

The Brutally Honest Truth About Doing Business In 2020

I get that fact that every one of us is worried. Concerned about how all of this is going to pan out - what is going to change.

Fact is, some firms are not affected. Some are continuing to sell and make money. I have two clients at the moment that are 'making hay' as we speak. Two very different businesses, but they are working really well.

If that is something you'd like for your business then welcome.

Even Before The Shit Storm of Coronavirus things were changing.

I've worked with small firms for the last ten years, I'm a finance guy by training (twenty five years) had my own shit storm of health and business problems, realised it was me that need to change, needed to do things differently. So that's what I did - took me a while to work it out but I did.

There are going to be two things to help you in the coming months and years. 1. Automating the hell out of everything 2. Simplification. There is a third and that's ignoring the naysayers and just cracking on.

Provided you want to get what few others are getting, then read on.

You've seen the news, read the headlines - it's all going online - business rates are crucifying small retailers - everything is harder than it was...

Depressing isn't it?

*I'll answer that for you - **hell no!***

For my clients it's better than business as normal (actual figures in the appendix).

For some 2020 is going to be a record year - perhaps we should all buy shares in supermarkets?

Thing is you'll get the same result by doing the same thing as everyone else, once you buy into the mindset of it's bad - then it will surely become just that.

Key is, if it's bad - what are you going to do about it?

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I work with small firms that want to grow a business organically - if you like, farming instead of hunting. I've been doing it for about ten years now - prior to that I worked with financial services firms that wanted to improve their online and offline marketing and increase profitability.

I now work with small firms and startups who want to do more with what they have, to create their own lake to fish in, to control their own passions and business. I do this by showing how to create systems, build online shops for them and show how automation can increase profits and allow you to work less.

If you are interested in making more sales with what you already have - I can help. You could be increasing your market share across town and beyond - an increase in turnover will move you towards more profits and by having customers that want to buy from you time and time again - repeat business will of course follow.

Existing customer focus is a powerful way to run a business you know that, but few do it.

Being open to make purchases 24 hours a day, allowing customers to place orders even when you are not around, offering them special bits - like pre order and click & collect and even delivery - mean you can sell more without the ball-ache of turning up/opening.

Importantly, by changing just a few of the things you are doing - you open up a whole new market place, for those who..

- are too busy to shop locally
- can't park/have to get kids dressed
- want what you have but can't get to you

Let me show you how to remove the problems for you. I don't promise to increase your biz by 10x or even 20x - but simply show you how to do more with what you have - 1.1x is a start - that's ten percent more.

What Nikki Hobbs said about me ... "I have no hesitation in recommending him to anyone looking to increase the success of their business."

Instead of feeling like you are struggling you could be thriving and growing - without a great deal of effort.

Instead of moanin' and bitchin' about what's not working - you could be slowly beating the shizzle out of your competition.

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Instead of turning up at the same old premises every day - you could be processing your sales for the day before you leave the house.

For example..

- Being able to use social media as a tool rather than a time sink.
- Being able to grow a list of possible customers that you can message through your online platform.
- Being able to track sales and get paid in advance.
- Being able to compete with the likes of Argos, Amazon and Tesco with click and connect.

It's possible to sell to those customers that didn't buy instore or today - from your website. With some small changes you can improve cash flow, build repeat sales, take on your competitors - including the biggest players in the industry - and win.

Look - Things Are Not Working Like They Were

There is more than an outside chance that many parts of your business are not working like they were, perhaps you feel the need to create something bespoke for those top end customers - who spend good money on the same shizzle your pond life customers moan about.

Either way you need to deliver your products to them and be available - and that's hard if you are in a fixed place of business. There is a thing called 'elastic pricing' remember that just because your present customer won't pay more - doesn't mean you get can more for a product in a different market.

You are investing hard earned time and money in your business at the moment. How is that working - do you know what you get back for each pound invested? Chances are you don't have a scooby. What about 80/20 - this aged principle of nature and maths - getting rid of the pond life customers that only want cut price, price matched. You can't compete on price - it's a sure way to the poor house.

