



standotheek

Winning customers, retaining customers.



The Art of Refinishing.

**Accident repair •
Scratch removal •
Retouching/buffing •
Vintage car service •**

**Pickup and delivery •
Call 0202 12 34 56 •**



**The
Müller
bodyshop**



**Turn right after 100m.
42, Sample Street**

Introduction.

In this brochure you will frequently come across the name "Müller". This name has been chosen deliberately. It is a very common name and you are well familiar with Mr Müller's line of business. The fictitious Müller bodyshop is just one example of many similar businesses which are all trying to stand out from the competition.

This brochure presents some of the results of the Müller bodyshop's ventures into the world of marketing. You may possibly arrive at different results because your own bodyshop is positioned differently in the marketplace or because you prefer a different design for your stationery and promotional materials. This is just the way it should be - after all, your goal is to make your bodyshop stand out as being unique in the eyes of your customers. Marketing will help you achieve just that!

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Marketing. It's not a buzzword, but a business tool.

Marketing is not just another word for advertising. Marketing is the full package of measures and activities which ensure your business's success in the market-place. This not only includes visible measures but also planning, coordination and control.

Marketing instruments allow you to identify existing and potential customer needs which can then be converted into actual demand for your products and services. So what we are talking about is not a short-term effort but rather a management tool to keep your company on the right course in the long term.

Of course, you know your customers better than anybody else. But then, you know only those customers who are already in your customer file. For example, you may have made a good name for yourself among the car dealerships in your area based on your

precise work, your professional expertise and your compliance with deadlines. All these factors speak for your bodyshop - but why are they not known to all those motorists who continue to take their cars to the dealership for body repairs instead of coming straight to you?

The question which we want to answer jointly with you on the following pages is: What tools and instruments can you use to secure and improve your revenues and profits over the medium and long term? The answers which you will find will help you win new customers and structure your business volume for higher margins and profits.

- Marketing makes bodyshops fit for the market.
- Marketing helps you tap into new customer groups.
- Marketing secures your future revenues and profits.

1

Analysis

- Market situation
- Customer structure
- Competitive situation

5

Control

possible adjustment of:

- Analysis
- Objectives
- Strategy
- Measures

- **What short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives do I have for my business?**
- **What are my competitors doing?**
- **Am I being recommended by my customers?**

2

Objectives

- Expand market share
- Raise name awareness
- Increase sales

- **What do my customers want?**
- **How can I recruit additional/different customers?**

3

Strategy

- Product
- Price
- Communication
- Image
- Staff

- **What revenue volume do I need to keep my capacity fully utilised?**
- **How can I generate more sales?**
- **More profit through higher quality?**

4

Measures

examples:

- Advertisements
- Business stationery
- Press release
- Website
- Direct mailing

- **What is my sales/profit ratio?**
- **How important is public awareness of my name?**
- **What kind of marketing budget should I spend?**

- **What form of advertising should I choose?**
- **What can be improved about my bodyshop's appearance and image?**
- **How do I implement suitable advertising measures?**

- **How should I measure the success of my advertising activities?**
- **Have I reached my objectives?**
- **Do my employees support my marketing concept?**



Marketing means looking ahead. And taking a long, hard look at your business.

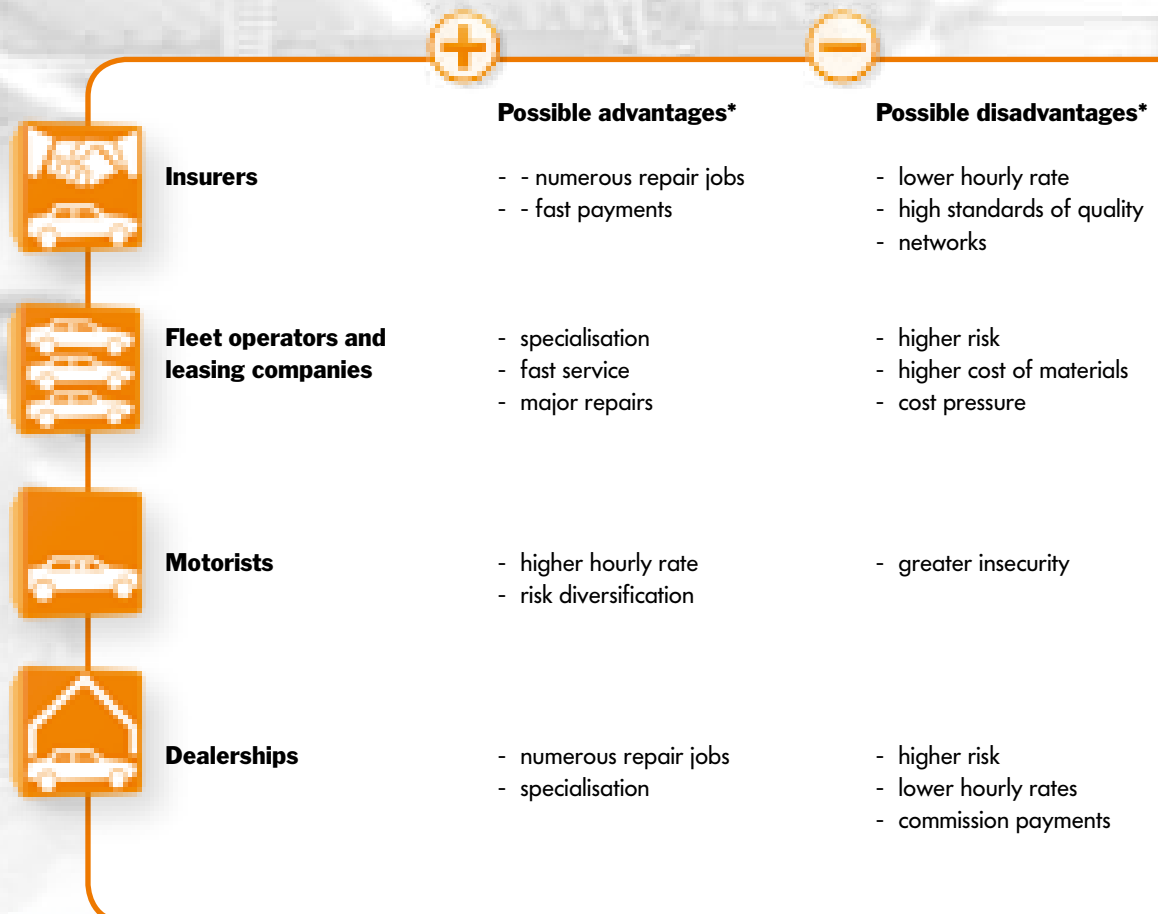
Marketing means mapping out the road ahead for your business. However, to be able to do that you need to be very sure about your starting position. This means you have to take stock of your current position in the marketplace and your present level of competitiveness. And you need to be aware of how your business is perceived by others in this market environment.

To be able to formulate arguments which people can really appreciate, you need to be fully familiar with your business and know about your strengths and your position:

“Our bodyshop trains young people. Over the past 10 years a total of eight trainees have completed an apprenticeship with us - both in the office and in the shop. Today we emphasise this fact in our advertising, which has helped us attract many customers.”

