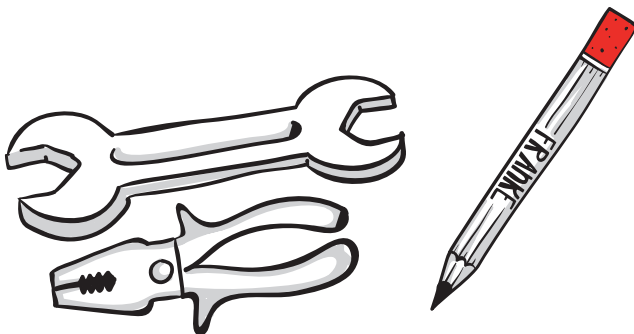




MARKETING

YOUR GUIDE TO
GETTING IT RIGHT

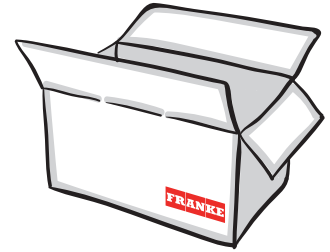
Wayne Silver
Managing Director, ONE



MAKE IT WONDERFUL



Let's start with a plan



What do you want marketing to do for you?

Marketing is important, whatever business you're in. But when you're putting together a marketing plan, you need to think about what you want it to do for you. It could be that you're looking to attract new customers, or you might want to promote a particular service you offer. Either way, identify your goals right from the start.

What's your budget going to be?

Marketing your business will cost money. But consider it as money well spent. Look at what you can afford to spend and start out relatively small by doing some test marketing activities. Then if these prove successful, look at increasing what you spend, to bring in even greater results.

Do you need help to deliver your marketing plan?

You've made your plan, set your budget and now it's time to put it into action. But who's going to do this? Have you got the skills and resources to do it yourself, or do you need to involve someone else, such as a local design studio to produce leaflets, advertisements or build you a website.

How will you know if it's worked?

You want to make sure you're getting good value for money. So it's important to be able to measure how successful your marketing has been, e.g. has it brought in the customers and business you expected it to?



How you look means a lot

Image is important. So when you're looking at marketing your business, you need to think about how you look to the outside world – both to the customers you have now and those you're looking to attract.

A good place to start is by looking at your competitors. How do they present themselves? Do they look professional, reliable, trustworthy? How does your company compare?

It might be that your business already has a name or even a logo. If you do, it's worth looking at these to see whether they still project the image you want them to. At the same time, look at all the things your customers see, like stationery, invoices, estimates and other paperwork. Are these as professional as they could be?

Think about...

- Looking at your competitors
- Names and logos
- Stationery and paperwork



Connecting with your customers

First impressions count. So make sure customers get the right impression about you, answer every phone call with a 'smile' in your voice. It makes you seem friendly, approachable and good to work with.

Then every time you speak to them, whether over the phone, in emails or in person, keep reminding them why they've chosen to work with you. By always being pleasant and polite and answering questions and enquiries promptly and professionally.

It's a little thing but the impact it has is huge, so get your relationship with your customers right from the start.

Make the right impression when...

- You answer customer's calls
- You meet face-to-face
- You respond to emails
- You answer questions and enquiries



Get your website working

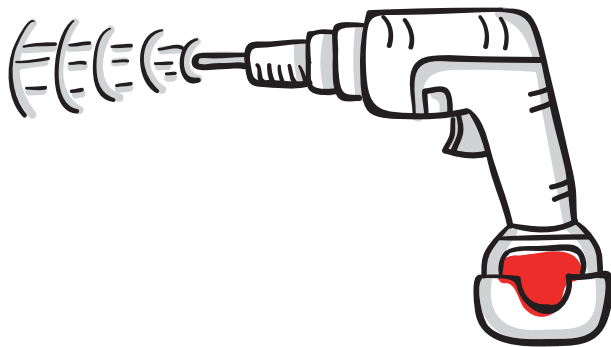
These days, websites are a big part of the marketing mix for many businesses. A lot of customers will do some online research before they even pick up the phone, so your site must look the part and be up to date.

If you can, improve your Google rankings so your site comes as close to the top as possible when customers are searching, so they can find out all about you in a couple of clicks.

Think of your website as a shop window, that customers can look into to see what you offer. So include case studies that show off your skills and include quality photographs showcasing what you do.

