



HOW TO FUTUREPROOF YOUR BUSINESS

There is no quick way to win B2B clients (unless it is for sales under £500) as the whole sale depends upon trust and as we all know, trust takes time. The following pages lay out a simple but effective process (I call it Futureproofing) that will enable your company to stand out from your competition, create a repeatable,

supportable message that if pushed out into content and social media and included within ALL of your off and online collateral again and again will create a pull based marketing process and create trust within your market. Yes it takes time and effort but the results as I have proven again and again can be huge.

PREPARATION: GETTING YOUR BUSINESS READY FOR MARKET.

The targeting process is VITAL to the success of your marketing strategy and is the one most companies forget about when starting a growth business process.

Your business growth will depend upon this process as not all business is the same. Smaller pieces of work are easier to win but typically provide a much smaller profit. Medium a little harder but provide a larger profit and large pieces the most difficult but provide a much larger profit. This is why knowing what types of business you need to win to hit your growth targets is important not only to the business but also to your sales people.

If you don't know who you are targeting, how that fits into your business growth structure or why they would work with you more than one of your competitors you cannot ask or create a marketing strategy to get them.

The tighter your request, the tighter your reasoning for them talking to you, the more trust you can generate, the more value you can add the more you can charge and the more likely you are of winning the business.

WARNING: DO NOT SKIP THIS PHASE OR YOU WILL WASTE A HUGE AMOUNT OF TIME AND MONEY WINNING THE WRONG TYPE OF CLIENTS.



MARKETING: INSURING YOU GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT TO YOUR AUDIENCE.

There are now SO many ways to market your business offline and online. Everyone will tell you that theirs is the best method and will roll out facts about successes through their process. The issue is usually that the client wants the easy method. There isn't one. If you want the business bad enough then you'll have to work for it. Your job is to look at which method can provide the biggest return of the size and type of new business you have now defined you wish to win.

You should choose various routes that support each other, and remember to focus on the size and type of client you are trying to win.

Different fish swim in different ponds. I've highlighted the two I believe are the most important due to the fact that 84% of all business is done through referral and given a thumbs up to the ones I view to be good supportive methods. In my mind third party endorsements win business therefore setting up a referral process requires networking and content to support your message. Warning: There is a LOT of noise in ALL areas so you need to stand out, be highly targeted, repeat your key sales message again and again and drive the listener or viewer to act. What you choose will have a direct impact on the business you win, the money you spend but also the time you take winning it. NB: These are my chosen preferential methods BUT the methods you choose will be determined by what you are selling, to whom and how much your service or product costs.

TV

The world of the big boys. The cost of production often keeps this out of B2B unless you are a global brand. With the advent of multiple small TV channels this area can be explored but do be aware that production costs in themselves can rack up costs.

Print

In my mind again this is a very expensive way to market your service unless you have a highly targeted publication. Used as more a brand recognition process or part of a PR press and advertising strategy.



Networking

The best form of B2B marketing available but does take time and needs to have a strategy behind it or poor leads and time management can have an impact on returns. Can take up to 3 years to become highly effective but once running can be an engine that gives and gives.

Exhibitions

There are now events for every type of business and sub sector. If you do this take time to think of who will be at the event and look at doing something that pulls people to your stand rather trying to grab one of those poor unfortunate people passing you by.



Direct mail

Recently had a resurgence due to the amount of people using online methods. Review what you intend to send and the action you wish to accomplish. Think of your target market and how to get past the gatekeepers and into the hands of the decision maker. Highly targeted does work, mass mailers don't.



Speaking

Great way to get in front of your target audience and improve your position as a thought leader within your market. DON'T sell. Educate. Think about your audience and tailor your talk to them. You MUST have something NEW to say and again research your audience.

Telesales

Some swear by this method In my opinion it is a dead process and one that has people spending hour after hour annoying people at work or at home and impacts your brand negatively. When was the last time you responded to a cold call?