Investing in marketing as a business tool is more than a purely financial consideration. It should also be an inspiration to think beyond your day-to-day business routines. Such investments are clearly of a long-term nature, given that the accident repair market is going through a phase of profound changes.

Concentration and consolidation in the marketplace are the order of the day, driven by increasingly higher technical standards which can only be met by spending more money on equipment and human resources. While the number of vehicles on the road is rising, the number of damage repairs paid by insurance companies is stagnating or declining. Therefore it is important to build a profitable customer base which is not confined to a single group of customers. The more pillars your business rests on, the better.



*Advantages and disadvantages may differ between bodyshops

I have a lot of customers. But which customers are the most profitable ones?



If you want to cater to your customers' needs, you need to be familiar with your customers. What does your bodyshop's customer structure look like at present? Do you work for insurers or dealerships, for fleets or leasing companies, or for motorists?

Each of these customer groups has different needs. While corporate and business customers value smooth and reliable handling and a favourable package price, retail customers tend to pay more attention to quality and personal attention. From your business perspective, these different groups predominantly mean different levels of revenues and margins.

What do the different customer groups mean for your bodyshop?

- Managing capacity utilisation at your bodyshop
- Short-term or long-term customer relationships
- Different levels of administrative efforts.

For example, insurance companies' damage management programmes may deliver interesting margins but they may also result in your bodyshop becoming economically dependent on these customers. If such contracts account for a third of your business, your viability may be

jeopardised if and when these contracts are discontinued. The important thing is to build a sustainable customer structure which isolates you against changing market situations. This healthy mix should include motorists who should, however, not account for all of your business.



Importance for revenues



Importance for profits

What importance does this customer group have for your bodyshop's sales revenues and profits?

Rate on a scale from
1 = very high to
5 = very low





The right mix makes the difference: Define the most effective messages.

From time to time your business is confronted with factors outside your direct control - competitors, laws and regulations as well as social structures in your environment. But there are also a number of essential factors which you have full control over:

- You decide what products and services you offer.
- You can price your products and services within certain limits.
- You can shape your bodyshop's appearance and image.
- You can train your staff to contribute to a favourable perception of your business.

These four factors need to be reflected in your advertising messages. Taken together, they represent the so-called marketing mix which needs to be optimally tuned both in qualitative and in quantitative terms.

Products and services

Product offerings and repair methods:

- Glass and plastic repairs
- SMART repairs
- MICRO repairs
- Paintless dent removal
- Wheel mounting and alignment
- Body repairs

Customer services:

- "Color for Life" guarantee
- Salvage and towing service
- "Mobile" cost estimates
- Free car pick-up and delivery
- Information day for school-leavers
- Car cleaning

Market additional benefits for customers having their car repaired:

- Free beverages
- Toy cars / surprises for kids
- Customer newsletters
- After-sales service

Pricing strategies

Low-price strategies are aimed at:

- Market penetration
- Sales growth
- Expansion of market share

- Can support a quality image
- Make sense for bodyshops which are well positioned in the market
- Can be applied for special services

Other possibilities

- Variable or stable prices
- Seasonal rebates
- Special actions/offers

Strategy as the key to success.



Marketing is 30 percent good ideas and 70 percent good planning. So now you know which customers generate the highest revenues and the highest margins. You currently do most work for car dealerships and other commercial customers and now you want to increasingly attract motorists? Because they support higher margins?

Needless to say, you would like to enjoy all advantages offered by the different customer groups at once - a steady supply of work, high sales revenues and attractive margins. This is where the planning has to start. Winning motorists as customers requires a different approach, different arguments and different instruments compared to the fleet operators, leasing companies and commercial customers who you usually deal with.

You decide what is important for your bodyshop and which customer group you want to address primarily. These decisions are the basis for your future customer portfolio and for the definition of your marketing activities.



Appearance of your business

- appealing exterior look
- interior design
- cleanliness
- appropriate furniture and fittings
- customer parking
- clear signage
- master refinisher certificate on display

Employees

- good communicators
- friendly behaviour
- competent professionals
- helpful and accommodating persons



What are your objectives?
Higher sales?
Greater profits?



Insurers



Fleet operators and leasing companies



Motorists



Dealerships



Market observation: Keeping your eyes open.

To succeed in competition, you have to behave like a competitor. This includes watching the other competitors as they line up at the starting line. What type of running shoes are they wearing? How well-trained are they? What strategy do I need to keep up with them or outdistance them?

Applied to your business, such questions are: What are my strengths? What do I need to improve? Where are the opportunities? What risks are there? Take a critical look at your own bodyshop and at your competitors' offerings. This will

allow you to conduct a clear analysis and to identify your present competitive position.

Even as a business owner, you are also a customer on a day-to-day basis. Be sure to keep your eyes open when you go shopping for products and services. Why do you feel well served in some places and disappointed in others? What has made you a loyal customer at your favourite supermarket or bakery?

It is worth taking a look at yourself from the customer's point of view - this is the perspective which counts when planning marketing activities. Everything should be scrutinised - from your product offering to the assessment of your own quality standards to your employees' job satisfaction. Now you may wonder what on earth "job satisfaction" had to do with your bodyshop's image among the public. Well, a lot. For one thing, your employees act as multipliers of your bodyshop's image and for another, their satisfaction with their jobs will also be perceived by all customers and prospects visiting your bodyshop. This means that job satisfaction actually helps to keep your customers satisfied.

How are your competitors positioned vis-à-vis the different customers groups? What recipes are successful?

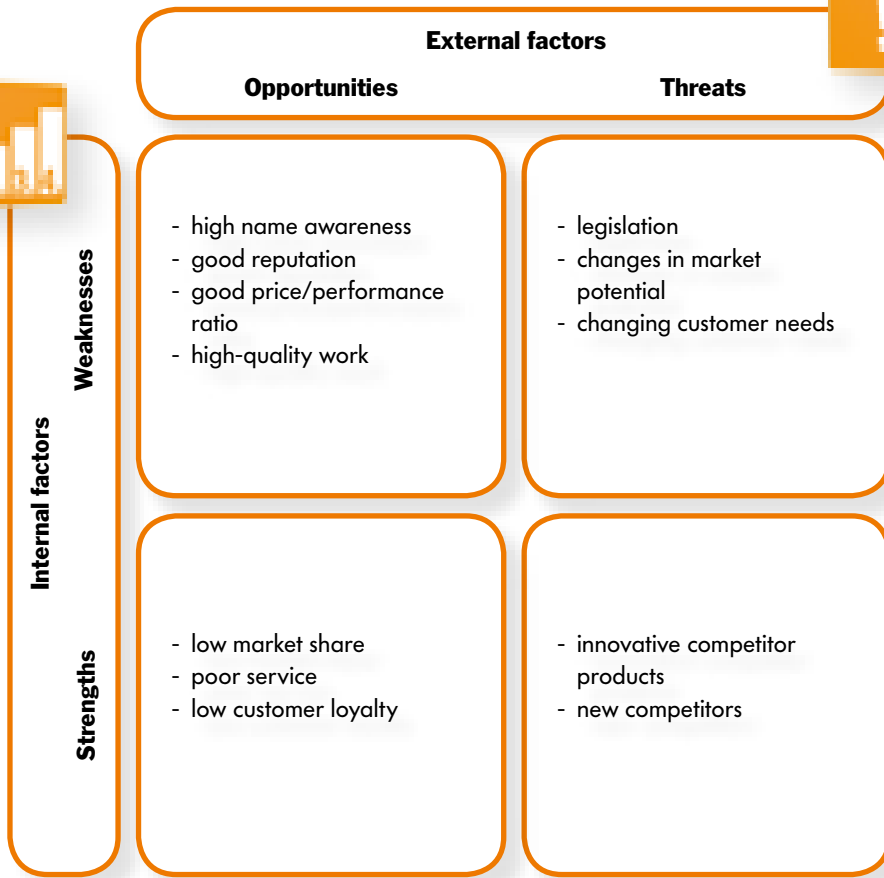
_____ Insurers

_____ Fleet operators and leasing companies

_____ Motorists

_____ Dealerships





What are your strengths?

