

MORTGAGE MARKETING

programme

THE BROKER'S GUIDE TO MARKETING





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INTRODUCTION

For advisers, standing out from the crowd can feel like quite a challenge. According to IMLA, 84% of mortgages are through intermediaries. That means there is a lot of noise to cut through in order to be heard.

That's where marketing, and this guide, comes in. Marketing is any of the activities that you use to promote your business, so it isn't directly sales. It's how you generate leads and nurture

prospective buyers and service existing clients. Marketing includes everything from your website to public relations (PR) to your social media presence.

It can take a lot of work and knowledge to get your marketing right, ensuring your business gets noticed. With this guide, you can learn everything you need to know to start marketing effectively and grow your business.



GETTING STARTED

The first step for any business looking at their marketing is to gather information and that's no different for brokers. To make sure that your marketing efforts achieve what you need them to, they need to be wellconsidered and aligned to both your audience and your business goals.

Before starting, you should do a quick audit of your current marketing activities. Try to look at what you are doing, what you aren't doing,

what works and what doesn't. Also keep in mind that you don't have to do everything to market successfully.

Sometimes resources and budget are tight, so consider where you'll get the most return for your effort. Taking the time to understand your business and the market can mean the difference between a constant stream of new leads and an enquiry desert.

Marketing takes a day to learn and a lifetime to master.

Philip Kotler- Management Consultant Professor and Author

GETTING STARTED

Understanding your target audience

As part of creating your marketing plan, you need to know your audience. Your audience is the group of people to whom you are trying to connect and market. For brokers, it is especially important to clarify this throughout the planning process.

Most likely, you have multiple audiences that you would like to reach instead of just one. Rather than summing up everyone you want to work with as 'people who want to buy property,' for instance, you may want to segment that further into smaller groups and concentrate on one that is likely to be the most profitable. These can be based on the type of buyer that you prefer working with.

As you start thinking about your audience, consider the following questions:

- **What types of property does my ideal buyer look for?**
- **How old do they tend to be?**
- **Are they first-time buyers?**
- **Do I prefer helping people find family homes or investment properties?**
- **Where do these buyers find their information?**
- **What social media do they use?**
- **What are the challenges this audience faces in the buying process?**

These questions will help you identify your target audience and get a better understanding of who you are trying to reach. The clearer you are on your target audience the more relevant and engaging you can make your marketing.

It's also worth mentioning that your audience may also include other professionals such as estate agents if you're looking to increase referrals.

Be sure to answer as many questions as you can about them and pay special attention to their challenges. This offers insight into problems that you may be able to solve for them.

You can use this Marketing Persona Template to help map out your target audience.

GETTING STARTED

The buyer journey

The buyer journey is the process that individuals in your target audience go through to move from 'thinking about getting a mortgage' to 'securing a mortgage.' Although the specifics of what audiences do may differ from sector to sector, generally speaking, the steps are the same. These steps are: Awareness, Consideration, and Decision.

Awareness

The awareness stage is when a buyer first recognises that they have a problem that needs to be solved e.g. they need a house with more space for the family.

Brokers who do marketing well recognise that engagement with clients early in the buyer journey means that client is more likely to come to them at the time they seek mortgage advice. This is where content marketing can help, providing useful advice and information that aligns to their needs at this stage, e.g. providing a 'guide to avoiding the pitfalls of house buying' These types of interactions will help move your audience onto the next stage of the journey and start to build a relationship with your brand. Once they understand their problem more clearly, they can start looking for ways to solve it.

Consideration

The second stage of the buyer journey is the consideration stage. In this stage, your audience is aware of the problem that they are facing and they are beginning to weigh up the options.

An excellent way to engage your audience in this stage is to create content, messaging, or even campaigns related to helping them see their challenge clearly and understand what their next steps could be. Here, content on your website on e.g. 'how to choose the right mortgage' may help build a relationship with them.

You can steer thinking by helping the growing family decide between upsizing to a larger home and adding an extension. Or for the buy-to-let investor, explaining the tax implications of investing in property (see our guide here).

Decision

This is the final stage of the buyer journey. Here your audience knows the problem they are having, they know that they want to secure a mortgage as part of the solution. What they need now is someone who can help them make that happen. So this stage is about helping them recognise your value and, ultimately, turn to you for advice.

This is the stage where you need to start selling the value of your business in relation to any competitors. Why can you solve their problem better than anyone else?

