

MAKE YOUR BUSINESS VISIBLE...

Structuring and prioritising your to do list can maximise your productivity
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A shared vision to develop the English Riviera visitor economy
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How our High Street banks are playing a role in their communities
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How to improve the results from your LinkedIn Company page
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What winning an award can mean for your business
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Dec 2020 - Jan 2021 Edition



Ask the Editor

Welcome to the last issue of South Devon Biz for 2020 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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Maximising productivity: when every minute matters.

I've been running Joanne Manville Virtual Assistance for 5 years and have an amazing team of 13 VAs who bring a wealth of expertise and experience from a huge range of industry backgrounds. Each is responsible for a variety of tasks from a variety of clients and let me tell you, they are one efficient bunch!

Working with clients remotely is a completely different kettle of fish to working as an employee in an office. In an office, you're paid for your presence, but not so in the world of Virtual Assistance. Fixed fee projects aside, you're paid solely for your time as opposed to the time at your desk.

What this means is that not only do you have to make the minutes count in terms of delivering top quality and value to your clients, but you need to make sure your unbillable minutes are minimised.

There are so many tips and techniques out there to help you make the most effective use of your time, but I have a few personal favourites. Here are my top 3 tips for productivity.

Structure and schedule.

There's so much to be said for having a routine and set structure to your days. Planning in advance eliminates the need for decision making and 'busy work' when you've already got a hit list you attack in a preordained fashion. The bonus is, it also prevents procrastination.

Batch tasks.

Batching tasks of a similar nature helps you to focus and get in the zone and allows you to maintain momentum. Context switching can kill your ability to be productive so to limit this as much as possible is really important.



Eat that frog!

I've noticed an increased use of this phrase lately as more and more people are finding that it works! Get that 'must-do but don't want to do' task off your plate first. You'll be relieved you did, and it'll put you in a productive mindset for the rest of the day.

If tools of the trade are more your thing, there are plenty of time trackers and project management systems that allow you to take your organisational abilities to the next level. We use Avaza for project management across the team and Trello is a firm favourite for a lot of our clients. Avaza includes a time tracking tool but if you want simplicity, try Toggl.

My last piece of advice would be to have an analysis session on your day-to-day activity. If you can identify which tasks have the most positive impact on overall results without taking up too much of your valuable time, these are the ones to prioritise.



Joanne Manville
Virtual Assistance



Torbay Destination Management Group

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Torbay Destination Management Group

The Destination Management Group (DMG) has a joined-up approach for tourism, working in partnership for the destination with the shared vision to develop the English Riviera's visitor economy. Partners include, TDA, Torbay Culture, English Riviera Bid Co, National Trust, Torbay Together, Torbay Business Forum, Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and South Devon College.

As Curriculum Head at South Devon College looking after Sport, Leisure, Public and Protective services, Catering, Hospitality and Tourism, I have been a member of the DMG for about 2 years. I was hugely proud to be appointed Chair of the DMG back in June this year, working with the partners to steer and promote the destination management activities around the Bay. The partners meet every 6 weeks and I feedback key information and highlights to Torbay weekly, and this is also posted on the College and Council websites to share with local businesses and residents, as we are keen to be transparent in our efforts and achievements.

The key drivers for the DMG are to extend the current season, increase visitor numbers and spend, attract investment and develop skills. Some of the recent highlights related to these points include: The Official Tourism Website is managed by the English Riviera BID Company Ltd (ERBC), who ensure easy access to

information on things to do and places to stay. Despite the Covid 19 challenges this year the ERBC team have been relentless in the pursuit to sustain business in the bay. Examples include, targeted digital marketing campaigns to promote the English Riviera, such as 'Autumn Adventures Await' and the Government funded 'Enjoy Summer Safely' national campaign, as well as ensuring regular Covid updates to businesses in the Bay, lobbying government and supporting the sector to recover and repair.

The Torbay Culture Great Place Scheme launched 2 innovative projects to attract year-round visitors. The Speed Up and Slow Down project promotes the English Riviera as a place of relaxation and exploration. And the Writers on the Riviera project offers literary trails that uncover the places and stories of some of the greatest writers of the past 200 years, based in the Bay.

Possibly the biggest news in promoting year round visitors is the £120m investment the Franchise Group, which will see hotel chains Mercure, Ibis and Hilton open in the bay over the next two years. University Centre South Devon and South Devon College have been developing training, skills and education programmes to support local people to gain the qualifications, needed to work in the new hotels and restaurants. This develops work opportunities for local people and keeps talent within the Bay.

