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HELLO I'M SHANE

Managing Director
Stonecreate

IT ALL STARTS WITH FAMILY

Welcome to our first Stone Create magazine.

Stone Create came about after tirelessly working in Manchester for 18 years at a City Centre based design agency. Over time, I project managed some huge projects, including World Cups, the Ryder Cup, Manchester United, and although these were exciting and provided me with fantastic experience, I was seriously missing family life and wanted to get my work / lifestyle balance on track.

I missed out on quality family time, especially being there when my sons were growing up.

I needed a plan, and this was to work within Preston again, but bring a 'big city' quality agency with me. I was very fortunate to have some great clients who supported me in my decision to set up Stone Create, who have been loyal clients ever since.

Once the company was set up, I soon realised that I needed a knowledgeable and skilled team to support me. My current team is the strongest I have had the fortune to manage over the past decade and it's a pleasure to come into work every day. Stone Create is now a 12-man strong team, with skills covering all marketing channels, across all sectors.

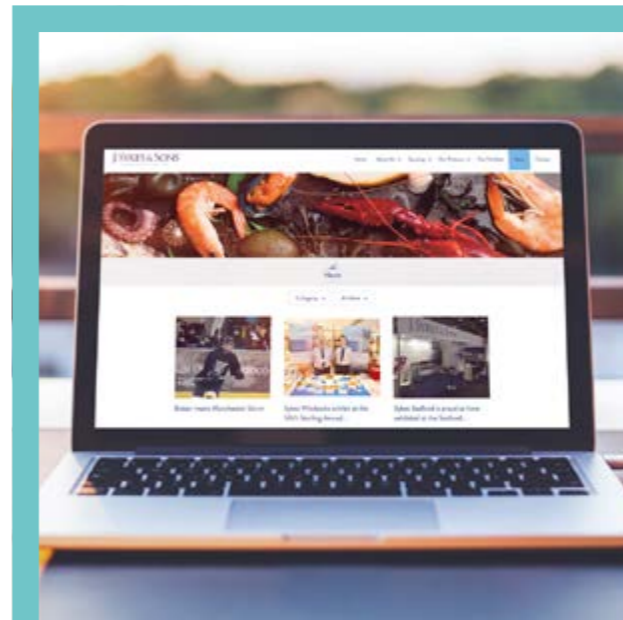
One of the biggest questions we get asked is "What does Stone Create do?" or "What can Stone Create do for my business?" This quarterly magazine will show you various aspects of our business and a number of projects we have recently undertaken, which will hopefully clear up those common questions.

Enjoy the read!

We would welcome any feedback:

Email: info@stonecreate.com

Telephone: **01772 642476**



◀ DIGITAL.

Innovative online marketing strategy, design and content to give your business access to your mass market digitally.

Our digital campaigns offer truly bespoke content specific to your business at an affordable price, with proven return on investment.



MARKETING. ▶

Increase the visibility of your brand and develop your business relationships.

Our marketing services are always adapted to evolve your businesses. We attract new prospects and those who are ready to buy, to your brand, product or service, by building your presence both on and offline.



SIGNAGE. ▼

Not only does your signage play an essential role in helping direct people to your business, it's the perfect promotional tool - where else can you advertise 24/7?

Well-designed signage will get you noticed, raising awareness of your brand and marketing activities to improve your customers' perception of you.



▲ DESIGN.

Great design extends beyond establishing identity and brand recognition. It is essential to attract attention and encourage your audience to find out more.

Over 90% of what people see isn't taken in, make the 10% count with eye catching design that communicates clearly what you do.

THE POWER OF VIDEO

Video is now a leading marketing channel for influencing and engaging your target audience.

Using video content as part of your company's marketing strategy used to be an option. It is now seen as a necessary tool to influence your audience, whether this be in search, on social media or on a website.

The use of technology is ever increasing, including TV, computer, mobile or tablet so you need to take advantage of this and you need to do it well.

Short and sweet videos will provide you with a higher probability of reaching your audience and becoming an influencer in your industry. Don't waste time creating minutes and minutes of content as you will lose consumer interest. Videos should be kept under 60 seconds.

Video is key to the success of your brand.

ALL THESE NUMBERS ADD UP

- Online video accounts for **74%** of all online traffic.
- **55%** of people watch videos online every day.
- **85%** of Facebook video is watched without sound.
- **52%** of marketers believe that video is effective for brand awareness.
- Using the word 'video' in an email subject line boosts the open rates by **19%**.
- **50%** of internet users look for videos related to a product or service before visiting a store.
- **4x** as many customers would rather watch a video about a product than read about it.
- Nearly **2/3** of consumers prefer to watch a video under 60 seconds.

Consumer Retention

30%
OF WHAT THEY SEE

70%
OF WHAT THEY SEE & HEAR

20%
OF WHAT THEY HEAR

Google Insights 2017

5 STEPS TO PAY PER CLICK SUCCESS

What are you selling?

If you are considering the idea of rolling out paid ads for your business, you need to ask yourself "what are we selling?" It may seem odd to ask yourself this question, but knowing this will help you identify if paying for advertising is actually worth it. For small businesses that sell products that rely on long term relationships, paid ads may be the way to go. For companies that sell large value products are also great businesses to implement paid ads.

Who are you selling to?

Paid advertising works for many businesses across a variety of social media and electronic platforms. Remember that not all ads will have the same effect on each media channel. You must be aware of who you are selling to, including demographics, interests, intent. Choosing what platform makes the most sense, the more chance your paid ads will work. Paid ad space is becoming increasingly popular across all platforms.

What is your budget?

Small businesses are obviously aware of the word "budget." It is not a dirty word. We understand there is no limitless pot of money. When asked what's your budget, it's not because we want to exploit you. We want to allocate it to the place of most cost-effective impact. "Budgets", when it comes to paid advertising, can be your friend. Knowing not only what your company budget is, but also what budget paid advertising spaces operate within is just as valuable. When choosing a potential platform, look at what a budget "reach" gets you as a company. If you want to reach 10,000 new customers then setting a budget with that number in mind can help you determine if it's worth the investment and on what platform you should pay for such exposure. If your budget is £50 and you are expecting to reach 10,000 potential people and retain them as customers, you may want to reconsider the approach.

