

PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

March 2011



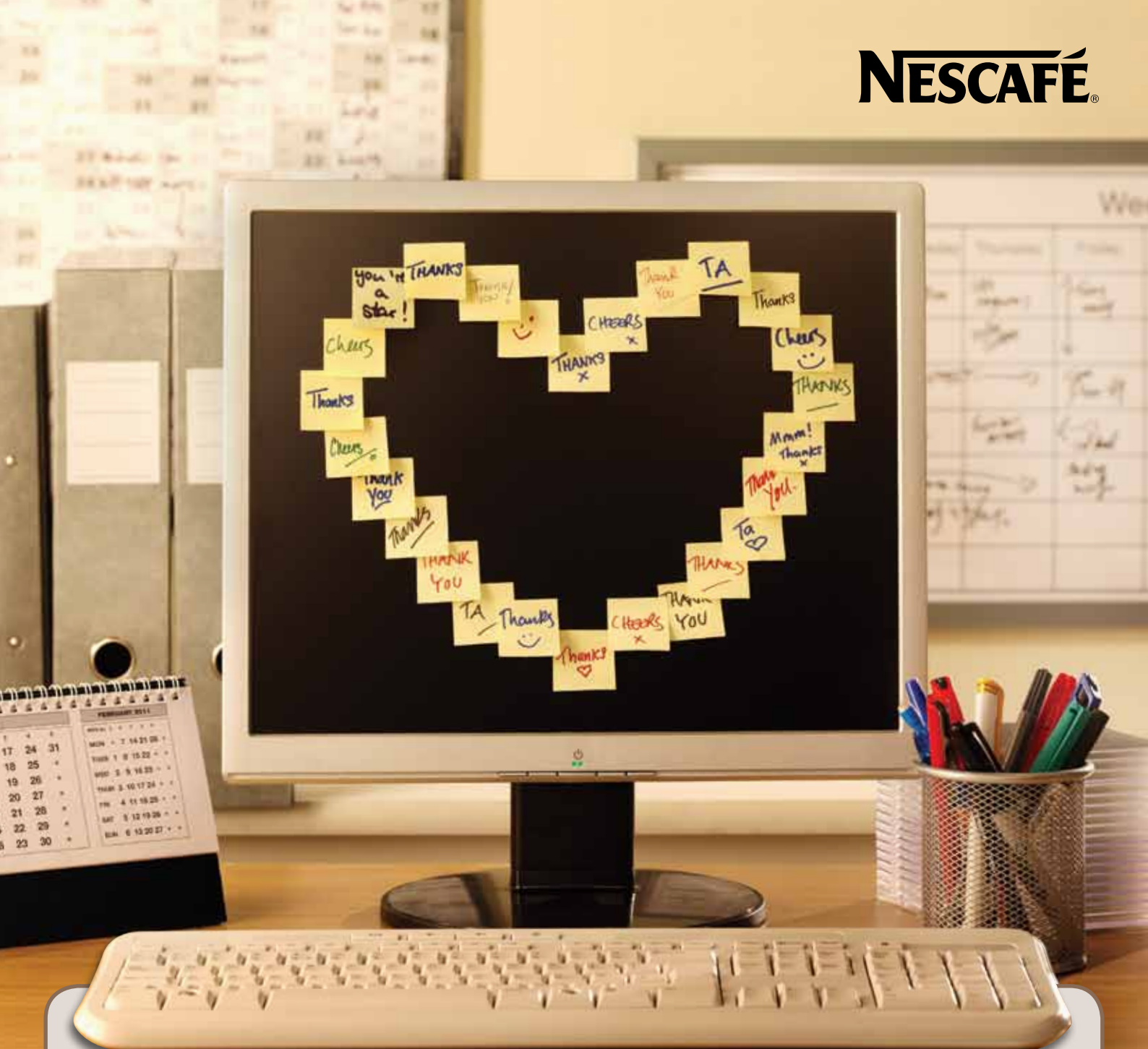
Social Media Special!

**Blogging Tips / Tweeting for Business /
How to increase your Twitter following /
Using Facebook for Marketing**

**PLUS: Accountability in the workplace /
CV tips for PAs / News / Competitions**

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Enter the Workplace of the Month competition to win a host of fabulous prizes



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23 Best Western offer 2 night break

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UK firms battling with up to 60 regulations



A new report confirms what UK business owners will already know: the amount of red tape they face is excessive, confusing and very time-consuming...

The National Audit Office has found that on average companies have to comply with as many as 60 different regulations, imposed by various different bodies and many business owners don't even realise when they're breaking the rules.

Some of the stories from the report are depressingly familiar. The owner of one catering company, for example, said he spends four to six weeks a year (all evenings and weekends) trying to get his head around legislation. The owners of a nursery added that they spent every weekend 'for months' poring over regulations, to 'get up to speed' with them. And it's not just the volume of red tape that's the problem; Andrew Cave, from the Federation of Small Businesses, pointed out that in many ways, businesses aren't so much concerned by current legislation as keeping up with the 'churn and change' as the Government updates the law.

A Better Regulation Executive is supposed to help matters by introducing a new 'one in, one out' rule. But it faces a huge problem: figures by the Institute of Directors last week found that the annual cost to firms of dealing with red tape was £36.8bn, while a separate survey by the British Chambers of Commerce indicated that companies will have to shell out almost £23bn to deal with new employment legislation over the next four years.

Broadband Speeds Top Priority For UK Consumers

A new study by comparison website Cable.co.uk reveals that fast broadband is by far the most important factor when choosing a broadband, TV and phone bundle.

More than a third of those polled prefer faster broadband over better value or the convenience of dealing with a single provider.

Only one in five think that better value would attract them to a triple-play bundle. Dealing with a single provider came bottom with less than 13% of the vote.

Paul France CEO of Cable said, "Broadband providers in the UK have seen a rise in demand for faster broadband, despite the availability of cheaper packages."

"Given the current economic climate you'd expect value for money to be the consumer's top priority but that's simply not the case."

To meet this growing demand Virgin Media last year began offering broadband speeds up to 100Mbps while BT is continuing the roll-out of its Infinity fibre broadband service to homes and businesses across the country.

Recession reduced 'sickie days' - but not for long

Sickness absence fell to record levels during the recession but has since increased, with over 600,000 workers taking time off in the last few months of 2010, according to new figures.



The Office for National Statistics said the sickness absence rate was 2.1% in the first quarter of 2009, but was back to pre-recession levels by the end of 2010, with 2.5% of people having at least one day off sick in the week before they were surveyed.

Around 613,000 employees were absent from work sick between October and December last year, resulting in two million working days being lost.

Sickness absence has fallen over the past decade, although it has remained higher in the public sector than in private firms.

Absence rates have been consistently higher among women, while there was also a difference between men and women in the reasons for being off work.

Other than minor illnesses such as coughs and colds, the top reason for men to be off work was musculoskeletal problems, whereas the main reason for women was stress, depression and anxiety.

Smartphones increase workload and decrease productivity

Why are we working harder than ever and yet being less effective? Why do we let work bleed into family life and holidays? A new UK study suggests that merely owning a BlackBerry or similar smart phone vastly increases the amount of time we spend checking messages outside working hours.



Author Ian Price collated data from over five hundred workers on the experience of managing work email both with and without BlackBerries and measured dimensions of stress along with organisational context. This has shown that the device can, if anything, ease the anxiety of message accumulation but with significant consequences for time spent on email outside working hours. "Those with BlackBerry or equivalent spent 2.5 times as long checking emails outside working hours as those without. However, BlackBerry users had email volumes only 13% higher," says Ian.

His new book *The Activity Illusion* advises on how to work less and be more effective in our job; how up to 20% of an organisation's payroll gets soaked up by ineffective use of email; why we get "addicted" to email and BlackBerry; and how to create the virtuous circle of an effective work life and a great life outside the office.

Problems with Windows Phone 7

Microsoft has been forced to pull the first update for its Windows Phone 7 system after it crashed handsets.

Owners found their mobiles turned off or failed to start up at all after they had downloaded the programme.

The embarrassing episode comes as Microsoft struggles to gain a foothold in the lucrative smartphone market against stronger competitors like Apple's iPhone and Google's Android.

It also comes against a backdrop of other glitches with Microsoft products, especially its virus-ridden browser Internet Explorer.

Personal Data Scams On The Rise

Online data scams are on the increase – and becoming more dangerous - according to a trend observed by a leading freebies website.

The practice of capturing data such as e-mail addresses, telephone numbers and home addresses is nothing new in cyberspace. But now websites are becoming increasingly sophisticated in the way they collect personal details.

Particularly vulnerable are Web surfers searching for offers and bargains. Many sites purport to offer free samples or even high value items in an attempt to lure the unsuspecting public. Bogus 'free iPhone' sites typically fall into this category, but a variety of other methods are becoming commonplace. This includes scams featuring competitions, surveys and even Facebook applications.

Those participating in social networking are

at the highest risk, with scams becoming widespread within minutes.

Top tips to avoid online data scams:

- Look for a clear Privacy Policy outlining how the personal data will be used.
- Sites requiring registration should always provide an opt-out feature.
- Offers from large brands and household names are generally safer than unknowns.
- If an offer appears too good to be true, stay well clear.
- Be sure to read the small print before committing.
- Use a secondary e-mail address rather than your primary or work e-mail account.
- Keep your computer updated with the latest patches and security software.
- Conduct online research to gauge the opinions of others.

Survey shows shoppers prefer well designed websites

The best reason for investing properly in your website: a really bad one can seriously hinder your chance of getting repeat custom.

A dodgy website could do significant damage to a company's reputation: according to a survey by brand consultants Wolff Olins, 74% of consumers say they'd never return to a poorly performing website, and that rises to 84% if they happen to be a first-time visitor.

The survey, of 2,000 consumers, found that two-thirds of shoppers share their experiences of online shopping with friends - whether good or bad. Being able to return an item without too many complications was the most important factor to consumers, and six in 10 said they'd be put off buying from a retailer again if their product arrived too slowly. Just a quarter said that accurate product descriptions were the most important factor for them

While on the high street, slick branding and expensive interiors come at a price, online, you can get a professional look without



forking out huge sums. And apparently, 48% of consumers don't believe that shopping on the high street offers a better experience than shopping online, which means e-tailers have a 'tremendous opportunity to create loyal repeat customers'. In other words: go that extra mile and give your customers a little bit extra, and they'll prioritise your website over rivals sites - and high street stores - any day of the week.