What are your weaknesses?

Your strengths and weaknesses are factors which you can control. This is why this type of analysis is also called "business analysis". In contrast, you have only limited control over external opportunities and threats. This type of analysis is also referred to as an "environmental analysis". All factors need to be viewed in their entirety. This approach allows you to derive different strategies:

- You look for opportunities to complement your present success.
- The strengths of your business point the way to new potentials.
- Possible risks are minimised through the expansion of existing potentials.
- Specific strengths are positioned in a way which prevents potential risks from becoming problems.

It is not always possible to say which strategy matches your business one hundred percent. However, it is possible to identify a focal area which can and should be supported by selective measures in other areas.





Where are you headed? And how will you get there?

Winning new customers is also always a worthwhile goal. But as you have seen on the previous pages, this is not the only marketing objective. Other possible objectives include:

- improving customer satisfaction and customer loyalty
- boost vehicle throughput
- gain more profitable customers
- raise your market share
- offer better service
- achieve stronger/better public visibility.

And whatever objective you are pursuing - you also want to raise your profits.

How can this be achieved? Well, by adjusting those factors which are under your control, i.e. your products and services, your prices and your service. In each of these areas you already offer your customers something which makes you attractive in comparison with your competitors. So now the task is to find arguments and solutions to align your business even more effectively with the needs of the market.

The next step consists in tailoring these messages to the specific expectations of your chosen target group.



What objectives do you want to accomplish for your business?

1st objective:

2nd objective:

3rd objective:

4th objective:

How do you want to accomplish these objectives?

Spreading the message.



Advertising means drawing attention to your business, highlighting your bodyshop as well as its products and services and leaving a favourable impression on your target audience. This can easily be achieved with your existing customers who are familiar with the quality of your work, your service and your reliability. But how can you reach new prospects?

Actually, there is a whole variety of measures which can be taken. Each measure is geared to a specific partial objective and sustained success requires an appropriate combination of measures. Investing in advertising pays off. What percentage of sales revenues should be spent on advertising? Between 1 and 3 percent are customary in this industry, even though any advertising budget should reflect the size and structure of the business.

This chart shows which measure is suited to which target group.

Appearance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Print advertisements			✓	
Radio commercials			✓	
Flyers			✓	
Folders	✓	✓	✓	✓
Posters/billboards			✓	
Direct mailing	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phone marketing	✓	✓	✓	✓
Color for Life	✓	✓	✓	✓
Own website	✓	✓	✓	✓
Press relations			✓	
Open day			✓	
Relationship management	✓	✓	✓	✓

✓ = suitable

✓ = partially suitable



Appearance.



Helpful hints for implementation.

- Recruiting an advertising agency or design firm is an important decision which should not be taken lightly. Be sure to ask for references and samples of work done for clients with similar businesses. Look for an agency which "speaks your language".
- Ask the agencies for advice on how to spend the defined budget.
- Be sure that the agency or the designers give you an unlimited right to use the designs and that they agree to surrender the data files. This will enable you to switch to a different agency if and when required.

Check the external appearance of your business.

The following questions should be answered with a clear yes:

- Does my business come across as likeable and competent?
- Does its external appearance follow a clear line - from vehicle lettering to stationery to the website?
- Is my core competence conveyed in an understandable manner through all media?

First impressions.


One often speaks of "impressive people" whose appearance leaves a strong effect on those who meet them. Always remember that your bodyshop, too, leaves an impression on people. Many different details add up to define your "appearance". Customers should receive positive messages about you even before they step through the door. A consistent and unified look makes your business more memorable and recognisable.

People remember what they like.

This is why you should make sure that your stationery as well as your facade and vehicle lettering are all designed along a clear line. The advertising materials described on the following pages should also share this design.

And what about your workshop? Make sure that the interior design encourages people to stay - cleanliness and tidiness are important factors. Also, don't be shy about demonstrating your expertise and display your master's certificate as well as any other certifications in a well visible spot.

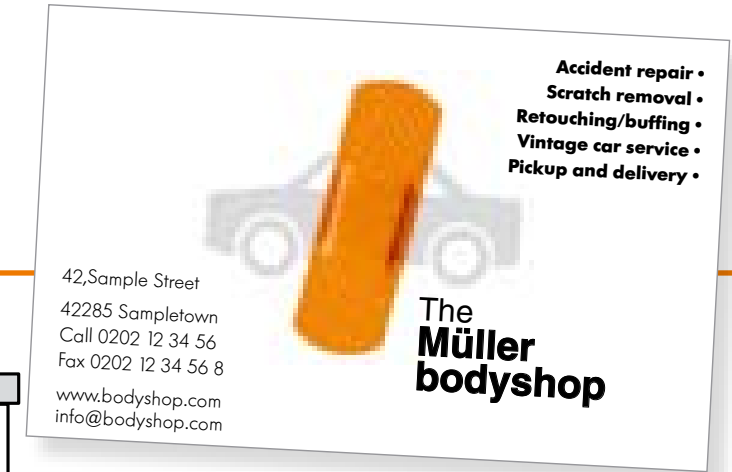
Are there enough customer parking slots? Is there enough signage pointing first-time visitors to your office? And last but not least, nothing is more effective in leaving a positive impression than friendly and accommodating staff. If necessary, alert your employees to the need for customer-oriented behaviour.



- Accident repair
- Scratch removal
- Retouching/buffing
- Vintage car service
- Pickup and delivery

Call 0202 12 34 56

The Müller bodyshop



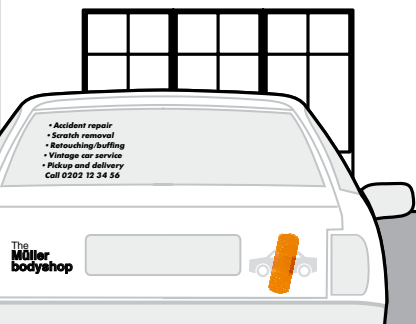
- Accident repair
- Scratch removal
- Retouching/buffing
- Vintage car service
- Pickup and delivery

42, Sample Street
42285 Sampletown
Call 0202 12 34 56
Fax 0202 12 34 56 8
www.bodyshop.com
info@bodyshop.com

The Müller bodyshop



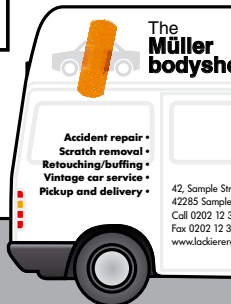
Reception



- Accident repair
- Scratch removal
- Retouching/buffing
- Vintage car service
- Pickup and delivery

Call 0202 12 34 56

The Müller bodyshop



- Accident repair
- Scratch removal
- Retouching/buffing
- Vintage car service
- Pickup and delivery

42, Sample Street
42285 Sampletown
Call 0202 12 34 56
Fax 0202 12 34 56 8
www.bodyshop.com

The Müller bodyshop



Advertisements.