What is your goal?

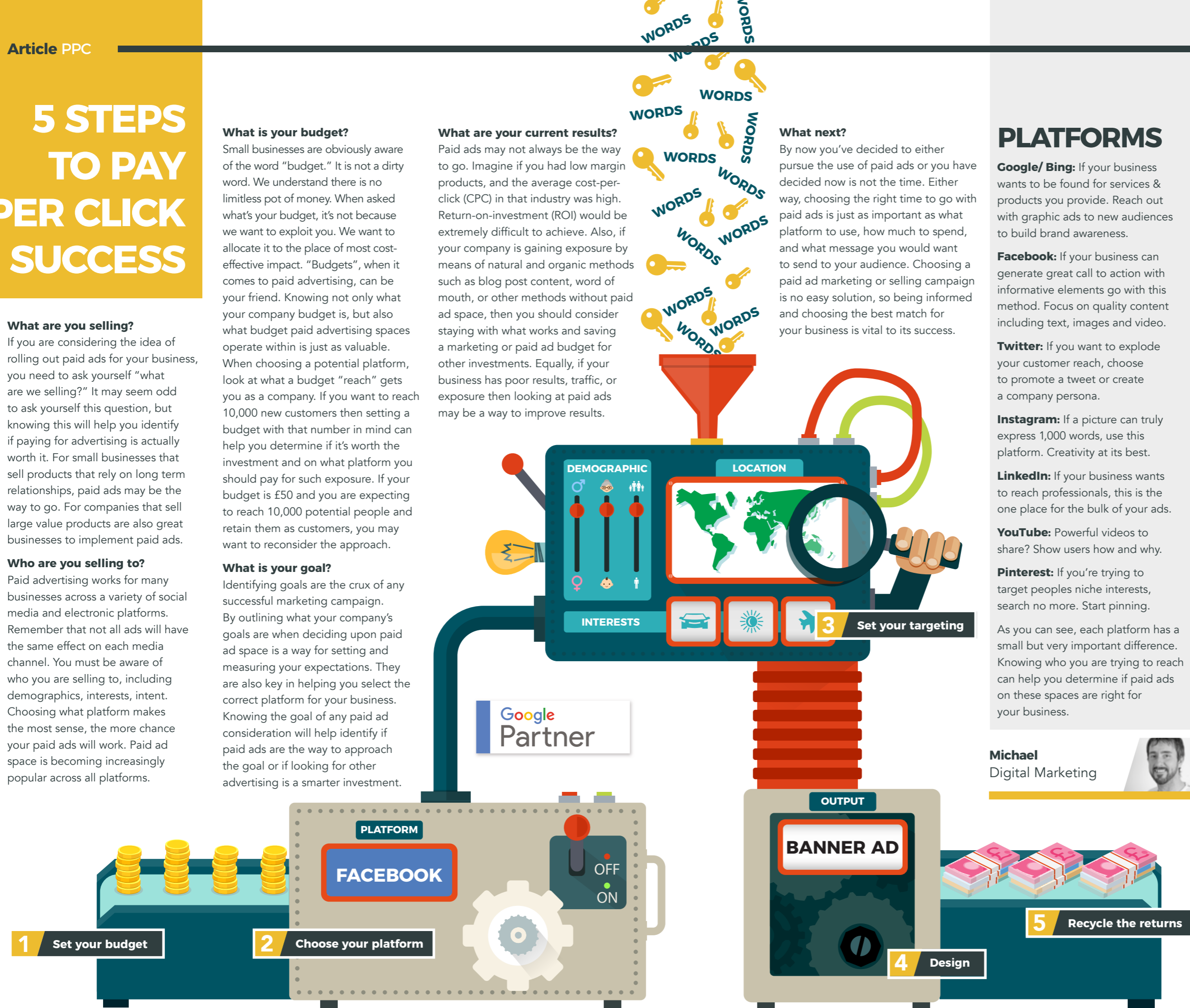
Identifying goals are the crux of any successful marketing campaign. By outlining what your company's goals are when deciding upon paid ad space is a way for setting and measuring your expectations. They are also key in helping you select the correct platform for your business. Knowing the goal of any paid ad consideration will help identify if paid ads are the way to approach the goal or if looking for other advertising is a smarter investment.

What are your current results?

Paid ads may not always be the way to go. Imagine if you had low margin products, and the average cost-per-click (CPC) in that industry was high. Return-on-investment (ROI) would be extremely difficult to achieve. Also, if your company is gaining exposure by means of natural and organic methods such as blog post content, word of mouth, or other methods without paid ad space, then you should consider staying with what works and saving a marketing or paid ad budget for other investments. Equally, if your business has poor results, traffic, or exposure then looking at paid ads may be a way to improve results.

What next?

By now you've decided to either pursue the use of paid ads or you have decided now is not the time. Either way, choosing the right time to go with paid ads is just as important as what platform to use, how much to spend, and what message you would want to send to your audience. Choosing a paid ad marketing or selling campaign is no easy solution, so being informed and choosing the best match for your business is vital to its success.



PLATFORMS

Google/ Bing: If your business wants to be found for services & products you provide. Reach out with graphic ads to new audiences to build brand awareness.

Facebook: If your business can generate great call to action with informative elements go with this method. Focus on quality content including text, images and video.

Twitter: If you want to explode your customer reach, choose to promote a tweet or create a company persona.

Instagram: If a picture can truly express 1,000 words, use this platform. Creativity at its best.

LinkedIn: If your business wants to reach professionals, this is the one place for the bulk of your ads.

YouTube: Powerful videos to share? Show users how and why.

Pinterest: If you're trying to target peoples niche interests, search no more. Start pinning. As you can see, each platform has a small but very important difference. Knowing who you are trying to reach can help you determine if paid ads on these spaces are right for your business.