Make it obvious how customers can get in touch with you, whether by phone, email or an online response form. And make sure you follow up enquiries from your site quickly, or risk customers going elsewhere.

One last thing to think about is how people will browse your site. Many of us use tablets or our phones to get online so whether you're designing a site from scratch or updating your existing one, consider how it will work on these smaller screens.



What's so good about social media?

Social media channels like Facebook and Twitter aren't just a great way to keep in touch with your mates. They're also an effective way to connect with your customers.

As well as these, Pinterest is a great way for trades such as kitchen installers to appeal to customers and you could use shots of completed projects to inspire followers to get in touch.

Whichever social media platforms you use, the golden rule is to use them well. Be consistent, update posts regularly and avoid hard selling. Instead, build a relationship with your followers by posting about projects you're working on, or telling them about the latest design trends.

Social media and you...

- Use Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest
- Be consistent, update regularly
- Avoid the hard sell
- Build a relationship



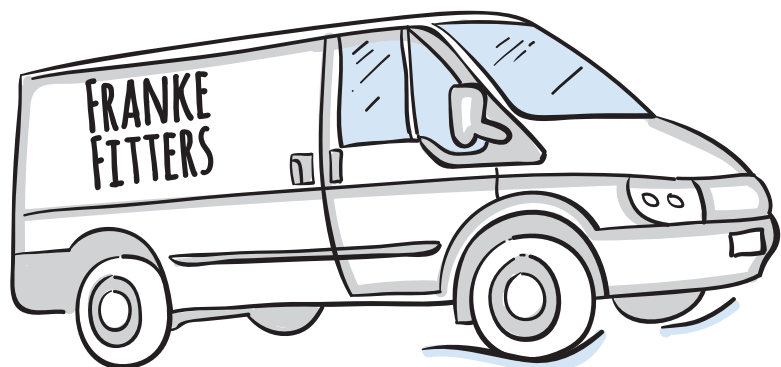
Look at local area marketing

There are lots of ways to get your business known locally and further afield. As well as press advertising and local PR, look out for shows and events where you could meet customers and tell them what you offer.

Supporting a local charity or sponsoring a football team is also great for getting your name and brand out there, taking your business to a wider audience than just advertising alone.

Think about...

- Local press and PR
- Shows and events
- Supporting charities and good causes
- Sponsorship



Reputation and recommendations

Reputation is everything. So you need to do everything to protect it, making sure customers know that the service you offer is of the highest possible standard.

Testimonials can help you do this. So you should think about asking existing customers to recommend you. Offering incentives can sometimes persuade people to tell their family and friends about you.

You could also ask customers if they'd give you a good write up on one of the many online review sites people will go to when choosing tradesmen or companies.

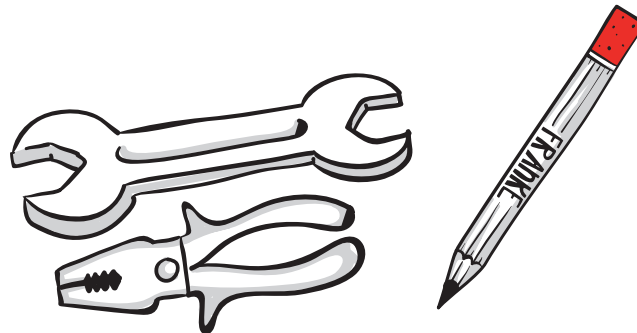
And when a job's complete, don't end things there. Sending a letter or email to check a customer is still happy with the work you've done a few months after finishing can really add to your reputation for being nice to do business with.



See what's working best

As we mentioned at the start, it's important to know that your marketing is effective and that your budget is being well spent. So you should regularly review things to see what is and isn't working.

From the most popular pages on your website, to which social media posts have got the most likes, knowing what's having the biggest impact and bringing in the most customers can shape your future marketing activity.



Summary

So there it is. All you need to know about marketing your business better. From drawing up a plan and looking at how the world views you, to creating an effective website and using social media to connect with customers. And last but not least, reviewing what you do to identify what's working for you and what you need to do in the future.

So what are you waiting for? Get out there and get your name known!

The 5 steps to follow

- Make a marketing plan
- Look at your logo and branding
- Create a website or improve an existing one
- Use social media and other opportunities
- Regularly review and update your plan

