



things you
can do to grow
your business
next year.

TOMORROW



By UK Entrepreneur
Nigel Botterill

My name's Nigel Botterill.

I'm a family man with 4 great kids and one gorgeous wife. I'm also a proud entrepreneur just like you. I've launched 8 separate million pound plus businesses since I set out on my own in 2003, starting them all from scratch and picking up a cupboard full of prestigious awards on the way. Not everything has turned out great though – I've had my share of failures too.

Here's my story...

I started my career as a 16 year old at Barclays back in '82, and worked there for 18 years. In my final role at Barclays I was responsible for sales in all the UK call centres: 6 call centres, 3,000 staff and hundreds of millions in the P&L! In 2000, I joined John Caudwell at Singlepoint, part of his Phones4U empire and also worked at Card Protection Plan, working closely with self-made multi-millionaire Hamish Ogston.

The Big Leap

Working alongside John and Hamish had a big impact on me and I wanted my own train set. So I swallowed a bravery pill, waved goodbye to my secure six-figure salary, re-mortgaged our house, and set up my own marketing consultancy business, N5 Ltd, on 1st January 2003. It was super-scary, but I knew that I had to make that big leap – or regret it for ever.

As I was launching N5, my wife Sue (who'd been a stay-at-home mum for six years at that point, looking after our then 3 children) was incredibly supportive but she was (naturally!) worried about our household missing the fixed salary so she decided to help out by launching her own mini-business; a local community magazine called 'The Dicken's Heath Directory', with paid-for ads from local businesses.

Totally ill-equipped and with no relevant experience, Sue's business took off quickly! She was soon generating well over £2,000 a month profit, for only a few hours work that she fitted in around looking after the children.

A year later, our friends and family had got wind of Sue's fab little business, and asked how they could copy her success. So... we went to St Lucia on holiday for a fortnight and wrote everything down.

We'd created our first info-product: 'My Mag', a programme that teaches people how to set up, publish, market and administer their own local community magazine, just like Sue's.

Our info-product sold like hot-cakes. After a while I figured that whilst the magazines were great, the world was moving online and was there a way to take the best of My Mag and put it on the internet – ‘thebestof’ was conceived.

We launched thebestof in July 2005 and we were the very first independent online business directory in the UK (there was Yell and Thomson and us at that point but noone else). I marketed it to our My Mag customers through a series of ‘Secret Meetings’ and on Day One we had 47 franchisees.

The next 18 months were a complete whirlwind. thebestof became the fastest UK franchise ever to get to 200 franchisees and we began picking up some serious awards. We moved into some great premises and then had to move again less than 12 months later because we’d outgrown the space.

In 2007, faced with lots of copy-cat competition, we re-branded and re-positioned thebestof to become the complete marketing solution for the best local businesses in each part of the UK. Every business now has to be recommended by local people, and our local franchisees work hard to champion many thousands of great small businesses right across the country.

2008 was an exciting time for thebestof – we won more awards, and we were placed third in The Sunday Times/Microsoft Tech Track 100. It was also the year I wrote my first seven-figure cheque to Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs. Joy!

My Commitment to Learning

At the start of 2010, it was pointed out to me that my commitment to learning was very unusual – as were the results I’d been able to achieve in business. What’s more, the two things are directly linked. The only reason I’ve been able to launch and grow eight separate million pound+ businesses in as many years is because of all the stuff I’ve learned from all those other people. All the courses and conferences and seminars I’ve been on, all the books and webinars I’ve studied etc.

I have put this FREE report together to help you grow your business. It lays out the seven things that you can implement in your business TOMORROW to make a real step change and set you up on your journey from mediocrity to super success. I’m a straight talking Yorkshireman and I’ve been there and done it, EIGHT times! All my strategies are tried and tested, and straight from the trenches so if you’re looking for business theory, team motivation, mind-set rubbish and corporate bollocks, you won’t find it here. **This stuff works.**

1. Get off the hamster wheel. You are not a “doer.”

To build any big business, there is one thing that you have to understand. Get to grips with this concept and it will change the way you think about your whole business. Super successful entrepreneurs like Richard Branson, Alan Sugar and Dan Kennedy have a firm grasp on this and have built multi-million pound business empires thinking this way. Here it is:

You have to be a marketer of your thing, not a doer of your thing.

For example, my friend Julie is a Florist. She gets the upmost pleasure out of working with flowers, arranging them and making everything look very pretty. She knows full-well that by making that **conscious decision to be a doer of her thing, she is limiting her success in business.**

So many business owners across the UK are the same as Julia. They work very hard, don't get me wrong, but they do the same thing every day. They get caught up in the day to day running of the business, constantly on the hamster wheel, working harder and harder but getting the same results. They are all 'doers' of their business.



If this is you, let me introduce you to David Costa.