Recently, we welcomed Nicky Harding to the partnership. Nicky has over 33 years

of Conference & Events sales experience at the Riviera International Conference Centre in Torquay and is now running Meetdevon Ltd, a one stop shop for promoting the area and securing lucrative events for the English Riviera. We are looking forward to developing opportunities locally, through this new venture.

This is a very brief overview of some of the recent activity, but anyone wishing to find out more about the DMG can email Rebecca.Davies@tda.uk.net



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“The efforts of local communities have been crucial in supporting our most vulnerable through this pandemic – and big organisations have a role to play in this, too.

Community spirit may have already been at the heart of Devonshire’s villages, towns and cities before 2020, a source of pride for many local men and women. But during this crisis we’ve seen how important that fellowship is in supporting our most vulnerable. Whether practical, emotional or financial support, it wouldn’t have been possible without our communities pulling together.

The pandemic has also seen that this support network playing an active, visible role in delivering this support has reached far wider than the charities, volunteers, public bodies and small businesses which ordinarily do so much for their localities. Society as a whole has pulled together – and that has highlighted that big organisations can play an important role in the communities in which they are rooted.

Whether that’s distilleries producing hand sanitiser, restaurant and hotel

chains providing food and shelter to the homeless, or fashion brands making PPE, the scale of support offered and the speed at which it has been provided has been remarkable.

Across the UK, the financial services industry is helping to support the UK economy through the fiscal impact of this crisis and we recognise that we must both support businesses whom are currently doing everything they can to protect jobs, whilst also helping those struggling with their personal finances. Barclays are active participants in Government-backed initiatives like the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLS), and we have delivered over £11.5 billion of finance to those facing challenges with cash-flow and beyond. And we continue to work with organisations such as Torbay Business Forum, one which I’m proud to have been Chair of for the last two years, supporting SMEs right across Torbay.

During this period, we of course also recognise that many people are experiencing financial difficulty, from making repayments on their mortgage to concerns about access to cash. I’m proud to say that Barclays have provided over 640k payment holidays globally for mortgages, credit cards and loans, and waived £100m of interest and fees in the UK. We’ve kept branches open and also retrained our branch staff to take inbound calls, provided access to cash to those self-isolating and set up dedicated phone lines for NHS workers and the elderly.

Although the effect of these large national schemes and initiatives are felt by many in our communities, regional charities and volunteers are addressing the impact of COVID-19 by providing local support from the ground up. In recognition of this fantastic work, large organisations are pledging millions of pounds of donations in support. Through Barclays’ £100m Community Aid Package, we are partnering with hundreds of charities across the UK who have seen demand for their services dramatically increase as a result of the pandemic – offering donations, colleague volunteers, practical support and gifted advertising space to maximise their outreach and ensure that their services can continue.

This crisis has shown that community spirit is full of energy, and that resilient businesses which are rooted in the UK play an important role. I’m proud of my colleagues across Devon who have been working flat out to support our customers and clients and I’m proud of our local communities which have pulled together to help each other.

Let’s use our community grit to keep pushing forward and together, we will get through this difficult time.”



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 representing their interests at local regional and national level.
Contact: Maureen@astralitybusinessservices.co.uk



Organisers - Q - Interesting Fact!
I have developed brands for the international music and film sector and worked alongside world wide celebrities and public eye entrepreneurs.
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MY SuperConnector

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SuperConnector



How to get your LinkedIn Company Page working for you

Your LinkedIn page is a fantastic opportunity to deliver valuable content that helps foster engagement, nurture relationships and helps your message spread faster.

2 main reasons to have a LinkedIn Company Page:

1. Firstly, it's a brand positioning tool. You can link to the company page in your experience section and the logo appears in this section and also at the top of your profile. It's so much better than a greyed-out logo section which says to me that you haven't really invested in your brand and makes me wonder are you credible? All employees at your company can also link to the page.

2. Secondly, you need a LinkedIn Page in order to carry out paid LinkedIn advertising. I'm all about organic reach and have never carried out a paid campaign on LinkedIn. It's a costly practice and is more suited to large corporates who want to extend their reach. That being said it's a great way for you to increase visibility to people that matter.

4 Benefits of a LinkedIn Page:

- Your LinkedIn company page is a free information hub for potential prospects. It's also a chance for you to showcase

the behind the scenes of your organisation and give prospects a taster of what it could be like to work with you.