Michael
Digital Marketing



HERE'S THE PROOF...

SILVER SERVICE *Singers*

Silver Service Singers work nationwide to offer a surprise catch to your wedding, special party or corporate event.

After running for about 12 months, they came to us asking for assistance with Facebook Ads. Although Facebook was generating new business leads, the ads were only lasting a matter of days before they would stop working and then have to be recreated.

We were commissioned to investigate and recreate the Facebook ad structure to stop this happening.

SOLUTION

Split-test the ads against different audiences.

SCALABILITY

Increase volume for growth.

By showing the right ad to the right person, in the right location, on the right device, we were able to manage the budget much more pro-actively.

www.silverservicesingers.co.uk

482% increase in gross profit **328%** increase in lead volume

Google AdWords
Get Started with up to
£120*

XXXXX-XXXXX-XXXXX

CALL: 01772 642 476
or email: info@stonecreate.com

MAKE A STAND

THE BENEFITS OF INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION STANDS

Exhibitions are the perfect way to promote your company to hundreds, or even thousands of potential new clients. By making your stand interesting, interactive and fun, you are guaranteed to stand out.

Having a simple pop up stand with two employees is great... if you want to look like every other exhibitor at the show. Why not be that unique company that thinks outside of the box? It doesn't have to relate to what product or service you are promoting, it is simply a tool to attract visitors to your stand and remember you once the event has come to an end.

Make your stand interesting, interactive and fun, you are guaranteed to stand out.

Our client, Amipart, recently exhibited at Automechanika at the NEC, Birmingham. We fully manage all events that Amipart exhibit at, which means that part of the process is to design and print their stand. As a company that supplies a vast range of replacement parts for trucks, we needed a hook to showcase them in a different light to their competition.

Our idea was to incorporate a target range into one area of the stand, which enabled visitors to 'shoot' the area they were most interested in. It was a great ice breaker to have and a fun addition to the stand.



DESIGNER THOUGHTS

Having fun sells. Have a hook and be different!

Shane Friend



Ian Coupe
Shout Network

SHOUT Q&A

How can joining a networking group benefit my business?

Shout have 17 very informal and friendly networking groups across Lancashire including breakfast and lunch time groups.

They are single sector so there will only ever be one accountant, or one lawyer for example.

We pride ourselves on the fact that our groups are very relaxed with no pressure to bring referrals. We would rather encourage people to arrange one-to-ones, which enable people to get to know one another better as individuals and representatives of their companies.

It's said all the time, but people do buy from people.

Meeting up with the same group of people every other week builds up trust and hopefully means that you become the go-to person for that sector, not only for the people in the room, but for their contacts and wider network too.

The Shout team is always on hand to advise and connect people and we also run joint meetings every few months so that members from all the groups have the opportunity to network with one another. We are also very active on Twitter with over 20 thousand followers and we are happy to promote our members and shout about what they are up to.

For further information about membership availability please contact: info@shoutnetwork.co.uk

“ ”

People were queuing at one point to have a go on the target range! Another great marketing idea from Stone Create.

Mark Ainsworth
General Manager



Questions & Answers

What is the difference between SEO and PPC?

“ Firstly, SEO or search-engine-optimisation is the art of making your website appear higher up the search engine rankings. By having good, relevant content and also other websites recommending your website, your website will be optimised for search engines. Of course you want to be on page one, not page one thousand and one, but so does everybody else.

This means that it does take a lot of time and effort to make an impact that search engines recognise. PPC or pay-per-click is a way of bypassing the time it takes to rank on search engines by bidding in an auction to show ads above (or below) the natural listings. The idea is that you bid an amount on a set of keywords, that is cost effective to your business. You can also bid on a variety of other things such as devices and demographics to ensure you show your website to the people most likely to engage with your brand.

Michael
Digital Marketing



How can an SME or new business compete against the larger corporates?

“ We are so consumed and engaged with slick well represented brands on and offline that new or SME businesses have all the work to do to break the hypnotic trance like hold these larger groups have on your customers.

The great thing about a larger successful brand/company is that they have created a means for smaller to medium sized brands/companies to measure themselves against and learn where they need to grow!

Fight Fire with Fire! Small brands can learn a lot from how the larger set-ups communicate. Living up-to the standards set by larger, well received brands is a significant step in earning the trust and continued engagement of your consumers.

Brand development and communication is as cost effective as it is impactful for an SME to break the cloud cover and reach a peak where consumers recognise and trust them.

You can't over simplify the impact a good brand/strategy can have on your market growth. A good brand has to reflect your customers needs, we want to say the right things look the right ways and deliver on our promises.

This isn't a one way scenario. A continued conversation with your customer is required, rewarding them with incentives, VIP club membership, discounts, free gifts for loyalty etc. Continue to reveal deeper levels to a rewarding relationship.

Get in touch for more insight in brand and brand strategy that oils the cogs for increased consumer engagement.

Mark
Creative



How do I make my target audience engage with my online content?

“ In short, your headline is your one chance to make your reader care. The question is, how do you do this? Well, most importantly, ensure that your headline is clear, specific and elevates a key piece of information that you anticipate your target audience wants to hear. Your hook needs to be unique and relevant. Make it snappy, don't overdo it when it comes to your headline, try and stick to the rule of a 7 or 8-word maximum.

Next, consider what you want your reader to feel to make them want to click and read more, gain emotional resonance through the language that you use and aim to make your audience realise why they need your product or service, not tell them what you do. Finally, generate clicks time and time again by ensuring that your content is high quality and relevant once you get past the headline. Good content will have your readers coming back for more.

Elizabeth
Head of Marketing



Any Questions?

If you have any thoughts or would like to submit any questions for the next issue, please contact us on the details below:

01772 642 476
info@stonecreate.com

How often should I blog?

“ The simple answer is... blog as much as you can.

To see results, blogging must be done consistently and frequently. Once you start blogging though, you must be able to keep up that momentum.

