

MAKE YOUR BUSINESS VISIBLE...

Business Mentoring.
How could having a mentor
add value to your business.
[See Below](#)

The Best B&B in the world
in 2019 and 2020 and it is
here in South Devon.
They share their recipe for
success with us.
[See Below](#)

Keeping your business visible.
Briscoe PR take a look at why
you should keep up your public
relations and have a strategy
for raising your profile.
[See Below](#)

**Financial Planning for your
Business - we take a look at
the importance of ensuring
your business can continue
without you at the helm**
[See Below](#)

August 2020 Edition



Ask the Editor

Welcome to issue 3 of
South Devon Biz covering
the issues important to
South Devon businesses.
If you have a topic or question
you would like us to cover in
the next issue please do send
me an email to

Maureen

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The views expressed are our personal views
from our professional business advisors
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What is Business Mentoring

Running or managing a business can often be a
lonely place to be. Having the right business mentor
with relevant knowledge and experience has the
following benefits.

- Someone to talk to that can understand and
relate to your own situations
- A source of inspiration and motivation
- It sets aside dedicated time to work on
your business
- You will get a different perspective
- You will agree objectives for which your
mentor will keep you on track to achieve
- Gives you a critical friend who will give
practical advice that you need to hear rather
than want to hear
- Expanding your contacts – most mentors are
well connected and can introduce you to the
right people
- Will add a sense check to any business
decisions you make
- Increase your confidence
- A gentle nudge to spend time on your
business as well as in your business

A successful mentoring relationship depends on
openness and trust between the two of you. Always
choose a mentor that has the right level of experi-
ence and is somebody you can confide in and feel
comfortable with.

Growing your business



We are proud to offer a variety of business services
leaving you free to run your business while we work
on the additional challenges you face.

With over 20 years experience of helping businesses
to grow and prosper, our services are designed to help
business owners and entrepreneurs set and reach their
goals and raise their business profile.

We can give an independent view and assist with business
planning, marketing strategy & implementation as well
as event management for conferences, away days,
product launches, teambuilding or client entertainment.

Based in Torbay and working across the South Devon
area including: Torquay, Paignton, Brixham, Dartmouth,
Teignmouth, Totnes, Newton Abbot, Salcombe.
Most services can also be provided remotely if you are
based outside of South Devon.

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Organisers - Maureen Frost - Interesting Fact!
In my previous role as CEO of Hampshire Chamber of
Commerce I led the team that looked after 1700 businesses
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Andy Banner-Price

E: stay@the25.uk W: www.the25.uk



Maureen talks to Andy Banner-Price co owner of Torquay's multiple award winning hotel

Q1 what encouraged you to go into the hospitality sector?

It was completely random – we were both looking for jobs following redundancy and we'd finished doing our house up so we were also looking for a new home. Having wasted another evening not being able to find all three in the same travelling area I decided to look for businesses instead with a view to us doing something together with accommodation attached. A country house hotel in North Wales was literally the first thing to come up and we just fell in love with it. How hard could it be?!! We were there for over 7 years but it was initially a very steep learning curve.

Q2 Why did you pick Torquay?

We decided to downsize to remove the need for staff and wanted to just do B&B. Having a restaurant and also doing weddings and functions at our last hotel took over our whole lives. We were looking all over England and Wales and stumbled across properties in Torquay. It was initially more about the property – it needed to have enough space for comfortable luxury bedrooms, plentiful parking, & walking distance to good eateries. Our current property ticked all the boxes. We also fell in love with Torquay. There are so many things to do, beautiful scenery, lots of tourists, thriving theatres and history. It had everything we wanted.

Q3 What do you think has been the reason for your success with awards?

We're perfectionists. We continually strive to be better and even since winning "Best B&B in the World" last year out of more than a million properties, we haven't stopped making improvements since.

We will never have a finished property. We always put ourselves in the customers' shoes and ensure everyone has the best time possible.

Q4 What do you see as the best opportunities over the next 3 years?

I think the "book direct" message is finally starting to hit home and more and more guests realise they can get a better deal by cutting out the likes of Booking.com. However, unless you're in a strong position with plenty of direct bookings, if Booking.com went bust tomorrow, you're soon going to be struggling. We work hard to build a loyal following on social media, have an informative and up to date website and good SEO so we appear in lots of searches towards the top. Accommodation businesses also doing this will see an opportunity to continue to grow, plus less reliance on third party websites means you're paying less of your potential profits on commission.

