

**Convert
me**

I'm yours

**GAS
STREET
WORKS.**

Web Loves Video

Gnitekram

[marketing backwards]

Marketing is easy. Repeat after me, marketing is easy.

Start by defining what you want and work backwards to arrive at where you need to start. Just follow these simple steps and inject some fun back into your marketing planning.

So, working backwards from where you want to be. **Step one**, start with your goal, is it

- Lots of happy people buying what you sell or do.
- Lots of engaged people wanting to find out more about what you do, ready for when they might want to buy it.
- Lots of data for people who may potentially want to learn more about what you do, if you're nice and prove yourself to be useful to them.
- Positive conversation around what you sell or do.

What we're really talking about here are your **good will goals**.

Not your 'make £50,000 by Q2' goals. However, sufficient nurture of potential contacts will often produce enough goodwill around what you sell or do, fed by genuine two-way dialogue, in order to convert happy prospects to customers.

This could well make you £50,000 by Q2 BUT only if you're viewing your contacts as valuable people capable of emotion and irrationality, currently wrapped in the warm embrace of your nurturing cycle, not 'prospects', traffic or data on the icy conveyor belt that leads all the way to the bank.

Prospects
are valuable
people,
currently
wrapped
in the warm
embrace of
your nurturing
cycle...

Step two

[create a destination]

Now we've got that sorted and you know why you're going to be nurturing your fledgling followers, what do you actually have to do?

Step two – create a destination.

You could mastermind the most incredible campaign going, but if when all those intrigued and willing viewers click through to your site and find themselves stranded in the desert of a website fail, they will not, I repeat, will not, come back. So fill it to bursting with value, content, real information, rich media, relevant video, images and interactivity. Invite feedback, pose questions, comment on what's current. Step back and look at your website – if you didn't know your business (yet) and couldn't give a monkey's bottom about the latest addition to your team, product tweak or industry news, would you still hang around?

Apply this checklist:

1. Is it visually arresting.... **check**
2. Does it have engaging hooks (video content is huge here).... **check**
3. Is the content well written and with the right tone for your audience.... **check**
4. Is it current.... **check**
5. Is it interactive.... **check**
6. Added Value. Is there something in it for me (other than purchasing your product, which is really something in it for you?)... **check**

To find yourself stranded in the desert of a website fail is never to return

Step three

[look at your audience]

Excellent. So step three...

how the hell is anyone going to find you?

Traffic is an idea thrown about willy nilly in these times of click throughs, trackbacks and dwell time but don't make the mistake of forgetting that all of this 'traffic' is actually just normal people showing an interest.

If your website were a shop and you were attracted to the window by a great display, only to be herded in like cattle and then dumped in a room with no staff, no service and no indication of how to get what you saw in the window, just how impressed would you be? About as impressed as your visitors are going to be if your strategy is aggressive without the goods to back it up.

One thing to get straight from the beginning is that not all traffic is good traffic. Directing someone with no interest in what you sell or do to your site is a complete waste of time. As is tricking people into thinking you're something you're not. If you were searching for an 'electric fan' and found yourself on the 'fan' site for Man United FC, you're unlikely to think to yourself, 'Well, I'm still hot and I still need a fan, but this looks good, I live nowhere near Manchester and I support Villa but I might sign up anyway'.

Approach traffic in **verticals**. Look at your audience and what else they are interested in. If you're marketing green ideas, is your audience also into organic food, DIY, animal/environmental charities, alternative health, fitness, gardening, Grand Designs etc. Once you've identified where else they live online you can go there and start handing out **golden carrots** to tempt them over to where you live.

Yes you have to go first.

Climb the ladder and begin dishing our golden carrots...

Step four

[Be creative, be bold]

And finally, step four, simply involves getting those creative juices flowing.

Be creative. Be bold. Be forever in the shoes of your flock. If you would find it lengthy, annoying, overkill, valuable, creative, witty, interesting or timely in your day or week, chances are so will they.

Note to self: never underestimate the importance of the long game. Nurturing is not an activity that can be measured in hours or days nor is it rewarded by instant gratification. Often you will be regularly nurturing with absolutely no response, sometimes for months or years and only when you stop does someone email/tweet to say that they've been reading and enjoying your newsletter/blog/RSS feed for years and finally have the project they've been looking for that they'd like you to work on...and by the way where did your content go, they miss it?!