GETTING STARTED

Creating a strategy

Strategy is what ties everything you know about your audience into your wider business goals. A good marketing strategy will help you turn knowledge into plans and then into a consistent flow of leads. Here are the things you need to know about putting together a marketing strategy for your business:



Choosing goals

When deciding goals for your marketing strategy, it's vital that they align to your overall business goals. Instead of relying on vanity metrics (measurements that don't influence your bottom line), be sure you are looking at performance indicators that matter.

To help you do this, create SMART goals. These are goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely. For example, a SMART goal for your business might be to 'increase Buy-To-Let sales in the North West by 10% by the end of Quarter 2.'

- **Specific** - Make sure your goals aren't too vague. Try to keep them focused on one objective.
- **Measurable** - When choosing a goal, be certain that you have ways to determine whether or not your efforts have been successful.
- **Achievable** - It may be tempting to shoot for the stars when goal setting, but you'll need to temper that enthusiasm with what is really possible within your timeline, budget, and audience.
- **Relevant** - Setting goals like growing your social following can be relevant, but they aren't always. Set goals that will influence your business in a meaningful way.
- **Timely** - Putting a deadline against things will help you keep traction on the work and give you a particular end date to judge effectiveness.

GETTING STARTED

Campaigns

When you hear marketing, you most likely think of campaigns. Campaigns include the marketing elements such as taglines, ads, billboards, e-books and more that catch your eye. But what is a campaign exactly?

A campaign is a series of concerted marketing efforts centred around a specific theme with a specific goal over a specific time period. These are usually based on solving one of the challenges that your audience faces. It can be as simple as sharing content to generate leads or as complex as widespread advertisements that are used to promote awareness of your brand.

The type of campaign you'll want to create will be largely dependent on the SMART goal that you have set.

Communication tactics

While campaigns may feel more exciting and urgent, having a steady flow of communications going out is, arguably, even more important. Your regular blogs, emails, and posts are what people come back to time and time again. It's also what keeps your brand top of mind for people in your audience not yet at the decision stage.

Consistent effort is essential, marketing is a long term game with the best results coming to those that stick at it. Be sure to only commit to regular marketing or communications that you can easily maintain.



There is nothing more valuable than a spotless reputation.

William Shakespeare - Playwright

MANAGING YOUR BRAND

Your brand is how people feel about your business, it's defined by your customers, not by you. But you can shape how people feel about your business by being consistent. Your name, logo, imagery and messaging all make it clear that things belong to your business. It takes effort to manage it, but keeping your brand consistent is a principal part of your marketing.

As you create assets and utilise the various



tactics you'll see in this guide, be sure that your brand remains the same throughout. Be sure to pay attention to:

- **Tone of voice**
 - how your copy sounds (i.e. cheerful, forthright, stern, or friendly)
- **Messaging**
 - what you are saying on each platform about your services
- **Logo**
 - don't use this in ways that detract from your brand
- **Values**
 - what your business believes in
- **Visual language**
 - the imagery, colours and graphics that define your brand

Your business has to look the part. How you present your services to a client or prospect will have a direct impact on the perceived value of those services. If things look good, there will be a perception of a better service.

Even small broker businesses can make a big impact by creating a consistent and strong brand presence across all platforms and communications.

One of the first things that your audience sees about your brand and it is a key part of client experience..

WEBSITE

Campaigns

One of the key parts of your marketing may not even seem like marketing to you. Your website, believe it or not, can be the crux of your marketing efforts. Often, it is one of the first things that your audience sees about your brand and it is a key part of client experience.



Why is it important?

Your website is the core of your business' digital existence. It acts as your 'shop window.' Everything you do online should bring your audience closer to your site and closer to engaging with your brand. This means that your website will either be your audience's first impression of the business or very close to it.

Now that remote working and the amount of time people spend online has increased, your audience is much more likely to encounter your business digitally before it does physically. That means ensuring that your business' website delivers more than just a visual brochure.

Your website needs to represent your brand in the best possible light. You will need to ensure that it is well designed, user friendly, and built to move the user further along the buyer journey.

