

Small businesses: Think big on marketing

We sponsored two Caterham Formula One cars in last weekend's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, which meant the Pixalytics name was circulating around the Las Marina track on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Sponsoring an F1 car isn't something a micro-businesses, like us, normally does; but as we described in last week's blog this came through a crowdfunding opportunity.

We spent the weekend watching the television coverage to see if we could spot our name on the car; but the speed made it almost impossible. We knew where our name was, as you can see in the pictures, and a number of times we saw the white line of the text, but couldn't make out individual the letters. We almost saw it in pit lane interviews, but the presenter's leg was in the way! Whilst in the race the closest we came was a shot from Fernando Alonso's car as he and Will Stevens, in the Caterham, raced down the straight; but everything was still a blur. So despite all this, was the sponsorship worth it? Absolutely!

Using social media before, during and after the race we were able to get the message out about our sponsorship, this meant:

- Much higher high profile on Twitter and LinkedIn, with a more impressions, views, retweets, favourites and clicks.
- Increase web traffic for the days leading up to the race.
- Comments and direct responses to last week's blog were higher than normal.
- Connections with new people and companies through the Caterham crowdfunding community.

This piece of promotion made a hugely positive impact on our profile, plus it was great fun too!

For a micro-business marketing can be a dreaded word. It's the one thing that everyone knows they should do, but it's often the thing that gets put off until tomorrow; contracts need to be delivered, invoices payments have to be chased and HMRC has to be paid. These are all far more pressing than marketing, right?

Wrong. Marketing is vital to developing a sustainable business. You need to make sure people know about your company, its products and services. Too often micro-businesses stick with the tried and tested; adverts, flyers, exhibiting and websites. All of these are important, but don't forget to think big too!

Sure the large firms have more money, more time and more people, so you can be creative. Look for the unusual and the expected, and when you see an opportunity seize it. We found out about

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Caterham watching the television at home, and within an hour had taken the chance. Consider this quote from Richard Branson, a master of self-promotion.

"Don't think what's the cheapest way to do it or the fastest way to do it. Think what's the most amazing way to do it!"

The next time you think about your marketing, don't just do what you've always done. Think unusual, think unexpected, think different, think amazing, think big! You never know what opportunities you could seize!