Choosing the right mediums

What comes next is a human-friendly break-down of some of the most available and well-populated social media channels. So that you can read, digest and choose the ones that are applicable to meet your goodwill goals. **Crack on.**

**Be forever in
the shoes of
your flock**

Bloggging

[Access to the blogosphere]

How it works:

Bloggging is all about branding. Whereas traditionally branding was about imagery, colour palettes, sounds, jingles and strap lines (which all still apply); what bloggging now allows for is the stream of consciousness, the personality, interests, tonality and opinion of your brand (and employees) to shine through, which is much more compelling and engaging than engineered 'snippets' of our brand in pictures or words.

Use it to:

Communicate your viewpoint, comment on industry-specific happenings, celebrate work – yours and other peoples, provide employee updates, make announcements, ask questions, start conversations and respond to comments from other people and critically on other people's blogs – your blog is not an island, CONNECT.

Overall, a good mix of news, comment, invitation, opinion and insight is always a good recipe.

What you could get:

Excellent blogger relations – how does a pool of engaged, respected and respectful contacts, customers and prospects sound?

Feedback – don't be afraid of criticism, it may be the best chance you get to surprise and delight a customer. Let's face it, if you do everything perfectly first time then your customer gets exactly what they paid for, nothing to write home about. If you happen to disappoint them slightly, (but publicly, thanks to your corporate blog) and you then respond to that disappointment by going the extra mile and (publicly) delighting them, you may just have an advocate on your hands.



**Your blog is
not an island**

Twitter

[tweets for my tweeps]

How it works:

Twitter is a micro-blogging platform for messages of less than 140 characters. Short sharp tweets, delivered across a number of platforms to followers. It is partly down to this assimilation across mobile platforms (the only social network to truly grasp this, due to its simplicity, as even Facebook stumbles when it comes to images and video via mobile) that Twitter is so successful. The other reason is its use of vertical connects. You follow on Twitter based on interests and expertise, as social as it is, it's about information dissemination and VERY niche targeting, which makes it unrivalled in its power to connect brands and the individuals who want to meet them.

Use it to:

Develop your personal branding; direct traffic to sites, blogs, podcasts, videos, images, comment, forums – WHEREVER the party is; or crucially to administer unparalleled customer support and prospecting. Organisation happens via #tags, which collate tweets around a certain topic, creating pockets of relevance and applications such as Twitterhawk allow for the searching and automated tweeting of hot, not vaguely warm, but HOT leads in your exact target vicinity. Your searches can include key terms, exclude key terms, be weighted for positive or negative attributes, filter for location and include up to 5 different responses for different types of identified tweet. Very clever.

What you could get:

Real business. Whereas conversion has historically been hard to prove, with almost no concrete stats emerging from any social (or anti-social) media for that matter, Twitter can deliver hot leads that just require



Hash tags
collate tweets
create pockets
of relevance

tipping over the edge into a pot labelled 'loyalists'. Information, faster than any other method as networks catch fire with big (and small) world and niche news.

You Tube

[broadcast yourself]

How it works:

YouTube is online video, online video is YouTube. Newer sites are popping up and growing in popularity, such as Vimeo, Viddler and VideoJug, as the web becomes more and more closely linked to video production, but YouTube is still a good place to start. However, don't be fooled into thinking if it's on YouTube it's found an audience, millions (literally multiples of millions) of videos are uploaded just to YouTube every day. You now have to work harder to carve out a viewership and the best way to do this is to aggregate.

Use it to:

Err...aggregate. Create your own YouTube channel, brand it, set your status as a Comedian, Musician, Director, or – my personal favourite – a Guru; and then assume the mantle of expert, collecting and sharing content about your area of expertise. Yep, that's right, you don't even need to be creating video content to be a sharer of video news. A good tactic is to create Playlists. Organise similar videos, or those that tell a story, teach parts of a process or give a rounded view on a subject, together into playlists that form specific watching for a viewer.

What you could get:

A direct feed of engaging and noteworthy video content, maximized for usability by your clever organising and streaming of content into relevant lists – making you a valuable source of information to friends, colleagues, contacts, followers and fans. Engaging is worth repeating, in an environment where everyone has a web presence and your website is your single biggest marketing asset and communicator of your brand values, differentiation is often elusive.