Advertisements get the message out.

The biggest advantage of advertisements lies in the large circulation of newspapers, free papers, the Yellow Pages and the Internet. Advertisements let you reach out to your target groups in private households and small businesses.

The costs of print advertisements always depend on the circulation of the newspaper or publication and the size of the advertisements. Even though these costs can be considerable, advertisements can be suitable for your business if you can set aside an appropriate budget and space out the publication intervals.

Speed is of the essence.

Daily papers are the most up to date mediums, enabling you to place ads at short notice and for clearly defined regions and areas. This way you can run specific ads for individual services and special offers. Also, the ad format can be varied from one issue to the next. Your image can be strengthened in the long term through regular ads highlighting your bodyshop, your excellent service, special offers or areas of specialisation. Ask the ad sales department about discounts granted on multiple ad placements!

Local free papers are also effective in raising your profile. These papers are studied extensively by people in your neighbourhood looking for special offers, skilled tradesmen and specialist services.

Advertisements plus editorial coverage doubles the effect.

You may even succeed in getting the local newspaper or ad paper interested in publishing an editorial piece on your bodyshop. Your apprenticeship programme for school-leavers could possibly provide an interesting topic. If you are planning a company anniversary or an Open Day, tell the ad sales executive about it. If you are a valued customer, he or she will certainly pass the information on to the local editorial department.

Look sharp - even in print.

It is important for your ad to stand out. This is why it should not be designed in a hurry. Make it stand out by including a photo, an illustration or a witty headline which grab readers' attention. To the extent possible, color should also be used because color is what your business is all about after all.

Page placement is a key factor in the effectiveness of your ad. Research has shown that ads on right-hand pages get noted more frequently. Do not forget to include your phone number and address in your ad.



Accident damage? We can help.

**Vehicle pickup, courtesy car, complete service.
Call +49 (0) 1234-5678**

The Müller bodyshop

42, Sample Street • 42285 Sampletown • www.bodyshop.com

Let us celebrate.

Celebrating 30 years of commitment to high-quality paintwork. Join our party from 12 noon to 4 p.m. on April 12. There'll be dancing, drinks and a draw.



John Sample
Sample Street 45
42285 Sampletown
Call 0123 4567890
www.bodyshop.com

Helpful hints for implementation.

- Contact the ad sales department or the publisher (look for the phone numbers in the masthead of the paper).
- Ask for their advertisement rate card.
- Select the publication dates which are ideal for you.
- Look for an agency or designer to produce your layout, text and the ready-to-print copy.
- One-off ad placements are not really effective. It is better to define regular publication intervals and to stick to them.

Check your ad.

All questions should be answered with a "yes".

- Does this paper's readership include my target group?
- Does my ad stand out?
- Are my illustrations and/or text interesting for my target group?
- Does the ad make clear what service my bodyshop offers?
- Does the ad make clear what "special" service my bodyshop offers?
- Does the ad make clear who the reader should contact and how?
- Does the ad match the look of my bodyshop?

If all your competitors offer "accident repairs", all you need to do is advertise "accident repairs with life-long guarantee" and your offer will stand out from crowd.

Lifetime warranty.

**Accident repair with lifetime paint warranty.
Vehicle pickup, courtesy car, full service.
Call +49 (0) 1234-5678**





Commercials on local radio.

- > Screeching brakes > loud bang
- > A traffic accident

- > Voice 1: **Oops. I need a bodyshop.**
- > Voice 2: **Call the Müller Bodyshop. They offer a full service.**

- > Voice 1: **A full service?**
- > Voice 2: **Yes, they will pick up your car and bring you a rental car.**

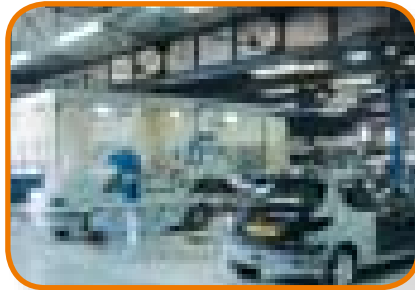
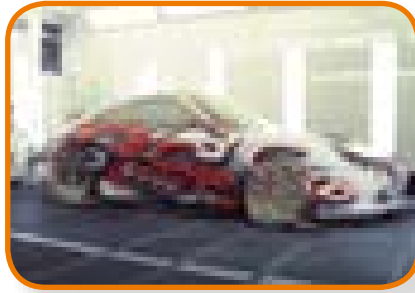
- > Voice 1: **And what about the repair?**
- > Voice 2: **They repair everything to the car maker's specifications. And then they clean the entire car. In addition you get a life-long guarantee on the new paintwork - free of charge. So if you are in an accident, call the Müller Bodyshop on 0202 12 34 56.**

- > Voice 1: **What was that number again?**
- > Voice 2: **0202 12 34 56. The Müller Bodyshop.**

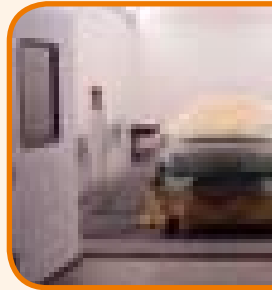
- > **Sound of car starting and driving off.**

"Only major companies can afford to produce and place such elaborate radio commercials", you may say. But this does not have to be true. Advertising on local radio is not all that expensive. Moreover, many local radio stations are more popular than the major radio networks. Many commuters - who account for the bulk of your target group - listen to the radio while driving their cars. Radio commercials can vary in duration. As for the production of your commercial, your local radio station will gladly point you to a capable recording studio in your area.

Needless to say, a radio commercial is more expensive than an ad in a weekly paper. However, a radio commercial also gives you direct access to a large part of your potential customers while also allowing you to highlight special offers at very short notice.



Photos.



Helpful hints for implementation.

- Contact the radio station.
- Check what time of the day is best suited for reaching your target group (e.g. commuters on their way home)
- Ask for a rate card showing the prices and the station's coverage values (media data).
- Contact an agency to produce the commercials. Most radio stations will be happy to point you to a capable service provider.
- Research has shown that repetitions of a short commercial are more effective than less frequent placements of a long commercial.

Check your commercial.

All six questions should be answered in the affirmative:

- Does the commercial reach my target group?
- Does my commercial stand out from the programming environment?
- Will I arouse listeners' attention?
- Does the ad make clear what service my bodyshop offers?
- Does the ad make clear what "special" service my bodyshop offers?
- Are my phone number and address clearly audible?



A picture says more than a thousand words.

Whatever service you are offering - a good picture will bring across your special expertise in a flash. In many cases not a single word is required. Your modern bodyshop equipment and the fascination of a professionally refinished paintwork can best be communicated through good photos. This is why it is recommendable to compile a small image database containing photos of your bodyshop and of outstanding repair and refinishing jobs, possibly also with impressive "before" and "after" comparisons.

