

5 BEST PRACTICES' FOR USING EMAIL



Email is part of day to day business life in most businesses. Here are a few tips to help you regain control of your inbox.

Speak to people

When you receive an email that looks like it's going to be complicated to reply to, visit/telephone the person who sent it, and ask what they want you to do.

Discussing things in person can eliminate those email chains that go on and on. People can often hide behind email but in person, you can make your point and, if necessary, demand a straight answer.

Send good emails

We all receive junk emails on a regular basis. If you send good quality emails you will tend to receive quality emails back. Try to be straight with people and don't hide behind elusive language. Tackle problems head on and in a polite manner. This will make it more difficult for people to respond in a rude or annoying way.

Avoid "reply all"

This just clutters up people's inboxes unnecessarily. They will also reply all back to you and clutter up your inbox. Only reply to those to whom it is necessary to reply.

Lengthy emails

If you receive a lengthy email and you are too busy to deal with it, reply to or call the sender. Try something along the lines of "Thanks for this. I'm short on time. Very quickly, what is it you would like me to do?"

Agreements

Very often we send emails in order to get things agreed in writing. If you need this, perhaps try having a conversation with the person. Establish the way forward, agree verbally then when you get back to your desk send an email to confirm what has been agreed along the lines of, "As discussed today, we have confirmed our agreement to...." Don't forget to file this email - it can be useful if the decision is ever challenged.

APPLE IPHONE 6



It's been a long time coming, but Apple has finally launched the iPhone 6. In fact, they have launched two phones: the iPhone 6 and the iPhone 6 Plus. In response to market demand for phones with larger screens or "phablets", which manufacturers such as Samsung and Sony have driven, Apple has had to offer a large-format version of its latest phone.

The iPhone 6 has a 4.7-inch screen, with the iPhone 6 Plus featuring a screen size of 5.5 inches. The smaller iPhone 6 breaks away from the 4-inch screen of models past and into larger territory, though at 4.7 inches, is still smallish by today's standards. Many users will welcome the choice of size, as people often find that phones with a really large screen can be somewhat cumbersome to use. The iPhone 6 has a new Retina display, dubbed "Retina HD", retaining its 326ppi pixel density with a 1,334x750-pixel resolution. The iPhone 6 Plus has a higher pixel density on its 1080p HD display.

The iPhone's 8-megapixel camera has not had a pixel boost, but it does receive a refresh thanks to a new sensor. According to Apple, the new camera can focus much faster, colours look more lifelike when the flash is engaged, and the imaging chip has better ways to sharpen images and reduce noise. HDR is now automatic, as well so image quality should be very good indeed. The camera also has a panorama mode which can capture up to 43 megapixels in its five-element lens.

The iPhone 6's A8 processor is the second 64-bit chipset that Apple has made, and it boasts 50 percent faster graphics and a 25 percent faster CPU, which should make the phone more power-efficient. For fitness fanatics, the iPhone 6 also has new sensors which assist the phone with running apps for tracking distance, speed, elevation, etc. Battery life looks to be improved too and the iPhone 6 should last up to 10 hours over 3G and 4G networks, and up to 11 hours on Wi-Fi and video. The phone also offers Wi-Fi calling and Voice over LTE (aka VoLTE).

Support for the Wi-Fi 802.11 ac standard means you're looking at Wi-Fi speeds three times faster than those in the iPhone 5S. After resisting NFC, or near-field communication, Apple has added this functionality and has built an entire mobile payment system around it, with partners galore already waiting in the wings. The system is called Apple Pay.

The phone is also slim, at 0.27-inches, or 6.9-millimeters thick and comes in three colours: gold, silver, and space grey..

ORGANIC GROWTH STRATEGIES

Most businesses want to grow, but with less bank finance available these days it's not easy to just buy out a competitor. If you can't grow by "mergers and acquisitions", you need to develop a strategy to grow your business organically which can prove a much slower process.

Organic growth is especially prevalent during the early stages of a company's commercial establishment, but opportunities continuously present themselves if you listen to the market. So, if your firm is committed to meeting the needs of its customers and is commercially driven with a good control over costs, you can use the following strategies to drive business growth.

Market Penetration

Also known as the "Protect and Build" strategy, this conservative approach sees a company consolidate and stabilise its position in the market by selling more existing products to existing customers. To make this cross-selling approach work, your firm will need to leverage existing resources and capabilities; this will allow your business to capture a larger share of existing markets. This strategy is low risk as you won't need to launch new products or services – instead, just focus on selling more to existing clients and contacts.

Product Development

A product development strategy focuses on creating new products or services and introducing them to existing customers. If your business is good at creating new innovations then it is probably well positioned to use this strategy. The key is utilising market research in order to identify a need or gap in the market for a new product or service. If there is potential demand and you launch the right product or service, then you stand a reasonable chance of success. There is an element of risk inherent in this strategy, as developing new products requires investment from the business.

Market Development

This approach involves the promotion of existing products into new markets. These could be industry sectors or geographical territories. This approach requires the firm to invest in market research to define which markets are best to target. There is an element of risk to this strategy, as it requires both time and money in order to conduct the research and to develop appropriate marketing campaigns.

Diversification

This can be a risky growth strategy because to diversify means creating new products or services and selling them into new markets at the same time. There are a lot of "unknown unknowns" involved, such as the competitor landscape and the needs / requirements of customers in that market. There is also risk inherent in the fact that the company is somewhat reliant on the strength of its brand in a market that is not necessarily familiar with. However, diversifying can give the company an opportunity to really grow if the new product / service is well received and the new target market is large enough.

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

MAKE AN 'ABOUT US' VIDEO

Most websites have an "About Us" page to provide visitors with information about the business such as who the Directors are, where the company was founded, its values and its mission.

Incorporating some video content can really bring the business to life and make it more real to website visitors.

A good 'About Us' video is a powerful and valuable tool that can be used in many ways, from marketing and branding to recruiting and educating. The 'About Us' video can send a strong message about the company, its values and what it does for customers and staff of the firm.

Search Engine Rankings

Google and other popular search engines like video content. Adding video content to your site which is relevant to your firm's area of expertise will help your firm to rank higher for related search terms. By adding new video content and updating videos regularly you will continue to influence your firm's ranking positively, thereby making it easier for customers to find you.



Marketing

Your brand is much more than your logo or corporate colours. Your brand is what your customers say about you and your business. Along with the homepage, the 'About Us' page is often one of the most visited pages on a website. Visitors want to know about the people behind a product or service and obtain a deeper understanding of the people they will be dealing with if they choose to engage with the company.

Recruitment

When people hear about a company's job vacancies, they will visit its website and check out the 'About Us' page. Having a video that prospective applicants can watch is a great idea, as they can get a feel for the company including its values and mission. An 'About Us' video can also be used to communicate the achievements of the firm's staff, the business's approach to corporate responsibility, community engagement, diversity, etc. These are the things that create the culture of your firm which is very often what makes people want to work there.



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