Don't set yourself up for failure – if your aim is to blog 4 / 5 times a week, you must be able to keep up this frequency, knowing that you will always have enough interesting and engaging content to put out there.

So.. before you decide on a weekly or monthly number of posts to reach, think about the number you can actually sustain based on the type of content you are creating.

To work out that number, first take a look at what your competition is doing. What are they blogging about? Is it good quality content? If you're noticing that they are mostly blogging once a week, or even less than that, you should be okay to start at a lower pace. On the other hand, if your competition is blogging heavily, then you will need to up your game and match their pace.

Louise
Marketing Executive



What is a CMS?

“ A CMS or content-management-system is a way of making website content easy to update without the need of a developer. Long gone are the days of having to recode your new product on your website. It's now easier than using Word or PowerPoint.

The majority of websites these days are built on a CMS with WordPress claiming 25% of all sites around the world! You could also have a totally bespoke solution developed to work exactly how you want.

Of course, we can do either.

Nerijus
Developer



Should I boost Facebook posts?

“ In short, no. You may be tempted by Facebook's cheeky sales technique to persuade you to enhance your post reach, but don't even think about it. Facebook advertising can be very powerful but only if you give it the correct information about your audience and your objective. If you use 'Boost Post', you have very limited targeting options, in terms of audience, platform placement, etc. If you use the Advert Manager you have far more control, plus there are better objectives available to ensure you are hitting your business goals, not just increasing engagement on your page.

Michael
Digital Marketing



Should my company use an in-house mail server?

“ When setting up email accounts for a new company domain, a common question asked is whether to host email services on an in-house mail server, hosting server or to use an external mail provider.

Hosting your own mail server either locally or using your web hosting package is normally not recommended due to mail servers being rather difficult to set up and maintain. Filtering incoming spam from genuine emails as well as keeping off email blacklists requires ongoing attention. If your website is compromised you can also automatically end up on several external blacklists if the attacker decides to send out spam emails, and any other technical problems will also most likely need professional IT support.

Using an external mail service such as Office 365 or G Suite can be a low-cost solution that requires little effort to set up and fixes all the above problems from the get-go. You can still use your own domain name and benefit from the additional features that come with these subscriptions.

Thomas
Lead Developer





Is marketing a fallacy or one of the most important tools to add to your businesses success?

Here a number of common marketing facts and misconceptions are explained by our Head of Marketing, Liz Clark.

What is marketing? Why should I market my business? How will it benefit me?

The main focus on traditional sales techniques started to shift to marketing in the 1990's, but still many organisations remain confused as to what it actually is.

In short, marketing is all about awareness and persuading your clients and prospects to the point of sale, whether that be a shop, a service, your website or your salesperson. Ultimately it gives customers an affiliation with your brand that gives them reason to pick you over your competitors.

A 2016 Hubspot research study indicated that 63% of prospects have little or no knowledge of a company before reaching the sales process, proving that marketing still has huge scope for many organisations.

Isn't it all just a bit risky?

Many business leaders are put off not only by the unknown when it comes to marketing, but they see it as a business expense that may be considered unnecessary or even a luxury in some cases. Forward-thinking decision makers are increasingly seeing the value however, considering marketing as an essential component in sustaining business growth.

It is worth noting that, as with anything in business, investment is needed to generate good returns, but when your spend gains growth in awareness, market share, customer lifetime value and ultimately profits, it is completely justified.

"But, I'm busy enough, I don't need marketing"

This was the exact sentiment of Coca-Cola in the 1980's. They'd long had the market share over Pepsi and as such decided to cut back on their efforts to win over customers. They became complacent. I'm sure that you can guess what happened next? - They lost market share to Pepsi that Coca-Cola had to spend years and millions of dollars in promotion and product development to win back.

The moral of the story is that marketing isn't just about getting new customers, it's about keeping the customers you already have to maximise their customer lifetime value. Just because you're not promoting your brand and reminding your customers of your presence, it doesn't mean that your competitors aren't. A constantly evolving marketing strategy is required in today's marketplace to guarantee tomorrow's customers.

"My business isn't right for marketing" If you have no desire for sustaining or growing your business, do not want to reach new customers or gain business from your competitors, then that is correct.

The key point to consider is that marketing is not a one-size-fits-all approach. There is no off the shelf solution and each business' marketing efforts should be completely tailored to that business and its customers. What works for your business may not work as well for another; the right mix for each business is out there, it's all about finding the balance that works for you.

For example, a local estate agency business looking to sell more houses would first of all require good signage to drive strong brand awareness in their location, backed up with an easy to use website where people can search for properties once they know the estate agents is there. Add to this some paid advertising so they appear when anyone searches "houses for sale in town X".

Meanwhile, a market leading engineering company may be at capacity but they require monthly newsletter communications to be sent to their clients, letting them know what's new and continually engaging them with their existing strong brand. Their website would be an information hub to give excellent online presence, should any clients needing information or interested parties want to find out more about them, adding value to existing clients and stakeholders.

What will work for my business?

It's all about picking the right channels for your business, doing the right things within these channels and making sure everything is integrated.

A website is a great start, but remember, you can have the flashiest website with all the bells and whistles, but it doesn't mean that people are

going to find it. A super website is one thing, but how are you going to get people to visit and engage with it?

A website, alongside an email campaign strategy, some regular blogs and social media activity, all under the umbrella of one brand, on the other hand allows for integration. Potential clients may see your email one week, a blog the next and some social media posts in the interim. All of this exposure leads to brand recognition so that as time goes by your messages are recognised and begin to be considered by your prospects, thus driving them to like your content on social media or visit your website to find out more or make an enquiry.

How do I get started?

Get the basics right first. It all starts with a brand identity which will infiltrate all that you do. I've worked with large companies with huge market shares who still see their lack of identity as a huge threat to themselves when it comes to competition.

Align your brand with your customers. Understanding who you want to reach is essential. If your brand identity and communication style do not resonate with your target audience, it will be much more difficult for your messages to engage their interest.