WEBSITE

What your website needs

It's all very well to say that your website needs to do this or that, but how do you accomplish it? We've highlighted four of the key areas that you need to showcase on your website to help potential leads become clients:

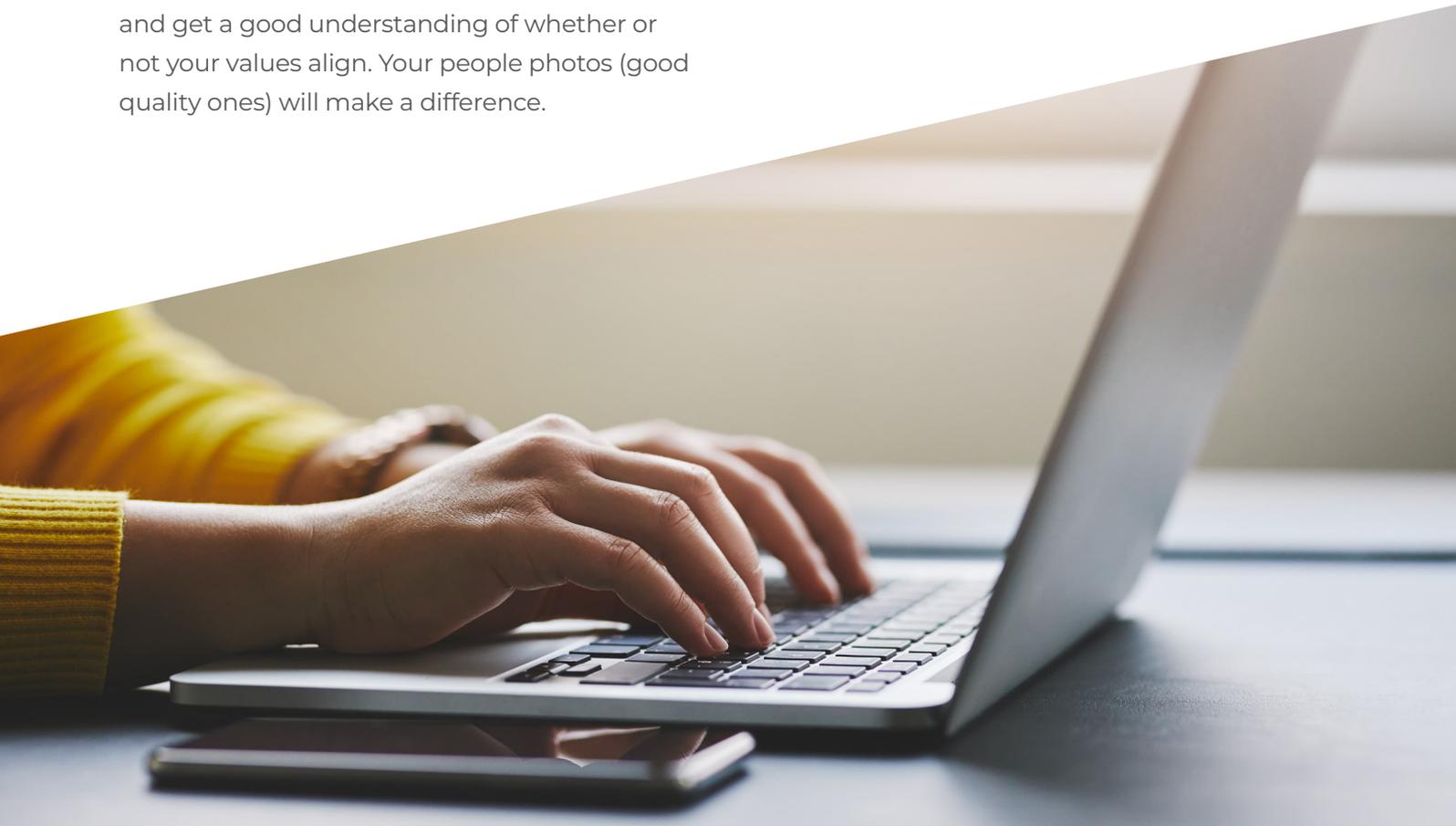
- **Client stories** - Also known as case studies, these are one of the best ways to help clients in the decision stage choose your brand. They should showcase true success stories from people from your target audience. The more that visitors can see themselves in these scenarios, the more likely they are to feel like you can help them too.

Learn more: [How to write a client case study \(with a free template\)](#)

- **About** - The about (or about us) section can often be overlooked, but people increasingly want to put a face to who they'll be working with and get a good understanding of whether or not your values align. Your people photos (good quality ones) will make a difference.

- **Testimonials and reviews** - These are also known as social proof. People buy from people and genuine recommendations can really make your brand stand out.

- **Lead generation** - To get the most from your website, it's important that you have some way of generating leads from it. On top of having a contact or enquiries form, try to tie in any campaign work you might be doing to a landing page on your website. You can use that to gather important information about your site visitors and qualify them as leads.





