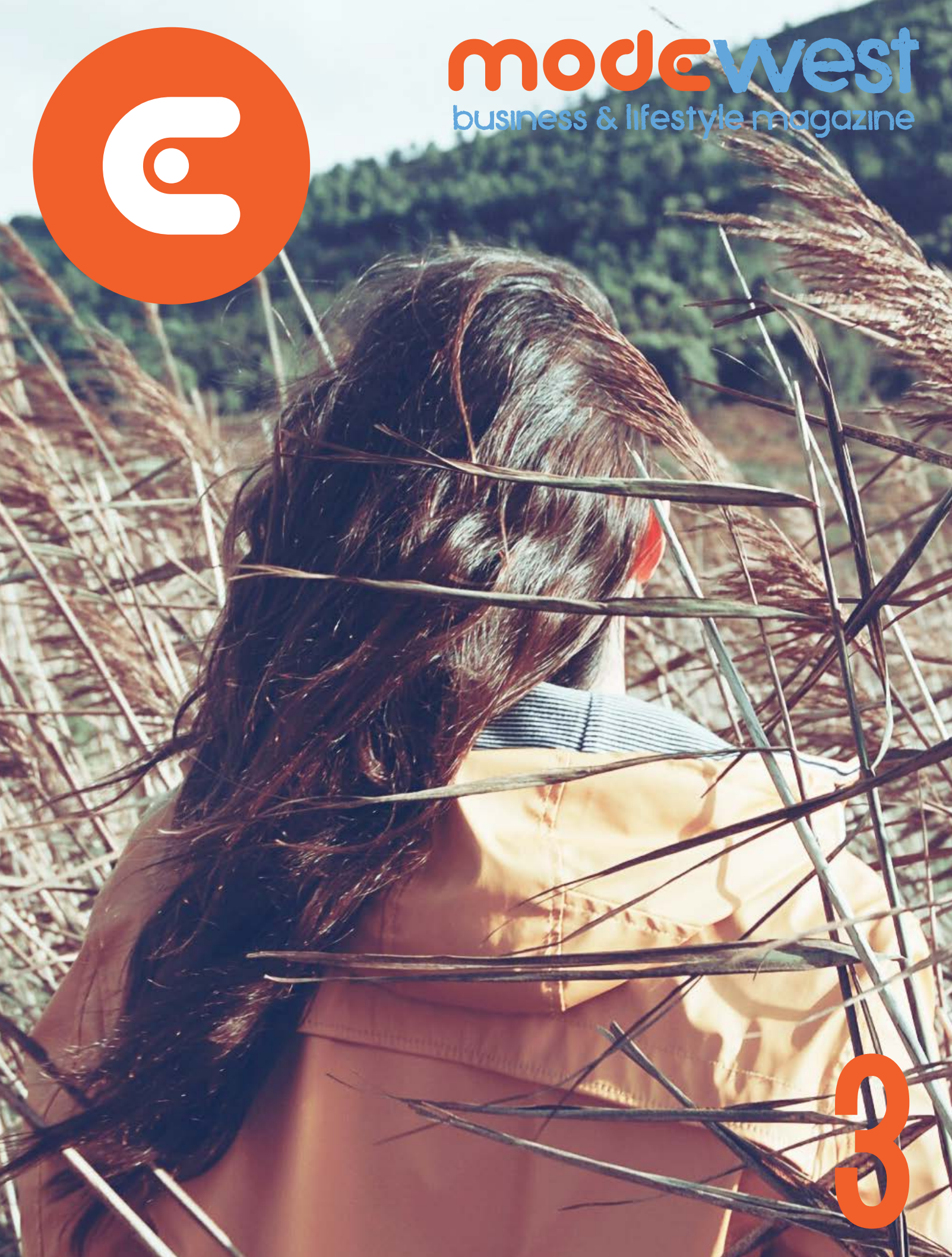




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EDITOR Gina Jaaskelainen

from the editor

It's the end of the financial year. This is a time to examine our financial position and make decisions for the future. This year, we have seen a lot of people in small business struggling with money and perhaps questioning the future of their business. We would like to encourage you to keep going. Investing in your business strategically will reap rewards, and there is help available. You are not alone.

In 2015, social media has well-and-truly pervaded our lives. We are on social media all the time. But whether we are efficient in using it to the benefit of our business is still a question mark. Many find that social media takes too much of their time and distracts them from 'productive' work.

Is social media seen as entertainment? In fact, social media is a business tool. The sooner we grasp this fundamental truth the sooner we'll ensure our time spent on social media is profitable.

In this issue of Modewest, we delve into the world of Instagram. Instagram has transformed from a teenage selfie platform into a strategic brand awareness tool. This image-based social media network allows you to make contact with people that are interested in your visual brand as well as to showcase the 'human' side of your business.

To develop our human side, let's ensure we are maintaining good health and wellness despite our busy lives. Stop and smell the roses, eat wholesome, natural foods and make time in your day to rest, relax and rejuvenate.

On page 29 we discuss the health benefits of a low carb diet and on page 32 we bring you the second part of our Basics of Essential Oils series, discussing the healing benefits of applying essential oils topically.

The time to look back is short. The time to look forward—and make sound business decisions—is now!

Gina Jaaskelainen, *Editor-in-Chief*

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Are staff issues overwhelming you?

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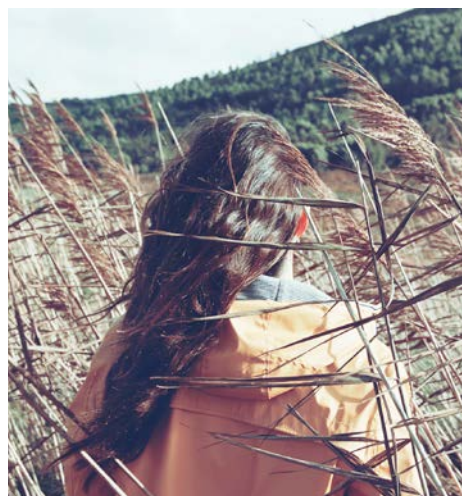
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know your customer

Have you noticed that when you buy something from an online bookshop you'll soon receive their suggestions on what to buy next? There is a huge push in the consumer contact industry to collect metrics, preferences and tracking data to capture buying trends. Merging and cross-referencing data across various platforms helps companies build their individualised customer profiles. The purpose is to provide customers personalised marketing—but it can sure feel like you're being spied on! "Knowing and understanding your customer is an integral part of running a profitable business," says business mentor **Rob Drage** from Thexton Armstrong Drage in Faulconbridge. "But, on the other hand, it is possible to 'know' too much about your customer, to the point of second-guessing them, and neglecting to find out the truth."