Make a plan. What do you want your marketing to actually achieve? Outline what outcomes you are looking for and work back from there with a plan on how to do it.

Once you have the brand basics and a plan in place, ensure that what you are directing your customers to, whether that is a place, a brochure or a website, truly emanates your brand and identity. Now you've got this right, it's time to start using marketing channels to direct your prospects to your brand. Remember, it's better to master a few channels and do them well than to take a scattergun approach, hoping something sticks.

HERE'S THE FACTS...

55%

of B2B marketers report that search engine marketing (SEM) is their most effective paid advertising method.

Forbes 2017

73%

of companies see creatively more engaging content as a marketing priority.

Hubspot 2017

1 in 3

businesses are not sure which digital channel has the most positive impact on their revenue.

The CMO Survey 2017

By 2019

mobile advertising will represent 72% of all UK digital ad spending.

EConsultancy 2017



THE ISLANDS ILLUSTRATED

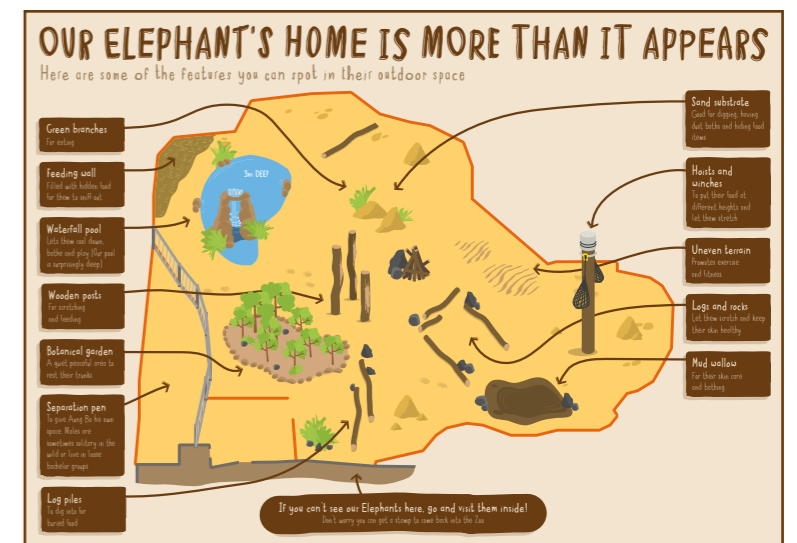
Chester Zoo recently had the challenge of needing to showcase their brand new attraction, 'The Islands' to their visitors. They knew they needed to do this through some new signage which would get people excited about exploring six amazing tropical environments of South East Asia; but how would they do this to make sure visitors fully appreciate the unique nature of this new attraction?

The Stone Create Design Team were then brought in to work with the team at Chester Zoo to design and illustrate the signs for 'The Islands' so that they would really jump out to the Zoo's visitors and help make the attraction a huge success.

Our task was to illustrate all the signage around the islands and think outside the box to set the look and feel of each location, and educating visitors on the island habitats of Panay, Papua, Bali, Sumatra, Sumba and Sulawesi.

Our first thought was that we needed to research each island and really focus on what made each one different; the animals that live there, the vegetation that grows and what each landscape looks like. Once we had our differentiators, this was translated into our illustrations, giving each Island its own unique identity, with graphic elements bespoke to each island. We then went on to think about what the key messages to the Zoo's visitors would be looking for and of course this was making it all about the animals.

We discovered that each island had one or two animals that were native to it, so we made these the feature of the illustrations, be it the Balinese Starling or the Sumatran Tiger. The colours, fonts and overall style of the signs were considered to ensure that there would be an appeal to visitors of all ages.



AN UNFORGETTABLE PROJECT

Recreating natural environments and educating people on what makes each animal enclosure individual is a huge focus for Chester Zoo.

When it came to creating a learning journey for visitors of the Elephant's enclosure it was imperative the Zoo got across the importance of the Elephant's habitat and the main elements to keep an eye out for.

Following the success of The Islands signage work, Stone Create were invited to design and illustrate the Elephant enclosure signage. We made certain that not only was the design in line with Chester Zoo brand guidelines, but we portrayed what the Elephant's life is like inside the enclosure, getting across the message to the visitor of the importance of recreating their natural environment.



For me, Chester Zoo is such an exciting client. With such a vibrant and fun brand, it gave me the chance to take my illustrations to the next level.



