



# How to market

Marketing yourself  
on a budget





# Welcome

Whether you're just starting out or have been in business several years, you may be thinking about how much to spend on marketing, or if you can even afford to.

Every expert will tell you that marketing your business is essential, and they're right. But that doesn't mean you have to spend a fortune to ensure you get your business' message and brand out to a wider audience.

In our first Breathe how-to guide, we share our top 10 tips for marketing on a zero or minimal budget with advice from Breathe Partners on how they've achieved marketing success.

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# 1. Start blogging

Hubspot recently published a study of over 2,000 of its business's customers. It revealed that those who blogged had increased their monthly leads by **126%** over those who chose not to. The Breathe blog is by far our most powerful marketing tool – driving over 50% of the monthly website traffic – and it's something you should be considering.

Blogging is important not only because it provides specialist content and advice, but because of the traffic it brings to your site – the more you write, the more traffic you get. Really great blogs can gain dedicated followers who look forward to what you have to say. Remember, you're an expert. Successful blogging takes time and persistence, but the rewards can be phenomenal.

Haven't got time to write? No problem, with sites like [fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com) you can easily find people online to write original blog posts from as little as £10 each.



## Not sure what content will attract traffic?

Ubersuggest is a great, free tool which can help you understand search volumes for keywords and content ideas. Internally linking from your blog content to your own services creates a true user journey and gives you more chance to promote your own offering.

[Use Ubersuggest](#)

**DO NOT** copy and paste content from another source. This is known as duplicate content and Google frowns upon this technique. It could see you blacklisted from Google in extreme circumstances. Feel free to find another source for inspiration but this needs to be re-written as your own content with your own opinion.

Stay updated with current market and industry news and minimise jargon, as your audience may not understand certain terminology. If you can make it simple for them to understand they will trust you.



## 2.

# Embrace social media






Social media is a part of everyone's lives, which means it's a part of your potential client's lives too. However, it's not for creating profiles on multiple platforms and taking a scattergun approach to advertising your services, in the hope that someone will notice.

Creating engaging content is imperative. What's often also overlooked is how different platforms - Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram for example - are individually better equipped to promote your photos, videos or written content.

And it's not just about *your* posts, participate in discussions from others too. Be a business that others see as human.

### How often to post on social media

\*per day unless noted

|   | Low   | Suggested | High |
|---|-------|-----------|------|
|    | 3     | 15        | 30   |
|   | 2 /wk | 1         | 1    |
|  | 3 /wk | 1         | 2    |
|  | 3 /wk | 1         | 2    |
|  | 3     | 11        | 30   |



#### Plan to succeed

Click below to find out how to create your social media plan in this brilliant article from The Balance.

[Read article](#)

3.

# Get a website

Gone are the days of websites needing to be built by experts. Sites such as GoDaddy and Wix will guide you through the process and have your professional, modern looking website up and running before lunch with ease - from as little as £5 per month.

**Your website is your business' shop window.**

If it looks professional, your services will too. Your website can contain as little as your contact details, who you are and what you do. You can list it on local directories, as well as including links in your social media profiles.