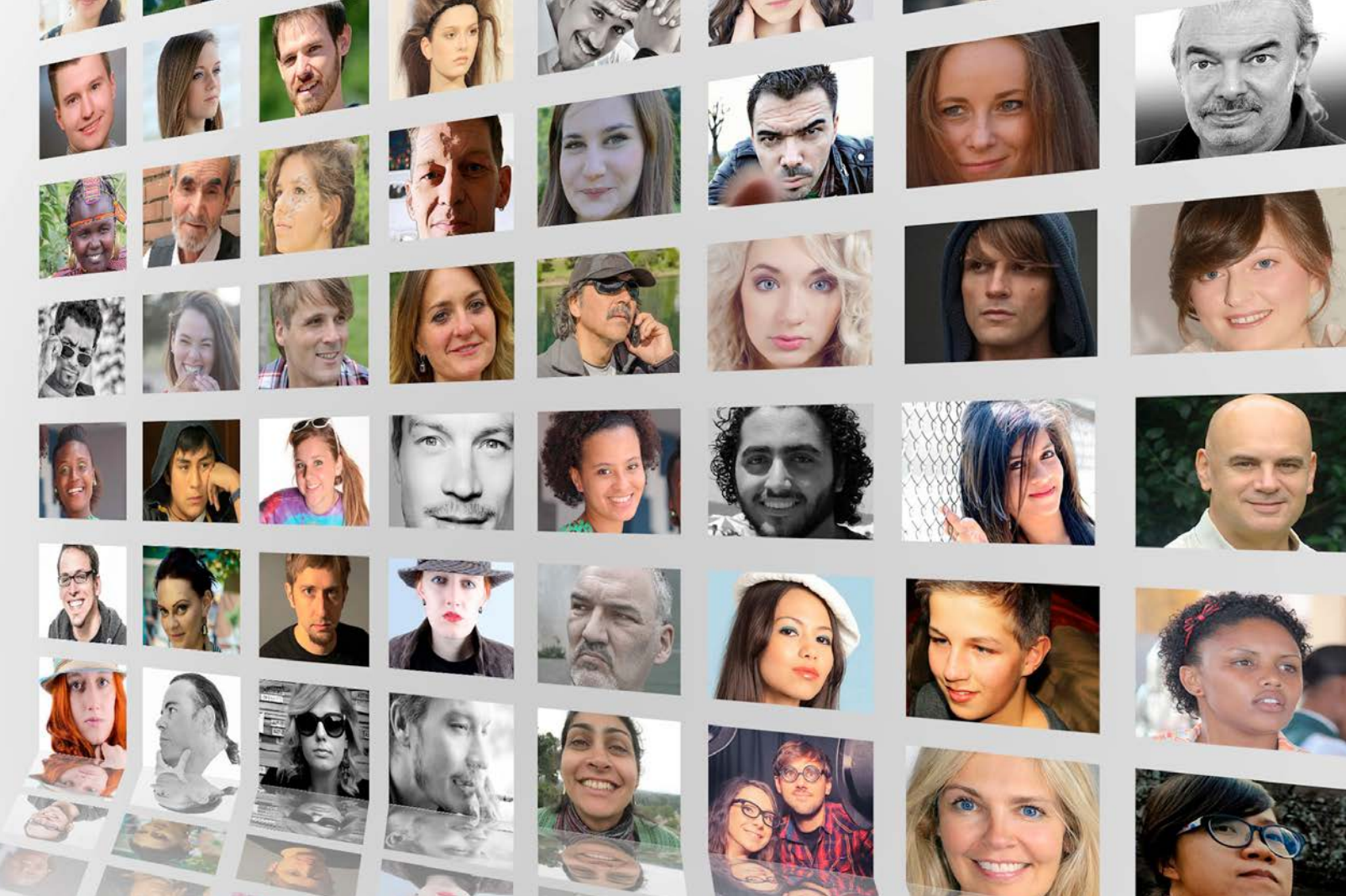
So, how can we learn about our customers' wishes without invading their privacy?

"It does not take very much effort, through a conversation with your customer, to find out, for instance, what they do, how old they are, where they shop, what car they drive, whether they own a business and who their key customers are," says Rob. "But the only driver in collecting this information must be to understand and serve your customer better."

As small business owners, we do business with people we trust and respect and enjoy serving. They do business with us because we meet their needs, provide a value-based personal service and take the time to listen to them.

Often, you will learn all you need to know about your customers just by listening and asking questions. It's never a good idea to make assumptions.

"The difficulty arises when we second guess the customer instead of having a conversation," says Rob. "Knowing how your products and services meet their needs is the key to a continuing and profitable customer relationship." As each customer is an individual, it's important to treat them in a unique way—one that makes sense to them.



Your ideal customer

Having a view of your customer is important for the purpose of creating a picture of your ideal customer. Knowing what he or she looks like will help you market your services more effectively. This 'dream' customer has a few characteristics that set them apart from the rest.

"An ideal customer is satisfied with your product or service," says Rob. "They feel that their needs are being met and they think of you first when they're looking to re-purchase."

And they don't haggle. "They are happy with your price because it provides value to them. In fact, they are so pleased with you that they will tell others about you, and about your product or service," Rob says.

Mutual satisfaction

Your relationship with your ideal customer is mutually satisfying and beneficial.

From a business owner's perspective the ideal customer provides, first of all, good turnover and good profit—and they buy frequently.

On the other hand, an ideal customer doesn't take too much of your time and leaves you free to pursue other customer relationships.

They also help you find new customers and keep your cash flow in check by providing referrals and paying on time.

Taking your relationship further

Now that we know what our ideal customer looks like, and how they can benefit our business, let's see if we can make our dealings with them more individual.

By communicating with our customers—by just observing them—we may be able to learn what their communication preferences are. "Do they prefer to speak with us face to face? Or are they comfortable dealing with us by phone or email?" Asks Rob.

For the purpose of honing our services to better serve our customers, we should aim to find out how our customers use our services.

By familiarising ourselves with the way they benefit from our products or services we will be able to discover new ways to develop our offering.

Making sense of your brand

Understanding your customers should influence your interaction with them. It should also crystallise your own thinking as to what your business offers and whether your brand makes sense to your customers.



All human interaction, including business, is based on communication. That's one reason to revisit the language that you use with your customers. Are you speaking their language—or are you just making noise? Does your customer understand you?

"Taking the questioning further," says Rob, "you should ask yourself whether your value proposition, brand positioning and even your business name make sense to your customers."

When you speak the language of your customers—and they understand what your business is about—you have the option of recruiting your customers to do your marketing for you.

An enthusiastic customer, well-versed in your business ideology, can become a walking, talking ambassador of your brand.

Value is not about price (alone)

A healthy business relationship with your customer should not, primarily, be about price.

Your job as a product or service provider is to find out what your customer values and then sell to that value.

"Getting to know your customers can reveal untapped or hidden value in complementary products and services," says Rob. "It's a tool to acquire competitive intelligence as well as to be abreast of market trends."