One shot, many uses.

Whether it is on your website, in an editorial piece in a paper or in a presentation folder - photos can be used for a wide variety of advertising and sales purposes. However, only a high-quality photo can really capture and convey the quality of your work. Therefore it makes sense to use a professional whose expertise as a photographer is on par with your own professional expertise as a refinisher.

Things to remember:

- You, your employees and your bodyshop should look your very best for the photo session.
- All persons photographed need to sign a consent before their photos may be published.
- If you hire a professional photographer, be sure to agree that you obtain all photos in data form plus an unlimited right to use the photos for your advertising and marketing purposes at no extra costs.



Folders, flyers and leaflets.



The flyer: everything you have to offer at a glance.

As the term suggests, a flyer is much lighter and less voluminous than a brochure or catalogue, resulting in simplified production and lower production costs. Simply flyers can in fact be produced at comparatively low costs. Today's digital printing processes also allow for relatively short print runs with short lead times. Flyers can be used for a variety of purposes. They can be handed to customers and prospects visiting your bodyshop, distributed at events, attached to mail-shots or included in presentation folders submitted to insurers, fleet operators and leasing companies. However, it is worth remembering that recipients will draw conclusions about the quality of your work from a poorly worded and sloppily designed flyer. Both the design and the contents of the flyer should therefore be carefully planned and executed.

More than a calling card.

Rather than simply printing your name, address and phone number on the flyer, be sure to introduce yourself properly to the reader and highlight any special services you offer. The idea is to differentiate yourself from your competitors and to be perceived as unique. If you already use a slogan or catchphrase in your advertisements, be sure to use it on the flyer as well. Draw attention to your high standards of workmanship and service. And don't forget to tell people who this special offer is coming from. How long has your bodyshop been in business? How many people do you employ? Consider adding a "how to find us" sketch to the address section at the bottom. Including a voucher for a special service or rebate may also be a good idea. In this case your flyer will receive greater attention and you get a direct feedback.

You certainly know the saying "You never get a second chance to make a good first impression". This also holds true for your advertising and promotion materials. Remember that your goal is to sell professional work - this can only be achieved using professional tools. Creating stylish pages and fiddling around with page design software requires a certain degree of computer literacy and also tends to be quite time-consuming. This type of work is better left to professional web designers and agencies who are used to producing top-notch results.

Accident repair •
Scratch removal •
Retouching/buffing •
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Pickup and delivery •



Helpful hints for implementation.

- Define the purpose of the flyer:
Do you merely want to get your name out or do you want to present your full range of services?
- Define a budget and ask your agency to outline possible solutions.

Image folder to present your bodyshop.

- Describe your range of services.
- Put the focus on special services and competencies.
- Provide information on your bodyshop and paintshop equipment.
- Read the draft from the customer's point of view!

Flyer.

- Flyers can be dropped in letterboxes and distributed at sports events, flea markets, second hand car markets and in specific public spaces.
- This may require a permit from the event organisers and/or your local government.
- Distribution can be handled by service providers who can be found in the yellow pages.

For Repanet members:

Repanet members can download different master files for flyers from the Repanet advertising materials portal.

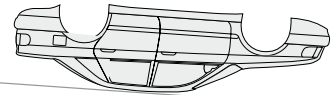
Check your folder.

All questions should be answered in the affirmative:

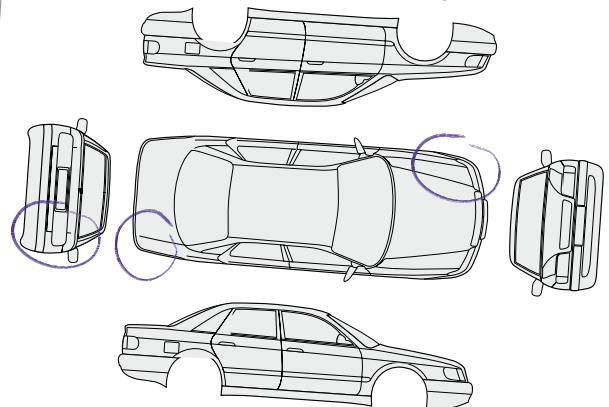
- Is the contents suitable for my target group?
- Does the folder make clear what services my bodyshop offers?
- Does the folder make clear what "special" service my bodyshop offers?
- Are all contact details included – phone number, address, and route description?
- Does the folder reflect the look of my bodyshop?

Diagnosis: dented.

Beware of rust!



Ugly scratches! We can help.



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bodyshop

42, Sample Street • 42285 Sampletown • www.bodyshop.com





Direct mailing and phone marketing.



**24-hour quick repair by the Müller bodyshop
= short downtimes for your fleet vehicles.**



The Müller bodyshop | 42, Sample Street | 42285 Sampletown

Herr Peter Beispielkunde
Samplestreet 35
42119 Sampletown

Make it personal: direct contact.

Maybe you are looking for a way to approach customers and prospects directly because printed ads and radio commercials also go out to a lot of readers and listeners to whom your services are completely irrelevant. Such a way exists in the form of a direct, personalised letter.

Making the most of every occasion.

There are plenty of occasions for sending people letters. You can thank first-time customers for their business. Or you can draw people's attention to special offers such as spring or winter inspections. To make the letter more interesting, add a discount coupon, a flyer or a newsletter. You can also run a prize competition. If you already manage your customer data on your computer, you have all names and addresses at your fingertips. You may consider adding your customers' birthdays, special preferences or particular features of their cars to your database. This will permit even more effective personalisation of your letters.

Good addresses are valuable assets.

Of course mail-shots can also be used to generate new business leads. This usually takes a little more time and effort because the addresses of potential customers need to be collected and verified first. The Internet and today's digital business directories are of great help in this respect. Be sure to capture all addresses correctly. Before sending letters to businesses and companies, you need to find out who or to what department the letter should be sent.



Hitting the right tone – relevant information is of the essence.

The best way to proceed is to establish an annual schedule which determines the events and offerings to be communicated to your different target groups. Then you can select the matching addresses from your database or CRM database. Now comes the most important task: drafting the letter. It is important that the recipient can instantly see what your letter is all about and what kind of service you are offering. The sender - i.e. your bodyshop - must be equally clear. Confine the text to the information which really counts. Put yourself in the recipient's shoes - ask yourself how YOU would react if this letter landed on your desk? Once you have finalised the letter, all you need is an employee who knows how to operate the "mail merge" function of your word processor and you are almost done. To keep stationery and postage costs within reasonable limits, the list of recipients should be critically reviewed before the letters are printed and dispatched.

You know that you have hit the right tone if numerous customers turn up at your bodyshop to take advantage of the attached discount voucher or if your Open Day attracts particularly many visitors.

Helpful hints for implementation.

- Look for your target group in business directories and on the Internet. What needs does this target group have?
- Come up with a special offer for your target group!
- In the case of business addresses, find out who the letter should be addressed to and who the actual decision-maker is.
- Try to make direct contact by letter and by phone. Present the benefits of your services in concise words. Your advertising agency may help you in this respect.
- Define a partial objective for each call - e.g. an appointment for a presentation of your complete range of services.
- If you have not accomplished your partial objective, make a note of the reasons. Draw on this experience when making the next calls.
- Make follow-up calls at regular intervals and do not get discouraged.