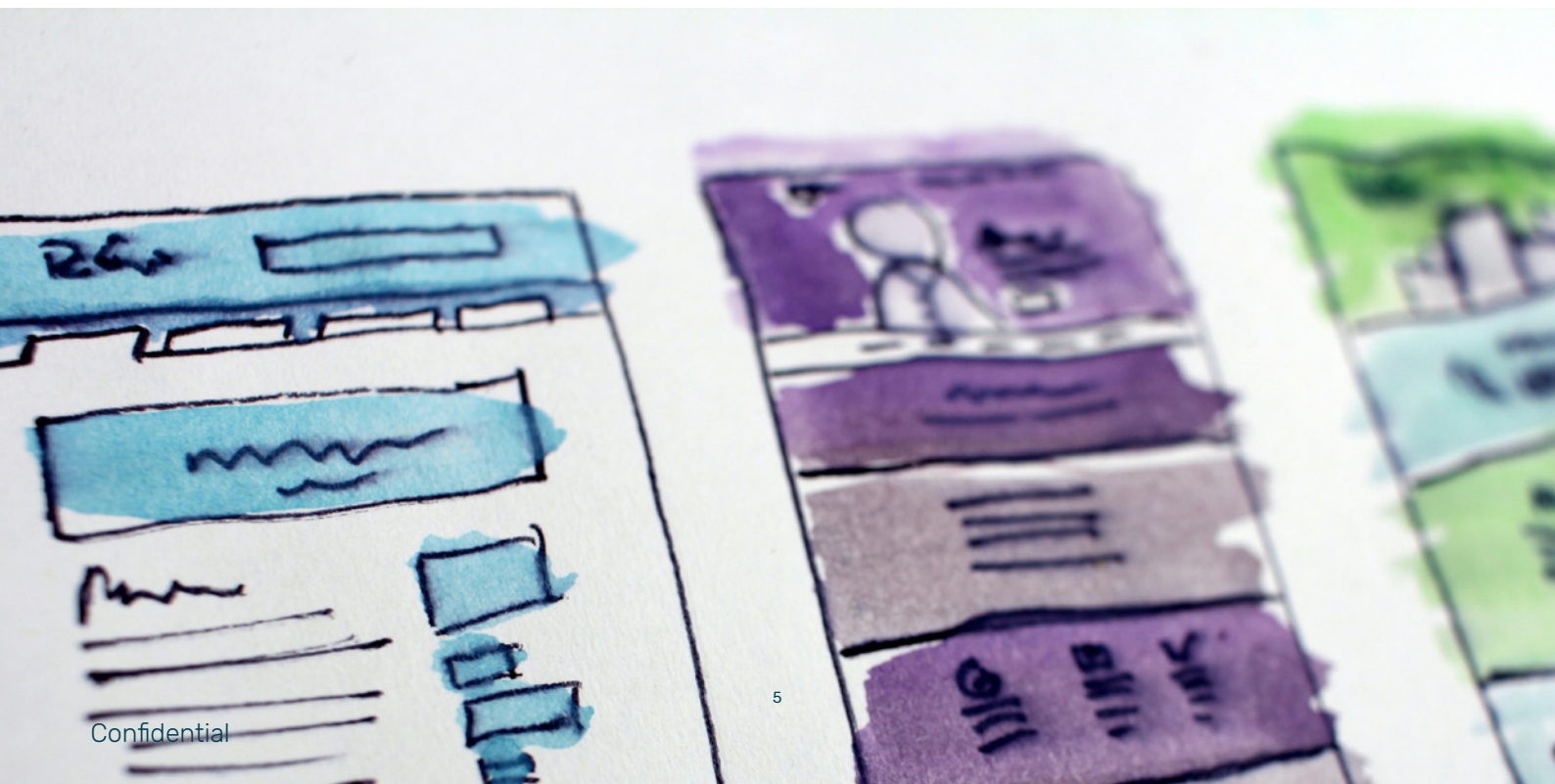
Track and pinpoint where your visitors are coming from, which channels are driving traffic and the behaviour of users with [Google Analytics](#). This insight allows you to focus on key areas of your website and produce more content - if required - which could help your metrics grow naturally.



**See how Google sees you**

It's always good practice to check how Google sees you. This SEO analyzer tool scores the performance of your site with suggestions to help improve visibility across Google and other search engines.

[Use SEO Analyser](#)



## 4.

# Email marketing

Keeping in touch with existing customers on a regular basis gives you an extra channel to promote new services, upsell existing services and share content/news about your business.

Once your website is up and running, ensure you have a **Sign up for our Newsletter** button, allowing you to keep in touch - and maintain relationships - with new and potential customers.

The numbers may only trickle in at first - try offering a sign up bonus (maybe your weight in chocolate, or more realistically a free HR health check) - but you'll slowly build a base of contacts who you can nurture into customers.

You can start your email campaigns with a free email marketing service like MailChimp.

### Increase email sign-ups

Here's an article to help you increase your email sign-ups.



[Read article](#)

## 5.

# Network

Love it or hate it, networking is essential to building strong connections and obtaining new business. Networking events can be found in every local town - and region - and they're popular for a reason, they work.

However, don't think of networking as just the formalised events. Speaking to fellow parents in the playground or chatting to your gym class members, that's networking. We're not saying to promote your HR services on day one, but always strive to build relationships and simply let people know about your services when the time's right.