David is a friend. He also happens to run a floristry company. David would never consider himself as a florist, he is a marketer. You see, David has **made the conscious decision to be a marketer of floristry, not a doer.** He spends each and every day getting new customers and keeping them happy. That's why he's one of Interflora's top three florists in the whole of the UK. He employs someone to run the shop, which he can afford to do because he has a very steady flow of customers that he is directing into his shop door through effective marketing.

I run eight different businesses and **concentrate on the marketing of each one.**

I employ staff to handle the day to day running of the business.

2. Most people in your industry or sector are wrong... About everything!

This is something that I came to realise from the launch and development of thebestof. You see, in any group of people, you'll be able to break it down into roughly these percentages – 1%, 4%, 15%, 60% and 20%.

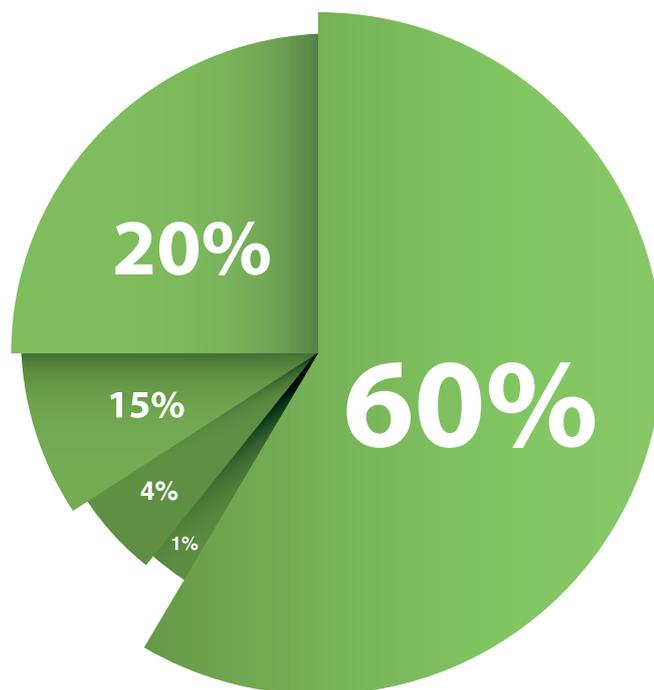
It doesn't matter whether the group is bakers in Bromsgrove or hairdressers in Harpenden, it will breakdown, broadly into those percentages. Here's what those percentages represent in business terms: 1% are super successful, 4% are very successful, 15% are getting there, 60% are getting by and 20%, at any one time, are struggling.

Stop to think about the implications of that analysis for a moment. You'll soon come to the inescapable conclusion that **most people in your industry or sector are wrong – about everything. Because most people are in the 60% and the 20%.**

If you were to look at that group as franchisors in the UK, then, by any definition, we are in the top 1%. Over the last seven years, we have re-written the rules of franchising in the UK. We didn't do this deliberately; it's just that we set up thebestof without realising that what we had put into place was almost the polar opposite of established practices among franchisors.

The fact that we did everything very differently and are in the top 1% is not a coincidence. And so it is in every sector. So work out who the 1% are in your sector or industry and then make it your business to find out what it is that they are doing differently to everybody else **because only lazy, unambitious, unimaginative business owners follow the crowd...** don't they?

You cannot ignore this. If you follow the crowd and do what everybody else does, then you'll get the results that everybody else gets and those results will be mediocre and average. **You will not become super-successful by doing what everybody else does.** Break the mould.



3. Accept ALL responsibility. It's all your fault.

“As a business owner, you are 100% responsible for what happens to your business. It's all your fault ...”

I've been accused of being too harsh with this rule. People say “Oh Nige, that's not true because X happened or Y happened to my business.” I say, “Rubbish.” It's all your fault.

I have a couple of examples to prove my point here. The first one is the excellent BBC2 TV series 'Mary Portas, Queen of Shops'. Each week, retail guru Mary Portas turns up at some local shop that is absolutely down and out and on the verge of bankruptcy. Over the course of the programme, she completely transforms these businesses from struggling loss-making enterprises, with few, if any, customers, into vibrant, popular businesses that are making good money. It's great TV, but it's also full of excellent lessons, not least of which is that it is the business owner who is responsible for what happens to that business. The greengrocer in Hoylake was very eager to blame the arrival of the Sainsbury's Express shop for their demise, but Mary turned it round. The hairdresser in Rochdale had no idea why he was now losing money having been so successful 20 years ago. Again, Mary took responsibility and turned it round. **Responsibility, you see, is a powerful thing.** Think differently. Get out of your rut. Take responsibility.

I have a friend who runs a swimming pool business.

Now, believe me, whatever market you are in, the demand for swimming pools has shrunk massively during the recession. It was a family business, 50 years old, and it was on the verge of going under.

