

# BUSINESS IS OPEN

Once your business is open whether online or offline, a shop, office or otherwise it always pays to remind you and the team about the importance of keeping your customer informed and of course – engagement. Here are some Simple Series ideas to keep you at the forefront of your customers minds as they navigate the web looking for your services and checking your availability and business hours.

## Get to know your target customer

This involves learning as much as you possibly can about your customers and not just their age, job and incomes, but also about their spending habits and daily routines. Create your avatar of an ideal client / customer.

## Consider your competitors

Consider whether any similar businesses are open at a time when you are closed, if so, there's a chance that you could be missing out on potential revenue. If you notice that they are never very busy at these times, then it may not be worth opening up your business either (sector dependent). Don't fall for the 'open all hours' concept unless you truly have someone answering your chat or emails too 24 hours a day. Chatbots don't qualify for 'open all hours'.

## Allow for the holiday season

You are likely to experience peaks and troughs throughout the year when it comes to footfall whether online or offline. Each business is different so do bear in mind the annual holiday calendar especially Christmas, New Years, Easter and the bank holidays these are likely to have an impact on the hours that you trade.

If you do decide to close at specific times, then it's important to communicate this clearly so that your customers know when you'll be open again. Make this information available across all your social media channels and of course your website.

## Seasonality

Don't forget to also add your seasonal hours to 'google my business' so that your customers are alerted of your change in hours when they search for your business.

## Special events

Make sure to keep a calendar on special events that may have a positive impact on your business and be a good marketing opportunity (think online and offline). Depending on what services or products you supply it may be date specific and/or events happening in your area, nationally or indeed international.

This could be anything from an exhibition, summit, conference, festivals, local fairs or sporting events. Bear in mind you may want to adjust your hours on these days to accommodate people before and after the event. Another great way to 'simply' market your business at a minimum cost.

## Check your data

Gathering data around your sales and transactions can be extremely insightful when it comes to figuring out exactly when you're generating the most revenue. Looking across the largest date range possible will allow you to spot any seasonal trends or patterns that appear.

When making adjustments to your opening hours, make sure to work from clear cut conclusions. For example, if based on your findings, you hardly receive any sales early on a Monday morning, you could consider opening at 10am instead of 9am. These small tweaks can make a difference to your business week.

## Keep your clients informed

Remember, always keep your clients informed. Use:-

- google my business
- social media channels
- website
- and offline marketing

to promote your opening hours to both your current customer base and potential customers.

## Final considerations

Although it can be tricky to get it right when it comes to your opening hours, taking a few considerations into account can certainly help you with making more accurate and informed decisions.

- Consider your competition, area, and customers
- Be consistent and reliable with your opening hours
- Make use of innovations for a flexible approach
- Allowing for seasonality and special events
- Be at ease with staying open at slower times