Rik Graphic Designer

MARKETING HORSEPOWER

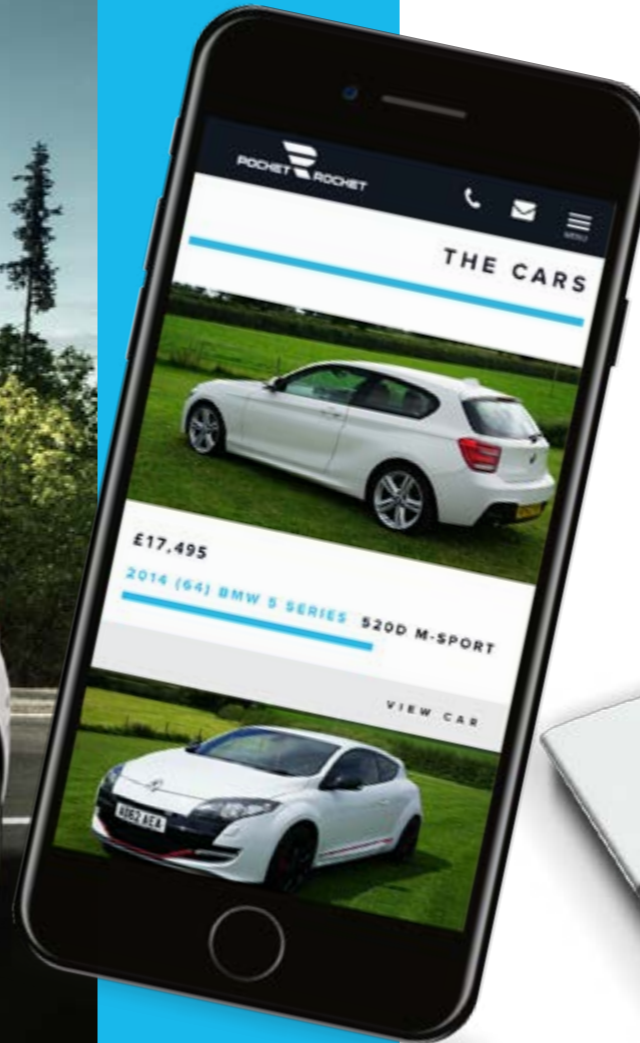


POCKET ROCKET

www.pocketrocketsales.co.uk

Selling cars is one thing, selling a brand that embodies the enthusiasm for small, fast, dynamic and fun cars with a desire to share with like-minded passionate car enthusiasts... You're not just selling cars, you're buying expertise and unique insight into the world of pocket-rocket cars.

And that was the difference that we had to include when developing the brand and website. We needed to create a foundation for a culture to develop and grow a place for like minded individuals through multiple social platforms and be driven to purchase these fantastic cars.



“ ”

Right from the outset it became clear that Stone Create operated to clear, efficient and most importantly, productive standards. They were somehow able to extract from Pocket Rocket the online vision and turn it into a reality. Our expectations were surpassed in all areas of the project and I am pleased to say that their strong after care customer service ensure's that our working relationship continues to this day - Highly recommended!

Andrew Lowe Owner



RUNSHAW COLLEGE

As one of the North West's leading colleges and adult education providers, Runshaw College is ranked by Ofsted as Outstanding. This leaves them in the fantastic position of needing to communicate all that's great about themselves to current and potential students and parents, something Stone Create are always happy to help them with.

Stone Create is fortunate to have a longstanding and trusting relationship with Runshaw College and as one of our longest standing clients, we have been providing print, design and marketing services to them for coming up to a decade.

From time critical, quick turnaround flyers and print items for their open days and events, to their annual run of 22,000 Student Prospectus' (pictured above), we work well with this fast paced education provider and exactly what is needed, is delivered on time, every time.

“ ”

We have worked with Stone Create for many years now. The quality of the design and print that they produce for us is second to none and you can always rely on a quick turnaround on jobs if required.

Martin Oldham Publications Manager

GAME ON! BRIDGE THE GAP



The game was designed and manufactured to change perceptions on careers in the construction industry.

Building future skills in Lancashire

STEMFirst provide inspirational opportunities and forge links between schools and employers in order to inspire, excite and grow the STEM knowledge and understanding within a younger audience.

Stone Create was asked to produce a game that would outline the variety of career opportunities that fall under the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) flag.

The game is part of a strategy to highlight the need for fundamental change in how the industry is perceived by the general public, and greater engagement of young people and society at large. It is crucial to improve the sector's image and decrease a skills gap.

With major housing shortages, vital infrastructure projects and renewed vigour in the commercial property market, the industry now needs to harness talent on a massive scale.

To help achieve this, STEMFirst want to change the perception of the construction industry in a younger generation. There is a huge diversity of career options and pay scales in the

construction industry. There is more to it than just bricks and mortar.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths are all skills that play an important part in the industry. The game is an opportunity to highlight this and dispell any myths or preconceptions that a younger audience may have about the industry.

To stand any chance of plugging the existing skills gaps, diversifying the workforce and securing a talent pipeline for the future, more young people need to be persuaded to pursue careers in construction.

CELEBRATING ENGINEERING HERITAGE & INSPIRING FUTURE SKILLS



The South Ribble Truck Trail

This 7 month interactive trail, snakes around Leyland, celebrating 100 years of truck manufacturing heritage in Leyland.

Local businesses and schools have got involved with the incorporation of a STEMFirst educational initiative, encouraging young people in local schools to be inspired by science, technology, engineering, maths, whilst aiming to encourage them to see opportunities for careers in these fields.

There were 13 trucks designed in total, all sponsored by local businesses, and a 14th truck was designed by local school children in a competition which culminated in a Dragon's Den style afternoon at Leyland Trucks.

Stone Create was excited to partner with South Ribble Borough Council, STEMFirst and Leyland Trucks to deliver this community project.



The Truck Trail is the perfect vehicle for schools, employers and young people to all get involved in a community project. The UK STEM skills shortage means it is imperative that employers and education work together to inspire the next generation.

**Steve Whelan
Leyland Trucks**

EDUCATION



Dragon's Den Style Competition at Leyland Trucks

OVER 50 LOCAL SCHOOLS INVOLVED

VIDEOS WATCHED BY OVER 50,000 PEOPLE

REACHED OVER 500,000 PEOPLE

Lancashire School Children Unveil 'The Truck of the Future'

The design on the 14th and final truck was the responsibility of local school children. All children in Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 in the South Ribble area were given the opportunity to design the 14th truck to fit the brief of 'The Truck of the Future'.

The competition encouraged young people to explore their skills in science, technology, engineering and maths by thinking about how trucks in the future could evolve and improve. Some fantastic entries, were received and the competition judges had a hard time shortlisting the entries with all sorts of magnificent futuristic truck concepts to choose from including, a truck powered by magnets and a truck with a mermaid in a water tank on-board!

The next stage of the competition saw finalists attending the Truck Trail Dragon's Den style competition hosted at Leyland Trucks. With over 50 children attending on the day, they were able to have a tour of the production line and even got the chance to explore inside some brand new DAF trucks that had just been manufactured, before each group had the opportunity to present their competition entry to the panel of judges.

The winning 'Truck of the Future' entry was unveiled at the Leyland Festival in June, with the honey-powered beehive truck, designed by Year 6 pupils at Broad Oak Primary School in Penwortham taking the prize. Not only were they named competition winners, they got their very own 'Busy Bees Deliveries' truck designed and manufactured as a 6ft by 8ft truck to take back to school with them.

Broad Oak Primary School Winning Truck.