Radio

Can be useful for localised campaigns, local businesses, brand recognition and special offers. However as a medium unless you have a very special offer and can do a deal with a radio station I find it just gets lost in the noise.



Influencer

A new player in the world of online and already undergone various changes. Getting access to someone who already has the following you wish to attract and paying them to discuss your service can have a huge impact. Target smaller higher targeted influencers if you cant afford the reported £900,000 Ronaldo commands per tweet.

Affiliate

Working with other sites and providers to drive traffic to your site with a reward structure in place. Has been shown to be highly effective for many business but depends on the reward and the offer. Think who has the type of client you wish to sell to and what you can offer your partner.

Email

With the advent of GDPR you would have hoped for less spam emails however that doesn't seem to have occurred. In my mind a total waste of time unless you have a dedicated list of followers and can supply them with very high level content regularly. Otherwise this just produces more noise and more delete strokes.

PPC

Can be one of the most expensive methods of marketing there is. You can spend a large amount of budget just to convert some clicks and not get a single new business lead. Facebook has the best targeted engine but ensure you are highly targeted and have a very good destination page to take click through to. Get ready to test and test again.



Content

Being used by everyone and rarely is there actually thought leadership in the thought leadership pieces. KEY is to use a title that grabs the attention and NOT industry speak. Choose where you upload and share and don't expect to have people make contact but do use it to support your Networking activities to build trust among your network and anything else is a bonus.

SEO

Be careful SEO has had its day and is very much a strategy for B2C providers or very large companies who wish to soak the market. Most businesses don't go online to find a supplier unless they are very small or wish to make up a list for a pitch situation (they ask a trusted advisor). Useful for some businesses but highly costly for others.

Social

GREAT for B2C but very, very noisy. Get ready for a long battle to stand out and build traction. Keep creating valued content and pushing for reviews if you are a B2B player. But be careful who you allow to share your social media as a bad post that someone thought was funny can go viral very quickly.



Webinars

Seemed like a good idea at the time. Again be careful of the time and investment required to create the webinar, who attends and ensure you know what you wish to get out of the process and what your follow up will be to encourage feedback and possible conversations about working together. Maybe think of giving a free piece of very useful content away to all attendees as a follow up?