So Here Is What I've Done and Why I've Done It

I was sickened by what was on offer to small and medium sized firms, sick of the b.s, the lies and utter rubbish that's thrown around like it's some holy text. It is possible for small firms to have/do/be a major player in any market place - provided you get real with some of this stuff.

In order to take on the market place on your terms you need to...

1. Automate sales - works for your 24/7

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2. Make 'sharing' an easy option
3. Additional tools - direct mail and sms if required
4. Learn some new tricks - so I provide access to a 'members website' with additional resources - and help.
5. Put in place 'budget payment' options for bigger sales - get paid in advance
6. Free up your time to promote and sell - provide service

Additionally I've also included valuable tools like coupons/vouchers and built in email and full online shopping options via small business tech package. This means you get the tools to engage with your customers and potential customers.

Try Not to Get Shafted

There are far too many small firms and retailers that are being shafted by web designers - selling £20k online shops, to many one and two man bands with great products - but just not selling enough to feed the kids.

Thousands of small firms just not being able to fight through the problem of business rates, staff, cash flow and now Covid-19 and a lockdown - at every turn someone is waiting to take a swipe or knock you back down.

So I decided to do something about it, to make it easier, to remove the complications, to give you the chance to make a difference - to you, because without you there is no business.

If you are not in a position at the moment to sell your stuff online, if you are not able to communicate with your customers, offer them deals and offers, getting them to come back soon, Prosecco evenings - special stock just for them, click and collect, social sharing - you are as they say (proverbially) f&\$%*d! It's where retail is at. Your customers want more, want different and will pay.

This is what many of your customers expect - maybe not all, but they do expect more. Little secret - HMV hasn't died because it didn't care - it died because it didn't communicate to its customers.

It didn't add value customers were expecting - oh and the hedge fund that owns it, knows more about money than the board of HMV - that's how it ends for many - and you if you are not careful.

This Very Old Fact Is True

30 years ago, factory workers began to be displaced by machines and cheap foreign labor. The worker cost £6.50 per hour but the robot only cost £1.50 per hour. Anyone willing to work for £1.50 per hour? Lots of business owners are doing just that. Go ahead after you've finished reading this, and do your own maths - I know you'll be shocked.

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Today, retail sales are being replaced by websites and media, with automation.

Imagine for a moment that you were a door to door salesman (they were quite common even twenty years ago) how would you ever compete with Amazon, or an online bookstore like Abebooks or even WH Smiths in today's world?

Some are doing very well - but you the small biz owner just don't have the ten grand to throw at a full blown - e-commerce operation and then have to pay the web guy to make updates and changes for an hourly rate every week. And then there is the need to compete with Wowcher, Groupon, Argos - every other massive firm that wants to take your share of the market - to put it's size nine on your windpipe and slowly push on your throat until you give up - walk away, die!

This very recent fact is even more telling in 2020 than it was in 2019 - "at least 25% of all sales are now made online" - if you don't have an online presence you really will be losing out. But that's not the full truth is it. You know what the deal is - you know what your customers want, ease, flexibility etc etc. Key is making that happen.

Colin Palmer said about me *"I couldn't believe my luck! Here I was talking to someone who knew what he was talking about, could cut through the 'white noise' and also spoke my language; and he understood exactly what I wanted."*

But who am I? Why should you listen to me?

I built my first online shop in 2000 - twobigshoes.com selling oversized, imported Italian shoes. I've spent twenty years working with financial services professionals improve their online presence and I have a team that helps me create 'effective' websites, and working with small businesses - to make more money and do more.

I'm a bit of a geek (some would say freak) - for the last twenty years I've been saying that this 'internet thing' will change everything and it has. I also wrote a really geeky book about pensions - it's called the Great British Pension Swindle - it's on Amazon.

I understand complexity and its engagement with the internet - but for a retail business the internet is like the size nine on your throat, if it pushes hard enough you'll die. I'm also not a young one, not a twenty two year old, web design guy. I've been through the mill several times and now work with small firms and startups to cut through the crap, solve the problems that small firms have.