The design on the 14th and final truck was the responsibility of local school children.

Mirror

VOTED IN THE TOP TEN FREE ATTRACTIONS IN THE NORTH WEST



COMMERCIAL



www.trucktrail.co.uk

Bringing the Concept to Life

As one of four partners in the Truck Trail project, Stone Create were at the helm of the marketing and production side of the project, bringing the Truck Trail concept to life. Not only did Stone Create design and manufacture all 14 trucks, full marketing services were provided including, website, mobile app, print, animation, social media and promotional items.

The Perfect Promotional Opportunity for Local Businesses

The Truck Trail has given 13 businesses the unique opportunity to promote themselves around the market town of Leyland, which was recently voted the best place to live in the UK. Each truck has its own character and is designed to showcase each sponsors brand. Not only do the trucks offer a great day out and celebrate Leyland's trucking heritage, they also provide the perfect promotional vessel; each truck is carefully situated to maximise visual impressions, footfall and passing traffic.



Top prizes for our competition winners



The official Truck Trail map



Over 3,000 Visitors Downloaded the Truck Trail App.

Whilst the Truck Trail website provided visitors with an online resource, the Truck Trail app was developed using augmented reality to add an interactive element to The Truck Trail.

Downloaded over 3,000 times, the augmented reality targets on each truck allow those with the app to scan the target and watch the truck come to life with a fun facts video.



The sponsored trucks in situ.

BESPOKE WEBSITE BENEFITS



When looking for a new company website to build your online presence you may be drawn to a pre-built templated design.

Thomas

When setting up your new website you want the lowest price possible, a good selection to choose from and know it will be up and running in no time at all, right? Whilst these are all the benefits you'll hear when looking at buying a template website, the common pitfalls are rarely understood before the project starts and the cracks only begin to show when your new website goes live and more importantly after you've paid for it. Here we look at the many perceived benefits of templates and how these turn out or have obstacles in the long run.

Customisation

It's usually fairly quick and easy to input some of your text and images into a template and get a quick preview of how things may look. You'll also find options to change the colour scheme or even perhaps choose from several different layouts or grids that can be placed on the page. But if you wish to customise the layout even further, you may find that you are limited by what the template allows. A templated page can look good with placeholder content, but once your own images and text and inputted it may seem out of place or unbalanced due to the fixed design.

Avoid devaluing your brand by using a replicated design which may be recognised by your customers.

Then there is individuality. Although there are a wide range of templates to choose from and you have customised the template slightly, added your own colour scheme and logo, there will still be many other companies out there using the same template and with more sites being launched every day this number is likely to increase.

With a bespoke layout, pages can be specifically tailored to your content whilst still maintaining flexibility for any new future additions. The design can match your brand identity and be unique to your company, helping you stand out from competitors resulting in a stronger brand.

Purchased themes come with limited support and a set amount of features. Expanding on these features can be difficult, as the author will not want to change the theme for just one of their many users.

As your company grows you could find that your objectives and key selling points change, resulting in a needed restructure of core pages. With a website designed specifically for your company this will not be a problem and can be done in a shorter time. The final product can also be integrated with any external systems you are currently using, such as custom CRM systems or accounting and stock management etc.

Efficiency and Optimisation

Whilst templates offer a selection of additional block content to choose from, such as slideshows embedded into a webpage, video players or galleries and social widgets etc, this means that all styling (CSS) and JavaScript is included each and every time any page is loaded. The result is a slow page load time from the get-go, offering a poor web experience for your customers.

You'll find users abandoning the website when they get tired of waiting for pages to load and going straight to your competitors instead.

The ideal website is highly optimised, with a page load time of less than a second. This is so important for your search engine ranking, as Google rate websites on this (meaning slower loading pages will be lower down in search results.)

By contrast, a bespoke design can include only what is needed, resulting in a highly optimised website with a greatly reduced page load time and higher search engine ranking. It will also be optimised in additional ways to be more descriptive and search engine or social media friendly resulting in more overall traffic to the site.



Security

Inexpensive themes are unfortunately more vulnerable to a cyber-attack. This is due to them being open source (code for building websites made available online that everyone can contribute to an use freely) and normally utilising free open source third party plugins.

This means that if a vulnerability is found, attackers can easily perform searches to find any sites using the template and attack en masse resulting in anything from a simple page defacement to a fully compromised site. Although no website or server can guarantee to be fully secure, a bespoke solution will use little to no external plugins, hugely reducing the risk of cyber-attack.

A bespoke solution will use little to no external plugins, hugely reducing the risk of cyber-attack.

Support

Purchased themes come with limited support and a set amount of features. Expanding on these features can be difficult, as the author will not want to change the theme for just one of their many users. Development is also commonly outsourced meaning that although you may get in touch with the designer they can only offer limited help with the layout and no help at all when it comes to requesting new features or querying how parts of the template structure work.

With a bespoke website, you can get in touch with a real developer or designer who can assist with any queries and who has a more personal relationship with your company.

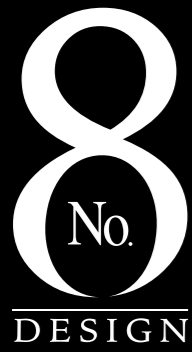
Make sure that when considering your new website, you bear in mind the future and think about how your company may change as you grow and what this will require online.

A bespoke website created by an agency will normally have dedicated support with a quicker response time.

You could find that going with a template website is a false economy in the long run.

IN SUMMARY

When considering which to choose, bear in mind the future and think about how your company may change as you grow and what this will require. You could find that going with a bespoke solution from the start could help and save money in the long run.



A luxury brand brings a consumer the opportunity to bring their lifestyle and value system to life. This is exactly what No.8 design wanted their customers to feel when using their interior design and build project management services.

The brand needed to communicate that a No. 8 project goes above and beyond just bricks and mortar, showcasing their 25-years of experience and specialism in a full service approach to each project's design and quality being second to none. After all, good design is obvious, great design is transparent.