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UK companies need to invest more in their staff



Too many of Britain's leading businesses are failing to engage effectively with their staff – leading to either reduced consumer confidence in their services, declining industrial relations, or both.

According to employer branding specialists, Evviva Brands, organisations like British Airways, London Underground and Royal Mail have yet to learn from successful multinational businesses the importance of investing in their 'people brands' in addition to their external marketing.

"The train driver who walks off because his seat is damp, leaving passengers stranded, is a symptom of a company that puts staff at the bottom of its business priorities" says Evviva's CEO, Dr. David Kippen.

"Similarly, why does British Airways think customers will book onto its flights when there's a fair chance of being served by disgruntled cabin crew, let alone the possibility of strike action?"

Kippen says that companies that put engagement of front line staff at the centre of their business strategy are generally more successful in the short and long term. Those that have adopted the 'staff first' model are at the top of every sector.

He references Ritz-Carlton whose employees are 'ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen' - both a service promise to guests of the hotel but also underscoring the dignity in service of the hotel's 'ladies and gentlemen'.

Best companies to work for

In a different vein, Google's employees observe the company's vaunted '20% rule' where one day in every five can be devoted to pet projects that drive the company's business. The consequences include Gmail, Google News and a host of others as well as a number four ranking on Fortune's list of the best companies to work for.

"If more British companies started putting staff at the centre of their business strategy, by adopting a brand strategy that drives change from the inside out, the commercial consequences would be radical and permanent."

"The benefits include improved staff retention, happiness and productivity; closer management and employee integration; enhanced recruitment and, most importantly, a growing customer reputation that boosts the bottom line."

Report calls for greater female representation at the top of the corporate ladder

Lord Davies of Abersoch has released his report to the government on "diversity in the boardroom". In it, UK firms were told to almost double the number of women on their boards by 2013, or face government measures.

As well as calling for greater female representation at the top of the corporate ladder, the report also asked headhunters and shareholders to sign up to a code of conduct to increase the number of women on boards.

Liz Field, CEO of the Financial Skills Partnership, said, "In the Financial Services sector companies have a particularly poor reputation when it comes to the number of females executives at top positions and in boardrooms.

"Despite working in a male-dominated industry, greater board diversity increases a firm's competitive advantage relative to those with less diversity. Women should have a major influence on a company's purchase decisions and should contribute to profit-making parts of the business. By matching the diversity of a firm's directors to the diversity of potential customers and employees a company can increase its ability to penetrate markets."

Lord Davies also called on chairmen to announce in the next six months their goals "to ensure that more talented and gifted women" get top jobs.

"Currently 18 FTSE 100 companies have no female directors at all and nearly half of all FTSE 250 companies do not have a woman in the boardroom," he said.

"Radical change is needed in the mindset of the business community

if we are to implement the scale of change that is needed."

A recently published report from the Institute of Leadership and Management stated that nearly three-quarters of women say they still face barriers to top-level promotion in the UK.

While women make up almost half of the UK workforce, they occupy just 12 percent of FTSE 100 directorships, according to Cranfield School of Management.



Women should have a major influence on a company's purchase decisions and should contribute to profit-making parts of the business.



Menzies Flitwick Manor launches exclusive Meetings Package

Menzies Flitwick Manor Hotel has launched an exclusive residential package specifically for the meeting and events market.

Situated in close vicinity to the M1, the Georgian Manor House Hotel has created an exclusive use overnight package at the 18-bedroom four star hotel.

Ideal for board meetings and training the hotel is situated in beautiful grounds and gardens, only a few minutes from junction 12 and 13 of the M1 motorway.

The hire package assures corporate clients the sole run of the house including all bedrooms and meeting rooms which are all fully equipped with the latest technology.

All meals are included in the cost as well as unlimited teas and coffees throughout the day.

www.menzies-hotels.co.uk

Harrods Unveils Gastronomic Tasting Room Venue

Harrods has unveiled its new **Tasting Room**, one of London's most elegant and intimate venues.

Ideal as an entertaining space, or for private board and client events, the Tasting Room offers an exclusive gastronomic experience, with access to an unparalleled array of fine wines and gourmet cuisine.

Nestled within the newly launched The Wine Shop on the Lower Ground Floor of Harrods, the Tasting Room evokes a traditional wine cellar ambience. Harrods Events Team can arrange a private lunch or dinner party for up to 16 guests, pairing a bespoke Tasting Menu with The Wine Shop's range of over 3,000 lines – including many of the world's finest wines and spirits.



London's Claridge's comes to Chester

This spring The **Chester Grosvenor and Spa's** Michelin-starred restaurant will play host to Claridge's top chef **Martyn Nail** at two exclusive gourmet dining events, both perfect for food lovers, corporate bookings or diners who would like to experience London's Claridge's without leaving the north west.

On **March 31st** a Claridge's gourmet evening designed by Martyn and Simon will be held in the Michelin-starred restaurant 'Simon Radley at The Chester Grosvenor'.