"Boutique" means different things to different people but I still feel there's a shortage of our kind of property. When I go away, once I've got the basics like location and parking, it's the little things that I'm looking for. I want a great breakfast, fresh milk in the room for my tea along with a homemade biscuit or cake. I'd like quirky décor so I know I'm not in a corporate hotel and friendly and chatty owners. I want Netflix so I can watch a film after dinner and an honesty bar so I can have a drink if I fancy one. We struggle when we want to go on holiday for a few days ourselves, and I think only a little step up with a few tweaks could make a big difference to so many people's businesses.

In lockdown I started producing an on-line training course for people wanting to go into the B&B industry. I plan to launch over this winter. I'd ultimately like to start doing consultancy work.

Q5 What are the biggest challenges

Unfortunately, a lot of the challenges we face are out of our direct control. As perfectionists, we'd love to control everything and have every single

aspect of the guests' experience exactly how we wish it. I'm therefore in regular contact with our council to try and get things like our flowers beds and seafont lights looking good. I'm always litter picking or weed killing around the property and managed to get our local post box repainted as it was looking pretty shabby. I can ensure our guests have a fabulous time at The 25, but if they don't enjoy the area for some reason then they still won't come back. I want them to have the best meals, go to the best bars, see the best scenery, visit the best shops and attractions and go home raving about the whole of the English Riviera, not just The 25.

Q6 what would your advice be to anyone thinking of buying a hotel?

Don't overstretch yourselves. It's very easy to get carried away and end up spending more on a property than you think but you'll need lots of money when you move in. Even if you don't need or plan to do a big refurb, even small things soon add up. If the TVs are out dated and you need new ones at £400 each, that soon mounts up when you have eight rooms. Even small things like a new bin for each bedroom is another £100.

I'd also suggest getting some training or experience. Due to the prevalence of on line reviews, you don't have the luxury of finding your feet as you learn on the job like we did thirteen years ago. Getting a few average reviews at the beginning can keep your scores low for years. If you want your property to be spotted on the first couple of pages and a reputation for being a nice place to stay, you need to be getting the excellent reviews from day one.

Do your research. Know the area, the market and your customers. Read all the on line reviews – is there anything negative anyone mentions and can you fix it? Ensure you purchase the right property – a lovely property in the wrong location is just a house. A poor property in the right location can become a successful business.



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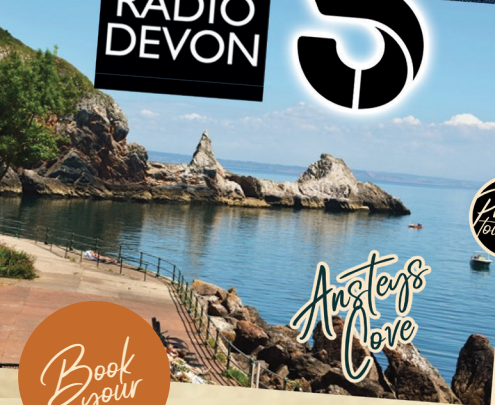


Vintage Tours

Around the English Riviera



Recommended by:



*Fabulous Devon Cream Tea Experience
around the beautiful English Riviera*

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*This truly is
an unforgettable experience
and one not to miss when
visiting the treasures around
The English Riviera!*



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Why Use Professional Images

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Tony Cobley, professional commercial photographer based in South Devon gives 7 reasons why businesses should use professional photography:

- 1) Within any marketing medium (website, brochure, newsletter, banner, etc), images are what we look at first so it's vital to make a great first impression.
- 2) Commercial photographers work with brands and their job is to understand the DNA of your business. They convert your brand messages into images which communicate those messages.
- 3) Photography doesn't just show who you are & what you do. The quality of the image tells the viewer how professionally and seriously you operate. Eg a professional headshot not only shows what you look like but separates you out as a professional upon first impression.
- 4) Commissioned professional photography is powerful because you get images of you and your business so it's relevant and personal.
- 5) High quality creative images massively improve interaction with your social media and can help SEO.

Continues on next page...

Keeping your business, products and services visible to your existing clients and potential customers has always been important.

Today it is vital that you are actively managing and developing your reputation, while listening to what your customers and other stakeholders are saying, to give you that important commercial advantage over your competitors.