CONTENT

Content, for the purposes of planning your marketing strategy, refers to the blogs, podcasts, videos, guides, and downloads that you create to promote your business. Content marketing is a strategic way of implementing these items to help move your target audience along the buyer journey. Blogs are the most common tactic in this kind of marketing.

Content builds relationships. Relationships are built on trust. Trust drives revenue.

Andrew Davis - Content Marketing Author

Because creating content effectively may not come naturally to everyone, here are some ways to create content that is valuable to your audience:

How to generate ideas

Coming up with ideas for content can feel daunting, but it doesn't have to be! As you begin to create a plan for the content you intend to produce (often done on a quarterly basis), the most important thing to keep in mind is your audience.

When you create content, it needs to add value for your audience. To achieve this, turn to the challenges that they face and the pains they may be feeling. A simple technique is just to make a note of the questions clients ask in meetings and answer these as a series of blog articles.

It is also important to consider creating content for each stage of the buyer journey. Someone who isn't sure whether they want to extend or move house will require very different content from someone who is trying to decide between you and a competitor.

If you struggle to think of new ideas for what your audience may need, consider using additional tools to fuel your thinking. You can use sites like Answer the Public and AlsoAsked to see what people search for in conjunction with your subject. This allows you to fill in knowledge gaps and provide answers to your audience's questions.

As you plan, try to only commit to as many pieces of content as you are able to produce regularly. Creating smaller pieces consistently, as with most marketing tactics, is more valuable than longer, sporadic content.

CONTENT

How to generate ideas

Once you have your content subjects chosen, the next part is actually creating the content. To make it both useful and attractive, your content needs to be engaging for your audience. Some ways you can make your content more engaging are:

Use storytelling techniques

No matter the subject, people tend to connect better to stories than pure data. Storytelling keeps readers engaged and interested in what happens next, how the problem was resolved, and how it relates to them.

If you can tie your content to a story about your life or business, it is far more likely to have an impact than simply relaying information.

Make it actionable

Another method to make your content more engaging is to make it actionable. Encourage your readers to do something, whether that be reading more of your content, getting in touch, or downloading a guide or template. Giving the piece of content a clear purpose not only helps keep readers engaged, but can also help you measure its success.

Include visuals

Spending much of our time on screens makes paying attention to large blocks of text difficult. To help alleviate some of that strain, break your

text up with interesting photos, graphics or videos. This also helps people who are visual learners take information in more effectively.

Help viewers avoid loss

Readers are two times more likely to look for ways to avoid a loss than to look for ways to gain something. This is why articles with titles that include things like 'biggest mistakes' or 'how to avoid' seem especially eye-catching.

Consider autonomy bias

Autonomy bias is a part of psychology that is likely playing a strong role in buyer behaviour right now. It explains that people feel more positive and comfortable when they feel that they are in control. To make use of this, empower your audience to interact with your brand in the way they choose. Give them options.

This can mean creating self-serve pages, mortgage calculators and guides that can allow visitors to further their journey ahead of interacting directly.

Using these tips is a great way to get started with creating engaging content. If you make content that both adds value to your audience and is produced in an appealing way, your content marketing efforts can make a big difference to your business.

SEO

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is all about ensuring that your website and content are as easy to find through search engines, particularly Google, as possible. Search engines work on algorithmic calculations to serve up the most relevant and useful content to searchers. This means that you'll need to follow certain guidelines to ensure that your site is easily found and not penalised.

Content SEO vs. Technical SEO

SEO can feel like a complicated matter to start utilising. Part of this is because there are two different ways to approach it.

The first is through Content SEO. This focuses on the content within pages, page layouts, meta descriptions (the descriptive text that sits beneath a link on a search page), page titles, image alt-text (which accessibility readers use to navigate images on a page), and keyword relevancy. The primary goal of content SEO is to ensure that your content is valuable and relevant.

The second way to look at SEO is from a technical standpoint. This includes things such as schema markups, page redirects, javascript, site architecture, and site speed. The goal of technical SEO is twofold: to ensure that your website is

easy for search engines to read and navigate and to ensure that site visitors have a good user experience.

Content SEO can be managed by the team involved with creating content for your business. Even if they don't have SEO experience, following the best practice tips in a later section can help significantly. Technical SEO, on the other hand, requires specialist knowledge that may be best suited to the team that built your website.

Keywords

Before moving on to the best-practice advice for SEO content, it's important to talk about keywords. Often, the success of SEO work is based on rankings for keywords.