Being knowledgeable about your customers therefore makes a lot of sense. When you know your customer and what motivates them, you will know your own business, and product or service offering, better. ●

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ROB DRAGE 0409 776 590 thextonarmstrong.com.au/drage



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I understand my financial break even point	
I know my cash flow and can easily pay my bills	
I have effective marketing and easily win new clients	
I receive referrals from happy customers	
I have time for family, friends and holidays	
I always challenge myself to improve performance	

YOUR SCORE

Contact Rob Drage on
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Many of us have pondered securing a loan to finance our business, especially when starting out. Borrowing money is fraught with danger for someone unprepared or uneducated in financial matters. For a person who has done their homework, however, and is aware of the risks and the options, borrowing may provide an intelligent way to kick-start his or her business or to fund a timely investment. “Research, research, research,” says financial adviser **Matt Rowe** from FIFO Capital in Sydney. “There are new financial products entering the market constantly. You have to keep yourself educated.”

The one type of loan that most of us have in mind when thinking about borrowing—the business loan—might not always be available. Traditional business loans are what banks are most comfortable dealing with—but they will also expect very tangible securities.

Many avenues to one destination

The good news is that there are more than one type of loan available to business owners. It is possible to take one’s pick from finance providers, which—in addition to banks—include finance companies, wealthy individuals and crowdfunding.

The bad news is that it may be difficult to obtain traditional forms of funding, especially if you are just starting out. One option, in a situation like this, is to turn to relatives or friends. “Asking for a loan from the people you know can be risky,” says Matt. “You might not be invited to Christmas dinner anymore.” If you absolutely have to resort to borrowing from family or friends, keep the amounts small and make sure you pay back quickly.

Business loans

Business loans from a bank typically come with a set of prerequisites.

- You’ll need to have been in business for at least two years;
- You’ll need a solid business plan;
- Your business must be making a profit;
- You can’t have defaults; and
- You must have bricks and mortar security to offer.

These loans are assessed on the strength of your property assets, and this security class is meant to cover the loan amount.

Types of property used as security include residential, commercial and rural land. “Funders can also look at the value of your business and capital equipment,” explains Matt. “Loan amounts vary and depend on the value of the property security being offered. Generally this is the cheapest form of borrowing.”

Unsecured loans or finance

Unsecured business loans include unsecured overdrafts, fixed-term loans and credit cards. Unsecured, in this instance, means that you have no property to offer as security. The financier will be assessing the strength of your business and/or acumen. The interest rate will typically reflect the higher risk nature of this form of lending.

Equipment finance

In equipment finance, you are lent money to buy equipment, which is then used as the security for the loan. Equipment finance can be for finance lease, commercial hire purchase or a chattel mortgage (a car loan). Funding amounts are usually between \$15,000 and \$100,000.

“Equipment finance works well if there is a particular income generating asset you need for the business—for example, a vehicle or plant machinery,” says Matt. “Usually, if you have been operating for at least two years, and you do not have defaults on your credit file, and you have property security; you can access a ‘low-doc loan’ (no or low documentation loan) where there is no need to provide financials.”

Debtor finance

Debtor finance is also known as invoice discounting, factoring, receivables funding or cashflow finance. With this form of finance, the financier advances funds against your outstanding invoices. So, in effect, you can get paid immediately, instead of having to wait for an invoice payment by your customer.

Debt versus equity

In addition to borrowing money, you have the option to take funds for equity in the business. Be aware, however, that you are giving up shares in your business and may end up losing the decision-making power in your own company.

Honesty pays off

“Be truthful in your application,” says Matt. “You will get caught if you lie and, what’s worse, you’ll have damaged your reputation and your relationship with your financier.” Honesty pays off, even if you’re not immediately lucky with your application.

“If I’m unable to assist a prospect with their funding request but have developed an open and honest relationship with them,” concludes Matt, “I’m happy to refer them to someone I think can help them.” ●



the '0' inbox

14



A couple of decades ago written communication was slow, but 'snail' mail and fax allowed us to think about our response—and we could get things done while waiting for a reply. From the 90s onward email has taken their place. With the constant barrage of spam and marketing emails, as well as our personal and business correspondence, managing our inboxes has become a stressful task, however. "Instead of looking forward to emails," points out business consultant **Angeline Zaghloul** from Peer Business Consulting in Sydney, "we're now craving that elusive concept: the 'zero inbox'—the state of nirvana when our inboxes are empty—and stay that way!" But is the zero inbox achievable? And how do we get there?

Despite the approximately four billion email accounts that exist worldwide today, and the average 200 emails people receive daily, email management can be achieved—and sustained—if you apply some basic and practical principles.

If your inbox is a complete mess you might have to spend some time doing an initial tidy. As you get things under control, it's then going to be easy to implement your new system.

Tip: Be consistent and take care not to let your inbox get out of control again.

Rule #1: Create labels or folders

Gmail and Outlook are both perfectly good 'email clients' (the software or application used to read and write emails)—and the most popular amongst business users today, replacing email clients such as Yahoo and Hotmail. Outlook has existed for ten years longer than Gmail and therefore performs in a more traditional way using a folder filing system.

In Outlook, your emails 'live' in different folders—that you have designated to them. The Outlook folder filing system is highly practical, and allows you to consistently file your emails away.

In Gmail, the equivalent filing system is to 'label' your emails. Your emails are 'tagged' into different labels—and the advantage of this filing system is that you can apply multiple labels to the one email. Once your emails are labelled as you wish, your emails can be archived and then recalled when you click on the tag in the left sidebar menu.

While Outlook folders may initially 'feel' more final, in practice the difference between Outlook folders and Gmail labels is minimal, and both constitute the first basic rule in achieving a zero inbox.

Rule #2: Don't leave your email client open

"We all get a little excited when we see an email notification on our desktop or portable device", notes Angeline. "But these notifications distract us from what we're supposed to be doing and kill our productivity instantly."

Indeed, it is our human nature to stop everything to read an incoming email and, before we know it, we're back to trawling our inboxes and the work we were doing becomes a distant memory.

Angeline's advice for staving off procrastination is to close your email client until you're ready to process your emails. "At the very least," she says, "turn off notifications of new emails."

For Gmail users, Google Chrome has a plug-in called Inbox Pause which can be effective in stopping new emails for a period of time, without you having to exit Gmail—handy in case you still need to send emails.

Rule #3: Compound your subscriptions

Angeline's advice is to resist subscribing to too many blogs and email newsletters. "It's a common mistake to subscribe to every blog and newsletter you can get your hands on," she says, "in an effort to obtain the latest trends and useful information. But if you don't have time to read them all, they end up clogging your inbox."

"Use Unroll.me to easily unsubscribe from the newsletters you don't read, and roll up the others into one daily email," she recommends.

Rule #4: Filter and file in one hit

Using 'filters' in Gmail or 'rules' in Outlook to categorise incoming emails is a great way to file emails on receipt, which you can then read later.

In Gmail you can filter emails and allow them to still remain in the inbox, therefore making it great for identifying what the email is about at a quick glance, however without the risk of forgetting about it by having it archived straight away.

In Outlook, these rules work more or less the same way as filters in Gmail. The purpose is to make categorising emails automatic based on sender, keyword or other such markers.

Caution: Be careful not to forget these emails. If you are filing away a lot of emails each day, consider deleting them instead or unsubscribing from unnecessary subscriptions.