Check your mailshot.

- If you were the recipient, would you open the envelope and read the letter?
- Is your special offer easy to understand?
- Don't start your sentences with "We ..." but address the customer directly.
- A well written text should also entertain the reader. Does your letter do that?
- Does your letter end with an invitation to contact you?
- Is the look of the letter consistent with the appearance of your bodyshop?



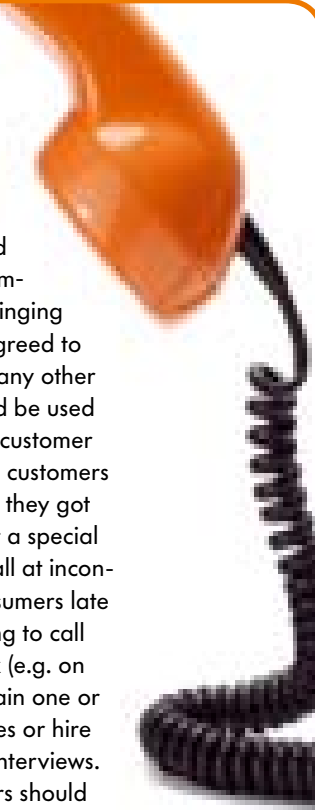
Phone marketing.

A thin line.

Calling a customer or prospect directly on the phone takes even more tact and discretion than writing a personalised letter. Many consumers tend to feel annoyed by unsolicited calls from salesmen and companies. Also, so-called "cold calling" (i.e. ringing up consumers who have not previously agreed to being called) is illegal in Germany and many other countries. Consequently, the phone should be used primarily to manage and refresh existing customer relationships. You might, for example, call customers to ask if they were happy with the service they got from your bodyshop or to tell them about a special offer you are running. Take care not to call at inconvenient hours. This means not calling consumers late in the evening or on Sundays and avoiding to call business customers very early in the week (e.g. on Monday mornings). The best thing is to train one or several employees in phone call techniques or hire a professional call centre to conduct the interviews. Spontaneous answers from your customers should be documented and evaluated with a view to improving your service further.

Before you make a call, check the following:

- Do you know the name of the person you are calling?
- Are you relaxed and in a good mood?
- What question do you intend to ask first?
- What concrete benefit are you planning to offer the customer?
- What result (partial objective) do you want to achieve?



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Color for Life – the ultimate warranty.



r etime arantee.

Annual paintwork inspection by an expert.
Free repair in case of warranty.
No added costs.



“Color for Life” is the name of a unique warranty programme developed by Standox as an easy-to-use customer loyalty tool for bodyshops. Use “Color for Life” to differentiate your bodyshop from your competitors. The programme essentially gives your customers a lifetime guarantee on all refinishing work done using the Standox product system. If a claim is made under the warranty, Standox covers the costs and you do not incur any obligations. A personal repair certificate handed over to the customer provides a platform for a number of advertising measures. The range of available advertising materials includes templates for a letter reminding the customer of the upcoming annual paintwork inspection. The basic Color for Life package offers you a low-cost marketing opportunity. Ask your Standox field rep about further details.





Bodyshop websites.

Harnessing the world's fastest medium.

Today the most people aged between 14 and 64 regularly use the Internet and one in four households has DSL broadband access to the Internet whose importance as an information medium continues to increase. This is hardly surprising, considering that the Internet is available on a 24/7 basis, websites can be operated at low costs and any content posted can be improved, expanded or updated at any time.

Businesses without websites are considered as outdated particularly by young consumers. Make sure you stay one click ahead of the competition. If your bodyshop is already listed in relevant online directories, chances are that it is displayed along with an extensive list of similar businesses. So make it easier for potentially interested parties to learn more about your services by linking your directory listing with your own website where you can present more extensive information and demonstrate your professional expertise.

Creating your own website.

Creating and operating your own website is not really difficult. Internet providers not only give you the required webspace but can also handle the domain registration on your behalf and offer value-added services such as email accounts and web design applications. The attached templates make it easy to create your own website in next to no time. You could also try your hand at designing your own website using one of the many free or low-cost software packages available in the market. Be sure to choose an easy-to-memorise name for your website. Consider combining your name with a clear business identifier (e.g. www.sampleman-bodyshop.org).

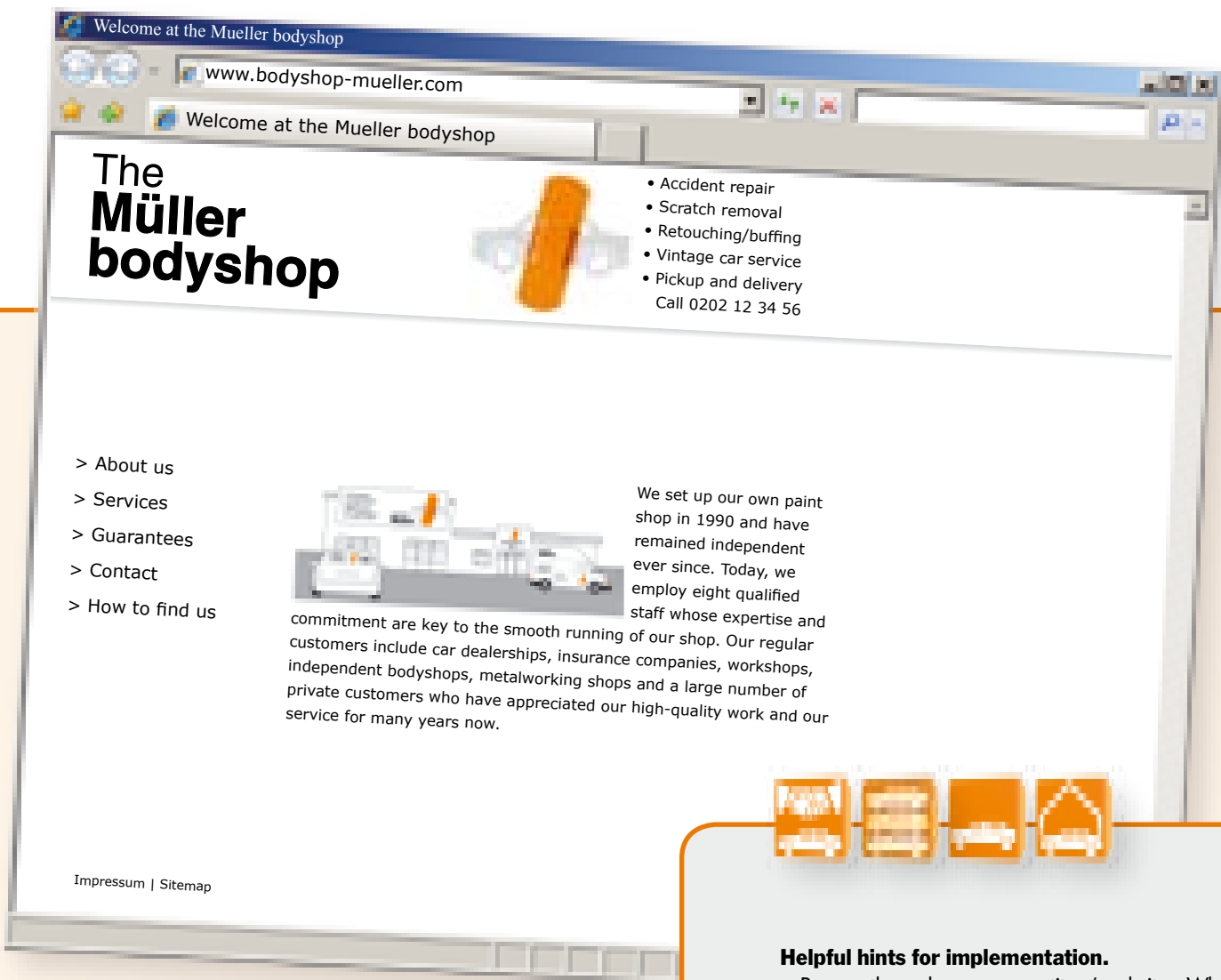
Basic content.