**Video makes
it sticky,
integration
makes it
stickier**

Although your site might be brimming with goodness, getting someone to browse around for long enough to find it is a challenge in itself, so streams of watchable, specific, engaging rich media is invaluable to making your site stickier than a jam doughnut on the beach.

RSS - Really Simple Syndication

[feed me]

How it works:

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication and (without pertaining to any technical knowledge) allows you to sit back, get a coffee and put your feet up, whilst the news you are interested in comes winging its way into whatever feed reader or aggregator you are choosing to deploy. It avoids email congestion and means you don't have the headache of remembering to track all the sites you want to keep up to date with.

Use it to:

Nurture your universe. Your universe of potential contacts is everyone you, your business, marketing material or reputation has ever come into contact with. Many won't be ready to do business, but will value your news for months or even years, whilst you demonstrate your industry knowledge through the interesting and dynamic changing sections of your site – effortlessly. With the same effort it takes to write your blog, your content is also delivered to the virtual doorstep of your readership. The challenge then, is in promoting your RSS feed and proving its worth. When the world and his wife has a constantly dripping news feed, despite the relative ease with which readers can obtain the feed, there are still only 24 hours in a day and a finite amount of information anyone can read – so you need to prove that your information is 'must-read'.

What you could get:

An informed readership. A reputation as an expert. Much like with your blog, a good mix of industry and business news, opinion, diversity, conversation, rich media and a slight Devil's Advocate attitude could get you an engaged, amused and informed audience.



Get out of your inbox.

Prime position front of mind – the equivalent of being able to freeze time in terms of marketing super power.

Facebook

[fans versus friends]

How it works:

Facebook has been (and to some extent still is) THE social connection platform that helps over 250 million people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and co-workers. Now with fan pages for business users, vanity URLs and Facebook advertising there are many more ways to grow your network, build awareness and link to new prospects through the news feeds of your loyalists.

Use it to:

Create a hub (yes, much like the way in which your website is a hub) but with the added bonus of being rooted in sociability. Meaning that you can upload images, videos, thoughts, opinions and links...and other people can upload them too. Creating a dialogue, a cumulative net of resources, an audience for asking questions to and seeking feedback from and an organic mechanism for inspiring new prospects to come and take a look. NOTE: this is not your own personal advertising platform, one way communication is as ineffective on Facebook as national cinema advertising might be for your local garage.

What you could get:

A friendly network. A social hub (from which to connect all other social mediums, with an Aggregator if you're not a fan of spending hours repeating yourself across numerous platforms). Or...a completely useless page of one-way announcements and dwindling fan numbers, if you don't invest some energy and backbone into it. Dare to ask, reveal what isn't yet finished, collect feedback and respond directly and publicly to it.



**Root your
brand in
sociability**

LinkedIn

[grow your network]

How it works:

LinkedIn is your 80's rolodex...online. You create a profile to sell yourself (which should do the equivalent of a power suit and walnut desk for your online reputation), including all of your professional qualifications, experience, fields of interest and expertise; and then you add your contacts. As in everyone you know in a business capacity, who knows when a contact of a contact will become a vital link in your career path?

Use it to:

Link with people you know. Keep people informed about what you're up to or looking to be involved with. But crucially, as with all networking, stay interested in what everyone else is doing too. Be part of other people's chains – if you have a colleague who does freelance web design and know the Digital Marketing Manager of a firm you used to work for is looking for support with their new site, introduce them. Acts of altruism in this context propel you to the front of people's minds and reciprocal connections inevitably come flooding in.

What you could get:

A widened net. As in MUCH wider. Wider than that which you could ever have cast in real life. Instead of ringing round old friends and colleagues for access to their rolodex when in need of an opportunity or referral, these people become your own contacts, to nurture as you see fit. The better you do this, the stronger your net and the greater your pool of resources becomes.



**Workplace
altruism.
It's an
ideology.**

One thing to remember: nurture when you don't need anything. Then when you do, connections are already established and not on an awkward 'needy job hunter seeks to rekindle old work relationship in hope of a job / recommendation' basis.