Rule #5: Don't forget your sent emails

Sent items can be managed in exactly the same way as your inbox emails. By default, replies to email messages in Outlook are saved in the sent folder. This behaviour can be changed in the settings, however.

Go to File > Options > Mail > Save Messages, and check the box that says, "When replying to a message that is not in the inbox, save the reply in the same folder."

In Gmail, you can do the same thing. And, if you have labelled the incoming email and hit reply, the sent email will automatically have the label applied to it and will be archived to that label automatically when you press send.

Rule #6: Step away from the inbox

"I can't count the number of times I've walked through offices and seen entire teams sitting at their computers trawling through emails", says Angeline. "If your email doesn't need to be documented for audit or record-keeping purposes, or if it contains staff-sensitive or client-sensitive communication—communication that would be better made face-to-face—you may be better to call the person or arrange a meeting rather than send an email."

"Every now and then," says Angeline, "it would be wise for us all to step away from the inbox—and away from our computers, for that matter—and reconnect personally with our clients and colleagues." ●

Merlin Mann's 'Inbox Zero System'

Productivity expert Merlin Mann developed the 'Inbox Zero System'. It involves processing your emails every hour, applying one of the following five actions in the system to each email:

1. Delete or archive;
2. Delegate to someone else;
3. Respond—within 1–2 minutes;
4. Defer—to do something before you are able to reply; and
5. Do—if it's something you should and can action now.

The key premise of Mann's system is that time and attention are finite and when an inbox is confused with a 'to do' list, productivity suffers.

Mann argues that the inbox is a medium to create your actions list. If you've processed your messages correctly, your inbox should revert to zero easily, which means that you're free to concentrate on your actual work.

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cloud accounting: the main players

Accounting software has been a crucial part of a bookkeeper's and business owner's life at least since 2000, when the GST (goods and services tax) was introduced in Australia. Today, because of these groups' continuous need to communicate using data, many business owners—along with almost all bookkeepers—have moved to cloud accounting software. For those small or startup businesses that haven't moved to the cloud, or are relying on their accountant to make this decision for them, it may be worthwhile to meet the players and understand their strengths and weaknesses. **Evelyn Green** from Align Bookkeeping in Faulconbridge lays out the playing field.

"The three main players in cloud accounting are MYOB, QuickBooks and XERO," says Evelyn. "Each one of them comes with an entry level package from where you can move up to the more expensive, all inclusive packages.

"Current starting price for QuickBooks stands at \$12–15 per month at the lower end. XERO Premium 100 comes in at \$90 per month and MYOB AccountRight Premier will set you back \$99 per month."

The differences in pricing are based on the availability of features such as number of users, inventory tracking and multi-currency function. The biggest difference, however, is in the payroll function.

XERO allows payroll for one employee on their cheapest package. This is increased to five, then ten and up to a maximum of 100 on consequent payment levels.

MYOB's cheapest package has no payroll option. The optional payroll features in AccountRight Plus or Essentials Payroll will increase the number of employees you can process to unlimited, however.

QuickBooks offers free payroll for up to ten employees across the range of packages. Their payroll is outsourced to a separate company called KeyPay, and is integrated into QuickBooks files as an add-on. The cost of this feature may change at a later stage.

Time management

"Streamlining business processes is key to increasing available time for your business prospects," says Evelyn. "The time that you spend entering receipts is time away from following a lead or interacting with a customer—and it's also time that your competition is spending on these things. This is something that is always going to remain."

There are, however, a few important differences between entering data to a spreadsheet, as opposed to a cloud accounting software. "One of the main advantages are the 'bank feeds', which allow the program to communicate directly and in real time with your bank," explains Evelyn.

"All your transactions are entered automatically into the accounting software. You may still need to allocate the transactions to their own category but even here the software is set up to recognise certain transactions to automate this process. So the more you use it the more efficient it becomes."

Integration with ATO and other stakeholders

Nowadays it is easier than ever to do all of your own bookkeeping, including lodging your own BAS. Depending on your situation and inclination, you are at liberty to do as little or as much of your own bookkeeping as you like. Most of the software available today will communicate directly with the tax office through the ATO's business portal, or by producing the necessary reports that make it easy for you to complete your paper forms.



The documents that you can prepare, and seamlessly lodge through your software, include BAS, Payment Summaries, Tax File Number Declarations and Superannuation obligations. By communicating with your bank you can even send bulk payments straight from your system to the bank to make payments of bills and wages easy.

The Government has also recently announced a system called Single Touch Payroll, which will be introduced in 2016. This system allows payment of wages to employees with the tax and superannuation withheld and paid automatically to the ATO and relevant superannuation funds.

In addition to ATO and superannuation funds, cloud accounting software integrates with digital business tools called 'add-ons'. Add-ons include everything from sophisticated project management systems and debtor tracking to inventory and ecommerce systems.

"Two aptly named add-ons are Receipt Bank and Shoeboxed, which you can use from your smartphone," says Evelyn.

"The idea is that you take a photo of your receipt and send it through to a specified email address or through the add-on apps themselves for processing. The receipt can then be coded and fed back to your accounting software automatically."

How secure is cloud accounting?

According to Evelyn, the security with cloud accounting software, like Internet banking, is much higher than what is available for consumers.

In addition, most companies offering Internet-based solutions spread their data across the world in different locations, thus eliminating the dangers of having everything in one location.

"There has been a lot of commentary on the security aspect of cloud accounting," says Evelyn. "This was an issue especially in the early days when people didn't know what they were dealing with. But if you're comfortable using Internet banking you should be fine with cloud-based accounting."

Is it worth upgrading?

When considering upgrading from a paper-based system or excel spreadsheet to a cloud accounting software package you need to consider the cost to you in time, effort and accuracy.

"What if you were to calculate your transactions at your charge-out rates?" Asks Evelyn. "Think how much faster it will be to calculate the same transactions with the help of software. Think how much more accurate a cloud accounting software application would be. And finally, think of the extent of reports you can draw out."

Evelyn is a firm believer in working efficiently and smartly.

"Cloud accounting is here to stay," she says. "Start by choosing a program that you like. They all offer a trial period so use that time to test the software and 'play' with it. Don't take their marketing messages at face value, instead, test it and find out for yourself if it is in fact easy to use and if it suits you." ●

copyrighting
your copy right



Social media has turned us all into writers. Solo operators, small business owners and corporate giants; everyone is posting, sharing, liking and blogging. But do we really know what the rules of copyright are? Or are there any rules? Writer and editor **Alison Hill** from Hazelbrook explains. “Copyright is a type of property you create when you use your creative skill and labour to make original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works,” says Alison. “It protects your right of ownership and your exclusive rights of use to reproduce, publish or communicate your work.”

“Your work does not have to be artistic to be protected by copyright,” says Alison. “All that is required is that your work is original—meaning that it was created by you and wasn’t copied.”

Fixed material form

Copyright doesn’t protect an idea, only its material expression or ‘fixed material form’, as the law puts it. “If you write a blog post about some amazingly productive project management techniques,” says Alison, “and find out that your competitor publishes on the same topic the next week, you’re not covered by copyright. It’s not copyright infringement unless your competition has copied the words, graphics or other images you used.”

