



Happy New Year!

Hello and welcome to the January edition of the BCU Business School Newsletter



We hope you have had a refreshing break over the festive season and eager to start the new year ahead. We have plenty of ways to support you during these unprecedented times.

This edition focuses on **Marketing** and the role it plays within your business.

We start by looking at marketing and the importance of listening to your customer, which we learn is key to **delighting your customers**.

This is followed by our **TigerLAB BITES podcast** where we learn more about **the customer experience concept**, as Nicola Gittins, Associate Professor in Marketing, looks at where businesses can add **value** at each point along the **customer journey**.

If you are looking to review how your business can grow through a better understanding of marketing and business planning, our **Enterprise for Success** workshops can help you focus on your marketing strategy.

Our forthcoming **Promoting Sustainable Performance webinar** offers some tips on developing a winning business strategy, and developing marketing strategies is just one of the ways our students could benefit your business with a **Live Student Project**.

We can help you develop a **strategic marketing approach**, understand **your customer groups**, **Create Demand**, and **manage Customer Relationships**, with our forthcoming **Small Business Leadership Programme**.

Are You Delighting Your Customers?



“The first step in exceeding your customer’s expectations is to know what those expectations are.”

Roy Hollister Williams

Best-selling author and marketing consultant

In these unprecedented times, it is easy to forget the importance marketing

plays within your business and that now, more than ever, it is vital that your efforts give you the best return on investment, whether that is your time, effort, resources, or money.

Studies show that customer behaviour has changed due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, leading to a more cautious approach, with customers taking a more pragmatic view on investing in new products and services for the time being. Therefore, they may be more reluctant to invest in your products and services, meaning that new customers are even harder to attract now. It is stated that it costs between 8-10 times more to attract new customers than to sell more to your existing customers, so it might be worth considering how best you can accomplish this.

Here are some simple guidelines to follow

Communicate

Communicating with your existing customers shows that you're sensitive to what's going on and can empathise with them. It also allows you to reassure customers that your operations and services won't be affected in any way, or if they have, then explain the situation and how you are trying to make things as easy as possible.

Your communication should:

- Acknowledge the pandemic and its impact on your customers' daily lives
- Discuss changes that the pandemic has brought about in your business, if any, and how the changes affect them
- Reassure them of the quality they should expect from doing business with you, and let them know that the pandemic won't impact this.
- Empathise with them and assure them that you'll be there for them.
People like to know what's going on, and if your customer has a problem or issue with your company, explain to them the steps you will take to solve it. The transparency will be appreciated.
- Always be timely. In today's business world, speed is essential. If your company delays responding to customers, you're missing a huge opportunity to capture valuable insights and feedback. Don't allow your competitors to serve your customer better and faster than you can.
- Always listen to your customers. Listen to customer feedback religiously and make an effort to share those insights across the company to ensure you are continuously building the right products and features.

Don't make marketing a casualty of these uncertain times and discover what

BCU's Associate Professor, Nicola Gittins, says about this and the **4 C's of Marketing** in the **TigerLAB BITES** video below

tigerLab BITES!



BCU tigerLAB BITES! Episode 4: Associate Professor Nicola Gittins; Marketing

Nicola draws upon her extensive experience of marketing across different industries. In this **TigerLAB BITE**, she focuses on the **customer experience**, looking at where **value** can be added at each point along the **customer journey**.

[Find Out More](#)

Promoting Sustainable Performance

No Fuss, No Frills: How BCU can help drive your Business Performance



Date: Wednesday 27 January

Time: 10am – 11am

Place: Online with MS Teams

This online webinar offers an insight into what it takes to **become a high-growth company**. Based on the findings of a new research project, Dr Mark Gilman, Professor of SME Growth & Development, leads us through some of **the key ingredients required to take your business to the next stage of growth**.

This panel discussion will enable three high-performing SMEs to share their journey to increased levels of business success. Following a review of their business, they have found new ways to **overcome obstacles, identify growth opportunities, develop a winning strategy, and, ultimately, rekindle their passion for their business**.

Register now via Eventbrite to part of this exciting programme and let our business experts help you drive your business performance.

[Register Here!](#)

Small Business Leadership Programme



SMALL BUSINESS LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Helping businesses to survive and thrive beyond COVID.

Register now

Logos at the bottom: SMALL BUSINESS CHARTER, BIRMINGHAM CITY University, and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

Do you lead a small business? You and your business can now benefit from a **free, fully funded** new programme designed to **enhance your business's robustness and growth in challenging times.**

We are delighted to announce at BCU we are part of a consortium of business schools accredited by the **Small Business Charter (SBC)** and supported by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy taking part in the Small Business Leadership Programme.

