

innovation by technology.

With the number of print publications folding at an all time high due to the prominence of digital arena, businesses and their marketing teams are constantly creating new and innovative ways to keep up with the changes.

Marketing plans are now more than ever including online activities to assist with the shift with the end aim of reaching an everchanging audience.

The latest print publication to fold is fashion and lifestyle magazine, Grazia. In the United Kingdom, Grazia has been a hit that sells more than 210,000 copies a week. The fact that the cover price is lower at around \$1.50 compared to \$6 in Australia probably helps, however, regardless of their pricing structure, magazines are turning digital and many publications are closing their doors.

This is not only affecting the larger businesses but small businesses that everyday are attempting to be seen in the marketplace and stay up to date with the latest communication technologies.

Constantly Innovate

Innovating your brand or services not only helps you keep up with the times and helps keep you in the game, it gives you another reason to communicate with your customers and clients. I'm not going to sugar coat it, but consumers expect the best regardless of price, so money and time is required. The plus side is small businesses are lucky as they have the freedom to nurture their new innovation from start to finish unlike larger businesses who battle through management and red tape for any decisions and changes to be made.

As a small business, offering new products, changing the packaging on your products and most importantly

creating new communication avenues keeps you constantly revitalised and in the forefront of a consumers mind.

An example currently that sees a larger business trying to be innovative is Fairfax Media that will switch from broadsheet to compact-sized formats shortly. It is expected that the publisher will redesign to result in a short-term lift in sales of The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age during the launch period. Fairfax plans to switch them to compact formats within the next year when it closes its two biggest printing facilities at Chullora in Sydney and Tullamarine in Melbourne, and shifts the publishing of the newspapers to regional sites. These changes don't come as a surprise as print media needs to make changes to keep up with online media avenues.

These changes will surely always be changing as technology is constantly evolving. But there is an upside. Many small businesses are now looking at different communication avenues than your usual print media advertising or editorial. The shift is happening right now and is seeing more technologically savvy ways making more importance to a small business.

Thinking Big

Marketing and advertising is turning more digital everyday from promotional billboards in Westfield's and car parks to larger outdoor billboards like you see on highways and airports. Innovating your standard billboards to be digital is reinventing the marketing wheel to something that stands out and grabs the audiences attention in a new light. Digital advertising, if in the right location can be powerful even for a small business.

An example could be a restaurant within a shopping centre; advertising on the

digital light boxes throughout the centre is a great marketing tool to ensure people know of your presence. You can choose one or multiple light boxes within a centre depending on your budget, which can also sometimes be relatively cheaper than your usual print advertising which is slowly fading out anyways.

The strength in animation

Animation is also creeping its way into marketing of a small business as the production costs of a traditional thirtysecond TV commercial is often out of reach, however they can now turn to a highly skilled Gen Y or Z animator at a fraction of the cost. M.A.S Accountants based in Sydney recently used a small business graphic and web company to create an animation, which took a little over two months but was well worth the wait and is now paying dividends across the business.

The tools and technology by which small businesses can now communicate along with the savvy minds behind them leaves an unimaginable horizon for SME's in Australia.

Technology is helping create new avenues for communication and digital is definitely the most popular way. Small businesses may be small by name but are definitely thinking big and out of the box to target their audience in great new ways introduced through technology.

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