

Monthly Newswire

Welcome to our monthly newswire. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and find it useful.

June 2021

Manage your diary with Calendly

Scheduling meetings, calls or video chats can be hugely time consuming. Calendly can make the process more efficient.

Calendly is an app for scheduling appointments, meetings, calls and events. It was created in an effort to eliminate the back and forth emailing that is often needed to set up a meeting or call between a group of busy people.

Calendly is designed around automated scheduling features that take the work out of connecting with others. It works with your calendar in Microsoft Office or Google in order to automate appointment scheduling. It even has some clever features which help to avoid meetings being double booked.

Calendly integrates with popular business software such as Zoom, Salesforce, Slack and Microsoft Office. Calendly enables users to set their availability preferences, and then send out their own personalised invitation link to arrange meetings or appointments. The invitee is presented with a selection of available times and dates based around the user's availability, and can choose a time slot that works for them.

Calendly includes suggested meeting lengths of 15, 30, and 60 minutes, but users can create an unlimited number of different event types to suit their needs, set buffer time between appointments, and enforce a minimum scheduling notice period to prevent the last-minute booking of meetings.

Calendly can also be configured to send out confirmation emails, event reminders and notifications. For events or webinars, users can also add links to event confirmation pages and so forth.

Calendly offers a free 14-day trial. From there, you can sign up to Premium, Pro or Enterprise packages, depending on the needs of your business. Monthly packages start from around £6 per month (USD \$8 - as Calendly is an American company).

Managing Mental Health in the Workplace

Supporting your team through turbulent and stressful times.

After dealing with the effects of the pandemic for over a year, many people are feeling isolated working from home, while others are struggling to manage family responsibilities alongside the demands of their day job. What can businesses do to support their people and help them to manage their mental health?



Start with a plan

Creating a mental health plan for your business can help you to promote wellbeing for your team. A typical plan might include wellbeing tips, tackling causes of work-related stress, a system for recording sickness absences that are related to mental health and training for all staff on stress management.

Promote an open culture

As ever, communication is key. Business owners and managers should strive to create a culture that encourages open dialogue, where people can discuss issues regarding their mental health without stigma or fear of being judged. This is more important now than ever before, as your team could be juggling a range of interconnected issues such as childcare / family care challenges, financial worries or feelings of loneliness due to working remotely for a long period of time.

In addition to encouraging open dialogue, you could carry out an anonymous internal survey where you ask your team to feed back on their personal wellbeing, stress levels and general mental health. You could also use this as an opportunity to gather feedback on the types of wellbeing measures that the team would like to see from the firm.

Spotting problems before they become wider issues

Train the managers in your business to spot problems. Teach them to look out for employees who are showing signs of distress such as regular absenteeism, changes in behaviour or signs of irritable or irrational behaviour. If your team are still working remotely, managers should make contact on a regular basis in order to catch up and "check in" with other team members.

Offer support where possible

Often the best support that your people need is to feel like they have been listened to. Let your team members know that they have the option to have a confidential conversation about mental health, if ever they need to. Managers can then work with the individual to agree a course of action to manage stress and get them back on track.

Please contact a member of our team if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised.

Call: 01698 258178 Email: info@alexander-marshall.co.uk

How to pivot your business strategy

If your business goes through a tough period, it may be time to pivot your strategy.

Necessity is the mother of all invention. Many firms have had to pivot their business strategy due to the current market conditions. In order to pivot your strategy, you will need to start by doing your research, reassessing your current business model and building a new approach from there.

Pivoting your strategy may involve targeting a different customer base, new routes to market or even a new range of products and services. If pivoting your strategy pushes you into a new market, you will likely need to re-evaluate your approach to sales, marketing and day to day business processes.

In the current environment, many bricks and mortar businesses have pivoted their strategy to focus on online services, direct to consumer sales and home delivery models.



Once you have evaluated when and where you need to pivot your strategy, you will need to move quickly in order to shift your business to the new model efficiently. Trust the data and insights that you gathered during the planning stage.

Decisive action will help you to avoid wasting time, effort and money. Communicate your new strategy to your people in order to gain their buy-in. Involve them in some of the planning and decision making in order to build their trust and bring them on the journey.

If you can get your team members to buy into the new strategy and really get behind it, you are much more likely to succeed.

Create goals and objectives for your team that align with the new strategic direction of the firm. Don't try to fix things that aren't broken. A pivot in strategy doesn't mean you need to change everything. For example, if you move your business to a new online-only model, you can probably use some of your current processes and procedures for things like sales or order management.

Once you pivot your strategy, ask your customers and staff for feedback. What has worked well, what could work better and what new ideas should you roll out as part of your new strategy? You can use this feedback to refine your new strategy and adopt further refinements.

Does Social Media Marketing Actually Work?

Social media marketing is incredibly popular but how do you ensure it actually works for your firm?

Time is a finite resource. Social media can be a hugely time-consuming undertaking and if it isn't employed effectively it can be a waste of time.

In order to determine whether your firm should invest time, effort and budget into social media marketing, you need to take a step back and look at your target customers and their typical buying habits.

Do your customers use Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter? If not, then why would you focus on marketing your business on these platforms?

Do your research and make a list of the ways your customers engage with firms such as yours – do they engage online, on the phone or in person? Is there an opportunity to engage with them in a more effective way using social media? Could you and your business create a new and innovative marketing strategy by connecting with customers in different markets?

Social media can be an effective marketing tool for businesses but only if you do it right. Start by thinking about the purpose of your social media strategy. Why should your business be on social media, who else in your industry sector uses it effectively and how could you create brand awareness or win new potential customers from social media platforms?

Businesses can use social media to connect with customers online. However, the key to a successful social media strategy is to engage with people, not sell to them. Create value for your potential customers by providing useful content, illustrating how your products or services are useful to your customers and by avoiding the "hard sell."

Focus on helping your customers to buy, rather than selling to them. Share case studies, information on key market trends and top tips that are relevant to your target market.

Whether social media marketing works for your business will largely be determined by your target customer base. However, it isn't the only solution out there and you could potentially differentiate your firm by finding other ways to engage with potential customers in a more meaningful or personal way.

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