Copyright protection is automatic

You don’t need to do anything to get your work copyrighted. In Australia, copyright protection is automatic under the Copyright Act, from the moment the work is created.

“From time to time there are scams in which ‘copyright agents’ offer to register your copyright for a fee,” warns Alison. “Don’t fall for them.”

The copyright symbol ©

“It’s a good idea to use the copyright symbol as a reminder that the work is not to be copied or republished without permission,” says Alison. “Use it in this form, ‘© Josephine Blogs 2015 joblogs@awesomeblog.com’. That way it is clear who the owner is, and how you can be contacted for permission to reproduce or share your copyrighted work. Using the copyright symbol has proved to deter copycats.”



Using other people's work

To use other people's work, you must contact the copyright holder and tell them exactly what you want to use and how you plan to use it. "You'll often find their details on the publication," says Alison, "or you may have to do a bit of sleuthing. Either way, make sure you get permission from them in writing."

To make matters more complicated, the creator of a work is not always the copyright holder. For example, a writer employed by a company to create content for the company's website or social media is most likely not the copyright holder as they created the work in the course of their employment.

Even in this case, however, the creator retains so-called 'moral rights' over their work. "This simply means," explains Alison, "that the creator of the work has the right to be attributed as the creator; and their work can not be falsely attributed or used/treated in a derogatory manner."

"So even if somebody else has copyright (your boss, for example) your moral rights can never be traded. Unless you agree otherwise, you have the right to be named as the author of your work. And, of course, if you are publishing somebody else's work, you should attribute them as its creator."

Using online material

Copyright affects online as well as offline publications. You can't take another person's work just because it's available online. Publishing online is generally no different to publishing old-style.

"There's a myth that you can re-publish content from the Internet because it is in the public domain," says Alison. "But in law, 'the public domain' just means that copyright has expired (usually 70 years after the death of the creator)."

A licence to use

With regards comments made on your website (for example, comments to blog posts or online articles), the contributor holds copyright and you have a limited 'licence' to use their material on your site.

"A licence really just means permission," says Alison. "A copyright owner can licence another person to use their work subject to certain conditions, such as paying a fee or royalty, using it in a specific place or for a defined length of time. There are also what are known as statutory licences, but these generally only apply to educational institutions."

Licences come in two categories: exclusive and non-exclusive

The exclusive licence transfers all copyright rights (except moral rights) to the licensee, for as long as the licence runs. The non-exclusive licence transfers only some of the rights to the licensee, as specified in a contract.

"When you post to a social media platform, you are usually granting the platform a licence to use your content," says Alison. "Check the fine print, as you may be giving them permission to use your content in any way *they* like, including commercially."



"The most popular sites don't ask you to transfer exclusive rights, but they can. And if they do, you can't use anything you have created in any other way, including to earn a living.

"There is always the danger that others may post infringing material on your website, or use anything on it in a way that infringes the creator's copyright.

"You are responsible for everything that happens on your website.

"For example," says Alison, "you can't give permission for a designer to use a photograph on your website that they haven't purchased or been given a copyright licence."

Quoting someone else's work

Quoting other people's work—in normal circumstances—is allowed. The exception is if the quote forms a substantial part of the original work. This doesn't necessarily refer to length, but to whether the part is 'important', 'essential' or 'distinctive'. In general, it's wise to get permission to use, for example, more than a few lines from a book or report. The law also provides exceptions for criticism or review, reporting the news, or for study and research. "If you need to know about a specific situation, seek professional legal advice," stresses Alison.

Copyright is indeed an important topic that needs to be taken seriously. Look out for your own intellectual rights—and be mindful of how you use other's copyrighted material. After all, it's not only a legal matter but one of courtesy. ●

further reading

ARTS LAW CENTRE OF AUSTRALIA

<http://artslaw.com.au>

Provides information, a seminar program and limited legal services. You can buy sample contracts at this site.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

<http://ag.gov.au>

Publishes a short guide to copyright.

AUSTRALIAN COPYRIGHT COUNCIL

<http://copyright.org.au>

Contains information sheets for creators and users of copyright, runs an excellent seminar series (the next one on 25 August 2015 in Sydney), and for only \$75 you can complete the Copyright Essentials online course.

COPYRIGHT AGENCY

<http://copyright.com.au>

Collects and distributes fees for copyright holders and creators, and publishes information about copyright.



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how to win clients and influence followers on Instagram

Launched in 2010 by American entrepreneurs Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, image and video sharing social media site Instagram has transformed from a teen phenomenon into a serious tool for businesses. In 2012, Instagram was purchased by Facebook for \$1 billion and, today, **Instagram is the fastest growing social network in the world**, with an estimated value of \$35 billion and 300 million active users.

Besides Facebook, there's probably no better tool for establishing brand identity than Instagram. With its social media feed consisting entirely of photos and videos—viewed mostly on mobile devices—Instagram combines ease of access and communication with a feeling of privacy unmatched by any other social media platform.

The numbers behind Instagram are impressive. There are 70 million daily photo uploads and 2.5 billion daily likes. 90% of Instagram users access the service on a mobile application. 70% of users check their Instagram feed once daily, and 35% log on more than once a day. 70% of Instagram users are outside the United States. The total photo count on Instagram stands at more than 30 billion images.

Instagram on Google

Your Instagram profile is indexed by Google, and other search engines. The photos and videos that you post on Instagram, however, are not. This doesn't mean that you cannot search Instagram photos on Google. You just need to add the word 'Instagram' to your search. For example, a search query for 'shoes on Instagram' will result in a row of five Instagram images of shoes, followed by Instagram accounts related to footwear.

The relevance of Instagram to a business owner is not, however, visibility on Google.

As with other social media platforms, your success on Instagram depends largely on your interaction with your followers. As you follow others and communicate with them, you will slowly and steadily give your company a face and a personality that your followers, and potential clients, are able to relate to.

Key to success on Instagram

The key to success on Instagram is making sure you are showcasing the human side of your business. Let your personality shine. Be yourself. Educate your followers, as well as entertain them.

Being more personal than Facebook, and much less formal and imperious than LinkedIn, Instagram is well suited to sharing behind-the-scenes and other 'unofficial' imagery. Your followers should feel that they are gaining access to the backstage of your company, by just following you on Instagram.

Captions for your images can be personalised, funny, touching and meaningful. Share photos that feature your products, new and old. Think of ways to turn your company news into interesting images that you can post on Instagram. Feature your clients, with their permission, on your Instagram feed.

When you post on Instagram, make it your goal to tell stories. Your brand will come across more interesting and more approachable. Ideally, your individual posts to Instagram should always have a point: why you're posting this image, right now.

You should also work towards creating a continuing story, one that a visitor to your Instagram profile can see at a glance.

Transforming your company's news into a continuous story is, admittedly, not an easy task. There is, however, an additional benefit to this—an increased self-awareness. As you keep posting, and embellishing the story of your company, you will not only engage your followers, but also educate yourself on the direction and deeper meaning of your vocation.