Keywords are the terms used to find information through a search engine. There are short-tail keywords made up of no more than three words such as 'mortgage broker.' There are also longtail keywords that are more specific such as 'best mortgage broker for first time buyers near me.' Long-tail keywords are often more accessible and easier to rank highly for. Short-tail keywords are often very competitive.



SEO

These keywords are what search engines pick up on in your content to determine whether or not your page is relevant to searchers. As part of your content planning, it may help to think of the search terms for which you would like your business to be found. Thinking of these keywords as overarching topics may help you when you use tools to generate ideas.

Rankings are the position of results that appear when a user searches for something. Naturally, the first ranking (the first result of a search) is the most desirable. However, anything on the first page of results is positive. This includes ranks one through ten.

To help your page rank well for specific keywords, you'll want to ensure that each page is focused on a single head (or main) keyword and includes any related or synonymous keywords. Including the additional keywords in a keyword group helps you appear in the results for similar searches.

Previous iterations of the Google algorithm allowed for short-term 'hacks' like keyword stuffing, or filling your page with keywords regardless of legibility. Now, however, Google continuously works to make sure that the pages it suggests are likely to be helpful and easy to use. Practices like keyword stuffing are penalised.

SEO best practice tips

Although it may seem like there is quite a bit to focus on with SEO, getting it right doesn't have to be too difficult.

To ensure that your pages have the best chance of ranking well on search engines, follow these simple guidelines:

- **Check your website platform for existing SEO tools and install one if they are not included**
- **Make sure your keyword is in the title**
- **Keep your title to about 70 characters (including spaces and punctuation)**
- **Include the keyword in your meta description**
- **Don't let your meta description go over 155 characters**
- **Include alt-text descriptions for all images**
- **Write posts that are over 500 words long**
- **Keep your posts to a single idea or keyword group**
- **Try to include links to other pages of your website**

Most importantly, however, is to focus on creating valuable content that really helps your audience. As technology progresses, so do search algorithms. So creating for longevity means creating for quality.

There are many more ways to optimise your website and content for search, but following these tips will help you get started.

EMAIL MARKETING

Mailing lists, subscribers and newsletters may seem old hat, but they are still one of the most effective ways of reaching your audience.

This is most easily done through a mailing service like Mailchimp, HubSpot or Dotmailer and is most effective when you link it to your customer relationship manager (CRM) system.

Email marketing is a great way to stay in touch with clients, ensuring a relationship is maintained for when the client needs to remortgage. It is also a great way to stay front of mind to encourage referrals.

Best-practice tips

Knowing that email is important and being able to utilise it well don't always go hand in hand. With that in mind, we have gathered some of the most important things to know about email marketing:

Keep your audience in mind

First and foremost, put yourself in your audience's shoes. When you send them emails, think about what they would want to see and how they would like to be spoken to. You want to make sure that every message you send out feels tailored to their needs, not the needs of the business.

Personalise it

Using personalisation can make your readers feel like you are writing to them directly. This increases open rates as well as click-through rates (when a user clicks on a link in your email).

However, managing personalisation effectively can be difficult. There's a fine line between crafting an email that feels personal and making it overbearing. A tip for this is to avoid personalising with anything that doesn't directly correlate with your business, like favourite ice cream flavours or whether they're a dog person or a cat person.

Write for mobile

Studies show that around 61.9% of emails are opened on mobile devices. While you'll want to monitor your own emails to make sure that rings true for you, it does seem to be consistent across sectors.

To create emails for mobile users effectively, it's important to keep your content short and easy to scan. Large blocks of text make for a difficult reading experience and can cause people to stop scrolling. If this happens often enough, they may even unsubscribe.



EMAIL MARKETING

Make it snappy

In addition to keeping your content in small pieces for mobile users, it's helpful to send emails that are short and have only one key theme. Our online attention spans tend not to last very long, so staying concise is important.

Perfect your subject line

Your subject line will make the difference between recipients opening or rejecting your email. To give your email the best possibility of getting in front of someone, the subject line needs to be engaging. Be sure to write like a normal human being (spam filters often catch anything that sounds off), keep a consistent tone in your email body, and try to make it short and easy to read.

Start a newsletter

If you aren't already sending a regular newsletter, it might be time to consider it. Newsletters are a great way to keep your brand present in your audience's mind. They also offer the opportunity to add value by sharing interesting articles that you've either produced or found elsewhere.

