How do you engage with your customers? Here’s how a writer can help.

Do you need to increase revenue? Regardless of the size of your business, the answer is likely to be yes. The question is, what combination of repeat business and new custom is likely to achieve that outcome where will your marketing budget be spent most effectively? Whilst larger firms and multinationals are likely to have substantial resources at their disposal, it can often be harder for small to medium sized enterprises to decide how to tackle communications.

If you already have the technical expertise in place to maintain a website and send out regular updates to existing customers, hiring a freelance writer can be a great place to start. The cost to your business is lower than employing someone directly and if you don’t get on they’re far easier to get rid of! A freelancer will also have the advantage of bringing a fresh perspective and may be able to identify elements of your work that you regard as routine but which would fascinate your customers.

I take the view that the people involved in a business should be at the heart of any marketing campaign. Even in the largest organisations a strong personal brand goes a long way and potential customers will often make decisions based upon who they consider to be trustworthy or have most enjoyed dealing with. If you can tell customers the story of your company and communicate its approach and core values their level of engagement is likely to increase.

This approach can take many forms. Your website, email updates, direct mailings and leaflets can all be used to highlight key features of your work or to showcase a single figurehead who best represents the brand. Equally, if you have several different departments these could each be highlighted in turn, potentially featuring a different team each month and explaining who is involved and what they do. Revealing some interesting personal information about your team can also be a simple but effective tool; customers who can see something of themselves in your employees are much more likely to remember you the next time they come to buy. All of this can be achieved simply and cheaply by hiring a writer who can chat with your staff to take down a quick pen portrait which can then form the basis for a wide range of updates.

If your company offers a range of services, cross selling can often be key in customer retention. It is increasingly rare for businesses to have the kind of face to face engagement with their clients that allows day to day issues to be discussed and new areas of assistance identified. However, if you’re in the habit of regularly reminding your customers what else you can do for them you stand a much better chance of your communication being timely when it’s needed most.

In all of your communications and advertising, social proof has a huge influence on whether a potential customer decides to buy. If someone else has used your services and come away happy the fear factor in trying something new is greatly reduced. Social proof can be as simple as including testimonials or case studies in your updates. It may seem cheeky, but a writer can even write testimonials for your customers to sign off at the end of a project to save them the time of writing it down themselves. You can even pre-empt this by giving details of what you’re working on at the moment. These can of course be anonymised to protect your customer’s privacy. If you’re good at getting out and about networking or engaging with your local community, tell your customers about it. It not only keeps you in the forefront of their minds but tells them that you’re out making connections which may ultimately benefit them. Involvement in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects has grown hugely in recent years and highlighting your participation is a great profile raiser, both within your own updates and the local press.

Clearly, the nature of your communications is going to depend very much on what your business does. Some concepts are easier for potential customers to understand than others, so if you create beautiful clothes or make delicious cakes your audience are already going to have a basic understanding of what you do. Your challenges are going to come from explaining why your product is better than Joe Bloggs’ down the road, what’s special about it and, potentially, why yours costs more. A writer will be able to focus attention on the positive elements of what you create and conjure up the feeling of using your product for someone who doesn’t have it in front of them.

Alternatively, if what you offer is highly technical but has a wide range of applications, translating that information into layman’s terms could transform your business. A potential customer could read product specifications but fail to appreciate the finer detail of how that will benefit them. A writer with the right background can communicate that and potentially bring about a lightbulb moment which results in a sale which could otherwise be lost.

If you want to transform your communications and increase sales in a cost effective way, try hiring a writer. You’re likely to be pleasantly surprised!