Having said that, it is important to remember that you aren't on Instagram to indulge yourself. Your main concern is your clientele; and your brand messaging must reflect—and be suitable to—your audience. Chances are that you already know your audience, but, if you don't, interacting with your followers on Instagram is a good way to find out who they are and what they like.

How to find followers

Your way to building an audience on Instagram starts from finding out which hashtags people in your niche are using. Hashtags are an integral part of Instagram, so don't be afraid to use them.

Hashtags are the only way to find images and videos on Instagram. When you search photos on Instagram you will get a list of photos marked with your search hashtag. The newest photos are always at the top of the list and, depending on the popularity of the hashtag, the list gets updated every few seconds—or even faster!

Hashtags are added to the comments section before posting your image. The maximum amount of hashtags per image is 30, and often it is a good idea to use all of your allowed hashtags to maximise your reach. However many hashtags you use, make certain that you post your hashtags *with* your photo. Adding hashtags later will not boost your photo to the top of the list, nor will it help your photo being found.

To find out which hashtags to use, check out your competition. If you're a real estate agent, for example, start with the hashtag #realestate. You will find a lot of photos by other real estate agents. Tap on a photo and see which hashtags it has. Tap on a hashtag on that image and see what types of images are associated with that particular hashtag.

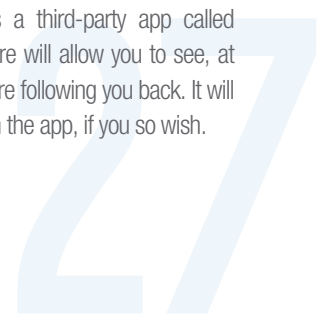


Keep digging, and write down a list of hashtags that seem relevant to your business. Then, test your hashtags by linking them to a photo. You will soon have your own list of hashtags that will attract the kind of audience that you're interested in.

If you give it permission, Instagram can also find which of your contacts and Facebook connections have an account, and you can also try out the Suggested Users feature. Some of the suggestions will be people that have a connection with you, while others will be Instagram influencers or people connected to your interests.

Using Crowdfire

An invaluable tool for finding followers is a third-party app called Crowdfire (previously JustUnfollow). Crowdfire will allow you to see, at a glance, which of the accounts you follow are following you back. It will also allow you to unfollow people from within the app, if you so wish.



To gather followers quickly, you can also follow other people's followers on Crowdfire. Just type in the name of the account whose followers you want to 'copy' and Crowdfire will present you with a list of accounts that you can follow directly from the app itself without having to visit Instagram.

Rewarding your followers

Now that you have built your audience on Instagram, it's time to cultivate your relationship with them, and especially with your top followers. You will find out fairly quickly which of your followers like your photos and comment on them regularly. These are your top followers.

Reward your top followers (or fans) by thanking them for their comments, answering their questions and liking and commenting on their photos. You can also contact your fans by using Instagram Direct which allows you to message people privately. Send your fans coupons, press releases and even surveys.

A simple 'thank you' goes a long way in establishing a relationship and making your followers feel special.

In addition to rewarding your top likers and commenters, you should ensure all your followers feel privileged to be following you. Post 'first looks' or previews of your products on your feed. Put up photos of your staff and signify their birthdays by posting a photo of the cake or the birthday person. In a word, make all your followers feel welcome—like they are a part of your company.

Your Instagram strategy

Instagram can be an essential part of your online marketing activity. Before you launch your business on yet another social media platform, however, stop for a minute and consider your Instagram strategy.

The rules and, most importantly, your objectives as a business on Instagram, are different from those of a private user. Your goal is not to get as many likes and comments as you can. As a marketer of your business, your goal is to create brand awareness and forge ongoing relationships with potential clients.

For these purposes, Instagram can be an incredibly powerful tool. ●



8 tips for posting on Instagram

1. Post only high-quality images, (feed photos minimum 640x640px, profile photo 110x110px)
2. Don't forget to post videos
3. Best days to post: Monday, Thursday, Sunday
4. Best posting routine: post different photos once or twice every day and don't repeat them
5. Share your photos and videos to Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr directly from Instagram
6. Use IFTTT app (If This Then That) to automatically share your posts to other social media platforms
7. Find popular hashtags on <http://tagsforlikes.com>
8. Measure your success on <http://iconosquare.com>

low carb for life

We're all busy people and don't always have the time or the energy to look after our health the way we should. Many of us feel less than optimal and carry extra weight on our bodies, and some of us have even become diabetic because of our life choices. The good news is that the 'right' food goes a long way in rectifying the situation. Opinions about what constitutes 'a healthy meal' have, however, changed pretty drastically in recent years, and many people are confused about what they should—and shouldn't—eat. Clinical nutritionist **Fiona Kane** from Informed Health in Penrith reminds us that, "Food is medicine. Each meal and each snack should nourish and energise you."

Today, nutritional principles that used to be considered beneficial, or even essential, have been challenged and, to a large degree, abandoned.

The biggest change in thinking concerns carbohydrates and lipids. According to new research, reducing carbohydrates in your diet results in weight loss, decreased appetite and reduced blood sugar and insulin levels—which is good.

The thinking on fats has changed substantially, too. According to the report dated 8 May 2015, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics—formerly known as the American Dietetics Association—has dropped cholesterol and saturated fats from their list of 'nutrients of concern'. (*Academy Comments re. The DGAC Scientific Report*: <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/advocacy/take-action/regulatory-comments/dgac-scientific-report>)

Despite the plethora of new research and anecdotal information from people who have regained their health by following a High Fat-Low Carb diet, the Government recommendations have not changed. The 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines still recommends that Australians eat more grains and reduce their intake of saturated fats. (*Source*: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/n55>)

Eat more protein and fat, fewer carbs

Taking into account that obesity levels and heart disease increased as people adopted low fat diets, the official guidelines in Australia, and elsewhere in the world, seem outdated at best. Perhaps the best policy for individuals is to get informed and take responsibility for their own health.

"You should optimally eat both protein and fat at each meal," says Fiona Kane. "Meat, chicken and fish are all great sources of protein. Avocados, nuts, seeds, coconut oil, butter and olive oil, on the other hand, should be eaten for their fat content."

Proteins and fats are essential for the welfare of our bodies.

What people often don't realise is that protein and fat are needed for optimal brain function and to produce hormones and important neurotransmitters such as serotonin and melatonin which are required for a happy mood and good sleep.

"If you eat balanced meals that include protein, fat and not too many carbohydrates, you'll maintain good blood sugar levels throughout the day," says Fiona Kane. "This will help you avoid energy dips, as well as the sugar and caffeine fix that we often use to cure out the afternoon slump."

"Besides, when you eat protein and fats," says Fiona, "you don't tend to overeat because the fat ensures that your brain and stomach get the message that you have eaten enough. If you are feeling bloated, tired, foggy or unwell after you eat, then you are not eating the right foods!"