Martyn will be creating a unique five course gourmet meal, matched by fine wines, and during the evening will make a special appearance in the restaurant.

On **April 1st** Martyn will preside over the special Claridge's lunch which begins at 12.30pm with a glass of Laurent-Perrier champagne.

Two courses designed by Martyn will then be served with wine before he gives a short talk to diners about his life as executive chef at the iconic London hotel.

The gourmet dinner on March 31st is priced at £150 per person with the gourmet lunch priced at £47.50 per person.



Corporate Savings at the Alton Towers Resort

Save over 25% on 24 hour rate conference centre bookings in March

The Alton Towers Resort is currently rewarding companies around the country – offering a minimum of 25% discount on all bookings for the month of March.

With a brand new 'Top 11 for 2011' assortment of wonderfully wacky team-building activities, including everything from adventurous theme park-based challenges, to a 'Strictly Fun Dancing' master class or proving 'Who's Got Talent' in an in-house skills contest, visitors can then unwind and enjoy an overnight stay with an evening meal in one of the fantastic hotels at the UK's number one short break destination.



CONFERENCE AND HOSPITALITY SHOW 2011



Conference & Hospitality Show to be opened by celebrity chef

Celebrity Chef, James Martin, is coming home to his roots when he opens The Conference and Hospitality Show 2011 at Savile's Hall, The Royal Armouries Leeds on Thursday March 17th. Yorkshire born James' appearance at the show co-incides with the opening of his first restaurant in the UK for over 10 years – inside the prestigious Alea casino adjacent to the Royal Armouries in Clarence Dock Leeds.

James is opening the show at 9.30 am and is also making a guest appearance at the Alea Casino Exhibition Stand where he will be doing a book signing from 10am to 11am.

James said: "As I'm a born and bred Yorkshire man, I have been searching for the right location for some time and Alea and Clarence Dock have everything I am looking for. I can't wait to open shortly, and deliver – along with my team - some of the best of British cooking Leeds has experienced."

Conference & Hospitality Show supports British Tourism Week

Tourism is the 5th largest industry in the UK, employing around 2.6 million people and is the

only industry that is active in all parts of the country and benefits visitors, residents and employees.

Event organiser Emma Cartmell is proud that the exhibition can form part of British Tourism Week and adds 'Business tourism is as

important and vital to the economy of a destination as leisure tourism. By holding the Show right in the middle of British Tourism Week we are able to emphasise this and encourage more tourism into venues in Leeds, West Yorkshire and the North.'

Visit www.conferenceandhospitalityshow.co.uk

Facebook and Social Media:

The Next Marketing Opportunity

Marketing as an activity is all about reaching the right customers with the right products, and the result sought is delighted customers who are more than willing to open their purses wide enough to boost your revenues. For many years, marketers stalked their target customers through various means and by trying to get their message across to spread awareness about their wares.

Traditional means of communication

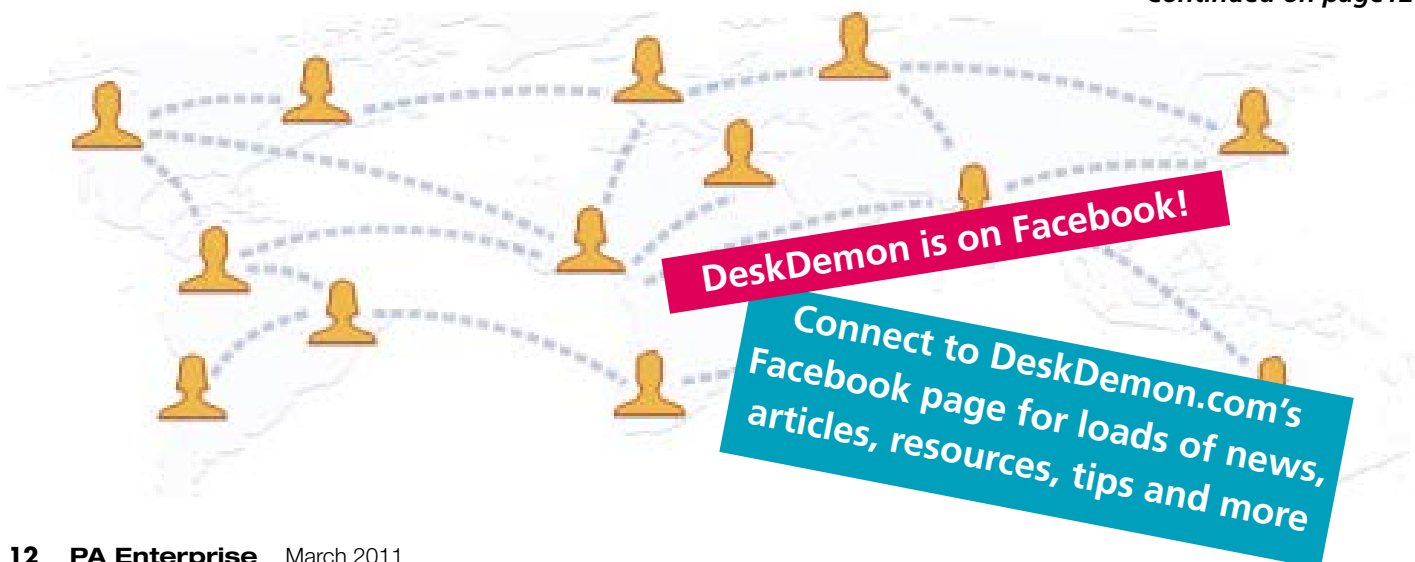
Traditionally, marketing communications were conducted via print, broadcast and such traditional media through disruptive advertising, where advertisements appear in between the content of

interest for the customer. Traditional media does give a large reach to a marketer with its programming of mass appeal. However, the wastage is equally high, since a large portion of the audience would belong to a different segment than the one that is to be targeted by the marketer.