What should be contained on your website? It is important to include information on your products and services, a description of your bodyshop and of course your contact details, i.e. your address, your phone number, possibly a route description with a rough map and an email function.

Optional goodies

If you are particularly proud of a car you have finished, why not exhibit it on your website? Pictures illustrating your expertise and capabilities will not fail to impress visitors to your website. Your Open Day was a big success and you took lots of pictures to prove it? Then post them on the web. But remember to update such sections of your website at regular intervals - otherwise visitors will quickly lose interest and stop coming back. Additional services such as repair status tracking including a text messaging service can be added as your website matures into an integrated business tool.





Things to avoid.

Very large images which take forever to load, animations and overly elaborate websites tend to tax users' patience. A straightforward and uncluttered website is better suited for your purposes.

Consider having your website designed and set up by a professional service provider. This way you get a visually appealing website which is aligned with your bodyshop's overall design, features user-friendly navigation aids and well balanced content. Also you need not bother about technical details such as different image representations on different screens etc. While this requires a one-off investment, you will eventually get value for money in the form of higher visitor numbers.

Helpful hints for implementation.

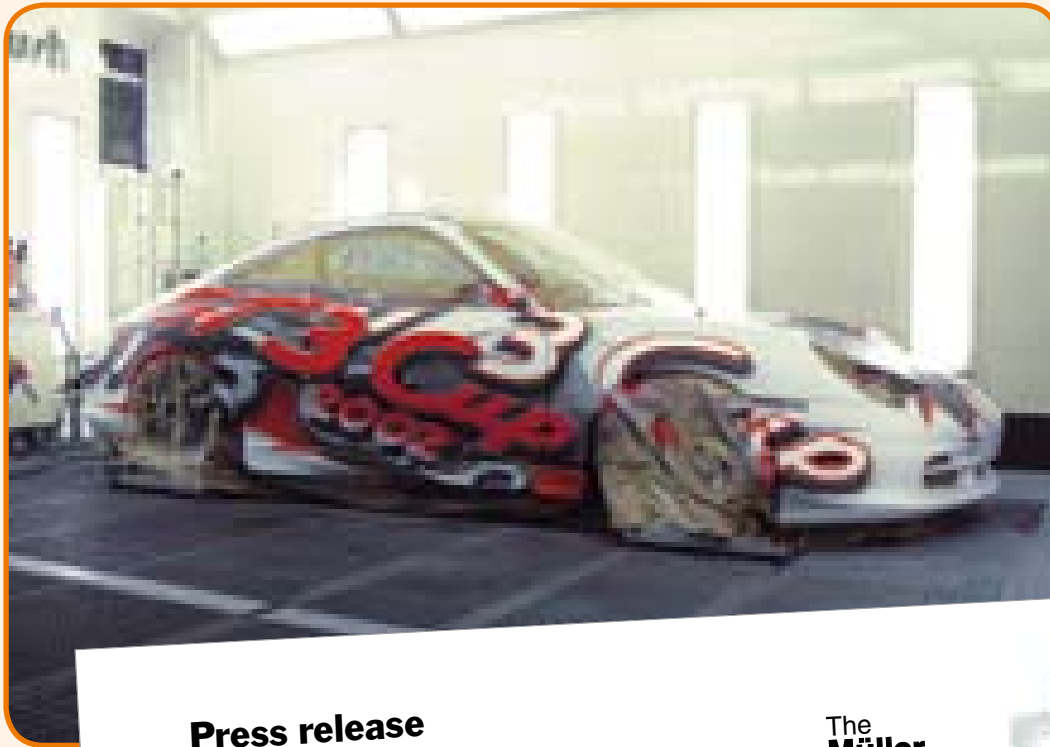
- Browse through your competitors' websites. What do you like about them? What would your target group like?
- Describe your range of services.
- Put the focus on your particular services and special expertise.
- Provide information on your technical equipment.
- Include photos or case studies of noteworthy projects such as the restoration of a vintage car or the (re)finishing of commercial vehicles.
- Define a budget and ask your agency to outline possible solutions.
- Ask your agency about search engine optimisation to ensure that your website can easily be found on the world wide web.

Check your website.

- Does your website come across as likeable and competent?
- Does it load fast enough?
- Are your special services easy to understand?
- Is your website user-friendly and easy to navigate?
- Does the website reflect your bodyshop's look?



Press relations.



Press release

3 January 2008

The
Müller
bodyshop



Effect finish for the Nürburgring

Locally painted sports car ready to hit the race track

Effect finish for the Nürburgring

Locally painted sports car ready to hit the race track



Good news.

When planning promotional activities, be sure to include the local press in your preparations. Whether it is an Open Day, a (re)opening or an anniversary, representatives of the local media should be invited. Bear in mind that journalists tend to have busy schedules and that it is advisable to inform them of your event in good time. Draft a suitable text and attach suitable photos to the extent that you have photos which are suitable for publication in the media. To maximise your chances of a publication, the volume and style of the text should make it easy for the editors to adopt as "their own". Such editorial texts should not be written in the style of an advertisement but rather use factual language to describe your products and services and any newsworthy events surrounding your business. To maximise the effect consider placing an ad in the same issue of the paper.

Get your best work published!

You do not have to wait for special events to send out press releases to the local media. If you have completed a spectacular refinish on a special car, for example why not write a press release about it? Maybe you are in luck and your story is just what the editors need to fill a gap on their motoring page. This way you can benefit from the newspaper's large circulation and reach out to a regional readership almost without cost.

Standex regularly offers ready-made press releases on various topics and subject matters (e.g. Color for Life and Repanet):

- Quality
- Service
- Customer orientation



Helpful hints for implementation.

- What are suitable events for press releases? What "story" surrounding your business could be of interest to newspaper readers in your region? Think of your anniversaries, the installation of environmentally friendly technology or the handover of a cheque to a local charity. The completion of a special-effect finish on a spectacular vehicle also makes for an attention-grabbing story.
- Draft a press release with a factual description of the occasion (what, why, when, where). Be sure to use an objective tone of voice and avoid creating the impression of an advertisement. In the ideal case, the editors should be able to simply "copy" your text into their newspaper.
- Attach a photo which illustrates the contents of the press release.
- Find out the names of the editors in charge of motoring and small business affairs at the local newspapers and radio stations.
- If you are already a regular advertiser in a newspaper, the ad sales executive should be able to refer you to the editors in charge and advise on how to proceed.
- Send out your press release simultaneously to all editors (personalised letter + press release + photo).
- Try to establish personal contact with the editors in charge.