Test, Test, Test

Throughout all of this, you should be testing for effectiveness. As much as you can, trial different subject lines and content types to see what your audience responds to best. You can use A/B testing to do this by creating two versions with a single difference and sending each of them to a portion of your audience. You can then compare the success of each and determine a 'winner.'

When testing, be sure to only change one variable at a time. If you try to test multiple changes, you may not be able to tell which element made it successful.



EMAIL MARKETING

Remember, these tips are general and your audience may have specific preferences. Testing enables you to see what works for them and what doesn't.

Growing a subscriber base

Since GDPR came into play in 2018, building an email subscriber list has seemed more difficult. But that isn't a bad thing. In fact, because of GDPR, your email list is much more likely to be populated by people who are interested in what you have to say and who are aligned with your target audience.

So how do you keep it growing?

In addition to creating lead generation campaigns that require a visitor to exchange their contact information for something like a guide, checklist, or e-book, there are a few small changes that you can make which might help.

Some of these are:

- **Encourage readers to share the newsletter with friends or post to social**
- **Promote your newsletter directly on social - tell the world what you offer!**
- **Add 'Subscribe to our newsletter' buttons to your company email signature**
- **Create a free online tool or resource like a mortgage calculator**
- **Ask website visitors for feedback (this can also help you improve your site)**

Host webinars or events

These are just a few of the possibilities! Remember to be creative and to always keep in mind who you want to be in contact with. A long list of subscribers doesn't help if none of them are right for your business.





SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a powerful, free tool that has become an omnipresent part of most people's lives. It has made its way into businesses of all kinds and is an easy way to create direct access to your audience. Not only can you use it to create interaction and engagement with them, but it is also likely your ideal buyer has access to it (and therefore your brand) at all times.

Platforms

Deciding which platform to focus your energy on can be difficult. It can feel like every time

you've wrapped your head around one app, a new one appears to be gaining popularity. Although it can be tempting to focus on the platform that you enjoy most, this decision needs to come back to your audience.

When you defined your target audience, one of the suggested questions was about which social media platforms your audience really uses. If they tend to use Instagram, but you love LinkedIn (or vice versa), it's important to default to the audience preference. You need to meet your buyers where they are.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Best-practice tips

Looking up tips for social media best practice can lead you down a rabbit hole of different ideal post times and frequencies, myriad content types, thousands of tags, and a host of ways to 'hack' the algorithms of each site. Falling into that information quagmire can end up paralysing you, so we've put together some simple best practice tips for the major platforms:

Facebook

Best for: Connecting with an audience in a personal way and targeting based on demographic or geography

Best posts: Photos or graphics, company culture, events, company updates

Frequency: 3-4 times per week



Twitter

Best for: Instant engagement and keeping your brand presence active

Best posts: Quick updates, sharing articles that might interest your audience, photos, company culture, blog posts

Frequency: 2-3 times per day

***Important note:** Bad reviews and negative comments gain traction very quickly on Twitter. You may need to monitor this even when you are not posting.

LinkedIn

Best for: Connecting with your audience in a professional setting, building thought leadership, networking with other businesses, targeting based on job sector or title

Best posts: Insightful posts about current events, blog posts, tips and tricks, videos and document carousels

Frequency: 3-5 times per week

Instagram

Best for: Showcasing your brand, extending your reach, brand awareness

Best posts: Photos, graphics and video work best - focus on behind the scenes, updates

Frequency: 2-3 times per week

Remember, these are just guidelines. Much like any other part of your 'business as usual' marketing, maintaining a consistent effort is better than putting out a lot of content at once and then going silent.

PR

Public relations (PR) is an important part of making sure that both your business and you as a broker are well known in your area. It is useful for increasing your reach both locally and nationally.

PR can often be overlooked as part of your overall marketing strategy, but it remains an effective method of establishing leadership and promoting your brand. Two of the ways brokers can harness the power of PR are through awards and press.

Awards

Entering awards can feel like a big investment of both time and money. So is it really worth putting the effort in? Absolutely! There are several reasons that no matter the size of your business, entering, and especially winning, awards is important for brokers.

Free PR

The first benefit of entering awards is the free press that comes along with them. Not only does it provide you with a great topic to shout about on your social channels and blog, but often the event itself will showcase those that have won or been shortlisted.

Credibility

Winning an award acts as a 3rd party endorsement for your business. But even being shortlisted or nominated can have an impact on how your business is viewed. An important part of this is to ensure that you are involved in awards that will appeal to your target audience. If your ideal buyer is purely local, a smaller and more local award may be appropriate.

Benchmarking

Awards also offer both you and your potential clients the ability to compare your business, proposition, and service with others in the mortgage sector. Winning an award can create a major point of differentiation for your business.

Employee engagement

In addition to the public-facing benefits of winning or being shortlisted for an award, team morale and motivation often increase. It can give your team cause to celebrate and take pride in the work that you all do together.

Here are a few of the mortgage broker awards available in the UK:

**The British Mortgage Awards
Mortgage Strategy Awards
Financial Reporter Awards**



Publicity is absolutely critical. A good PR story is infinitely more effective than a front page ad.

Richard Branson - Entrepreneur



PR

Press

Press releases and quotes in respectable industry publications are an important part of getting your business noticed. The first step in making this an effective part of your marketing plan is to cultivate relationships with your local newspapers. These relationships are easier to create and maintain than ones with large publications. The second step is to make sure you have a story.

To write a successful press release and ensure that you have a newsworthy angle, keep the TRUTH in mind:

T - Is the story topical or timely? When a story is related to current events or things currently happening in your organisation, readers are more interested.

R - Is the story relevant to the readers? How does this affect the people who will be reading this press release? The more people who are affected, the more newsworthy it is.

U - Is there anything unusual or unique about this story? How does it differ from the norm?

T - Is there any trouble or tension? These are the juicy things that journalists look for. Most likely, you'll want to position your business as having overcome or having been the solution to trouble. For tension, this can be about challenging conventional views.

H - What is the human interest? Who is involved and have they done something heroic or exceptional? People prefer to read stories about people, so be sure to put them at the heart of your writing.

Prowly is a useful tool to help create press releases and connect you to the right contacts.

WORD OF MOUTH

As the world becomes more and more digital, there is still an important place in your marketing plan for word of mouth. Clients consistently trust friends and peers beyond all else. In fact, a report by Nielsen suggests that 92% of buyers believe suggestions from friends and family above any form of advertising.

To channel that power into your own marketing efforts, you can use things like networking, social proof and client surveys.

Networking

Naturally, there have been several changes in networking recently. Previously you may have had to dedicate full days out for events and conferences, now, much of that is being done virtually. From the comfort of your own home, you can attend, host, and speak at various kinds of events for the sector.

Of course, that isn't without its downsides. Virtual events aren't always able to replicate the more casual and conversational aspects of those networking events. Because of this, it's important for brokers to use social networks for connecting to an audience.

Social proof

Social proof means using positive client reviews as independent evidence to support your marketing efforts. This is most frequently done digitally through reviews. Having a series of good reviews across a number of different sites supports your reputation even more. Below are three of the most frequently used review sites for brokers:

Google My Business

Google My Business is the account you need to set up in order to manage your business profile on Google. In addition to hosting your contact information, opening hours and images of your business, Google My Business is a platform for reviews. It is also many digital visitors' first glimpse of your business.

Learn more:

Visit [Google](#) to learn how to set up a business page on Google and Bing

Trustpilot

Trustpilot is a well-regarded consumer review site for all types of businesses. It is an easy way for clients to share their experiences and for potential clients to understand what it might be like to use your services. Having several positive reviews here can help to boost business.

WORD OF MOUTH

Facebook

One review site that you may not have considered is Facebook. More than just a social platform for posting, Facebook's business pages enable users to leave reviews about their experiences. Since people are most likely to trust friends, family, and peers, these reviews are likely to carry significant weight.

Have you decided to start bringing reviews into your marketing plan? Try out our Review Email Generator to help you get started!

Client surveys

An excellent way to provide you with insight into how your clients perceive their experience. They offer both an opportunity to reflect and improve as well as an opportunity to highlight things your business has done well. You can use the findings from client surveys in your marketing material to showcase positive feelings about your service (eg. 85% of clients were 'very satisfied' with our service).

Useful Tool:

Survey Monkey and Qualtrics are good tools to create surveys.

DATA AND REPORTING

Reporting is arguably the most important part of executing a marketing plan. This is the point at which you can tell whether or not your efforts have been working. That said, it's necessary to give your work time to take effect. Changing your marketing tactics can be a long term project.

Setting up your reporting should be done at the planning stage to ensure you capture all of the data correctly. There are a few things to consider when you do this: Metrics, Tools, and Return on Investment.

Metrics

Metrics are the figures, data, and measurements that you use to indicate the success of your marketing strategy. Each part of the process will have its own commonly used metrics, many of which are available within the platform or software that you use.