The Small Business Leadership Programme is a **free, fully-funded 10-week programme that supports senior leaders in enhancing their business's resilience and recovery from the impact of COVID-19.** It helps small and medium-sized businesses to **develop their potential for future growth and productivity.**

Participants will develop **strategic leadership skills** and the confidence to **make informed decisions to boost business performance.**

Amongst the various business topics, the focus on marketing will help you to **explore your Vision, Purpose and Brand** to enable you to be clear about why you do what you do; we give you the tools to create a vision for the future and learn how to communicate this internally and externally.

We can help you develop a strategic marketing approach, understand your customer groups, Create Demand, and manage Customer Relationships to ensure the way you communicate and manage relationships is tuned in to your customers' needs and behaviour.

This programme will be delivered online by small business and enterprise experts from our business schools.

To take part, you need to be in a **senior management role for a business that has been operating for at least one year and has 5-249 employees in England.**

Please register your interest at bcbsbusiness.services@bcu.ac.uk

For More Information

Marketing Planning for Success



Date: Tuesdays 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd February

Time: 10am – 1pm

Place: Online with MS Teams

Whether you're starting your business plan or looking at developing a marketing strategy, our 4-part **Enterprise for Success** programme gives you the confidence and tools you need to grow your business.



Starting on Tuesday 2nd February, focusing on **developing your business leadership style and marketing strategy**, the four half-day workshops offer the ideal opportunity to develop your skills.

Aimed at the business owner, the programme will help you **identify, understand, and assess how your business can grow through a better understanding of marketing and business planning.**

The workshops are created and devised by experienced BCU business support specialists in their field, **giving you the business planning models and templates to grow a sustainable business.**

Register your place via Eventbrite and get your business ready for the year ahead.

[Register Here!](#)

Business Advice Centre – Introducing Our Live Student Projects

BCU's Business Advice Centre celebrated its first anniversary in November 2020 and has made great strides in becoming a recognised hub that brings together **industry, academics, and students** across a wide range of services specifically designed to help your business.



One of the BAC's major achievements is its **Live Student Projects**, where our undergraduate and postgraduate students get the opportunity to put theory into practice by working on a real-life business challenge provided by local, nationwide, and international businesses.

During its first year, the Live Student Projects have offered support in problem-solving and strategy development for **B2B and B2C client growth** across **22 businesses** with our undergraduate students, and a further **11 businesses** with our postgraduate students.

We are currently in the process of assisting 21 local and international companies within the areas of **marketing, management, accounting, finance, and economics**. Also, outcomes can be defined for other areas of your business, providing each project offers a solution to a business problem and growth opportunities within your business.

Your business can receive support around:

- Marketing strategies across various channels, such as PR; use of analytical tools, and competitor evaluation
- Commercial viability and sustainability of products
- Improving sales and market positioning
- Structure and make-up of the local business community, and challenges concerning Brexit
- The impact of COVID-19 in the workplace
- How inclusivity and diversity is brought to life in a real workforce setting
- Talent acquisition and retention strategies
- Maximising the use of existing services and understanding the customer experience
- Statistical insights within the financial area of each business

- Consulting experience and product development on B2B and B2C platforms
- Establishing a competitive, global landscape whilst enhancing technological capabilities and platforms
- Researching past and current industry trends and supporting strategies for entry into foreign markets

Can you help us?

We are always looking for additional companies to assist us in providing projects for our dedicated students. By providing a Live Student Project, your business can help develop and enhance our students' employability. By working collaboratively with us on a project, you can help cultivate the next generation of entrepreneurs and employees.



JL Education Consultants Ltd is one local business that found benefit from offering a Live Student Project:

"It was an absolute pleasure to work with the students at BCU. They helped my business with two pivotal projects on leadership and marketing. The students were terrific, hardworking, and conscientious. They provided some excellent advice and recommendations, and also really brightened up my day whenever I talked to them."

Your business could also benefit by:

- An in-depth analysis of commercial insights that help support your business goals
- Free, no-cost support around high-quality research, data analysis and resolving outcomes carried out by motivated, young professionals supported by sector-experienced academics.
- Practice-based methodologies used to facilitate strategic aims and encourage increased revenue and growth.

If you have a business challenge that you do not have the resources, time, or expertise to tackle, and would like to assist our students in gaining valuable business experience whilst always under the supervision of our experienced academic leads, then please contact us at bac@bcu.ac.uk

If you would like any further information on any of the items contained in this newsletter, or on how we may be able to assist you and your business, then please contact us at bcbsbusiness.services@bcu.ac.uk or visit our website at www.bcu.ac.uk/business%20/

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Birmingham City University · The Curzon Building · 4 Cardigan Street · Birmingham, West Midlands B4 7BD · United Kingdom