Social bookmarking

[you Digg?]

How it works:

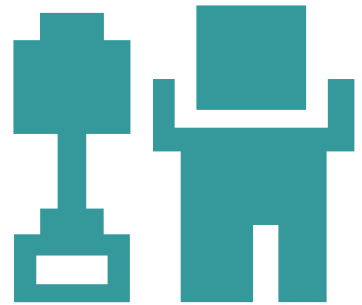
Digg, Netscape and Delicious are just a few examples of social bookmarking tools, which allow users (us) to flag or 'bookmark' something of interest – from large corporate sites and news announcements to obscure blogs and the wandering thoughts of anyone who happens to have access to a computer. Other members of the site community then vote on them (it's time sensitive, so after about 51 votes within 24 hours on Digg or 10 votes within 10 minutes on Netscape) your story can be catapulted to the stratospheric heights of the home page.

Use it to:

Drive. Lots. Of. Traffic. The catch? What you're writing has to be of serious value, well-written and incredibly well seeded. Perfect for when you've written a timely, interesting and relevant article. If you can upload this and seed the link on all of your social platforms, including your blog and website, providing one-click access to rate your article, you're sure of a major spike in traffic.

What you could get:

Impressions on your impressions. Not just eyes on web pages either, engaged pairs of eyes. For someone to read your article and consider it worth putting their name to as a voter or commentator means that they more than likely actually read it (and it's now immortalised in a massive repository of newsworthy content for more people to find, which sounds like a bit of a Brucey Bonus to me).



Validate your expertise

Aggregators

[grow your own network]

How it works:

So there are thousands of other sites from which you can launch your message and participate in stimulating debate other than just your own website....but there aren't a thousand extra hours in the day with which to complete the enormous task of staying abreast of the ever-evolving online community. So exploit your efforts by writing once and posting, tweeting or updating many times simultaneously on your different networks.

Use it to:

Claim back your life! As much as social networking is a fabulous exercise in brand building, lead generation, customer service, conversion and retention; there is other work to be done in the office, you know like actually developing the products and services you're generating all this buzz around, strategising, finance plans, meeting humans face to face, that kind of thing. Between your feed reader and your aggregator you can live the life of a social entrepreneur, continuing to converse, provide information, have an opinion and stay up to date with everyone else's news, as well as actually leaving the office before midnight.

What you could get:

An online footprint like a woolly mammoth. Big enough to make you known to a much wider audience and grab the attention of people that can be drawn in to your social web (by cross-promoting your various channel appearances), ready for you to nurture and over-awe with your valuable wisdom. Enough said.

Last but not least. This isn't a checklist. One or all of these activities are not social if they exist in isolation. The network can achieve great things if you approach it as exactly that – a network.



Get out of your inbox

Links are vital. Not the kind you buy from dodgy online 'gurus' who claim to get you 250 links for £1000, but real links that join up the dots of your online presence into a trackable, navigatable arena where what you get out is what you put in (to the power of a hundred)

Think synergy. Think cross promotion. Think horizontal growth. And then stop thinking and start sharing.

About us

[A full service digital agency]

Gas Street Works is a Birmingham / UK based digital media agency specialising in communication through video, motion graphics and interactive media.

We put our clients at the cutting edge of audience engagement and interactivity – so if you've got an audience and a message, then we can help.

We create bespoke solutions that are engaging and exciting; from concept to delivery, we bring projects to life with our imaginative ideas and expertise.

As a full service agency, we have the ability to deliver a comprehensive service to meet your needs. Our strength lies in our dedicated team of in-house experts who love what they do. We think our work is pretty inspiring – we hope you do too.

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Our Clients

[We have worked with a variety of sectors:]

Charity

Barnardos

Birmingham Children's Hospital Red Balloon Appeal

Education

BECTA

QCA

Learning and Skills Council

Government

The Home Office

Birmingham City Council

Cheshire County Council

Coventry City Council

Health

The Health Exchange

Dudley PCT

NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement

Health & Safety

Interserve PLC

HR & Training

Dudley PCT

The Highways Agency

Manufacturing / Production

Inductotherm

Sport

Birmingham City FC

Transport

The Highways Agency

Utilities

Anglian Water

Youth Engagement

Catch 22

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Web Loves Video