

ELITE SQUAD

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Changes in Your Routine and How You Live Your Life

We waited for the day and now he's here - Prince George, that is - and his arrival has meant changes for his parents.

They have been managing to enjoy a period out of the limelight and to do what all new parents do - Take some time to get used to the differences this little person makes on their lives and routine.

Another well-anticipated day that has caused long-term changes also came and went in late July. July 22nd was the day that Google started forcibly upgrading old AdWords campaigns to their new 'Enhanced' model.

Improve quality - Waste less money

Enhanced campaigns give you many more ways to target prospective clients. The more you can have your ads shown to people who are your 'ideal clients' and the less they are shown to those who are not, the higher the quality of visitors and the less money you'll waste on 'no hoppers'.

AdWords enhanced campaigns expand your power to monitor your ads' performance by device, by location and by time, and so your ads can be tailored more specifically. The device people are using to view your ads and landing pages generally makes a considerable difference. Even if you think it doesn't, monitor performance by device anyway. There might just be a bias and you can use this knowledge to present your messages differently to different devices.

People's location can be important too, not just for your own 'catchment area', but you could test showing different messages to mobile users near enough to call into your premises. The same goes for time of day. You might show your 'phone us now' message when you are open for business and your 'send us your message and we'll respond' call-to-action at other times.

In your best interests

It is in your best interests to serve up pages that contain pertinent valuable information people

can read without scrolling or zooming, which they can react to instantly, and receive an equally rapid, acceptable response.

When you are using display ads, which you should be using, the ability to target more accurately and check for possible bias is even wider-ranging. You can monitor, and target, by:

- Keywords
- Specific Websites
- Website Topics
- Readers' Interests
- Readers' Gender
- Readers' Age

As well as the advert you show and the landing page you send people to, you can also adjust the amount you are prepared to bid per click. Adwords includes tools to see how much extra traffic is available relative to your current settings, and this information can guide you on the worth of bidding more per click, as well as which combinations of parameters to eliminate entirely.

Get more by being at the top

Another extremely powerful feature is 'ad extensions' which greatly increase your ad's 'pulling power'. By monitoring and testing, you can get your best performing adverts into the top three positions - the ones that appear on the top left of the search results. Only these ads have access to ad extensions, which enable:

- A choice of extra pages, and extra ads
- Extra product details, including photographs
- Address information, for multiple offices
- A clickable phone number
- Social annotations - e.g. Google+ followers
- Seller ratings for retailers
- Offer extensions - e.g. In-store offers

I hope you are already using pay-per-click advertising because it is a very effective 'spanner' in your marketing 'toolbox', but don't worry if you aren't yet. Google AdWords is probably the easiest place to start and, as a member of the Elite Squad, you'll get help to get started and then get ahead of the majority of your competitors. ■

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A Client's Tale

The differences made in the real world

Today **Elite Squad** is speaking to Ian Perry of Remedy For Business who specialise in turning around and re-structuring as well as growing and developing businesses. From Ipswich they cover most of East Anglia and into the City of London.

ES: Hello, Ian. You've read my booklet, you've heard me explain my ideas and you've heard me use the phrase "Selling Without Selling" so, from your experience, how does that apply in the case of a small consultancy practice?

IP: I think it fits very well. Consulting, accountancy and perhaps legal practices have been very much time-sheet based but the world is changing. It's a case of getting away from that time-sheet mentality. You must be looking at setting a fee for different values within the business, values your work brings to the owner. You're getting away from a more proscriptive approach and identifying the value you're bringing to the client. Part of that is ignoring what you've done, and how they have worked, historically. You're looking at the here and now, trying to get away from price-wars and driving prices down, whilst getting them to concentrate on the benefits you're bringing.

ES: And how has your attitude to selling changed since you first heard my ideas?

IP: Dramatically! I'm an Accountant by trade so I spent my life fighting salesmen. Now, being in a position where I'm having to get better at it, it did fundamentally change the way I go about things. I'm looking at the value aspect of it and the expertise that I bring. In particular, working with business owners to help them effectively set targets to achieve what they want to get. Rather than saying right, this is the skill set I've got, I'm identifying their issues and then convincing them I have the answer to their issues. I'm trying to get away from just problem-solving and trying to add value to their business.

ES: What measurable gains has it created?

IP: I think the more you practise, the better you get - you fine-tune and you get more confident. And if you're doing it correctly, you should be working less hours, because rather than basing the project on how much effort and work you're putting in to it, you're basing it on the value you're bringing to the client's business.

ES: And has that been true in your case?