Check your press release.

- Is the content of interest to the general public?
- Is the content easy to understand even in condensed form?
- Is the text written in a way which encourages the editors to simply "copy" it into their newspaper?
- Are all covering letters addressed personally to the editors in charge?



Open Day / Special Event.



Show off your business.

Holding an Open Day offers an opportunity to show off the best sides of your bodyshop. Such events can be organised regularly or on special occasions such as new openings or anniversaries. Give some thought to who you should invite. Maybe it would be a good idea to introduce new products and concepts (e.g. Repanet) to a specific target group. Or to organise an event specifically for school-leavers. Or you could invite all your neighbours in order to get to know each other better.

Such events inspire trust and give your business better exposure to the public. Experience shows that a well-organised event can attract numerous guests who appreciate the opportunity to inform themselves about your business your products and services and your staff, all of which helps to strengthen your customer relationships. Be sure to inform the local media of your event (see chapter "Press relations") so that you can benefit from additional exposure.

Note that a successful Open Day requires thorough planning and efficient organisation, can cost a lot of money (depending on the scale of the event) and needs to be fully supported by your entire team. In turn, such an event also tends to generate incremental business which can be maximised e.g. through mailshots a few days after the event. You should also take lots of pictures and post them on the Internet, thereby attracting traffic to your website.

Helpful hints for implementation.

- Allow for a minimum of six months' lead time.
- Define a target group.
- Involve your employees in the planning process at an early stage.
- Define a date, avoiding the vacation periods and "long weekends".
- Come up with a special motto and attractions (e.g. a "car fitness day with water fun for your car and a bouncy castle for your kids").
- Write down a schedule for the day's events. Draw up a check list for the weeks leading up to the event.
- Check all technical requirements. Do you need permission from the local authorities? Does your insurance cover the guests? Are there sufficient sanitary facilities? etc.
- Prepare the invitations.
- Agree all times and dates with the suppliers and service providers including the caterers and the entertainment agency.
- Inform the local media at least eight weeks ahead of the event.
- Mail the invitations.
- Advise the neighbours (four weeks in advance).
- Get your premises in shape and prepare for the event (during the week leading up to the event).
- Make the most of your new business leads by sending out a mailshot looking back on the event and informing the local media about the successful day.

Relationship management.



- Helpful hints for implementation.

- Think of groups of people who are important for your bodyshop and who can potentially refer business to you on a sustained basis.
- What interests and hobbies do these people share? Put together a file listing all contact details and preferences.
- Invite small groups to your events.
- Create a personal atmosphere. The objective of these events is to build and strengthen personal relationships.
- Use these opportunities to learn more about the needs and expectations of these target groups.

Check your relationship management.

- Do you remember your customers' birthdays and do you send them cards or small presents?
- Do you collect your contact and customer data in a database?
- Do you use the automatic reminder functions provided by your database software?
- Do you also send Christmas, New Year and Easter cards?
- Have you ever asked your customers about any particular wishes?



Managing your contacts.

"Relationship management" - what is that supposed to mean? Well, it simply means making sure that your relationships with important sources of business such as insurance agencies are maintained alive on an ongoing basis. The objective is to strengthen their loyalty to your business. This can best be achieved in an informal atmosphere.

To create a suitable environment, select an event with a certain entertainment value such as a balloon ride or an exhibition. The event should facilitate an exchange of information in a relaxed atmosphere. Note that such events are not really cheap and require a lot of tact because otherwise you might acquire a reputation of someone who tries to "buy" his guests.





Controlling your success.

Measuring the effectiveness of your activities.

“Controlling” is a management term which means more than retrospectively checking the effectiveness of a measure. Rather, it stands for pro-active planning and controlling of all measures and activities. This is why the illustration on pages 4-5 has the form of a cycle.

Before you defined your objectives in the chapter “Where are you headed?”, you had already learned about two important controlling tools - the competitor analysis and the strengths-weaknesses analysis. Both are important tools when it comes to determining your competitive position. And both can be applied before and after your marketing activities.

- **Strengths-weaknesses analysis and competitor analysis tend to focus on the medium-term and long-term periods.**
- **Market data and ratios such as sales, vehicle throughput and customer satisfaction tend to focus on shorter periods.**

Marketing control allows you to measure the effectiveness of your marketing measures (target vs. actual comparison). After all, the money you spend on marketing is meant to make your business more successful. Otherwise your marketing efforts would not be worth your while.

You certainly remember your competitor analysis in one of the earlier chapters where you wrote down what your competitors are better or worse at compared to you. In addition, the strengths-weakness analysis helped you gain a clear picture of your own business and helped you identify your strengths as well as any weaknesses which possibly need to be addressed.

- **80% customer satisfaction before introduction of the new services.**
- **95% customer satisfaction one year after introduction of the new.**

You then defined certain objectives (e.g. raise sales revenues from motorists and increase customer satisfaction), developed a strategy based on the so-called marketing mix (e.g. communication policy) and derived suitable measures (e.g. advertisements or improved service). In addition you have compiled all envisaged measures in an annual plan.

At the end of the day, you want to “measure” whether your marketing activities have actually delivered the desired effect. It is important to see that success always results from a combination of measures. A new customer may have been attracted by your advertisement in the local paper, or he has looked for a bodyshop in the yellow pages. Or he has been referred to you by a satisfied customer. The best way to find out why new customers have come to you is to ask all new customers about it and to collect this information.

What can I measure?

- **Change in total vehicle throughput**
- **Change in sales revenues**
- **Change in customer satisfaction**
- **Response to voucher/coupon action**
- **Click rates on your website**

Whether or not a given marketing activity has had an impact on your sales is relatively easy to measure - e.g. by determining your sales revenue before, during and after this activity. If you have mailed a discount voucher, you can easily measure the number of customers who have claimed their discount. And what about customer satisfaction? How has customer satisfaction developed since the start of your service offensive? This can be determined by polling your customers e.g. with the help of a short questionnaire card.

One-off measurements are not really useful - what you need is a series of measurements over a longer period. Otherwise it is not possible to determine whether a change has been achieved. This is why regular measurements are an absolute necessity!

You can only control those aspects of your business which you measure regularly. But what can you do if your measurements fail to show the desired success? It is important to remember that marketing is not a "quick fix". It would be foolish to think that one can place an ad in the local paper and see people flocking to your door the next morning. Continuity is the name of the game. Also, some of your marketing activities will be more successful than others, and some may not have any effect at all. If your measurements show that this is the case, you can take remedial action, adjust your strategy and implement new measures which are more successful.



We value your opinion.

Please check the following boxes to help us improve our service:

- The person I spoke to when I first called was helpful.
- The employee in customer reception was friendly.
- The employee who assessed the repair volume was competent.
- I am satisfied with the quality of the repair.
- I am satisfied with the cleanliness of my car after the repair.
- I am satisfied with the service I received.
- I find the exterior appearance of the bodyshop appealing.
- Would you want anything to change? Have you any suggestions?

agree	don't agree	don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Thank you very much.



Standox GmbH · Postfach · D-42271 Wuppertal · Germany