Enter Social Media and the Internet

The revolution stirred by the internet as a medium took place because of the fact that it is highly personalized and provides more content on-demand than any other available medium. Social sites proliferated far and wide in

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their usage for a few simple reasons:

The power to create and distribute content is equally available to every user, irrespective of him/her being a customer or a marketer. In the earlier forms of media, that power rested with the editorial staff of the channel or the advertiser, but hardly ever with the user.

The medium is completely personalised, and a user can create or join groups and further create content based on what he/she likes.

Opinions are free and fair. This is one reason why social media is of utmost concern to marketers, since buying decisions are no more influenced as much by advertisements. The traditional word-of-mouth marketing approach has grown leaps and bounds on social networks.

Facebook – at the center of Social Media

With 500 million (and growing) unique users worldwide, Facebook is the number one social networking site in terms of activity and subscriptions. What started as a garage

initiative by Mark Zuckerberg has now become the biggest phenomenon on the internet.

A user interface that allows for quick communication and the ability to create fan pages and groups at the click of a mouse button are what make Facebook extremely popular. Another important reason for its immense popularity is the wide variety of social applications that have been developed and made available within the Facebook environment.

These applications can allow users and friends to do joint activities like playing games that run endlessly, sharing photos, videos, and web links, and many more.

How does this help a marketer?

Traditionally, media plans were drawn to include television channels, publications, or any other media that can grab maximum eyeballs and effectively reach a selected target audience. The science of segmentation and targeting has become only more accurate in the case of social media.

Facebook provides a

wide variety of avenues to communicate with the audience, which opens up an entirely different world of possibilities to have a fruitful dialogue with customers. Some of these methods used popularly by marketers are:

Advertising: The first opportunity, which is the most obvious one, is advertising on Facebook. The difference, however, is the fact that you can create your own advertisement in a matter of minutes and also specify the details of your target group in terms of demographics and types of discussions where you want your advertisement to appear.

Fan Pages: Facebook allows every brand, as well as individual users, to create fan pages for their favorite celebrities and their own homegrown businesses. Large brands have also created their official pages on Facebook that have a huge, immediate fan following around the world. The fan page has immense utility to convey first hand information about the brand and also to collect immediate and frank feedback from your customers.

DeskDemon is on Facebook!

Connect to DeskDemon.com's facebook page for loads of news, articles, resources, tips and more

Branded applications: One of the most effective ways to engage a user toward your brand is by creating an application; this could be a game or a contest, with your branding coming across subtly through it.

What makes Facebook even more exciting is the way it allows you to target your communication sharply just to the customer segment you want to attract. It also provides analytics and page insights that give good feedback and measurement on the activity done.

The options provided by Facebook can be creatively explored and used judiciously for bringing about maximum benefits to any brand.

However, while doing all this, you need to be aware of the fact that customers have an equal say and have the ability to respond immediately to any of your actions with a thumbs up or a thumbs down. Availing the service of a social media consultant to work out a social media strategy may be required so that your efforts will not be in vain.

Get more information here for the best Facebook training available: www.hyperfbtraffic.com

Email Newsletters: what works?

Newsletters sent via email are now a common marketing tool - our inboxes are littered with them. Some are instantly deleted without a second glance, whereas others attract our attention. Here are some key bits of advice to getting the best out of an email newsletter:

- People seem to react more emotionally to newsletters than to websites. They see them as a personal communication. This is good news if you can use them to create a good ongoing relationship. The potential catch is that you can upset your customers if you're not sensitive about how you use them.
- The e-mail must be designed for users who scan. The average time spent reading will only be about 51 secs. Make sure you have clear headlines that help people to quickly decide if your news is relevant. Keep the e-mail short with links to your website for further information.
- Newsletters should be targeted at particular information, problems or situations. Most of us are overwhelmed by e-mail. We only want news if it's helpful and relevant.
- Users often stay subscribed, even though they're not interested, and then get more and more annoyed by each new issue. This is obviously not good for customer relations. The unsubscribe process must be simple and obvious. We help you do this by making sure there's an unsubscribe link at the bottom of every newsletter. If you're sending out a newsletter to a large number of people, you may want an even more obvious unsubscribe at the top of the e-mail.
- A new subscriber should be able to subscribe in less than a minute. This sounds obvious, but a test showed that it can take about 4 mins to subscribe on some sites! That's enough to put someone off. Think about where you want to put a subscription link and use a really simple subscription process. Remember, the less information you request, the more likely you are to actually get someone to sign up.

www.olamalu.com

Blogging Tips

**What's the point of blogging?
Blogging simply for the sake
of blogging won't allow you
to reap the benefits of this
powerful communication tool.**

The internet can seem pretty impersonal. By blogging regularly, you're letting potential customers get to know you better. Your blog should never be dry - make sure it conveys you as well as your ideas.