Whether you are publishing news stories on your own website, issuing news releases to the press or creating a content strategy for your social media you should first and foremost be listening to your target audience and using that to build your activity around your values and ethos.

That would tell you what sort of things your customers and clients like to hear about, how they want to be communicated with and the sort of content that resonates with them. Without this information everything that you do is shooting into the dark. Once you have listened and then created your approach to your communications these are some of the things you should be considering:

News Releases

Never underestimate the power of a published press release providing news about your business, product and service development, new appointments, contract wins and other activity. Finding the right publications and having the relationship with the key journalists is important for getting the coverage that fits with your wider strategy.

Make sure you publish the news release on your own website too and then signpost it from your social media content.

Social Media

If your social media output was a bit ad hoc pre-Covid now is the time to make it more professional, consistent and strategic with considered content and supporting imagery and graphics. Make sure it aligns with your core values and messages, but don't make it all about you. Don't be the business that just talks about itself on its social media all the time.

Case Studies

Well-written examples of how you work and what you achieve for clients will touch the pain points of those people who are looking at your website to see if you can help them. Include a strong testimonial from the client too.

Blogging

Content on your own website that illustrates why you are an expert at what you do can be reassuring for people considering hiring you or buying your goods. Blog posts give you the chance to show your expertise and opinion on key issues in your sector - and Google loves that new and fresh content too.

Creative Ideas

If you have a team of people spend some time brainstorming ideas for news stories and other activity that could get your brand noticed. Get a pipeline of activity and content for the next six to nine months.

If you know you should be doing some of these things better than you are at the moment then consider outsourcing to an agency. They will provide that external sounding board for ideas, come up with creative campaigns and get you the coverage and exposure that you want.

briscoe:pr
MEDIA | CONTENT | SOCIAL



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Why Use Professional Images

6) It's not good enough being the best at what you do, you need to show the world how good you are. Pro photographers know how to represent, compose and light things at their best.

7) With quality images, your promo' material is improved, your public profile is enhanced and your marketing optimised. So the same marketing time and effort will go further!

Examples...



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FORTUNA WILLS
& ESTATE PLANNING



Why business Owners should have a Lasting Power of Attorney

Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) are finally starting to become more commonplace for individuals who are serious about their financial planning and family security, however for business owners this area of planning is often overlooked and doing so can have serious consequences for their business and their family.

LPA awareness is increasing generally with more stories in the media about people living longer and some of the horror stories that are publicised about what can happen if people lose capacity without having LPAs in place. Generally, people are aware that they can appoint attorneys to deal with their personal finances, as well as their health and welfare, but a subject less commonly discussed is Business LPAs (BLPAs).

Anybody with a business interest, whether that be as a sole trader, a partner or a shareholder, should consider creating a separate LPA solely to deal with their business affairs as part of their business continuity planning. Without a BLPA in place, if someone with an interest in a business is unavailable, e.g.

if they regularly spend time out of the country, or lacks mental capacity, it may not be possible to pay staff and suppliers, complete unfinished transactions or enter into new contracts, all of which would be likely to significantly hinder the day-to-day running of the business. Contracts entered into by a person who had capacity but now lacks it may become unenforceable owing to their incapacity.

Often in a personal LPA, people will choose to appoint a spouse or family member as their attorney,

but they might not be the most suitable person to manage business interests as well. Business interests are usually more complex than personal affairs and can require specialist knowledge and experience that personal attorneys may not have.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of Practice governs this area and states that 'an attorney should be someone who is trustworthy, competent and reliable. They should have the skills and ability to carry out the necessary tasks.' Naturally, this means that careful consideration should be given when appointing an attorney to manage business affairs, to ensure that they have the necessary expertise and skills to be able to make decisions in relation to the business in the same way that the donor would have done.

Some businesses have prepared for potential disasters occurring in their businesses, such as theft, computer hacks, fire or flood but few businesses have prepared for significant decision makers being incapacitated or unavailable due to prolonged illness or as a result of an accident.

If a business owner does lose capacity without a valid LPA in place, an application will need to be made to the Court of Protection to have a deputy appointed. This is a costly and drawn out process and there is no guarantee that the court will appoint your preferred deputy.

Regardless of current health, all business owners should be thinking about their planning for the future and LPAs should form part of that planning in every case in order to protect both their business and personal finances should the unthinkable happen.



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Your brand is what other people talk about when you're not in the room

we create brands that work
and win business...