IP: It certainly has been, yes. There have been a couple of projects in the past where I look back and think what an awful lot of work to make that

happen, and others not quite so much. So, if I can use the expertise that you've passed on, the client is getting the value. If I can take less hours to do it myself to deliver that - then clearly it's beneficial to me too.

ES: So you're working smarter, not harder!

IP: Exactly, yes.

ES: A few moments ago, Ian, you mentioned the word confidence. How quickly - or indeed, how slowly - did you start trying out these ideas?

IP: I'm reasonably confident as a person and fairly open to trying new things, and to developing myself personally, so it didn't take that long. You have got to commit to it. You've really got to want to see the benefits of doing it, and that will dictate, how quickly you pick it up and run with it. You know, if you've got your own personal barriers it will be much harder. I was quite happy to embrace it and, after a couple of trials with clients, it started to become the norm.

ES: And what would you say were the most challenging aspects of adopting this new style of sales conversation?

IP: I think the biggest challenge for me was getting over some of the objections, and trying to do so in a way that's non-salesy. I'm not a salesman by trade and have never been comfortable with the hard-selling aspect of it, so it's trying to put the project over in such a way as to stop some of the objections. Or, I work with the owner of the business to overcome them. So, if you're not from a sales background, that's often one of your biggest challenges.

ES: Would you say that it might even be more than a challenge and become a fear in people if they don't have a way of overcoming it?

IP: I think yes, I would agree that if you - it's the same as any other problem that you come across, if you don't address it quickly enough, I suppose it festers and gets worse, and it becomes a bit of a psychological barrier. You do have to be open-minded about things - not too arrogant to think you've got all the answers and know everything. It's a bit like an addiction. You have to accept you've got a problem before you can overcome it.

ES: Getting more into practicalities, I know many of my clients tell me their clients aren't always clear about what they really want. How do you deal with that?

IP: I would say that in a lot of cases, if not most cases, the clients aren't clear, or what they think

they want is not really where they should be going. So I'd say it's the majority of cases. The way I go about it is to spend time with them, getting them to really concentrate on where they've come from, where they are now, and what they really want for their business in the future. I'm looking at their goals and objectives and trying to align the project with them. I'm not forcing anything on them; I'm encouraging them to think clearly, and perhaps laterally, about what they really want, and encouraging them along that journey. This often takes a bit of time at the start but, if you don't get it right, the chances are that the project will struggle going forwards.

ES: So you help them gain greater clarity. But I also imagine that now and again you have to help clients change their minds and make decisions - take up new positions, have new opinions - that they are comfortable with holding.

IP: Indeed, and by going through the process with them I understand myself what they've gone through and how they operate, and by speaking to them I understand how they work. And that's where I bring a lot of value to the project, from my experience of dealing with similar circumstances. So I get them to where they want to be, because I've been there and done it. I know from what I've heard, where they ought to be considering things and what they might want to be doing - although I can't force them to. I can encourage them down certain avenues, based on what they've told me and my experience.

ES: One of my expressions is 'People rarely disagree with their own opinions'. You need to ask the right question in order for the client to come out with the answer you hoped they would.

IP: Yes, if you can get them to think it's their idea then yes, they will buy into it. It's always the challenge. They don't know you're doing it but that is actually what you try and get to. You know yourself where they should be - it's trying to help them get there as well.

ES: Are there any areas you're still, after all this time, finding you're having to work on?

IP: I think you constantly have to fine-tune the overcoming of the objections. If you're not from a sales background, that will always be one of the biggest challenges you're up against. I'm forever trying to improve the way I put a proposal to a client to overcome those objections, and to learn what does and doesn't work for me. And that's something I think that you never really get on top of. There's always more you can do; you can always do a bit better or improve. And because that's what I would consider my weak area, that's always one of the areas I'm constantly trying to improve. And a lot of that is learning from other

people. I spent many years as an Accountant, battling salesmen I thought were giving the profit away. I now look back and realise they were actually very good at what they did. So I try and learn from the people I've worked with over the years who are from a sales background, and learn some of the techniques and ways they went about it. It's a constant challenge that I'm always concentrating on.

ES: Another situation you may have encountered is "I like the Rolls-Royce but I can only afford the Mini." How have you dealt with this?

IP: What I do in those circumstances is to work out which parts of my proposal they're happiest with and then see what else I could leave out of it. It starts to de-value the offering but it does allow me to consider a lower, acceptable price.

ES: So what would you say then is the biggest change my teachings have made to you? And indeed to your clients?

