

James Butler's Newsletter #63

Amuse, Inform and Inspire

November 2007

Thank you to all those who have commented on the reduced length of the newsletter last issue (both for and against) and welcome to all new clients and readers this month. Like any good business, I track key statistics (you do in your business, don't you?!) and last month was yet another record month for the number of people reading this newsletter – thank you.

About three years ago, I was getting very excited as I prepared to depart for my annual holiday out of the UK at Christmas. I was off to realise a long-held ambition: to see tigers in the wild. Many of you will know I was lucky enough to achieve it, and the January 2005 newsletter has some thoughts on the experience (see the archive on the website).

That's neat, that's neat



I really love your tiger feet! How come all the best music was recorded before I started school? And why are tigers relevant for this month's newsletter? They provide an interesting example of marketing by word of mouth, something I am very passionate about with clients.

Follow my non-business story for a while, and see how you can apply the lessons to your own marketing situation.

When I got home from India in January 2005, I told anyone who would listen about my trip – I was bowled over by the beauty of these creatures, and it was newsworthy because not many people get to do what I did (and I feel very lucky). So, **I talked with passion, and had a story to tell.**

In October 2005 a community group I chaired at the time needed a speaker for a local meeting, and we were getting desperate so I volunteered to talk about my experiences in India. It was accepted, and I spoke to about 40 people. Now, I love public speaking, I like to think I am fairly good at it and I love tigers. So, **I took an opportunity, did something I am good at and knew more than most people in the room.** (Which, by the way, is how to be an expert – don't know more than anyone else in the world, just more than anyone else in the audience!)

In early 2006, I was approached by the chair of another group, who hadn't even heard me talk, because they wanted to book me as an after dinner speaker that autumn! Now my few slides cobbled together from a trip had become an attraction, and an opportunity to raise awareness for tiger conservation through WWF. So, **people talked about me, my passion and my story,** and I got a second booking.

In early 2007, I got another booking – this time offering a small honorarium for speaking (which will be sponsoring a tiger through WWF for one year). My filling-in because we didn't have a speaker had grown into a paid gig! Again, the person asking hadn't heard me, but had heard from others. I swear they said "I hear you do a great talk on tigers" when they called. So, **people who I have never spoken to are now calling me for my services, for a service I have never marketed.**

And the icing on the cake? That speaking gig (which is next week) is for the Reading District Natural History Society. These are people who know their nature! OK, starting to feel less like an expert, but luckily I am the pre-Christmas "light entertainment" and I have stressed I am no botanist!

What does this mean in terms of running or promoting a business? Well, I think there are simple lessons to learn:

- Use marketing methods you enjoy (speaking isn't for everyone), because then you will have greater impact;
- Have a story to tell – and so many of us do if we only look;
- Share a passion – don't be a zealot, but put heart into it – that's infectious;
- Spot and take initial opportunities – some small acorns become big oak trees;
- Don't wait until you know it all – the day never comes. Go with what you have and be honest about gaps;
- Get people talking about you – offer something unusual or interesting and people will share that with others. That is what gets **them** ringing **you**, not the other way round.
- Have a purpose – I think it has helped that all three talks I have done have been for someone else's benefit – a group, WWF etc. Is there a relevant cause you can align with?

Now it's time for you to do some work! Revisit your plans for marketing your business in 2008 and see where you can apply these lessons – what can you do that taps a passion and shows you in the best light? How can you build that into a planned campaign through the year?

I'd love to hear what you come up with!

Painless Business News

The next few weeks are a good opportunity to focus on the working ON the business, not IN, because client sessions drop off in December. Time to clear those bitty projects off the list before the New Year. January is a good time for people to kickstart their year with fresh plans for their business, so if anyone moans about their business over Christmas, give them my name. And don't forget you might enjoy some support too!

With the thought of New Year resolutions coming up, you may be interested in my forthcoming workshop near Oxford on December 18th at 5pm. We will be discussing "Just Saying No" – how to manage your workload, prioritise and not get sucked into things you shouldn't be doing. As always, it promises to be a stretching opportunity to change how you work, for the better, as well as a chance for some Christmas treats with a lovely crowd of people. Places are limited, so email me to check availability. And someone has already "just said no" in a reply, so spare me the humour!

Book Review

The most inspiring read on my US trip has to be *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* by Louis Fischer. What an amazing man, so able to devote his life to a cause and a true creator of history. What was also fascinating was that he sacrificed a lot in terms of his relationship with his family, which I never knew. So he may be one of the giants of global history, but he wasn't always the best father or husband. As someone who believes that our whole being is important, it reminded me that our work or cause is not all we have in life, and we need to remember the context.

Painless Puns

Some thoughts for this month:

The fastest way to pass your own expectations is to add passion to your labour.

Mike Litman

If you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way.

Napoleon Hill

Whilst I believe in measurement in business, I like this too:

Many of the things you can count, don't count. Many of the things you can't count, really count.

Albert Einstein

A regular provider of feedback on this newsletter, especially the jokes, and one of the first names on my lips when recommending web gurus is Nigel Day of www.clarison.co.uk. He has a life purpose of improving the quality of my jokes and submitted this one:

Luke and Obi-Wan are in a Chinese restaurant and Luke's having trouble.

Finally, Obi-Wan says, "Use the forks, Luke."

To return to my usual standard, did you hear about the cannibal who was late for dinner? He was given the cold shoulder.

Final Words

Think of me as I present my humble Tiger Talk to a group of experienced naturalists (thank God they're not naturists, it will be December!). And please think how you can promote or market a project you are involved in during 2008. Now is the time to set the intention – and my associates and I are always here to help you formulate a plan.

Warmest regards

James Butler

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Careful assessment of your needs ensures that the most appropriate intervention is supplied – whether one to one ongoing coaching, strategic reviews, training events or facilitated group exercises within a team.

To discuss how you can painlessly build the business you want, call James today for a no-obligation discussion of your situation.