The Stone Create team has produced a brand and website that not only communicates our unrivalled standards in kitchen design and build, but has inspired confidence in our workforce as well as our customers.

Neil Barnes Owner



No. 8 Design

With over 25 years' experience as a high end design and craftsmanship company, No. 8 Design delivers unique kitchen design, exquisite interiors and state of the art builds to make their customers dreams come true.

When No.8 Design decided they needed a complete rebrand, they didn't have a clear vision of what they wanted their brand to look like, but they certainly knew how they wanted it to make their customers think and feel. It was Stone Create's task to design the No.8 rebrand, making sure all elements of what they do were obvious. In addition, the brand needed to be seen as cutting edge in design and expert in craftsmanship with the added finesse of luxury and distinction.

We took the approach of creating the logo to appear like a door number, resonating with customers that No.8 Design's sector was the improvement of private homes. It was considered that the brand's primary colour scheme would be black and white, a scheme often associated with style and simplicity, using softer secondary colours of green, purple and orange to act as differentiators between the three main services they offer.

With a strong new brand in place, we were able to integrate this within the website design, brochure print and vehicle graphics to ensure consistency across all marketing channels.

Visit: www.no8.design

A BRAND NEW DAY

Creating a brand for a fabric printing company that has been in operation for nearly 100 years and continues to combine both traditional and innovative cutting edge technology.

Our task was to craft a bespoke brand to encompass a traditional value-driven company that uses its rich heritage and commitment to continuous quality as a foundation for moving forward.



Est. 1924



Est. 1924



Est. 1924

“ ”

Stone Create has really made the effort to get to know our brand and what we stand for. We've built a great relationship where we've been able to work together to create a fantastic new brand that really reflects our company and the image we want to portray.

Mary Stansfield Design Manager



DESIGNER THOUGHTS

When branding a company that's been successfully operational for the last 100 years, you feel a sense of responsibility that your contribution must continue the legacy for the next 100 years.

Shane Friend

Brand Application.

Standfast and Barracks value craftsmanship and the pursuit of refinement in every detail, including their brand.

With this in mind, the icon had to reflect this and a well-balanced, engineered letter type was created. The colour is a classic, strong dark blue and further details were added to the brand concept using designs from the companies vast archive collection.

We designed a consistent look and feel from van livery to stationery, and promotional brochures.

Expanding on the fluidity of the icon, using the negative and positive, we created a unique window to showcase the beautiful patterns, fabrics and textures with which to display the rich and colourful world of Standfast & Barracks.

A beautiful, classic design has been created which will take the company forward for another one hundred years, reflecting not only their heritage but their forward thinking vision.





▲ Our Branding is Electric

As part of our rebrand, marketing and website project for Hooley Electrical, their commercial vehicles were designed and wrapped to outline their services and contact details in a visually engaging way to promote brand awareness.



▲ Communicating Silence

The new silencing underlay from Footfall Flooring makes Soundsense! To promote their innovative new product range, we produced A5 binder folders that they can insert their product samples into, creating a more bespoke and design-led print pack for different clients and their requirements.

◀ **Bonjour! Hola! Ciao!**

A 28-page brochure was designed and produced in English for Leyland Silicone & Hose, before being translated into French, Spanish, Italian, German and Russian for use in international markets.

▶ **Eat My Photo Goes Live!**

Next time you're looking for the perfect tasty treat for your friends and loved ones, remember we have been delighted to design and develop Eat My Photo's new website, allowing uploads of your pictures and messages onto their yummy cupcakes, biscuits and celebration cakes.

www.eatmyphoto.co.uk



▲ Educating in Waste

Presented with a public communications and design brief for South Ribble Borough Council, we were given the task of designing a new identity for the new Garden Waste Collection Scheme. A large part of the project was educating people in the importance of recycling garden waste. This was achieved through a visual of recycling incorporating a tree and the cycle of garden waste to be printed on council bins.

◀ **A Level Ready to Go**

Our annual print run of 22,000 Student Prospectus has recently been completed for this fast paced education provider, Runshaw College.

▼ Exhibitions

Our aim is for our clients to be the envy of all other exhibitors at their events. A well-designed space and an innovative hook works wonders for how successful an expo is for a business. We build exhibition spaces and create concepts for our client, Bentall Rowlands and their events worldwide. This year's projects have gone as far as Russia, Germany, Romania, Belgium, Dubai and the Ukraine.

These events have included Brau Bevale in Germany, where we manufactured a bar, symbolising their positioning in the brewery industry and Indagra, which took place in Romania, where a clean, minimalistic look was adopted, leaving visitors wanting to find out more. From showcasing large pieces of agricultural machinery and grain storage systems, each concept is individually tailored per event.



▲ There are Signs Everywhere..

Signage is one of the most cost effective pieces of marketing collateral which you can have, it's working for you 24/7. We have recently completed a new signage project for Robin Oatridge Accountants in Bamber Bridge and Longridge. It's now an integral part of their brand and represents their business to a wide variety of passers-by, allowing them to increase their brand awareness locally.



▲ 500 Page Catalogue

Taking 1,000's of products and creating a 500-page truck parts catalogue for Amipart was never going to be easy. However, in true Stone Create style we looked for a quicker and more effective option than creating the catalogue manually. We created a system that pulls all products from the Amipart website, automatically positioning them in a well-designed catalogue that orders all products by manufacturer.



▲ Mastercraft Memory

Letting your brand live on with the promotional gifts you give to clients and prospects goes a long way to making sure your brand is remembered long after you've left. More importantly, a promotional item that meets the need of a client is far more likely to be used time and time again. With this in mind, we produced some high quality memory sticks in branded tins for our client, Mastercraft, to share with their network.



▲ Video = Sales Leads for Matrix

As part of our ongoing digital marketing strategy for telecoms client Matrix247 Partnerships, a series of videos were filmed and edited to showcase the lifestyle and financial gains that their self-employed telecoms partners benefit from to encourage new recruits. Used across website and social media, the videos have generated over 50 new leads for Matrix247 in just 10 weeks.



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