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Online Plans

Perhaps your online plans are going wrong or there are some e-commerce fires that just ain't burning as bright as they should.

Sadly, a lot of small businesses end up spending a small fortune on things that just don't deliver. There is a good chance that you've already spent good money on websites and marketing that just hasn't worked and in retail this is becoming harder and harder as the shopping pound gets drawn online more and more. But - it is solvable, you do have a choice.

- **Are you sure that your customers are spending what they could with you instead of elsewhere?**
- **Are you able to promote and sell, encourage your existing customers to come back for more?**

Provided you can answer yes to these then you **don't need me if it's a no** then there is a good chance that you are missing opportunities to sell more.

For retailers I've produced some more information, you can listen to in the office today.

<https://www.therichardsmith.com/podcast-special-retail-businesses/>

When you are ready you can then pop to

<https://www.therichardsmith.com/shop> where there is some more information.

This podcast (it's also on Itunes) is not only about sales and marketing, it's also about having a modern set of business tools working for you, making sure that your presence is professional and that your possible customers can buy - and today. Also making sure you know what is happening in your market and what you can do to solve the problems.

Honestly - I give this information away knowing that most of you won't take any action, won't do anything with it - for those that do take some action will find that their business changes very quickly.

A reminder, that those who got stuff right a few years back managed to survive and thrive - think Argos or Amazon - those that got it wrong Woolworths - Poundland. If there is any chance that one on this list could help then we should talk.

- Automation of orders/sales/click and collect
- Social and search marketing improvement
- Facebook/Google paid ads
- Email marketing and brand building - offers | deals | repeat sales
- No/poor or worse incomplete e-shops
- No budget payment facility (paid up front for bigger orders)

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When you look around your business today ask if anyone has the skills needed to be able to solve any of these issues with you, in a way that makes sense. If you have, perfect you'll be flying in no time, if not welcome to my world, this is what I do.

I'll help you solve those issues once and for all but with no long term commitment - I don't want a job. But I do want to make sure you get the absolute truth about moving forward.

Couple of things to do next.

You can also listen to the special audio - no optin required/ no charge <https://www.therichardsmith.com/podcast-special-retail-businesses/>

You can also find out more on <https://www.therichardsmith.com/shop>

When you're ready to move on this - I'll be waiting.

Richard

Phone/Whatsapp 0774 007 6226 drop me a message with the very best time to get back to you.

PS.You could of course delay making the call, sitting on your hands hoping this is going to get better. It won't - get in touch today.

PPS. It could be worth many thousands of pounds of turnover and profit.

You should also check out <https://www.therichardsmith.com/shop> and <https://www.therichardsmith.com/podcast-special-retail-businesses/> - lots on there - all free, on me.

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Appendix

Current Client Results (live)

1. Is a retailer, food products.
2. Manufacturer - Glass products (

1.

Date Range:

Quarter to Date (Jan 1 - Mar 31, 2020)
vs. Previous Year (Jan 1 - Apr 1, 2019)

Performance

TOTAL SALES £67,266.11 ↗ 17% Previous Year: £57,483.76	NET SALES £61,526.21 ↗ 17% Previous Year: £52,778.76	ORDERS 1,450 ↗ 14% Previous Year: 1,276
ITEMS SOLD 3,633 ↗ 16% Previous Year: 3,135	RETURNS £107.49 ↘ -19% Previous Year: £131.90	GROSS SALES £62,362.61 ↗ 17% Previous Year: £53,502.76

Charts

2.

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PROFIT AND LOSS

Last quarter ▼

£54,030

Net income for last quarter

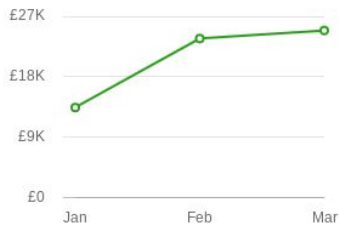


SALES

Last quarter ▼

£62,001

Last quarter



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