available. Frequently they learn from experience what works best for them.

Video is a typical example. Produced in-house and uploaded to YouTube, with links from company website, they add an extra dimension for an SME, without requiring a vast budget. It's a great example in the current economic situation.

Yet from our experience there are still reluctant clients who could exploit this media to their advantage. Of course, using Facebook or Twitter is no substitute for well-researched, piloted and executed marketing plans; but as part of an expanding marketing mix they are well worth consideration in 2011 and beyond.

EVENTS Greater London		
1-2 March 2011	Technology for Marketing and Advertising exhibition (TFMandA) <a href="http://www.t-f-m.co.uk/">http://www.t-f-m.co.uk/</a>	Earls Court 2, London
9 March 2011	International Marketing Development Survey – key findings cimevents@cim.co.uk <a href="http://www.cim.co.uk/38868">http://www.cim.co.uk/38868</a>	ICO Cavendish Centre, London
18 March 2011	Branding excellence for small businesses cimevents@cim.co.uk <a href="http://www.cim.co.uk/38026">http://www.cim.co.uk/38026</a>	Mail Media Centre, Stukeley Street, London WC1V 7AB
20 May 2011	Marketing excellence for small businesses cimevents@cim.co.uk <a href="http://www.cim.co.uk/38134">http://www.cim.co.uk/38134</a>	Mail Media Centre, Stukeley Street, London WC1V 7AB
22 July 2011	Marketing excellence for small businesses cimevents@cim.co.uk <a href="http://www.cim.co.uk/38141">http://www.cim.co.uk/38141</a>	Mail Media Centre, Stukeley Street, London WC1V 7AB
EVENTS Midlands		
22-23 June 2011	Business Midlands <a href="http://www.easyfairs.com">http://www.easyfairs.com</a>	Ricoh Arena

## Regional ambassadors' reports on news and events

### East of England

**Sue Higgins**

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In the East of England marketing workshops are proving very popular. Delegates are shown the basic principles of marketing and the tools they can apply to their businesses. The popular East of England Spring Marketing Conference is moving to The Forum in central Norwich on 6 April 2011. It is going to be another top-notch programme with two sessions aimed specifically at the SME sector. A B2B case study: presented by Ashton Graham and seven steps to creating a B2B social media strategy presented by Warren Knights. Booking details below.

The SBC is working with a number of membership organisations:

- **British Printing Industries Federation (BPIF)**

The principal business support organisation representing the UK print, printed packaging and graphic communication industry.

Following a tremendous uptake for their one-day workshop on 26 January 2011 in Cambridge, BPIF announced a second date in London on 1 March 2011. This could lead to a national roll-out of marketing training.

- **Federation for Small Businesses**

A pilot workshop is being planned for May at UCS Ipswich. If successful, it could be rolled out throughout the region.

- **The Institute of Directors**

Have commissioned CIM to hold a marketing workshop for Suffolk members; the date is yet to be confirmed.

ongoing links with a good number of SMEs as a result.

In the Plymouth area, Andrew Morton and Maureen Wincott are delivering a series of three marketing workshops for Chamber of Commerce members over the next three months. We are discussing running similar workshops for other Chambers in the region.

We are currently in discussion with The Beacon Group of companies, a group of leading businesses in their respective markets throughout the South West, about providing some marketing development input for their members. We are about to engage in some gap analysis to identify which particular areas of marketing knowledge and practice they could benefit from to further improve their competitiveness and growth potential.

We now know that the regional Business Link advisory service will cease to operate in November and we are planning meetings with both Peninsula and Northern Arc to identify how CIM through the SBC can continue to be involved with Business Link under the planned new structure. In the meantime, we shall be looking to see if there will be any further marketing seminar programmes planned from the spring onwards in which we can continue to be a principal partner.

### Wales

**Jonathan Deacon**

**Jonathan.Deacon@newport.ac.uk**

**Richard Houdmont**

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**Roz Jones**

**abs822@bangor.ac.uk**

The guest speaker at the Fellows and Chartered Marketers' Annual Dinner held in Cardiff recently was the Secretary of State for Wales. Chatham House rules applied so we cannot tell you what she said, but we can reveal that she referred specifically to two events in CIM's Wales Spring event calendar, both aimed at SMEs.

'Putting the bounce back into your business', held on 9 February 2011 in Aberystwyth, featured Andrew Jardine, who created a leading trampoline brand

using online marketplace eBay. Pembroke Dock-based Atlantic Trampolines, which launched in 2005 and achieved an annual turnover of over £1.2million within three years, supplies thousands of trampolines to households and businesses throughout the UK. It all sprang from a spare unit becoming available at a cheese maturation warehouse operated by Atlantic Industries and managing director, Andrew Jardine, identifying a niche market that would lead the company on to award-winning success.