He saved himself by putting in place a maintenance programme and looking after lots of the pools that he'd already installed (truth is he should have been doing this for years, anyway!). His two main competitors both went bump in the first half of 2010, **but he has hung in there and survived because he took responsibility and created a new revenue stream** (his maintenance contracts). His competitors that closed down blamed the recession and everybody else but themselves. **They avoided responsibility.**

It's not harsh. It's true.



4. Exploit the web, 'cos most people don't! (And that doesn't mean just having a website)

The Internet is here to stay, baby, and super successful business owners all embrace the Web and use it to help them grow their profits, BUT 90% of local businesses are doing nowhere near enough to exploit the potential of the Web.

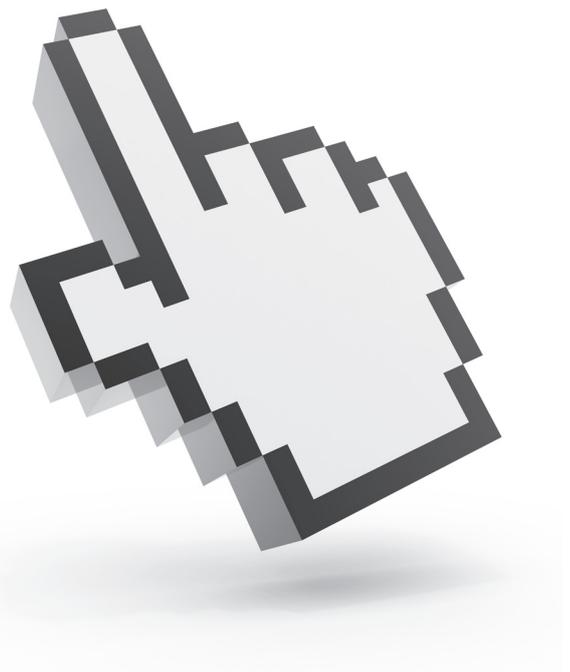
It's been over six years since we launched **thebestof** and the role that the Internet plays in business has changed immeasurably since then. **thebestof** is a business with a website, NOT a website business but I'm amazed at how **few local businesses have really embraced the Web and use it to help them develop and grow**. At the end of the day, it is just another type of media, but it is a very powerful one and one that is becoming woven into the very fabric of our society.

Merely having a website doesn't get close to what I mean, here. For instance, **if you haven't learned about and experimented with Google AdWords (or pay-per-click, or sponsored links – they're all the same thing) then you are bonkers**. I'm serious. For many businesses, there are large numbers of people looking online, in your area, today for what you do. What pay-per-click does is give you the opportunity to be found by them quickly and easily. If you haven't learnt how to do that and tested and trialled it, then you have probably made a very big mistake and missed out on thousands of pounds of revenue.

An even bigger omission by many businesses **is a failure to be registered on Google Plus Local**. When someone undertakes a "local search," Google will normally throw back a map at the top of the search results with red pins in it. There are never more than seven pins and each pin relates to a local business that ostensibly provides the service that you have just searched for.

Registering your business with Google Plus Local is **free and it takes less than 10 minutes to do, yet it can get your business on the front page of Google every day**. Your business can – and will – feature as one of those pins.

In my experience, **over 80% of businesses that I talk to have not done this**. It's completely bonkers and it's something that you can implement in your business tomorrow.



5. Its all in the follow-up.

Super successful businesses follow up with **their prospects much more than ordinary businesses do.**

We learned this initially on the back of that first **My Mag** exhibition but it's been reinforced many times since.

Lots of businesses never follow up with prospects after an exhibition, or any kind of first enquiry. The majority only follow up once or twice. **What I've learned is that it takes seven, nine, 12, sometimes 26 communications and follow-up for most people to make a final decision to purchase anyone's product or service,** and I don't mean 26 emails in a week.

Most businesses give up after one or two. Some are really proud that they have a five-step follow up programme. Truth is, **if you're giving up before 10, then you're almost certainly missing out... big time!**

We regularly make sales to people who first enquired over a year ago.

The reason they buy is because we stayed in touch – we followed up.

You'll know this for yourself. There'll be times when you think about making a decision on something you're interested in, but you never quite get around to it – and then it's that one thing you see in an email, brochure or that you hear on the phone that makes you decide to do it.

If you want to stay a small business forever, then just make sure you never follow up more than two or three times with your customers and prospects!



6. Fact: If you make a premium product available, at least 20% of people will buy it.

In most businesses, 20% of customers will pay more for a premium product or service if you make it available to them.

