



## What is the Profile of a Successful Small Business Owner?

by Patrick Zuluaga, [PMZ Marketing](#)

I was sitting at a recent presentation during a Small Business Networking Group breakfast meeting. The presentation was given by Belinda Trevenar a successful business owner of [RawLight Design Pty Limited](#) that started out from a backyard shed to a 10,000 units per day manufacturing capability and now looking for bigger premises to accommodate her successful business. During her talk I took copious amounts of notes and thought that I must share this information with you all.

Belinda attributed her on-going success to the following:

- **Planning** – Everything she is contemplating of doing for the business is meticulously planned to ensure that any nasty surprises are minimised and that she, her staff and her suppliers are well briefed and knowledgeable on what has to be done and when things are to take place in relation to the plan. Business owners must plan to succeed and set the objectives to aim for in their plan. This gives you clarity of purpose and the focus to run with the plan and make it work.
- **Systemise** – All aspects of her business have procedures documented including how her staff must answer the phones. Belinda learned this the hard way when she realised that everyone – staff and customers were always turning to her for everything. Systemising procedures empowers staff to understand their responsibilities and take action without being dependent on the business owner.
- **Test & Measure** – This is absolutely a powerful characteristic for a successful business owner! It demonstrates her ability to take risks, to make decisions, get on with the job and review the results of any actions taken. Measuring and tracking the results points the way for further improvements, ramping up successful initiatives and terminating activities or programs that do not meet their planned objectives.
- **Watch Competition** – Belinda is acutely aware that her business is in a very highly competitive industry. As a business owner you need to make sure you are aware of developments in your industry from new competitive products and in the way your competitors are responding to the marketplace.
- **Focused Marketing** – A subject close to my heart! Belinda understands the secret for marketing success. You must absolutely know who your key target market is, where your major opportunities are, find out what your target customers want, how you are pursuing the market and invest in marketing programs that specifically will reach out to your focused target markets with the messages that are relevant to your market segment.
- **Engage with Stakeholders** – This is a breath of fresh air. Belinda demonstrates humility that recognises she does not have all the knowledge and skills to go it alone. Actively solicit feedback and advice from your own customers, your staff, suppliers and from external expert consultants to get the best from the people around you.
- **Persistence and Perseverance** – Belinda is a self-starter and has the discipline and ability to hang in there to be successful. Success in business is hard work and requires your commitment and patience to try and try again until you achieve your objectives.
- **Cash is King** – Belinda does not offer credit terms, her business is on a cash basis with her customers and with her suppliers. As a small business owner you cannot act as your customer's banker. Make sure whatever approach you take you never take your eye from your cash position and make your accounts receivables collection a critical component of your business operations.



- **Entrust your Staff** – Belinda has learnt not to be a control freak and she trusts her staff to do the right thing for her customers and her business. Successful business owners share and delegated control. You cannot replicate yourself nor do you have more than 24-hours in a day. Delegate to staff members and empower them to act as you would with proper training and systemised procedures. You are in effect making 'copies' or clones of yourself.
- **Keep it All Together** – As a business owner Belinda realises that she is the leader and is responsible to keep the whole situation in a balance. A healthy life mix is necessary to keep everything in the right prospective. Make sure you develop habits and a source of strength from your work ethics, your social and family life and value in what you do for others.
- **Look after Yourself** – Belinda rewards herself with a weekly remedial message. I look at three priorities in life; Health, Family and Work. I know that I must remain healthy so that I can continue to enjoy my family and the excitement that comes with helping other business owners achieve Better Marketing Results. I jog at least four times a week - What do you do?
- **Dedication and Passion** – Belinda shines when she talks about her business. She enjoys and has a passion for what she does. A successful business owner is dedicated and passionate about their business. They love their work, love their business and love the industry that they participate in. This demonstrates itself in everything that they do – it shines through and infects everyone they come into contact with.

In my own marketing consulting experience with business owners I have found that the above traits are characteristics of successful business owners along with a profound view that they have ownership and are accountable for their own success.

As a business owner how many of these characteristics are in your profile? What have you identified as an area for development and what are you going to do about it?

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I appreciate your feedback and would like to hear from you on how you are handling these marketing challenges, send your comments to [patrick@pmzmarketing.com.au](mailto:patrick@pmzmarketing.com.au).

#### **About the Author**



Patrick Zuluaga has more than 20 years experience in marketing and business development roles with Australian and international companies. He is Director of PMZ Marketing, a consultancy focused on Small and Medium Enterprises to **help you succeed in business with better marketing results.**

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