Jardine said: "The spare unit at the warehouse was ideal for housing bulky products, like trampolines, and after conducting market research we discovered that there was a real thirst for this type of product and an opportunity we wanted to exploit." As a winner of the 2010 Canmol: Wales Marketing Awards, Jardine may be seen explaining his winning ways at [www.youtube.com/user/canmol](http://www.youtube.com/user/canmol).

The Secretary of State for Wales also drew attention to a North Wales event later in March, 'punching above your weight: smaller tourism businesses can win visitors'. This is an excellent opportunity for SMEs to learn how they really can compete with much larger companies by attention to detail, flexibility and understanding your customer. The event is being hosted by, and it is our aim to work more closely with, the Bangor University Business Club to deliver a series of events aimed at SMEs. The Business Club also organises networking activities and has a regular newsletter which addresses concerns for SMEs.

### Europe

**Steve Masterson, Salzburg, Austria**  
**s.masterson@kiska.com**

Currently we are pulling together a networking event calendar for European marketers in SMEs ranging from a 'Car and Coffee' event, where marketers with a passion for cars can come, show off and talk about their pride and joy, to some skiing events. Another design, branding and IP event is also on the cards. We will pull together a panel of experts to discuss openly and honestly how these things can be better managed and marketed (full details to follow). If you are a CIM member based in Europe who works or runs an SME you can join the SBC by emailing Dena Pearce [DenaPearce@cim.co.uk](mailto:DenaPearce@cim.co.uk). You can also log on to LinkedIn and join the SBC debates.

### South West

**Richard Storey**

**Richard@rlassociates.co.uk**

In the north of our region we have just completed a series of five half-day marketing seminars with Business Link Northern Arc which attracted well over 250 small business delegates. The seminars have been well received and we now have

EVENTS East of England		
6 April 2011	East of England Spring marketing conference <a href="http://www.cim.co.uk/38401">http://www.cim.co.uk/38401</a>	The Forum, Millennium Plain, Bethel Street, Norwich NR2 1TF
EVENTS Wales		
31 March 2011	Punching above your weight: smaller tourism businesses can win visitors <a href="http://www.cim.co.uk/38420">http://www.cim.co.uk/38420</a>	The Management Centre, Bangor University

# Ten marketing resolutions for 2011

**T**eresa Harris, Chartered Marketer and managing consultant at Second Opinion Marketing, has been canvassing her contacts, clients, suppliers and business contacts throughout January on their marketing resolutions for 2011. Teresa explains: "Marketing was at the top of businesses agenda but the most common factor was actually finding time to put plans or thoughts into action this year. So if there's one resolution I'd like business people to adopt – it's get out there and get on with it." So what's on their business agenda in 2011 and what is the best way to get started?

## 1 Create time to think and to action marketing ideas

This is the one thing business owners unanimously said they really struggle with. One client suggested, "It's important to focus on implementing one or two ideas, rather than having loads of ideas and doing nothing".

## 2 Turn customers into clients

A desire to move customers (single purchase, transactional with no strong relationship) to clients (tied into a mutually beneficial relationship with repeat purchases).

## 3 Focus on your customer's pain

You might start with some internal brainstorming, in-depth discussions with customers, and then you can start to map out how you can help.

## 4 Involve everyone in the business in marketing

Make sure everyone is meeting brand promises, that they understand the business goals and their role in meeting them. Ensure they are given an opportunity to contribute ideas that will be listened to.

## 5 Networking more regularly

These were especially common resolutions for accountants, solicitors, consultants and coaches. These individuals recognised that people buy from people. By having a wide, well-developed network they are then able to develop effective business relationships.

## 6 Start, or write a regular blog

It's about having a plan. Firstly, deciding what to write about and how to stimulate regular ideas. Then set the time to carry it out, or even brief someone else to do it.

## 7 Try Twitter

In a recent survey, 50% of British businesses using Twitter said they had no specific social media strategy. As with any



communication tool Twitter needs a plan.

## 8 Get an independent view of current marketing activities

Anyone can be asked to give a view on how your business comes across when people call you, what people think of your website or what makes you different. The secret here is to listen with an open mind and avoid being defensive.

## 9 Commit to improving customer service

Or as one person put it, 'add value to your customer's experience'. You need to explore the areas where you are failing and put things right, rather than focus on what you're already good at; you can then start to add value.

## 10 Keep in touch with customers and prospects on a regular basis

Social networking and blogs provide an opportunity to develop two-way communications. Maintaining a database of clients, prospects and contacts puts you in the driving seat. Make your communications appealing and relevant, understand their needs, and be prepared to reign in your sales message to focus on the client and their business.

