

**Camborne Town Crier Column
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**by Matt Powell, Business Growth Manager,
CPR Regeneration**

Christmas Greetings to you all!

I'd like to take the opportunity in this issue of the Crier to talk about marketing. Now, I don't pretend to be an expert on the subject, but for one reason or another, marketing has already become quite a central element of my job. I am doing quite a lot to market the town centre, and will be continuing to do so into the new year, and this has got me to thinking about how you, as businesses, market yourselves individually.

Marketing is all about how your customer views your business, from the sign above your door to the way your shop is laid out to the appearance and attitude of your staff...and as the owner of the business, everything you do is, in effect, marketing your business – whether that be at a party on a Saturday night, picking the kids up from school, even queuing up in the supermarket.

So, ask yourself the question: "how do my customers see my business?" In fact, why not go one step further and ask them yourself – have a suggestion box, or do a customer survey – the only way to find out if you are offering your customers what they want is to ask them! (I will be doing this myself after Christmas to find out what Camborne town centre as a whole could be doing better.)

And think too about ways to improve or develop your marketing – it doesn't have to cost a bomb, and should be unique to you, or to your type of business, at least. A well-written press release could get you in the local paper, for example, and can generate more interest than an advert in the same publication; A5 flyers can be printed off on your own computer and it costs very little to pay someone to walk round the streets for a couple of hours handing them out.

Joint marketing is another way of reducing costs, whether that be word of mouth referrals, shared leaflet expenses or more co-ordinated campaigns working with other businesses.

For a few quid more, there are opportunities to sponsor local teams, groups or clubs and at the other end of the scale, something like a website can open up new markets.

I guess any business needs to do what is right for them, and you should always make sure you are getting value for money (for example if a weekly ad in the Packet costs you £50, that's £2,600 a year – is the ad generating you the equivalent in sales?).

If you want to have a chat about the marketing needs of your business, or about anything else for that matter, then give me a call. It only remains for me to wish you a profitable Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M Powell".