The more you blog about things relevant to your business, the more keyword-rich pages you'll have showing up in Google. Update your blog once a week and in six weeks you've doubled the size of a six page portfolio site.

If you write well enough, people will keep on coming back. More than that, you can use your blog as a place to test out new ideas about your business.



We'd love you to practice your blogging skills on DeskDemon.com! This is your chance to have your say on the issues which are on your mind - and make you part of the the world's largest online community for the secretarial profession. Happy blogging!

Click here to browse blogs - and add your own.

Here are some useful guidelines to making the most of your blog...

By Peter Wolfing
www.blogtoolbox.com

First you need to decide what type of blog you want. If it is a business blog, it needs to be a little more informational, but still informal, so that the staff, who read it, actually want to read it and don't just see it as "work stuff". If it is a personal blog then it needs to be a little more fun.

Blogging is not as formal as a standard

web page. The reader does not necessarily expect perfect English. In fact it can make it seem more accessible and friendly, if the blog is written in a more conversational style rather than just telling the reader what it is that you want to convey to them.

Picking your niche carefully is very important if you are intending to make money from your blog. Do not choose too wide a niche or you will find it hard to compete with the big sites and blogs. So rather than health and fitness you might try, exercise for the office, or the home workers guide to staying fit. This gives you more chance of ranking well in your niche.

Go to the Overture keyword selector tool to find good keywords for your blog. Type in what your blog is about and it will give you a list of keywords to use in your blog that the search engines look for, so search engines will send you traffic.

Try to vary the keywords that you use to give yourself a better chance.

Many search engine specialists think that the search engines look for a keyword density of around 2-3%. This means that for every 100 words that you write the keyword will be mentioned 2-3 times. But do not let this affect your style of our writing. It is very important that it sounds

interesting to your readers.

Post regularly but not too much. When you start to build up a readership, you need to post regularly to keep them coming back. But don't start posting dozens of times a day, or your blog may be seen as Spam by the search engines and this could have a serious effect on your ranking.

Always "ping" your blog when you add a new post. "Pinging" is ways of letting the search engines know that you have added content to your blog. You just need to go to a pinging site such as pingoat or pingomatic and fill in the details of your blog. Then when you add posts, just go to their site and click the ping button.

Add your blog to Technocratic and Bloglines. These are blog search engines and you need to add your blog to them and give them a rough outline of your blog. Try to make it sound interesting so that readers who find your blog listing, will want to see what it is about.

To get more traffic to your site you can submit articles to article directories such as Ezine Articles, with the address of your blog in the resource box, so that readers who like your articles can click through to read your blog. You can submit too many more directories by using an article submission

service like Article Marketer.

Another good way to get traffic is to join forums that are on the same subject as your blog. They very often have a sig box that appears on all of your posts where you can add you blog address so that when people read your posts they can click through.

One of the easiest ways to get income from your blog is too add AdSense ads to it. These are ads that are put on your blog by Goggle and you get paid every time someone clicks them. You just apply to goggle for an account and they just give you a small piece of code to add to your site and the ads show up automatically.

Another good way to get income from your blog is to add affiliate programs to it. This means that whenever one of your readers buys one of the things that are advertised you receive a percentage of the amount. Two of the best affiliate programs are through Clickbank and Commission Junction.

Even when your blog is up and running and you have good steady traffic to your blog, do not think that they will just keep on going to your blog if you do not post regularly. Blog readers can be very fickle and the best way to keep them is to give them new things to read so that they will keep coming back.

Tweet for Business



You can now twitter on DeskDemon.com! Follow this link to see the latest twitter feeds

Twitter is rapidly becoming one of the most-used social networking sites for businesses. But what is it that makes Twitter so good for businesses? There are many reasons; the first would be that it is great for getting your message across to a lot of people. Twitter currently has around 6 million active users per month; many are businesses and many are individuals. Ben Williams advises on how to make the most of Twitter.

When Twitter first originated, it was used by individuals to keep in touch with their friends, and to let them know what they are doing. Recently, however, businesses have discovered the potential Twitter has to grow their business.

Businesses use Twitter for a couple of different reasons; to build rapport with prospective clients, and to raise their brand awareness.

To be successful on Twitter as a business,

there are a few simple steps:

Inw The more you tweet, the more people are likely to follow you. The more people that follow you, the more people you can get your message to.

When you first join Twitter, you will have to create a profile. Think about the impression your profile has on people visiting it; is it boring, or is it something that intrigues the viewer, and makes them want to receive your tweets?

When someone send you a message or tweets about you, don't ignore it. This is exactly what you want from Twitter; a chance to interact with someone. Many people make the mistake of just tweeting and not interacting with other people. You shouldn't do this; one of the main reasons for you joining Twitter is to interact with not only individuals, but other businesses as well

NEVER tweet direct sales messages, such as 'visit this site to buy ...' You want to redirect people to your site, and your site will do the selling for you.