In all walks of life, there are plenty of examples of businesses offering premium levels of product or service. Theatre tickets, airfares, hotels – they all have different levels of price that people can choose to pay. **Yet it is much more unusual to find premium products or services in small businesses.**

Implementing this in your business can, however, generate a double-digit percentage increase in profit immediately, as I found out with **My Little Wrapper**, a personalised chocolate business I started in 2008.



When we introduced **My Little Wrapper**, we initially only had a single product. Three months in, however we introduced a Professional Pack to the range. **The Professional Pack sold for 50% more, but generated almost 100% more gross margin.** Purchasers get a lot more stuff but it's far more profitable for us. The only thing we changed with our marketing and sales was that when a customer rang up to buy, we said, 'that's great, would you like the Standard Pack or the Professional Pack?' That's all we did. We didn't change any of our ads, it wasn't even on the website, but we asked the question when people came into buy. From the first month when we did it, right up to the current day, **every single month between 19%-21% of our customers buy the Professional Pack.**

I had a chiropractor that said this couldn't possibly apply to his business. He was wrong. He now has **different prices for his appointments depending on the time of the day.** If you want to see him first thing in the morning or in the early evening, then you pay a premium price. He's introduced premium pricing to reflect the time of day and the result has been an increase in his profits of over 20% in the last 12 months for exactly the same amount of work – and he's lost no clients.

It's there for everyone. **What's your premium price offering?** It's something that you won't have to think too hard about, and it can be implemented tomorrow.

7. Getting Customers - Your first job every day. The first thing that super successful business owners do every morning is the most important, most critical thing for the success of their business... it's marketing.

I learnt this rule from a very wise man called Martin Howey. Not long after I'd set up in business, I was talking with Martin, and he asked me what was the most important thing that I had to achieve if my business was going to be successful? This is one of those awkward questions, and I waffled around for a few minutes before settling on...

"Getting new customers and keeping the ones I've got".

Martin agreed with me. He explained that I was absolutely right that **as long as I was getting a regular flow of new customers and keeping the ones that I already had, then everything else in my business could and would be taken care of** – but without that regular flow of customers, I didn't have a business at all. He went on to explain to me how getting and keeping customers is all about marketing.

He then paused and asked what I'd done first thing that morning when I arrived in the office. In common with many people, I suspect, my answer was that I'd check my email, checked the voice mails, briefed the staff, made a couple of phone calls and started doing some work.

"That's interesting ..." he said, **"... when are you going to get customers today?"**

"I hadn't planned on getting any customers today" I replied.

"But you said that getting customers is the most important thing for the success of your business so why would you not only not do it first thing in the morning but not plan to do any at all today?" Martin asked me, surprised.

It was a very salutary lesson and one that I learned and implemented immediately. From that day on, I've established a regular routine. My working day typically begins around 7:30 a.m. I'm often the first into the office. When I arrive, I shut my door and hang up a little sign on my door that says, "Do not disturb unless building is on fire." (My staff know that I'm serious about this. No one ever interrupts my morning session when that sign is on the door).

The phone is off the hook, my email is turned off and I spend at least 90 minutes, sometimes as much as two hours, doing marketing for my business.

This is probably the most productive habit I have ever developed. It has been worth literally millions of pounds to me. You see, when I emerge from my office, usually around 9:15-9:30a.m. to confront the rigours of the day, it doesn't really matter what happens because I've done the marketing for the day. (And by the way, you can get a lot of marketing done in 90 minutes!)

This has ensured that our business has kept on the front foot, that we've always had very strong growth curves, and that our retention rates are also extremely healthy.

Like I said, it's a habit, and it's one that many other super successful business owners have implemented, as well. I know, because they've told me. I commend it to you, especially if marketing is not what you're good at. If you're like most business owners, then the marketing is difficult, it's a chore, it's not your normal space. If that's you then you're at even greater risk of not getting the marketing done unless you get into the habit of making it the first thing you do every morning!

So there we have it. 7 things that you can implement in your business starting from tomorrow. Obviously there are many more things that you can do in your business to make it a raving success, but I have put this guide together so that you can start implementing NOW. There are no valid excuses for you not to do all of this stuff tomorrow. **REMEMBER: Take 100% responsibility, it's all your fault.**

Now, if you've read this far, you're obviously serious about making a big change in your business. I've put together a video that runs alongside this course for you to have a look at. It's got a few more great nuggets in it and frankly, not bothering to find the time right now to watch it is a foolish thing to do. Here's the link to the video. www.freereportnb.co.uk

I'll be in touch throughout the following weeks (I have a great follow up strategy employed in my business!), and I hope to start a great working relationship with you. My mission is to help business owners across the UK to escape mediocrity and live the life they want to lead.

Enjoy your new marketing adventure, and remember, **It's all your fault!**

Nigel Botterill



P.S. I'm deadly serious about watching this video.
It's life changing stuff.
www.freereportnb.co.uk

