

Monthly Update | November 2017

Welcome to our monthly business newsletter designed to help you concentrate on working more “ON” your business, rather than “IN” it. Please remember our skills and experience can provide you with help and support, give you a strong shoulder to lean on and someone on your side, to bounce ideas off.

Best wishes

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Value Based Pricing

A value-based pricing strategy is one which sets prices primarily, (but not exclusively), in line with the perceived or estimated value of a product or service to the customer rather than according to the cost of the product or historical prices.

Value-based pricing is not about racing to the bottom along with your competitors. It's all about knowing your product or service's value, understanding what you're really selling, and being able to effectively communicate that value in a way that puts your cost into perspective.

The best brands price their products and services on the basis of what they think people are willing to pay.

For example, Apple produces iPhones quite cheaply however the company knows that loyal customers are willing to pay a premium for the latest handsets. As such, they price the latest versions at a premium and enjoy better profit margins as a result.

If you want to charge more than your nearest competitors, you need to be able to differentiate your product or service in some way. For example, your company might offer better customer service.

So, in order to create a value-based pricing strategy in your business, you need to be inquisitive. You need to ask your customers better questions, and make them feel like you understand their world. You need to listen to what they really want and respond to those requirements.

If you can build this into your product or service offering, you should be able to develop a pricing model with a better profit margin while simultaneously keeping your customers happy.

The Importance Of Boardroom Diversity

A more diverse team is of great benefit to any business. People with different backgrounds, values, skills and personalities working together as a team can help a business to come up with innovative solutions to complex problems.

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The management board is the mind of a company. The boardroom is where the strategic decisions are made, risk is managed and good governance is applied. As such, it is vital that an effective and balanced board consists of a diverse blend of high-quality individuals bringing a mix of experience, skills and different backgrounds to the table.

Women and men can have different risk appetites. Engineers and accountants may have a more linear, 'process management' type view of a business. Creative types from a marketing background may have new and interesting ideas to bring to the table. All have something to contribute to a management board.

Your board members should be armed with up to date knowledge and skills. They should be capable of applying a healthy dose of common sense, no matter what their background, age or experience. If all boards were made up of similarly minded people, businesses could end up suffering the effects of 'group think' – where the strategic direction of travel is decided by like minded individuals who fail to challenge each other's decisions.

As such, any management board should consist of women and men (ideally in equal measure) and individuals from different backgrounds, industries, countries and cultures. Beliefs, religious, political or otherwise should be left outside the boardroom door and your board members should be prepared to work together in order to deliver the right strategic and tactical decisions for the company.

How To Be A Better Manager

Not all managers are created equal. There are plenty of good managers and then there are great managers. Here are some key points on how to be a better manager:

Mistakes are an opportunity to learn

When a member of your team makes a mistake, use it as an opportunity to work with that person to understand what went wrong and why. You and your team can then put steps in place to prevent the same mistake happening again. You may even find a better way of doing things as a result. Mistakes can often drive new innovations in a business.

Delegate responsibility and accountability where appropriate

Decisiveness is a quality of a good manager. However sometimes you aren't the right person to make a decision. Sometimes it is best to delegate responsibility to a member of your team who has the best expertise in that particular area. This drives accountability among your team members and gives your people an opportunity to step up.

Look past the action to understand the motivation

Good managers deal with problems. Great managers look past the problems in order to understand the underlying issues that, if overcome, can lead to a much bigger change in the right direction. A problem is very often a symptom of a deeper issue in your business. Stop dealing with symptoms and fix the problems.

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Focus on the objectives of your people

Good managers focus on getting the most out of their people. Your team's objectives should align with the overall objectives of the company. If you focus on each team member's objectives, lead and inspire them to achieve those objectives and encourage them in the right direction, the overall objectives of the company should end up being achieved by default.

Be supportive

The best managers support their team members no matter what. At some point, somebody will upset a client, a supplier or a colleague. Regardless of the issue, a really great manager will support their team members.

You let your team members have the ideas

If you're a great manager, you will see the potential in your team members. As a result, you should be able to find ways to let them have the ideas, even though the outcome was what you probably hoped for all along.

Social Media Management With Hootsuite

Most businesses have some sort of social media strategy. However, managing multiple accounts across various platforms can be complicated.

Hootsuite is a social media management tool that allows users to manage, schedule and post updates to any page or profile on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Instagram, WordPress and other platforms from a central dashboard.

Hootsuite offers useful features such as scheduling of posts, analytics and audience engagement tools.

Users can implement and analyse marketing campaigns across all social profiles without the need to sign in to each network individually. Premium users get advanced features such as social analytics, audience engagement, team collaboration and security

The most prominent feature of Hootsuite is the ability to post text, links, videos and photos through the Hootsuite dashboard directly to multiple social media profiles. There are also scheduling features in Hootsuite which allow users to manage posts so that they are automatically posted at specific times. You can schedule your week's social media activity at the start of the week and leave it to run itself as the week progresses. This is great for time-poor business professionals.

Hootsuite also allows businesses to manage multiple social media profiles. With a free account, you can manage up to three social media profiles. If you need more, you can upgrade to a paid account. If you want to post to the social media profiles of, say, your entire sales team, you can do this centrally from the Hootsuite dashboard.

The system also includes more advanced features such as Targeted Messaging. This allows users to send specific, private messages out to targeted audience groups on selected social media profiles directly, through the Hootsuite dashboard.

Finally, Hootsuite has a dedicated section for creating analytical reports and click-through summaries. It works with Google Analytics as well as Facebook Insights. It is free to try the system out. You can also get a 30 day free trial of Hootsuite Pro which allows you to manage up to 10 social media profiles.