Don't just tweet about yourself; tweet about interesting articles you have read on the internet, and include a link to it

Establish yourself as an expert – if people think of you as an expert in your industry, you are going to be the first person that they ask regarding a problem they may have. They also increases the chance that they will want to do business with you in the future.

<http://freetwittertraffic.com>

Twitter News

Twitter file-sharing app goes viral after 2 weeks

A new Twitter application that allows users to share files with ease has taken off a mere two weeks following launch. The free service, dubbed TwileShare, uploads a file with user-generated tweet text and adds a unique short URL that is tracked and links to the uploaded file.

In addition to being mentioned hundreds of times on Twitter, TwileShare had over 20,000 visits, rave reviews and 24,000 search results on Google – all in an incredibly short space of time.

TwileShare founder Danny Bull said, "The response has been phenomenal. File-sharing has always been a topical subject and by combining it with the popularity of Twitter users can harness social media to share files in a new and interesting way."

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Tips to increase your Twitter following



Getting people to follow you on twitter is the best way to get your thoughts, feelings, and information out there to people. You can have some really interesting facts to share, products to talk about, or ideas to spread but they aren't any good if you don't have individuals to read the information. You can employ a few different tips to increase the number of people who follow you.

By RobertMelkk

The first is to be sure that your followers know who you are.

This means you ought to have your biography completed filled out and personalize the experience by uploading both a background image and an avatar. In the sea of millions you need to stand out and grab the attention of everyone. People don't want to follow someone that doesn't exhibit any of their personality in their account information.

The second is to be certain that you keep your Twitter account public. It is a known fact that you will gain more followers if your account is accessible to just anyone. Sometimes people don't want to wait



You can now twitter on DeskDemon.com! Follow this link to see the latest twitter feeds

for you to approve their request to follow them. Any content that you post should be widely spread. Individuals aren't going to want to follow you if they can't see the style of your tweets.

Third, you need to have a large amount of links available to your Twitter account. If you post your account links on other websites such as Facebook or LinkedIn more people will be exposed to your account and this will increase your follower count as well. If you have friends on myspace or facebook there is no reason why you shouldn't be following them on Twitter and they should be following you too. You could also include your Twitter link in your signatures on websites or in your emails as well to get the maximum exposure.

Fourth, follow people who follow you. This reciprocation will show people that you follow those who follow you. If individuals see accounts where someone is following a large number of people they may be inclined to follow them as well. Be sure that you tweet during the peak time periods. The most exposure will be given to you if you do it while people are online. Since the feeds are live and updated constantly it is easy for your information to get lost in the shuffle. The busiest time on Twitter is 4pm on Friday afternoon in Eastern Time zone. This was determined after 9 long months of analyzing tweets. This is when the highest number of retweets occur as well. The slowest times on Twitter for retweets is between 7 to 10am and on Sunday and Monday mornings.

Following these tips, even only a few of them, should improve the number of followers that you have. You will get more followers if you follow more of the tips. There are a number of other ways to get your follower count increased too but these are only a select few of them. Be sure to apply these.

Learn more about twitter online marketing as well as marketing using twitter, visit <http://freetwittertraffic.com>

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NESCAFÉ® Gold Blend launches its brand new **Workplace of the Month** competition this March, to encourage workplaces to **Get Together and WIN** in 2011.

Building on the success of 2010's 'Employee of the Month' competition, it encourages employees to make their case as to why their workplace deserves the chance to win BIG.

Monthly winners can enjoy a whole host of rewards such as: 20 sets of group tickets for 10 people to the UK's top attractions, or a VIP experience at the O2 Arena for the winner, and up to 17 of their colleagues.

Entering is simple – log onto www.goldblendworkplace.co.uk and enter your 10 digit batch code from the base of the promotional NESCAFÉ® Gold Blend tin along with company details for the chance to win. Entrants will automatically be placed in the main prize draw, taking place in November 2011, **where one lucky workplace will win a weekend trip to Paris for up to 10 people!**



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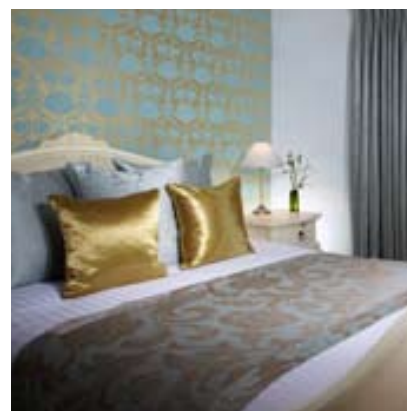


Business

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The lucky winners will be able to treat their feet to some top class footwear, so you'll soon be racing ahead in the fashion - as well as the organisation - stakes.

All you need to do is answer a simple question and submit your details and you'll be on your way to those long lusted over shoes.

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Driving accountability in the team culture

Alison Hail

“We’ve done the targets and decided the deadlines. Everyone knows what they have to do. But how do I make them accountable? How do I stop the excuses when they miss their deadlines?” Sound familiar? It’s the side of goal-setting which receives less attention and less training.