## 6. Be a guest

A lot of people aren't keen on public speaking, but when you're an expert on a subject, you'd be surprised at how quickly it becomes comfortable, and how much people will want to listen to you.

**You don't even have to be the host.**

Contact local radio stations, magazines or networking groups to see if they need a regular expert to guest talk about HR issues – or your specific area of expertise. You can become the local go-to and **trusted** personality that people think of when they need HR help.



At Breathe's Partner Summit, we invited seven Partners – some a little nervous – to take part in an open Q+A panel in front of 150 attendees to discuss their knowledge and experience. It was a wonderful success.

So, if you want to be on our panel next year and get your speaking career off to a great start – get in touch.



7.

# Ask for referrals

Referrals are one of the quickest ways to grow your business and positive word of mouth is possibly the best form of free marketing. However, many small business owners are uncomfortable asking for referrals, or maybe assume that clients will go out of their way to spread the news that they've had great service.

If a client doesn't spread the word, that's not to say that they don't want to, it's likely they're concentrating on their own business.



Make asking for referrals a part of your routine, drop in a line like this at the end of your e-mails/conversations;

*"It's been a joy working with you and I'm very pleased you're happy with my work. If you come across anyone looking for (your services), I'd be very grateful if you could pass on my details"*

8.

# Give it away

With Breathe, everyone gets a free trial before they sign up. If someone has the chance to try your product or service and they have a positive experience, the chances are they'll be happy to pay for it.



You could offer a HR Health Check, a business consultation or access to document templates via your website.

9.

# Make it snappy

The good old “elevator pitch” has changed a little. To grab the attention of a prospective client, research tells us we have only 8 seconds to engage them before they start to cloud over.

Can you tell someone not just what you do, but how you can help them, in 8 seconds – or just a few words?

For example;

*Breathe, HR software to end people admin...*

If you can – fantastic – you’ve just bought yourself another 60 seconds to really sell yourself.

It’s imperative to have a couple of lines you can reel off without hesitation to make potential clients stop and think, “wow, we need to talk”.



## Find your “Why”

Before you start thinking about your opening lines, have a look at this game changing talk by Simon Sinek on finding your “Why” – which he subsequently made into a bestselling book.

[Watch talk](#)

# 10. Get nominated

Whether it's your region, county or village, there's no harm in entering local business awards. Ask a friend to nominate you - or nominate yourself. Some may have a small fee, but many will be completely free to enter.

## **4 tips to writing an award submission**

No one can explain your services better than you, so during the application process take the time to think about your entry. Here's some great tips:



[Read article](#)

You could even ask friends and other businesses to support you if you need some votes, you'll see this on social media all the time.

A successful campaign is going to boost your local awareness, motivate you and potentially bring in new business. Fingers crossed, you might even get a new "Nominated" or "Winners" logo to display on your social channels.

No matter the result, you can have some great fun and make new contacts just by taking part.



# Breathe Partner

## Top tips



### **Michelle Raymond**

The Peoples Partner

I have found video marketing to be one of the most cost-effective ways to raise awareness of my personal and business brand.

We know sometimes that HR can be a bit dull and not seen as the most exciting part of your business. However, video is an effective marketing tool - accessible to your clients and potential customers - positioning you as an expert. It's a fun way of conveying your message.

In May 2018, I posted a 5-minute video on GDPR titled 'GDPR Made Simple for small business owners'. It received over 25,000 views and I was inundated with requests to support businesses with GDPR and HR. This is a perfect example of video marketing working at its best.

Not only does video marketing educate your audience - keeping them engaged - but it is also relatable, shareable and often doesn't cost you a penny. Here's how to market your business for next to nothing using video marketing.

Items you will need:

- A smartphone or tablet
- A small tripod
- A selfie ring light
- Personality (definitely need this)

If you have access to natural lighting, position your camera and tripod in front, so you are facing the window. The camera should be positioned landscape, so you don't get the two black lines either side of the video.

When recording, you should look at the camera (and not yourself) so when your customers watch the video, you will be talking to them directly.

Keep your videos under 6 minutes and share information on the most pressing HR matters.