Add your views by joining the conversation on LinkedIn CIM Small Business Community group.

## In brief

### Helping your business grow

A guide for small business owners and managers on the first steps to growing your business is available for download as a PDF on The Chartered Institute of Marketing's Small Business Community web pages: <http://www.cim.co.uk/sbc>

### SBC on the web

The Small Business Community has dedicated pages on The Chartered Institute of Marketing's main website for handy downloads, news on activities and events. Visit <http://www.cim.co.uk/sbc>

Information on finding a marketing consultant to deliver professional marketing advice is also available: <http://www.cim.co.uk/consultantsdirectory>

### [www.business.wales.gov.uk](http://www.business.wales.gov.uk)

Businesses in Wales can access the latest business news and business support available via [www.business.wales.gov.uk](http://www.business.wales.gov.uk), run by the Welsh Assembly Government. Check out the What's New? tab to find out about the latest initiatives that could help your business grow.

### Centenary poll

Vote for the most valuable marketing model of the last 100 years for today's marketer. With 12 models to choose from which is your favourite? Find out more: [www.cim.co.uk/100](http://www.cim.co.uk/100)

### Join the debate on LinkedIn

225 SBC members have joined our LinkedIn group to discuss and share tips on issues such as 'Five ways to raise your profile on Twitter' to the 'Relevance of static websites in this day and age'. Join the conversation by signing up to The Chartered Institute of Marketing Small Business Community on LinkedIn.



# The unrecognised sales force

Ian Lockyer of [easimarketing.com](http://easimarketing.com) explains how the sales responsibility encompasses all aspects of an organisation.

In an organisation there are many types of sales professionals. There are those on the road who interact with customers, develop relationships and then secure the sale. There are order takers who build relationships via the phone. Then there are those cold callers who work in one of the most difficult sales arenas. All play an important part in the organisation, but have you ever thought about your unrecognised sales force?

What most organisations tend to believe is selling is a process just for the sales department, but maybe you should think about the sales responsibility encompassing all parts of your organisation.

Everybody is a sales person. Those employees that work for you that don't see themselves as part of your sales team have the

ability to make or break a potential relationship with a customer. From the receptionist to the engineer, your front end staff have the ability to win or lose a potential customer by the way they interact with them. If you were treated rudely on the phone, or were left waiting in an untidy reception area for too long, you would think twice about using that company.

Empower your team to go that bit further. You might get some resistance because you are changing the way they have always done things. But once you have changed their focus to a sales/customer focus you will find that they enjoy the responsibility.

And don't forget about your electronic sales force that operates 24 /7 after your doors are shut. Your website should be able to carry on the process of looking after your customers or at least give them the direction to contact your team the next day.

## Information at your finger tips

The Business Link website <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk> is undergoing an overhaul in the forthcoming months to include many more functions and information portals.

But, it's still an ideal up-to-date reference source for both consultants and those working in SMEs. Check out...

<p><b>Complying with advertising standards</b> The laws and codes of practice that govern advertisements and direct marketing and how to work within them.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/advertisingstandards">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/advertisingstandards</a></p>
<p><b>PR: The basics</b> How to use the media, and other sources of publicity, to raise the profile of your business.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/pr">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/pr</a></p>
<p><b>Accepting online payments</b> How online payments work and how to set up a payment facility.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/onlinepayments">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/onlinepayments</a></p>
<p><b>Create an online shop</b> The key issues to consider when creating an online shop.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/onlineshop">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/onlineshop</a></p>
<p><b>Returns, refunds, warranties and complaints</b> Customers' rights to return goods and make claims under guarantees and warranties.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/refunds">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/refunds</a></p>
<p><b>The Sale of Goods Act</b> Keep on the right side of the law when selling to your customers.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/saleofgoods">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/saleofgoods</a></p>

## For further information

The Chartered Institute of Marketing's Small Business Community (SBC) is open to all members of the Institute and seeks to actively develop events and initiatives that promote good marketing practice in the SME sector.

If you are an **Institute member** you can join the SBC by contacting Dena Pearce at [DenaPearce@cim.co.uk](mailto:DenaPearce@cim.co.uk).

Members please log onto [www.cim.co.uk/sbc](http://www.cim.co.uk/sbc).

**Non CIM members** may join the SBC by becoming affiliate members. To access a full range of benefits visit [www.cim.co.uk/benefits](http://www.cim.co.uk/benefits). For further information please contact your regional director, small business ambassador or

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## Future editions

We welcome your feedback on this newsletter and contributions for future issues. Please send your suggestions and materials to Christine Boswell-Munday or Dena Pearce.



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