



**You're starting out in business, or maybe you've been in business a while but everyone is saying you need to have a social media presence.**

Then you have to keep posting on the page to keep it up to date. And you have to delete posts from other people because the posts are not relevant. And you have to reply to people who post or message you with often bizarre requests or information. You need to load photos and edit your posts so they're accurate and grammatically correct.

The message is if you're using social media, be prepared to put time and effort into it. It could mean up to an hour a day. Can you afford that when you need to be out making money for your business?

You might be better to provide a regular electronic newsletter specifically targeted for your clients, suppliers and prospects.

Then you realise you're going to have to put some effort in. To get your information in front of a lot of people, you need to get them following your page. So you have to market the page.



- Be realistic with social media expectations.
- Don't let your fish off the hook.
- Sell your bill with Information.
- Get meeting notes as they happen.
- Be cheeky and seek out the best.

# Don't let your fish off the hook

**The lifeblood of businesses is sales. Every extra dollar you make after you have paid for the running costs of the business is profit.**

A retailer who normally adds a 50 percent profit margin gets nothing for herself until she has paid the rent and other running costs. Once that has happened a \$100 sale is \$33 in her pocket (before Mrs Tax has taken her share). The vital component of a business is sales.

Someone rings you to buy something. The fish is on the hook just waiting to be landed.

"You can order that on our website," says your telephone receptionist.

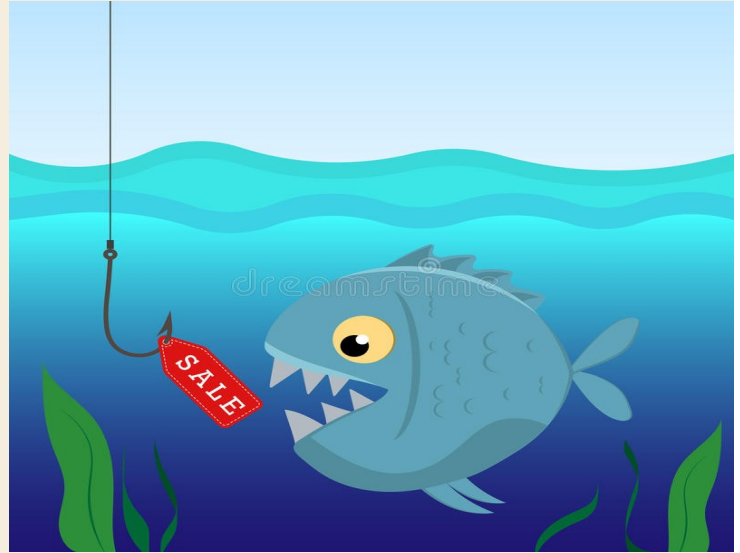
Your fish has just been let go and money has just been taken out of your pocket.

Now look at it from the point of view of the fish. It has been freed. There are lots more morsels to eat so this fish lifts the phone and rings one of your competitors, who obligingly supplies the goods with a minimum of hassle.

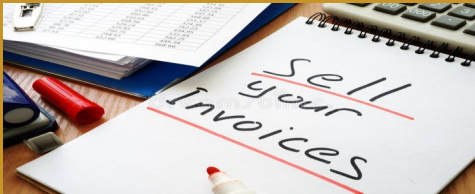
Many websites are poorly designed and waste the customer's time. They are best avoided.

It's all about saving time. If a telephone call is going to get the job done more quickly, then that's the way to go. That's why your fish rang you in the first place.

Never tell a customer you're not going to serve them personally by referring them to your website.



## 'Sell your bill' with information



**It's tough in retailing at present, but retailers have an advantage over trades people – they set the price and get paid immediately.**

Trades people generally do the work, bill for it and wait to be paid. If the customer doesn't like the bill, delays can occur. It can happen especially for maintenance work.

If possible, it's worth providing a price before starting the job so the customer knows what to expect. At least tell your customers your hourly rate and any other fees, such as for a callout.

When unexpected work is required and a bigger bill likely, advise the customer as soon as you know.

Another tip is to ring your customer and explain in detail why a bill might be larger than they expect. Then ask if the total amount is acceptable. Most people are reasonable if you are.

"Sell your bill" by providing plenty of information in your invoice.

## Get meeting notes as they happen

**The use of Zoom and other online meeting platforms during the Covid-19 lockdown has spawned many innovations as companies scramble to change their work practices.**

One clever innovation involves enhanced meeting notes.

In "the old days", notes were taken by a secretary, transcribed and delivered to participants when someone decided what should and should not be in them. Now it's possible to have a meeting in which everyone gets notes of the conversation as it happens.

One of these note-taking programs is Otter.AI, which has recently signed a deal with Zoom to put the notes into a web browser for everyone in the meeting. The transcript can be copied at the end.

Meeting collaborators, such as teacher assistants or secretaries, who are logged into Otter can even highlight, comment, and add photos to create meeting notes that everyone can review and share.

The program is timely given many people are working from home. Many meetings, events, and classes have gone virtual, but remote workers and students struggle to listen and pay attention while having to take their own notes.

Businesses, schools and others can now capture information accurately and make them accessible instantly.

# Recent Court Cases for your Interest

## Don't let your standards for operating machinery slip

Meat manufacturer Hellers Limited has been sentenced for health and safety failures at the Christchurch District Court this week after a worker lost four fingers in a machine used to process meat.

During the March 2019 incident while cleaning the machine a worker reached in to clear meat from between a rotating paddle and the inside wall of the machine, when his fingers became caught. The machine hadn't been stopped correctly and it restarted as part of its cycle. Four fingers on the worker's hand were immediately amputated. The worker's fingers were unable to be reattached. The machine has since been removed from production.

WorkSafe's Chief Inspector Steve Kelly said a WorkSafe investigation found the method of operating the machine had been unsafely adapted.

"Instead of accessing the machine via its raised platform and from behind an interlocked guard, a step ladder was used to gain access to an unguarded area of the machinery, against best practice and the direction of the manufacturers operating manual.

"The company's standard operating procedure and risk assessment for the machine were neither monitored or reviewed allowing this adapted method of cleaning the machine to go unchallenged and uncontrolled.

"Hellers' failures to ensure employees were carrying out work safely put workers at very serious risk, and in this instance, led to a worker suffering from life changing injuries."

The company was ordered to pay a fine of \$193,500 as well as \$60,000 in reparation to the victim.

### Notes:

- A fine of \$193,500 was imposed.
- Reparation of \$60,000 was ordered.
- Hellers Limited was sentenced under sections 36(1)(a), 48(1) and (2)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
  - ◊ Being a PCBU having a duty to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers who work for the PCBU, while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking, namely while operating the Laska Mixer Grinder Machine, did fail to comply with that duty and that failure exposed the workers to a risk of serious injury.
- S 48 (2)(c) carries a maximum penalty of \$1,500,000

Source: [www.worksafe.govt.nz](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz)



## WEB SOLUTIONS

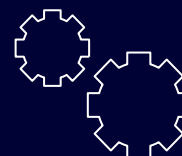
### 10 Tips to become an Awesome Debt Collector

From time to time every business needs to chase a debtor for not paying their bill to you. To be effective at this it's good to understand some simple skills on how best to do this.

Go to <https://debtrecoveries.com.au/10-tips-to-become-an-awesome-debt-collection-agent/> to learn 10 tips to sharpen your debt collections skills.

Learn how to Listen, Be sensitive, Keep your cool, Take your time, Be Clear and Concise, Understand your Job, Help your co-workers, Be Compliant, Do not waste your time and Have fun!!

There is a Free video to watch as well.



## TAX SOLUTIONS

### Air BnB and GST

Covid-19 has caused some people who were supplying Air B&B accommodation to switch to renting out their property. This is a switch from commercial renting to residential renting. GST applies to commercial renting for those who hit the \$60,000 threshold for GST registration. If you switch your commercial rental, such as Air B&B, to residential renting you need to pay Inland Revenue GST on the value of the property, if the residential renting goes on for 12 months or more. This time has now been extended to 18 months provided the switch to residential renting occurs between 14 February 2020 and 31 October 2020.



# Be cheeky and seek out the best

One piece of business advice might be the only one you need.

It's this: Get cheeky and ask a smart, successful person for help.

Most people who have succeeded in business are happy to help someone genuinely seeking advice. In fact, they sometimes wonder why no one will talk to them. They're a bit like the best-looking ones at the dance who seem too good to be true, so no one asks them to dance.

We know of one local retired businessman who built a multimillion-dollar business with offices on every continent. Being semi-retired, he now helps all sorts of businesses to get where they want to be, or just get out of difficulty.

And the best part of it – he doesn't charge for his time. He loves the collaboration, but if someone doesn't want to take his advice, he's happy to walk away.

"It's their business, so it's their decision," he says. "I might not agree and I'll argue my case, but if they decide to do something else, that's fine.

"Because I don't charge, there's no obligation on either of us."

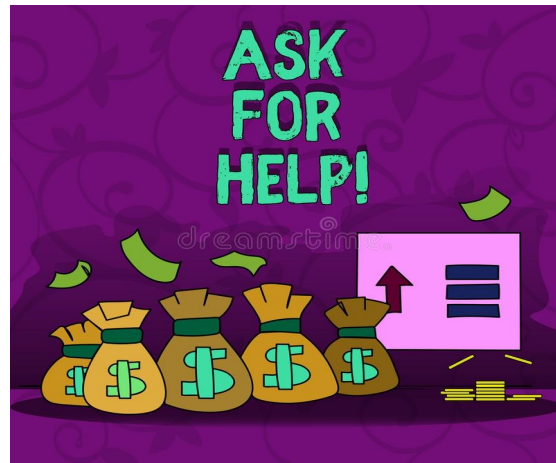
If you do your homework, you'll know who's been successful in your line of business. Seek out the

best and ring them, or make an appointment to see them. It's never difficult to find well-know people. Be creative.

They might be retired and spending most of the time in the garden, but they'll have plenty of expertise and experience just waiting for someone to tap into. In fact, they might just be flattered that you have thought of them.

If you do get that phone call or appointment, be prepared. Be specific. What is your particular issue – starting in business, difficulty building the business, wanting to get out of the business . . . ? What do you want from them? If they are good enough to give you their time, show you are prepared and won't waste the opportunity.

You never know, you might just build a strong business and personal relationship that benefits you both.



## Quick Quote

Finance is not merely about making money. It's about achieving our deep goals and protecting the fruits of our labour. It's about stewardship and, therefore, about achieving the good society. - Robert J. Shiller

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