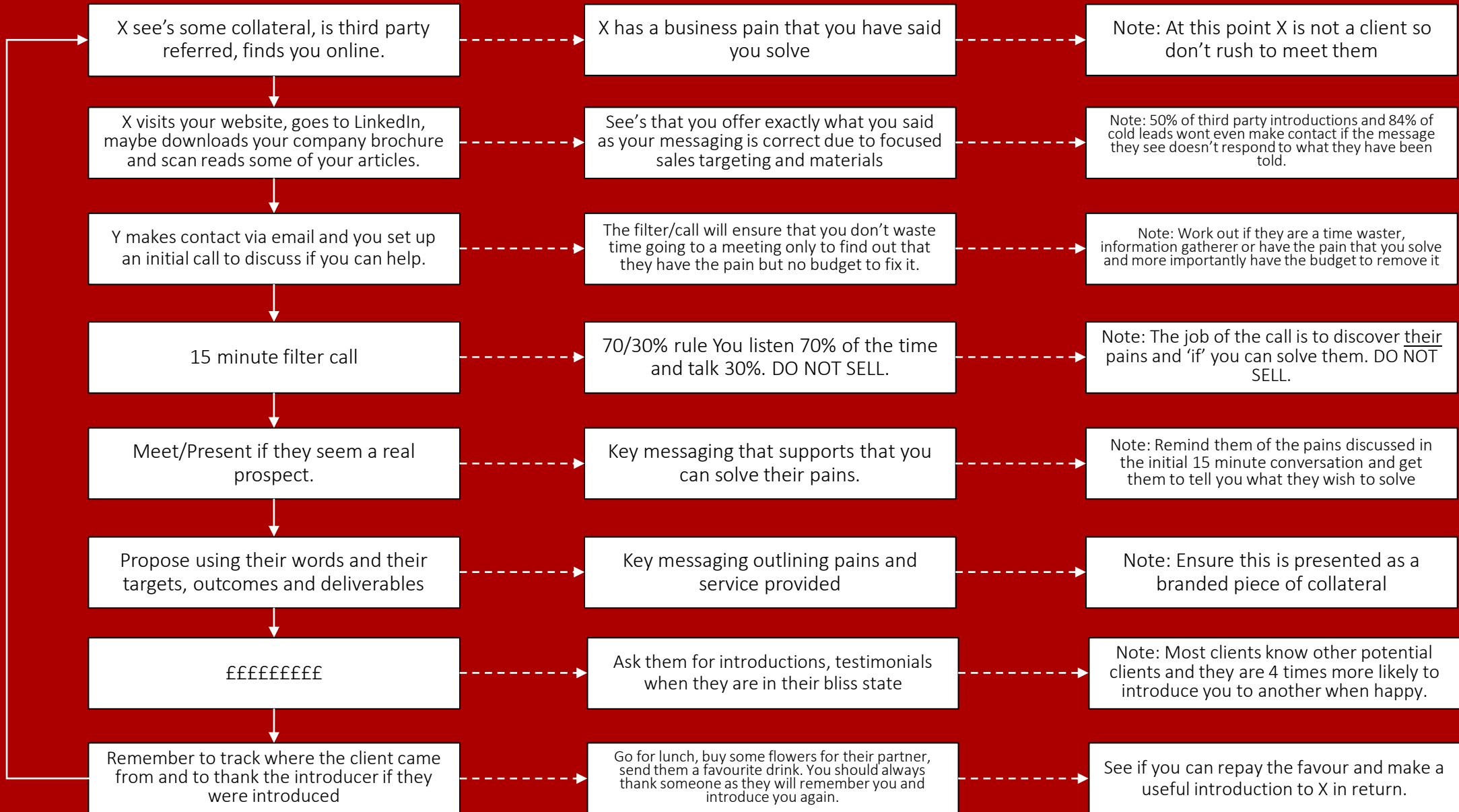
THE SALES GAME: WINNING THE TYPE OF CLIENTS THAT ADD PROFIT AND GROW YOUR BUSINESS.

Within sales you need an internal post and pre sale process so that you can refine it over time and win a higher and higher percentage of potential clients.

You will find that there are a lot of people who want the service you offer but haven't the money to pay for it, a huge amount of information gatherers and time wasters. So you must have a process to ensure you can filter and disqualify these leads on the phone rather than face to face (even the ones who have been referred).

The cost of a face to face meeting can be an entire morning or more. So in my mind you should try and disqualify anyone who is simply fishing for information or cant afford you on a phone call. Much easier and way, way cheaper.

Remember you cant lose business you haven't already won, or wasn't there in the first place. So be tough on yourself and your targets there are a lot of things you could be doing with your time, travelling to and from a meeting to find out there was never any business to win in the first place isn't one of them. This process is in no way definitive but should maybe give you something to think about.



THE FINAL WORD & A BIT ABOUT ME.

This plan, if followed correctly, will help you review who you want to work with and what you expect from those relationships.

Are there a lot of other things to consider? Of course, like lifetime value of a client, company processes, constant finessing of your message, sharing and creating quality content, I could go on. But in essence if you can go through this document slowly and surely it will answer a lot of questions, create a lot at the same time and at the end your company direction, sales and marketing will be a lot more focused and attract the type of clients that will enable your business to grow.

Why the Revolting Marketeer?

I am outspoken, can be blunt (or so I've been told), shoot from the hip and wish to help people see through a lot of the marketing nonsense that is being spoken by so many.

I love to help business owners, MD's, sales people and CEO's see where their business, sales and marketing can be finessed so that they get the results that they deserve and stand out in what is the most competitive business landscape the world has ever seen.

If you would like a 15 minute chat to see how I might help your business please connect to me on LinkedIn. No time wasters or information gatherers please but happy to chew the fat and see if I can help.

