



BUSINESS SENSE by TIM KELLY

How to get the 'right' customer

It is clear that our industry is in a bit of a mess and with rising costs at every turn, it imperative you have the right type of customer. But what is that "right type" of customer exactly? In short, it's one that makes your business profit.

If you are not making profit, you don't have a business, you have an expensive hobby. The "what is the right type of customer?" question is specific to your business. What does your business do? What services or products does it offer? Before you even start in business, you need to create a "differentiator", something what makes you stand out from the competition?

This often starts with your branding. How much time and money have you invested in yours? Does it stand out?

The key to branding, is that you need to be the first company everyone thinks of when they need the services you provide. You also need visual links, or auditory ones, that make customers think of your company. How many can remember a tune to an old advert? "Smash makes mash", for example? Or the Milk Tray man? Nearly 50 years later, and it is still in your head. That is superb branding and marketing.

So what is your branding saying about you?

The first thing is to make sure that your branding lets people know what it is. It doesn't necessarily need to be about the services you provide, but it certainly helps. For example, my brand name, "motorclaimguru" lets you know exactly what I specialise in. The colours in

my logo are bold and distinctive, and they were chosen on purpose. I do a lot of other things aside from motor claims though, so how do I promote them? This next bit applies to you as a repairer.

There are many other services you can provide that are linked to the services you provide. In essence, you guys could be painting anything. Think about what services you already provide, and how they could be adapted to different customers?

In 2013, I worked for an insurance company – no business, no idea of how to run a business or do marketing. Last month I was on the main stage at the British Motor Show with Car SOS in front of thousands of people. That type of marketing, you could not buy. But how does it happen? Well, it doesn't happen overnight.

The art of marketing is attracting people to your business that were not looking for you. I attract people to my business because they have a specific need. I make sure that whatever your need is, there is something relevant or associated with it on my website. Try inputting a term in the search field of my website, and you will see what I mean. I have eight years of blogs and many thousands of pages there to make sure search engines direct "you" to "me". I then tell you of all of the services I offer and what I can do for you when you find me.

You need to market all of the time, so make time for it. I switched onto it quickly, realising that newspapers, magazines and TV all need content. If they have interesting content, advertisers will spend money to

place themselves alongside it. These platforms employ researchers and journalists, so I made contact on LinkedIn with every journalist, editor and researcher that I thought would be interested and gave them my content.

Within a year I had an article in the *Daily Telegraph*, which became three articles, then other newspapers got interested, then the BBC's Rip Off Britain called, as well as Channel 4 Dispatches, *Autocar* magazine, and many more.

You might think the above doesn't relate to you because we are in different businesses, but if you do media that others find useful, you can push your brand and your services. Your followers will promote you by sharing what you do.

What I did was leverage and squeeze every bit of marketing out of everything I did, which attracted more interest. This is free advertising.

You need to be using LinkedIn if you don't already. Focusing on local media, local companies that you could be working with, find exactly who you need to speak to. Want to find out how to do that? Scan the QR code below to watch a video.

Now I have everyone's interest, make sure you read next month's *bodyshop* column, when we will focus on social media marketing with insights provided by Gary Chew of Small Torque and Redline Creative.



Scan the QR code to watch Tim Kelly's LinkedIn training session.

Tim Kelly is founder of motorclaimguru.co.uk and an expert in insurance and assessing vehicles, a consumer advocate and bodyshop consultant whose goal is to change the industry and put repairers back in control of their profits.

Bodyshop Magazine

CAR-O-LINER[®]
THE CONCEPT

**ACCURATE VEHICLE
DAMAGE ESTIMATION CENTRE
FOR FASTER REPAIRS**



Scan the QR code to
learn more

HERE WHEN YOU NEED US
EXCELLENCE. INNOVATION. PASSION.

Car-O-Liner Ltd. | 01788 574 157
info@car-o-liner.co.uk | www.car-o-liner.com