Eat slowly, drink water, exercise

Busy lifestyles tend to force us to eat fast. It might be a good idea to give your mind and your body time to catch up when you're eating.

"Don't eat your food in two gulps over your computer," says Fiona. "Slow down and chew your food properly to help your body digest it well."

It's also crucial to drink enough water. "Being dehydrated may lead to a big energy drop and a headache by the afternoon," warns Fiona.

And when your energy levels increase—thanks to your new diet—start introducing some exercise to your daily routine. "Even just walking up and down stairs for five minutes will get your energy up again," says Fiona. "But if possible get some fresh air; a quick walk around the block is good for recharging your energy."



case study 1: high carb harry

BREAKFAST:

Cereal or croissant plus coffee with two sugars

MORNING TEA:

Muesli bar

LUNCH:

Wholemeal salad sandwich plus iced coffee or iced tea with sugar

AFTERNOON TEA:

Low-fat yoghurt and dried fruit plus coffee or energy drink

DINNER:

Pasta with chicken or veggies and cheese

SNACKS:

Chips or chocolate

Harry is eating high carbohydrates or sugar at every meal. There is no quality fat or protein until dinner time. Harry would be having blood sugar highs and lows all day which would cause regular sugar cravings and energy drops throughout the day.

If you eat loads of sugar and avoid fat and protein, your body never gets the 'full' message and you stay hungry all the time. This person will be relying on sugar and caffeinated drinks to keep their energy up, which leads to many health issues when eating this way long term.



case study 2: low carb larry

BREAKFAST:

Eggs and spinach or smoked salmon, avocado and spinach plus green tea or coffee (no sugar)

MORNING TEA:

Larry's nourishing breakfast meant he didn't need to eat anything at morning tea time, but if you are hungry, a good option is a handful of almonds or Brazil nuts and walnuts

LUNCH:

Salad with tuna or chicken, olive oil, pepitas plus lots of mixed greens

AFTERNOON TEA:

Full fat Greek style yoghurt or coconut yoghurt with macadamias and berries

DINNER:

Salmon or lamb with greens and pumpkin plus mixed herbs in avocado oil or drizzle coconut oil or butter

SNACKS:

A small amount (2–4 squares) of dark chocolate plus herbal tea (no sugar)

Larry is eating a great balance of fat and protein at every meal which stabilises his blood sugar levels and gives him plenty of long term energy. Larry is unlikely to be craving sugar or needing caffeine to stay awake or alert.

Do you experience physical pain, tiredness, bloating, IBS, brain fog or sleeplessness? Your food could be causing this!



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basics of essential oils part 2: topical

In the last issue of Modewest, we explored the healing properties of essential oils on the body and mind from the simple act of smelling them—the aromatic benefits of essential oils. In this issue, we'll look at how **essential oils can soothe muscle aches and pains, reduce skin irritations and sores** and provide other healing benefits through topical application.

What are essential oils?

Essential oils are aromatic chemical compounds that are extracted from different parts of plants and trees, from the flowers, leaves, stems, barks, seeds and roots.

Essential oils are chemicals, yes. But it's important to understand that everything in nature is made of chemicals. There are good and bad chemicals. Some chemicals harm us, impede growth, destroy cells and ruin our health, such as Sodium Laurel Sulphates (SLSs), often found in cheap cleaning products, soaps and shampoos. And then there are good chemicals, such as essential oils. They do not cause us harm when used in the correct way, and they can even heal us.

Most essential oils are extracted by steam distillation or cold pressing. This should be done in sterile conditions. In addition, essential oils should always be tested for purity and potency.

Grades of essential oils

Essential oils come in differing grades of purity, potency and integrity. These grades determine the quality and nature of the oils you buy, whether they are undiluted and unadulterated (purity), concentrated (potency) or derived from a single plant source (integrity).

The cut above the rest in quality are those essential oils that are certified organic. In Australia, this organic certification is granted, for instance, by Australian Certified Organic (ACO). In the United States, the certification is given by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

When an essential oil is granted the status of certified organic, it is not only guaranteed to be free of bad chemicals. The certified organic label stands for an holistic system of handling plants, soil and environment. (Source: <http://aco.net.au/standard/australian-certified-organic>)

The higher grades of essential oils are 100% pure and potent and tested for consistency from batch to batch. Like most things you buy, you get what you pay for. If a product claims 100% purity and potency and is much cheaper than others on the market, you need to ask why and find out more before you buy.

Reputable manufacturers will provide specifications for their essential oils. A certificate of analysis will inform you of the plant source and origin, the extraction method, the testing methods and results, as well as details of the appearance of the oil, density and certification (if organic).

Also, a good rule of thumb is, if it smells 'pure' and is effective in healing your ailment, then it is most likely a high or good quality product. If it smells artificially 'chemical', or is incredibly cheap—which often amounts to the same thing—it is probably diluted with a vegetable oil or adulterated, and you need to beware.

Are essential oils absorbed topically?

We know that essential oils are absorbed into the body aromatically through the olfactory system. From the nasal cavity, the aromatic compounds in essential oils are carried to the brain and different parts of the body. But are essential oils also absorbed into the body topically, via the skin?

Human skin has a low-medium permeability, however many people believe that absorption of essential oils into the body can occur via the skin. The topical application of essential oils does indeed penetrate the skin and provide relief for localised pain and in some cases more severe pain.

During massage, for example, the increased movement promotes circulation and increases body heat, which improves absorption of the essential oils into the skin. This is invaluable in treating muscle stiffness, joint pain and poor circulation. As well, essential oils have a potent effect on the emotional centres of the brain. They help ease breathing by vapour inhalation, relaxing the body and mind, and acting as a respiratory tract antiseptic.

Because of their anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-fungal or antiseptic properties, essential oils also provide added relief from all kinds of physical and mental symptoms.

The topical use of essential oils is effective in relieving skin conditions, muscle aches and pains, headaches and sleeplessness.

The combination of aromatic and topical application of essential oils is an even greater therapeutic regime.

When we use essential oils topically, the aromatic healing properties are also at work in our minds and bodies.