Once completed, post to LinkedIn and share on your other social media platforms using captivating HR titles.

When you put your videos in front of your target audience, you relate to them. Bring your personality to the table and let it shine through. Your customers will buy your HR services, because of YOU.

### **Want to know more?**

You can get in touch directly with Michelle via [thepeoplespartner.com](http://thepeoplespartner.com) or contact her on LinkedIn.



# Breathe Partner

## Top tips



### **Michelle Thomas**

The HR Works Consultancy

Without doubt, my most effective source of client work has been through networking. I decided early on to invest in joining BNI (Business Networking International) - a regular networking meeting that meets each week. It's a big commitment to get up at 5am every week, but the proof is in the pudding and it's worked really well for me.

Annual membership is broken down to just over £20 per week including venue hire and breakfast. It was a no brainer as the costs were recouped within months of joining and now accounts for approximately 70% of my business. Plus, the value goes beyond just income.

Going it alone can be a fairly isolated place sometimes and so it helps to have like-minded business people you can call upon - not only professionally but also as a support network and friendships. Ultimately, networking will only work for you if you believe in it and yourself. There are a whole host of networking alternatives.

### **Social Media**

The best thing about using social media as a marketing strategy is - it's free! But that doesn't mean that it's easy. There is definitely a 'time and effort' requirement. Establishing a presence on social media comes from regular and consistent posts.

It's important to focus on channels that work for you and your business - after that, it's all about using it to tell your audience about your services with regular, interesting updates.

For me, it's all about LinkedIn and - rather surprisingly - Instagram. LinkedIn is great for lead generation as you can specifically target your audience right down to the person or role within a particular business with whom you'd like to work or connect with.

Instagram is more about brand awareness and getting your name out there - which in turn - makes you more likely to be at the forefront of people's mind, if - and when - they need HR support. Plus, it's fun! HR can often be perceived as a rules and regs 'policing' profession - with Instagram, I can lighten the tone and make it engaging.

### **Existing Contacts**

Never underestimate the power of your existing network of contacts. Some of my best pieces of work have come from ex-colleagues, ex-employers and people I studied for my CIPD with.

Take time to nurture the contacts you have - make sure they know what you are doing and the types of people or work you are looking for.

### **Want to know more?**

You can get in touch directly with Michelle via [michelle@hrworksconsultancy.com](mailto:michelle@hrworksconsultancy.com) or contact her on LinkedIn.



# Breathe Partner Top tips



## **Jemma Fairclough-Haynes**

Orchard Employment Law

I started Orchard Employment Law in 2015 in my living room with no budget. Four years on, I have been able to employ a member of staff, move into an office space and gain a client base of over 100.

As the old saying goes 'if it's not broke, don't fix it' so, although the business is doing well, I have kept my marketing budget small.

We have used social media to raise our profile and I have organically grown a Twitter following of over 4000, and more recently have been spending time on LinkedIn and Instagram.

I co-host on a local business radio show - Bunker Xtra - a couple of times a month and have been a guest on other radio stations in the South East. Radio stations are always looking for guests with useful and interesting content and it's a great way to share your knowledge with lots of people. It's also an opportunity for people to learn about you as a person. All the radio stations I have been on are in a digital format, so I have been able to download the show and share it across all our media platforms. I have even appeared on TV which was very exciting.

We still network, although not as much as we used to, and I have been lucky enough to be invited to speak at several events. Not only is this good for marketing but it also brings in revenue.

### **Want to know more?**

You can get in touch directly with Jemma via [info@orchardemploymentlaw.co.uk](mailto:info@orchardemploymentlaw.co.uk) or find her on LinkedIn.

# Thanks

Breathe would like to thank our contributors for their vital input into this how-to guide. If you think you could add some valuable content then please get in touch; [ewan@breathehr.com](mailto:ewan@breathehr.com)

Future issues will include How to Expo, How to Build Breathe into your Business, and How to Network, plus much more...

# Appendix

HubSpot FREE Marketing resources  
<https://www.hubspot.com/resources/template>

FREE Content and keyword suggestions  
<https://neilpatel.com/ubersuggest/>

FREE SEO Analyser  
<https://neilpatel.com/seo-analyzer/>

Google Analytics  
<https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/>