- Your content is easier to access – when you share content on a personal profile it's usually available for 24-72 hours (unless it goes viral). With your company page all of your content is easily accessible in one spot.
- The Content Suggestions is a very powerful tool and a great way to check out the news.
- Wider organic reach to your target audience – you can invite connections to like your page.

Some advice from the LinkedIn Pages Team on Content:

- Optimise curated content by adding in your point of view.
- Always include a caption with a clear call to action of about 150 characters or fewer. Some examples are register now, join us for, reserve your spot, share your thoughts, comment below, check out the full article / video here.
- Ask thoughtful questions to engage your audience.
- Always include rich media (LinkedIn recommends uploading images that are 1200 pixels wide by 627 pixels tall).
- Attract an audience by aligning content to your members' needs and interests. Make it about them versus you.
- Maintain an editorial calendar if possible but still react to timely events (newsjacking and your point of view).
- Make your content snackable and valuable, such as including short stats and quotes.

- Engage members through comments – ask them their questions, challenges etc.
- Have a content calendar (advance planning).
- Use a variety of content formats (the algorithm prefers a variety of content – photo, video, pdf).

The most popular LinkedIn Company Pages are:

- Using video to get engagement / you can use LinkedIn Live on your page.
- Featuring what the company does from an ethical or corporate social responsibility standpoint as well as equality.
- Talking about the people in the business.
- Talking about innovative solutions the companies are finding.

Need some help with your Company Page? Get in touch via jennifer@mysuperconnector.co.uk or on LinkedIn via <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jennifercorcoran1/>



**Top 10
Advisers
2020**

Jennifer recently won the title of the #1 marketer in the UK according to Enterprise Nation. She is one of their Top 10 Advisers



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Astrality Marine

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An interview with the recent winners of the Small Business Sunday Award from Theo Paphitis

What does Astrality Marine do?

At Astrality Marine we specialise in Marine Electrical and Electronics. Primarily we cater for the leisure boat community based around South Devon and Cornwall. Marine Electronics in particular can be a bit of a minefield to navigate as we are now in the age of networked systems. On the electrical side there are many factors to consider. The needs of a sailboat are far different to those of a powerboat. We are here to make sure everything works to its best efficiency.

What made you enter Small Business Sunday and how easy was it?

Honestly, we embrace the importance of social media and saw this Twitter event that happens every Sunday between 5pm and 7:30pm set up by Dragons Den Star and the self confessed Shop Keeper Theo Paphitis.. We saw Theo's Tweet seeking to select 6 small business winners and decided to add our comment and photos pitching what we do, (this is not easy with just 250 characters available). We did not think we would get chosen from all the entries although our pitch did get quite a few likes.

How did you feel when you were selected as one of the winners?

We were truly speechless and shocked. We had all sorts of questions running through our head. How did that happen, Why us, what did we do to get selected. We did not get much time for it to sink in as our Twitter feed went into meltdown, we could not keep up with the notifications. we had likes, comments and followers continuously coming in. and it certainly did not slow down for a few days.

What benefits have you seen already?

The benefits were immediate, the first being the follower count and relevant followers too. We had other B to B and B to C businesses instantly wanting to connect. We also quickly found that we were being welcomed to the #SBS Club as it is affectionately known. The following morning we had an Email arrive from the SBS Crew which is part of Theo's Company TPRG, in this was the list of all the support that winning opened up for us. we have been added to their Business Directory which is fully searchable. and SEO ready. Yes our entry already appears in a google search. The biggest benefit though are the connections, helped by Theo tweeting to his 490k followers about us.

What benefits will it give you in the future?

The future Benefits actually depend on what we do with it. We know that next year, Covid permitting, we are going

to be invited to a conference hosted by Theo and the many sponsors of #SBS. The important thing though is to keep up the engagement on Social Media. We will certainly take full advantage of the badge of honour that we have been given. One thing I have learned is do not be afraid to engage. I even had a Direct Message come from the CEO of Starling Bank and followed up with an online conversation with her.

What advice would you give to someone starting a business?

Speak to people and get the feel for what people are needing. Engagement on social media is where most people seem to get their information. Certainly look at marketing, it does not have to cost a lot in money but certainly will need your time. If you are unsure how to go about marketing yourself get help from someone who understands marketing and social media, it can be a bit of a minefield. Also find a brand that says about what you do or offer, do not have it over complicated the simple designs usually stand out the most. We all remember the British Rail logo which just uses 4 lines. Most importantly be yourself. If you have a great service to offer you may not need a large set up cost, start with what you have then add to this as you go along. Never be afraid to get help, we have great people around us that can deal with branding, social media and marketing.

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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...