To drive accountability in your team, we encourage the use of a questioning process taken from the toolkit of the leader-as-coach or manager-as-coach. It acts as a catalyst to learning too, for the individual and the team.

One benefit of this questioning or coaching process is that it builds personal awareness in the team of how they react, where and when they need support and how they can access it. The learning process in this coaching-based conversation goes in at a deeper level than mere brainstorming, especially if it is conducted in a one-on-one conversation with the line-manager. Finally, because this awareness is witnessed by another person (the manager in this case) it is less easy for the team-member to forget what they have committed

to doing differently. So it builds accountability and commitment in the individual being coached.

The manager can build further commitment and accountability by now focusing on close questioning. The result is not only support but much greater likelihood of the action taking place. If the leader-as-coach or manager-as-coach asks very specific questions (for example, which day, by when, what time of day) it enables the client to do all the planning in the coaching conversation itself.

Alternatively the learner can commit to finishing the detailed planning after the coaching conversation, in an agreed time-frame. For most people the first is the most useful option.

For those familiar with the GROW model, or my S-GROW

model, this is the W step and it supports the team member in taking action.

This kind of close questioning is useful for thinking through the implementation, and building commitment and accountability:

What barriers might there be to that happening? (to you doing that?)

What might stop you?

What could get in the way?

How could you deal with that?

What else could you do to help yourself in that?

Remembering what happened last time, what have you learnt that ensure you are successful this time?

What needs to happen to make sure you have enough support?



Naturally the final step of the conversation needs to link back to the objectives of the project in question and of the meeting. If the goal of the meeting was for the team member to clarify their thinking on a topic, action is not necessarily relevant but even so they might want to take action as a result. By being explicit, the manager-as-coach/leader-as-coach can avoid guesswork and help the other to plan more exactly:

Would you like to decide on some action at this point?

What would be an appropriate next step?

When will you do the planning for that?

Would it be useful to do it now?

Finally, you keep the momentum by arranging for 10 minute up-dates on a weekly or fortnightly basis, asking how it is going on a spontaneous but regular basis, probing when there is slippage or things are not happening, and by noticing and remarking on progress. Do any or all of these, together with a scheduled next meeting when progress and results (both successes or failures) are acknowledged and learnt from, and you will find that accountability becomes an expectation in your team and a habit.

About the author

Alison Haill is a communications skills specialist, facilitator, management and executive coach, trainer and published author of *The S-Factor A Coaching Handbook*. She is MD and founder of Oxford's specialist consultancy for communication training and coaching, Oxford Professional Consulting, which specialises in working with international managers and leaders.

By Richard Blake

Because of the competitive nature of job markets, a single application for an administrative assistant position can draw hundreds of applicants. As a result, employers typically scan resumes in mere seconds, usually about thirty seconds. For this reason, your CV must have all the right features that will encourage the reader to read through your resume. Typically, badly written CVs end up in the bin so it is vital to avoid the pitfalls when writing your own CV.

- You should write your CV in two pages. This should be sufficient for you to highlight relevant administrative skills,



Reader Offer:

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Admin Assistant CVs - how to write them effectively

expertise, experience and qualifications. If you have been in an administrative position for a considerable period of time and have taken up positions with increasing responsibility, you may require more than 2 pages to fully document your career. This is acceptable so long as the information is relevant.

- When compiling your CV, keep the layout and format simple so that the presentation is easy on the eye. Your CV should be written in black with Arial or Times Roman font and size 10 or 12 for the content. Your heading should be written in size 14 or 16 and the document should be consistent both in layout, font style and size.

- It is important that the reader understand your career goal quickly from your resume. You should therefore start your CV with a persuasive profile briefly detailing your background in administration and your objective. Your professional profile should be kept to a short paragraph of no more than 3 or 4 sentences. Your introductory professional profile statement should be followed by a bulleted list of your key skills relevant to administrative job positions. The list should contain no more than 8 short lines. If you are entering an administrative position for the first time, then your key skills should include relevant transferable skills such as attention to detail, organizational skills and ability to work accurately under pressure. Your key skills summary should typically include the following:

- **A methodical approach to work**
- **Your organizational skills**
- **Your ability to work proactively within a team setting**

- **Your ability to work effectively on your own initiative**
- **Good communication and interpersonal skills**
- **Sound computer skills and competent typing ability**
- **Your attention to detail and ability to work accurately**
- **Ability to work to deadlines and work effectively under pressure**

- If you are entering an administrative post with no previous experience, perhaps because you are a recent graduate, then you should add details of your education and training before your work experience, highlighting areas that are directly applicable to your remit in administration such as English, numerical qualifications and computer literacy certifications. If on the other hand you have amassed previous experience as an administrator, then your professional work experience should precede your education and qualifications. When presenting your work experience, try to describe the skills you used in your remits and how the position helped you hone those skills further, along with other skills you acquired within the post.

- Your CV should be written in the third person with minimal use of "I" in your document. Also, always mention dates, names of employers and names of educational institutions attended. You should also highlight achievements and other significant results that bear relevance to a position in administration.

Richard Blake is a Professional CV writer catering for school leavers, graduates, and professionals up to senior executives and CEOs. Services also include medical doctor CV preparation along with cover letters.

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