IP: The ability to earn more out of each client by getting away from the time-sheet mentality. I'm happy to complete a project with the client in a shorter time, and often I don't need to spend much time on it at all. I've brought to the table the value they expected, so they're happy, and the win-win is that I've actually spent less time doing it - plus they think I'm brilliant for doing it.

ES: Any other benefits or value you've gained?

IP: One of the other things is the ability to look at what the client wants now, and in the future, and develop "A client is for life and not just for Christmas." I could do a nice project now but I'm constantly looking for other projects and other value I can bring to them in the future. I'm trying to retain that client on an ongoing basis. I'm fine-tuning how I do each project to ensure that I'm delivering value, and there are other things I'm identifying all the time as we go along.

ES: That's fantastic, Ian. Well, I think our time's about up so, if people want to get in touch with you, what's your website?

IP: It's www.remedyforbusiness.com and I'd be very happy to speak to people.

ES: Thank you, Ian, very much indeed for sharing your thoughts with us all. ■

Coming Soon!

Weekly e-mail on:

Using pay-per-click advertising

Webinar about:

The Google Keyword Planner tool

Article covering:

KPIs for effective performance

Promotional Perceptions

No-holds barred critique of YOUR Marketing. David Winch reviews your marketing material. Send yours to Review@davidwinch.co.uk

This month we look at **Insight Associates**, an Accountancy firm based a few miles from Bishops Stortford, and run by Garry Mumford.

The picture of the cat certainly grabs attention as pictures always do and, as we are naturally drawn to any eyes we see, the relatively large eyes of the cat pull our attention firmly onto them. So much so that we probably overlook the 0800 number and the tagline on a first glance.

When we're ready to allow our attention to move off the cat's eyes, there's nothing to grab it and hold it, nothing compelling us to read the rest of the page. By the time the tagline is repeated as a headline, we're already halfway down the page yet there's been no second-person, what's in it for me, value-outcome messages at all!

So what might be an alternative to test? A quick check on Google for "manage money better" shows others saying "save time and money", "make ends meet" and "gain peace of mind and a sense of control." Something similar to these value-outcome, WIIFM messages would probably do a better job than the current headline.

The picture caption is witty but does nothing to address why the reader should keep on reading. The body text is all about Insight Associates and packed almost full of features. There are just four limp value outcomes: 'avoid financial difficulties', 'improve business performance', 'increased profitability' and 'growth'. All of this valuable real

estate has been wasted by hardly giving the reader any reason whatever why they would be daft not to read further and then do what Insight Associates want them to do.

I'm sure Insight know the sorts of things their clients worry about, so why not use this space to tell readers they can get them fixed here?

The call to action is just as limp. Every client would expect their first consultation to be free, confidential and without obligation, so this is of minimal value and doesn't differentiate Insight Associates from their competitors. And then the clickable link only takes the reader to the 'Contact Us' page where they have to take further actions before actually being in direct contact.

Just because you show a phone number and a clickable e-mail address, doesn't mean you should rely on them alone. You need to make the call to action strong and powerful too.

However, the right hand column does contain ideas that could be turned into strong value outcomes, and includes a good attempt at making emotional contact with the reader. Below the fold the left hand column includes data capture. If these good bits replaced the poorer bits, the page could, I'm sure, have more of a positive impact.

This site and some of the specific pages would benefit from split-testing some of the ideas I've mentioned. With some work this could become a much more effective page, and website. ■

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What our clients say:
"We can safely leave everything to Insight without having to worry. It's like having in-house financial employees. They make us feel like they're part of the business."
Chief Financial Officer
US Print & Barcoding Specialist

WHILE YOU'RE GROWING YOUR BUSINESS WHO'S WATCHING THE KITT?

Helping Businesses to Better Manage Their Money

As Chartered Certified Accountants with extensive commercial backgrounds Insight Associates provides outsourced accounts and Finance Director solutions to business.

Responsible for all aspects of accounting from experienced Finance Director input, through to monthly management accounts, payroll, VAT returns, statutory accounts & compliance, funding & business planning.

Based in the South East and working as your only resource or with existing staff to provide complete financial support our team gives Finance Director input for strategic business planning to avoid financial difficulties and significantly improve business performance.

Proven results from numerous satisfied clients over 20 years include cashflow stability, improved funding, timely and accurate management accounts, statutory compliance, increased profitability and growth through quality accounts information and good decision making.

[Call or email us now](#) for a FREE confidential no obligation consultation.

Just Imagine how great it would feel if you had:

- More time to focus on your business
- Fewer money and accounting headaches
- Improved cashflow
- Reduced financial risk and better profitability
- Better funding options

By managing your accounts, processes and financial controls we put YOU firmly in control of YOUR business's money.

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