



Being Obama

The inauguration of Barack Obama as President-elect, has breathed fresh life into the American people and their hopes for the future. There is universal agreement that Obama looks the part but he'd never have won the race to the White House if this had been his only virtue.

The campaign that got him elected gave him great visibility in the areas that mattered, the States that mattered, talking about what mattered to everyday Americans – his ideal audience, creating the perception that this man is the right man for the job.

In a similar vein, your business has to mirror this scenario. Okay, you may be no movie star, appearance wise (or you might!) but you can land new sales by being more visible to a larger number of prospects, in more diverse markets. Now you have the opportunity to offer them what they want to hear about – your brand.

Right! All I have to do is get a new website and re-brand the company? Eh nope!

Websites and branding on their own don't give you the visibility with new audiences! This point is critical. Ignore it at your peril.

On the internet, your prospects are looking for YOU! And if you don't spend on promoting yourself, then you are invisible. Branding works when people know the values you represent and can find you. But not if they can't.

If your customer base is shrinking your loyalty base is also shrinking so you need new ways to fine new blood. Just spending money on looking good will bring no sales and no pay back.

You have to address the problem the other way round. Work out who you want to attract and how to invest in increasing your visibility to generate hot leads. Apply the appropriate tools to convert this interest into sales. Now refresh your website and update your branding because they'll be more effective when linked to an effective lead generation model.

The issue for many SMEs is how to get found amongst the bigger, better resourced players. Simple answer – don't go toe to toe. You can't afford to! But you have to appear on page 1 of Google for your chosen keywords otherwise no one will click on your website. No one is going to find you. Generating quality leads means promoting your business online by picking an arena that's less competitive, more affordable and right for you.



Remember also that if you only invest in lead generation but not in a website with a compelling marketing message, any interest you do generate will bounce off it because you've created a disconnect between the interest generated and the website's ability to convert that interest. Outcome – lost sales and wasted investment.

You have to do the lot!

Invest in promotion. Invest in your website. Invest in your brand: i.e investment in visibility, relevance and brand growth as one coherent process.

Creating visibility through lead generation is not a one trick pony. The strength of your resource bank (money, time, knowledge) determines how many different marketing channels you employ. It isn't just pay per click or SEO. Think about email, RSS, video, viral and mobile marketing – whatever is appropriate for your customers.

If you're unsure or just overwhelmed by the whole thing, use an online marketing strategist before turning to the web designers. This will save you shed loads on time, money and anxiety and best of all, creates those new sales (there's nothing better than hearing your phones ringing with lots of potential buyers on the other end!).

Make yourself visible before making yourself look good. Barack did.

If you want some help marketing your business online or becoming the next President of the USA:

call: **01925 262 800** or email: gerryw@flyingveemgt.co.uk

Be prepared. Be persuasive. Make it happen.