Which metrics you choose to monitor and evaluate will depend on the goal that you set up in the beginning of your planning phase. However, there are some measures that are frequently used for each tactic.

These include (but are not limited to):

Website

Site visitors

- number of people who come to your website

Conversions

- number of visitors who become leads

Sources

- where visitors come from

Page views

- which pages are viewed most often

Sessions

- a group of a user's interactions that take place in a certain timeframe

Exit pages

- the pages which mark the end of a visitor's time on your site (this can give you an indication of how far along the user journey visitors get before leaving your website)

Email

Open rate

- percentage of the people you emailed who opened it

Click-through-rate

- percentage of openers who clicked on an enclosed link

Bounce rate

- percentage of email addresses that registered as undeliverable

Unsubscribes

- number of people who have left the subscription list

DATA AND REPORTING

Social media

Likes

- number of people who have 'liked' your post

Shares (can also be called things like retweets or quote tweets on Twitter)

- number of people who have shared your post with their network

Followers

- number of people who 'follow' your account to see updates

Impressions

- number of people who have seen your post

Interactions

- number of people who have interacted with your post (eg. comments, clicking links, expanding images)

Content

Views

- number of people viewing your content

Time on page

- how long visitors spend on the page (this can be an indicator of whether or not your content is read all of the way through)

Ranking

- this refers to page ranking on search engines and is useful for measuring SEO

Remember to choose your metrics based on how they impact your SMART marketing goal.

Tools

In order to capture data and measure outcomes, you'll need to be certain that you have the right tools to do this. Many of the metrics above can be monitored within their existing platforms for raw data, but not all. Also important is how you display and interpret that data. Here are some of the tools you may need:

Google Analytics

Google Analytics is a great, free tool that enables you to measure and understand a lot more about your website, visitors, and potential clients.

It can help you understand:

- **How many people are coming to your site**
- **Where these visitors are coming from**
- **Which pages they are going to**
- **Where these visitors live (roughly)**
- **Which devices these visitors are using**
- **Which marketing tactics are most effective at gaining visitors**
- **...and much more!**

Google Analytics is a very powerful tool, but it does require some setup and time investment to understand.

DATA AND REPORTING

Dashboards

Although you'll likely have all of the data you need to measure and report on through both the platforms that you use and through Google Analytics, it can be hard to see the bigger picture without bringing it all together. That's where dashboards come in.

Dashboards are graphical representations of data and can usually pull information in from disparate sources. To create them effectively, you may need to utilise additional software.

Examples of this software include:

- **Power BI for Office 365**
- **Google Data Studio**
- **HubSpot • Databox**
- **Mixpanel • Datapine**
- **Zoho Analytics**

There are a wide variety of dashboard tools available and determining the best one to use will depend on both the technology that you already use in-house and your priorities for metrics.

Return on Investment

Return on Investment (ROI) is an important measurement to keep in mind. This will help you understand not only whether your time, money and effort spent on marketing have been effective, but also whether or not they have been profitable.

At the end of the day, you are running a business and marketing should be helping you improve your bottom line. Of course, while you are learning more about your audience and trialling new things, you may run into situations where your marketing hasn't managed to be as profitable. In this case, understanding your ROI can help you learn when to change direction.

How do you measure ROI? The basic calculation can be done like this:

ROI = (Gain from investment - cost of investment)/Cost of investment

To get an understanding of what you have gained from your marketing efforts, you'll want an understanding of how many leads have come in, how many of them have become (or are likely to become) clients, and how much each client relationship is worth.

You may want to work with your finance team to get a clear picture of your results and how they play into the business.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

Once you've planned your marketing strategy, executed all of the elements and reported on success, the work still isn't over. Marketing is an ongoing endeavour and doesn't stop when a campaign ends.

It's important to revisit your marketing plan regularly. Whether you are a sole trader, have a small team or a larger one, involve everyone in the planning. This way you can ensure everyone in the business is aware of the marketing plan and what it contains to keep the whole business focused on the goals.

Successful marketing requires continuous improvement and regular reviews are vital to this. This could mean monthly, quarterly, or annually depending on your workflow. Quarterly reviews tend to be the most advantageous as they allow enough time for tactics to take effect, but enable you to change direction if needs be.



Now that you've read this introduction to all things marketing, you have the tools you need to start planning your marketing strategy effectively. If you have more questions or just want to take a deeper dive into these subjects, we have several resources in the Business Booster and Mortgage Marketing Programme Videos.

www.hlpbusinessbooster.co.uk/marketing-management

MORTGAGE MARKETING *programme*

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