Our bodies are an integrated system—when one part is not working properly, our whole body suffers. Hence, it makes sense that the topical use of essential oils is only part of the picture. ●

In the next issue of Modewest, we'll be discussing the Basics of Essential Oils Part 3: Internal—the controversy around ingesting essential oils. Are essential oils safe to ingest? Or are essential oils in fact poison to our bodies?

how to use essential oils topically

NEAT APPLICATION

Many essential oils can be applied neat, such as Lavender and Frankincense. **Recommended amount for neat application: 1–3 drops per application**

It's not necessary, or economical, to use large amounts of essential oils neat. If you want to use them on a larger area, use with a carrier oil such as coconut oil. **Recommended dilution for coverage: 1:10 ratio (1 drop essential oil to 10 drops carrier oil)**

DILUTED APPLICATION

Some essential oils can cause skin irritations or tingling sensations, such as Peppermint (avoid using near eyes) and Clove Bud (stinging and burning, always dilute). **Recommended dilution: 1:20 ratio (1 drop essential oil to 20 drops carrier oil)**

CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN

Essential oils should never be applied neat (undiluted) on children or pregnant women. **Recommended dilution: 1:20 ratio (1 drop essential oil to 20 drops carrier oil)**

essential oils for common ailments

AILMENT	ESSENTIAL OILS
Cuts, Sores/Bruises	Tea Tree, Immortelle, Lavender, Cypress, Roman Chamomile
Insect Bites/Stings	Lavender, Lemon, Tea Tree, Basil
Scars, Acne/Pimples	Frankincense, Lavender, Tea Tree
Muscle Aches/Pains	Peppermint, Lavender, Clove Bud, Cypress, Roman Chamomile
Headaches, Tension	Peppermint, Rosemary, Patchouli
Fever, Cold/Flu Symptoms	Eucalyptus, Peppermint, Lemon, Tea Tree, Ginger, Lavender
Sleeplessness, Insomnia	Lavender, Roman Chamomile, Blue Chamomile, Ylang Ylang
Stress, Anxiety, Depression	Lavender, Lemon, Bergamot, Geranium, Roman Chamomile
Restlessness, Hyperactivity	Lavender, Cedarwood, Roman Chamomile, Sandalwood

Consult a qualified healthcare professional if you have any specific health concerns or if you are pregnant. Use essential oils according to the recommended dilution. Do not take internally. For further information or product specifications, email sales@theessentialshop.com.au.

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the big screen: dinner at eight

The original platinum blonde bombshell, Jean Harlow. The tragic short lived film beauty—both inside and out. With her baby-like smile, her sexual charm and that platinum blonde peroxided hair, Jean Harlow dominates the screen in this 1933 pre-code film classic *Dinner at Eight*.

An MGM studio film, *Dinner at Eight* is what I would call a dramatic comedy. Directed by George Cukor, and produced by David O. Selznick, it stars, in billing order, Marie Dressler, John Barrymore, Wallace Beery, Jean Harlow, Lionel Barrymore, Lee Tracy, Edmund Lowe and Billie Burke. This impressive line-up of actors come together in the climactic society dinner organised by Millicent Jordan, wife of Oliver Jordan, New York shipping magnate.

Dinner at Eight probes into the lives of the main characters, revealing the usual pre-code themes of 'intrigue': adultery, romance, suicide, lost fame, illness and poverty, presented in a mostly light-hearted comedic manner. The performances that truly shine are those of Lionel Barrymore as Oliver Jordan, Marie Dressler as Carlotta Vance and Jean Harlow, playing Kitty, the second wife of mining tycoon Dan Packard.

While Millicent is busy organising her dinner party, Oliver faces financial ruin—his shipping company struck hard by the Depression. The former stage star Carlotta Vance, who is visiting New York to sort out her dismal financial situation, pays a visit to Oliver to see if he will buy back her shares in his company. Dan Packard, played by Wallace Beery, plans to take the Jordan shipping line through deceit, bragging so to his wife Kitty, and Kitty is having an affair with married Dr. Wayne Talbot, one more of Millicent's dinner guests.

To further complicate matters, Paula—Oliver and Millicent's 19 year old daughter who is soon to be married—is having a clandestine affair with film actor Larry Renault, included in Millicent's dinner guest list.

Wallace Beery adds enjoyment to the film, especially in scenes played with Jean Harlow where the two fight neck-to-neck in a witty struggle of wills—Kitty determined to dine in the company of 'elegant' people despite Dan's lack of interest in being the Jordan's dinner guest.

High-billed John Barrymore plays the role of Larry Renault, a washed-up silent movie star trying to make a come back, two-time divorcé and hardened alcoholic. In the one scene between them, Larry tries to convince Paula to return to her fiancé. The scene is bearable, but when Barrymore is left alone, the scene feels like it never ends. Eventually Larry's reality leads him to commit suicide.

Oliver discovers that he has terminal thrombosis of the heart and, though Dr. Talbot tries to hide his prognosis, Oliver soon understands the extent of his illness.

At the Packard residence, Kitty has revealed to Dan in a fit of anger that she is having an affair, and Dan subsequently threatens her with divorce. Kitty then threatens to sabotage Dan's upcoming Cabinet appointment by revealing his crooked dealings if he doesn't back down from his takeover of the Jordan shipping line.

On the night of the dinner, Carlotta takes Paula aside in private, who is just about to break her engagement with her fiancé, to tell her that Larry has committed suicide, and she counsels Paula to stay with her fiancé. At the same time, Millicent, after an hysterical outburst about the ruined plans of her dinner party, learns about Oliver's illness and their financial ruin. Awakened to her selfishness, Millicent announces to Oliver, in the most endearing scene in the film, that she is ready to 'economise'.

As the guests go in to dinner, Dan, with prodding from Kitty, tells Oliver that he has put a stop to the takeover of the Jordan shipping line and the film ends with perhaps the wittiest line in the film delivered by Marie Dressler to Jean Harlow.

Dinner at Eight is a pre-code treasure. Jean Harlow as Kitty is adorable, feisty, endearing, sexy and nice, and she does a remarkable Betty Boop voice during one of her scenes. Lionel Barrymore and Marie Dressler, as Oliver and Carlotta, are endearing, good and charming. But my favourite moment in the film is when Millicent understands the financial reality she and Oliver now face and she responds with sincerity and a matter-of-fact common sense. We'd do well to respond to such challenges in life and in business in this same way. ●



photo focus: ICARUS

What separates a good photographer from a great photographer is not necessarily skill or vision. The thing that's needed in order to become a great photographer—or great anything—is awareness.

When I was learning yoga in my 20s, twenty years ago, it was very important that I be aware of the position of each of my muscles and coordinate my moves with the inward and outward flow of my breath.

The visible—what the observer saw—mattered less than what happened in my mind: did my mind guide my body through the asanas or did I daydream and let my body move on autopilot?

The thing that applied to yoga twenty years ago applies to photography today.

Once you have passed the initial stages of apprenticeship—once you know your equipment and have become friends with light—the only thing stopping you from taking great photos is your mind; whether you pay attention or not.

Awareness is hard and uses up a lot of energy. I remember being drained like a bathtub after my first longer photography shoots a few years ago. The exhaustion I felt was partly physical—there is always some acrobatics involved in getting the right point of view—but it was also mental.



My brain was just not used to the strenuous workout I was suddenly demanding from it.

One such workday I lost that awareness.

I had finished a high-powered five-hour photo shoot that went from one location to another. Everything had worked as scripted, and I loved the speed and ease with which I captured the desired photos. The sun was shining and, before the shoot ended, I found myself in a swimming pool with my camera—still taking photos, still full of energy.

Then it ended. We'd got the photos we needed, and the shoot was over.

Except, I had booked another photo shoot for that day and I had to come up with a new batch of energy, without which there would be no awareness, either.

What makes that day so memorable is that I had no energy left. Like Icarus, I went from heights of success to what seemed like the depths of failure. I flew too close to the sun. Triumph turned into defeat.

The only thing separating one from the other is awareness—or the lack thereof. ●

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