

Dear Client,

Welcome to our monthly newswire. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and find it useful.

Best wishes

John & David

SAMSUNG GALAXY S3 NOTE

It seems that smartphones are getting bigger and bigger these days. Samsung is certainly leading the charge with the launch of its Galaxy S3 Note, featuring an impressive 5.7' display.

The Samsung Galaxy Note range essentially blurs the line between a smartphone and a tablet. Like existing models in the Note range, the S3 Note includes a stylus (dubbed the S-Pen) measuring 110mm in length. It is very lightweight, so it's not as comfortable to hold and write with as a regular pen, but it's perfectly good for some quick notes. The nib has a very small tip that allows for much greater accuracy than can be achieved using the wide, squashy tips you'd find on third-party models.

Aside from the screen size and stylus, the Galaxy S3 Note is essentially a Samsung Galaxy S3 phone. As the Galaxy S3 is still one of the best smartphones around, this is no bad thing. The Galaxy S3 Note has a 2.3Ghz processor and 3GB of RAM, making it very effective in handling multiple applications.

For business users who are often on the move, the Galaxy S3 Note can essentially function as a mini office and can be used for everything from reading documents, sending emails, editing documents, taking notes or even video conferencing on the go.

The S3 Note packs in a very decent 3,200mAh battery, which is far bigger than the batteries you'll find in standard smartphones. Unfortunately, the large high definition display and powerful processor really do take their toll on battery life. As such, the Note 3 very much falls in line with what users would expect from most smartphones.

With its bold, full HD display, superbly powerful processor and responsive stylus, the Galaxy Note 3 is an unquestionable powerhouse that's well suited to business people looking to work on the move. However, its enormous size and high price means it's unlikely to be a sensible option for non-business users.

HOSTING A GREAT SEMINAR

Hosting a seminar is a great way to reach out to new customers and give existing customers a little bit of "value added". However, putting on a good event isn't always as easy as it looks. It takes a lot of preparation, coordination and attention to detail to pull off a successful seminar.

Audience

You should tailor your seminar to your intended audience. As such, you should decide whether you are targeting existing customers, the general public, new businesses etc. Determining who your audience is will help you to decide what content should be included.

Budget

You should consider the aims of your seminar before setting your budget. For example, if you want to win 5 new customers, you may need 50 or 60 attendees at your event. This means that you will need a venue with the capacity to accommodate this number. Set a realistic budget and try to stick to it.

Venue

Once you determine the size of your desired audience, you will need to find an appropriate venue. A good venue from which to host your event is your business premises, as this will help to raise awareness of your firm's location among your target audience. Alternatively, you could choose a venue that is synonymous with your industry. For example, a solicitors firm could host a seminar at the local Law Society and an accountancy firm could host their event at the local ACCA or ICAEW office.

Schedule of Events

Having a specific schedule will help you create an agenda for your audience, should one be required. Ensure you have enough "leeway" in your timing to allow for unexpected occurrences (for example lunch not being served on time). Consider what time your speakers should arrive, if you're providing lunch or dinner etc.

Plan Ahead

Make lists, schedule meetings and touch base with people periodically. Make sure that you've listed everything you need. You should create a written plan that is designed to make every detail of the event happen (who is doing what), and talk through this plan with your team to ensure they don't need additional assistance.

KNOW YOUR COMPETITORS

Businesses need to know their competition, especially in today's hyper-competitive business environment. Knowing what the competition is up to allows you to develop unique selling points (USPs) which will encourage buyers to purchase from you.

People

In order to understand the customer experience offered by your competitors, try "mystery shopping" your nearest direct competitors. Things to note include: the customer experience, staff-customer interaction, how staff dress and present themselves, the business environment and little touches such as complementary tea or coffee. Most important of all is to take note of the sales process – how do your competitors go about selling products or services to the customer? Do they suggest how their product or service can add value? Do they offer a demonstration? How do they close the sale?

Products and Services

Keep an eye out for any new services or products your competitors offer. Pay close attention to the quality of their brochures, the appearance of their products and any new or interesting ways in which they add value for their customers. You should create reports which compare your business to the leading competitors in your particular sector of the market. You should circulate these reports to your management and sales teams with a view to encouraging them to implement new ideas and approaches which will improve your business against your competitors.

Pricing

Once you know the specific details about your competitor's people and their products or services, your sales team will be more informed and can develop the USPs that they can use when challenged by customers as to "why should I buy from you and not from your competitor?". Your sales team can then focus on the strengths of your products or services and encourage your customers to do the same.

If you are at a disadvantage to your competitors in terms of your pricing, work with your sales team to prepare a checklist of the specific features and benefits unique to your product or service. Have each sales person practice presenting this checklist, as this particular part of the sales process will usually be enough for the prospect to decide to purchase from you.

TIPS FOR BEING A BETTER MANAGER

No matter how big or small a business is, good managers will always make a business better. What traits make a highly effective manager? Experience being a given, here are a few points to consider:

Decisiveness

Effective managers are known to make decisions quickly and are slow to change those decisions. This is often seen as being stubborn or resistant to change, but a manager that changes his or her decisions frequently is seen as indecisive, confusing and loses respect as a team leader. Often, those who change decisions often rely too heavily on impressing others with their title and position instead of understanding what's in front of them. Well informed, quick decision making is a signature of highly effective managers.

Planning

Good managers make definite plans and know how to execute them. Leading by guesswork without definite plans can be seen as disorganised. For the most part, effective managers take the time to think things through, weigh up all the options and then come up with viable ways to address positive and negative risks that may arise. Essentially, they plan their work and work their plan.

Empathy

Good managers empathise with their team members. It's easy for some managers to dismiss the personal issues of team members, but truly effective managers realise that paying attention to staff as well as their work is essential to having a productive team. Not only does it make the employee feel like they matter, it is also good business. A boss that sympathises with and provides resources to his/her team is a part of the holistic business approach that is good for team morale as well as the firm itself.

Knowing the Detail

Good managers understand the detail but focus their efforts on the big picture. They delegate tasks to the team and trust those team members to deliver. A good manager will always impart an understanding of the overall plan to the team and then give each person a part to play in delivering the plan.

Please contact our office if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised.