PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

racs MARKETING

Starting a recruitment agency from scratch can be a daunting process just like creating any new business. However, having a blank canvas gives you the opportunity to get everything right in the first place and structure your business correctly. Channelling the passion and enthusiasm which inspired the decision to form your own business into a coherent plan from the outset will give the new agency the optimum chance of succeeding in what remains a challenging and often crowded market place. RACS Marketing offers budding entrepreneurs the following five tips to help them create their new recruitment agency:

1. What's In a Name?

Choosing an appropriate and relevant name for your business will ensure it will be both memorable and captivating. There are many potential approaches for a business name ranging from the funky (Blue Gecko or Top Banana are two real life examples), to the use of an individual's name or initials; of course there is no right or wrong, but entrepreneurs should consider the impression conveyed by the name of the business.

The word Google is now synonymous with a cool, dynamic and youthful brand, whilst IBM conveys a more serious and corporate message.

The availability of a suitable domain name should also be a factor as you want your web and email addresses to reflect your business name as closely as possible.

2. Target Audience

With thousands of recruitment agencies already in existence, defining your precise target audience is an essential facet of your business planning. Perhaps you have experience and contacts in a specific sector, or maybe you have spotted a gap in the market, but in each instance your precise market should be defined from the outset. Identifying your sector(s) will help you articulate your business offerings and unique selling points which will, in turn, impact on your branding, marketing and sales strategies.

Do not be afraid to highlight your credentials and the reasons why you formed the agency in the first place; potential clients and candidates will both be attracted to an agency with expertise and knowledge of a particular industry.

3. Defining The Brand

The word 'brand' is massively overused in business circles and is far too often

confused with merely a logo or a corporate identity. Both these visual elements are vitally important, but so are the emotions, promises and services offered by the business. Adopting a customer-service driven attitude from the start will help define the ethos of the business and provide an operational framework for the day-to-day running of the company, staff recruitment and marketing narrative.

Establishing a clearly defined strapline, list of values and mission statement will help all those involved understand the agency's philosophy and add clarity to the business as a while.

4. Looking Good

Once these first three points have been successfully completed, you are in a position to design a logo and corporate identity for the business. Try and resist the temptation of doing it yourself just to save money as this will inevitably cost you more in the long run. Source a reputable marketing agency or professional and invest the time to thoroughly communicate your business idea. A stylish logo and associated company image will instantly establish your agency as a serious player and give it an air of professionalism; we are constantly astounded by how many agencies fail to present themselves as a cool-looking company as first impressions really do count.

5. Invest Online

Everyone knows that a great website is essential to the success of any business, so choose a proven supplier to build yours. Always ask for references and case studies before you embark on the project as web agencies are notorious for not delivering sites either on time or to budget. Demand a contract and include financial penalties if your supplier fails to meet the brief or launch the site on time.

Start by writing a site map which highlights the structure, navigation and interactive elements along with any other key elements such as social media feeds, jobs boards or video content. Always ask for at least three different designs and do not sanction the build stage until you are totally happy with your chosen layout.

In terms of content, write or commission concise copy with lots of calls to action to appeal to the site user; use original images or those purchased from a reputable stock library (iStock or Shutterstock) and never publish images copied from the web!

Once launched, ensure your site is linked to Google Maps and has Google analytics tracking software included; both are free tools and will help track the performance of your site.

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