

EXPANDED & UPDATED
SECOND EDITION

FREE SAMPLE

"This book delivers exceptional value and clarity for all businesses to achieve a watertight marketing strategy."

Daniel Priestley,
Co-Founder & CEO – Dent Global



WATERTIGHT MARKETING

*The Proven Process for Seriously
Scaleable Sales*

BRYONY THOMAS

WHAT'S IN THIS FREE SAMPLE?

This free sample of the second edition of Watertight Marketing will give you a good flavour of what's in the book.

We've included:

- The full contents page
- The Introduction
- All of Chapter 1
- The intro and summary of all chapters
- About the Author

WHAT'S NEW IN THIS EDITION?

If you like what you find here, we hope you'll dive into the full book, where you'll find:

- Two brand new frameworks.
- Two new sections to help you understand your audience and articulate your proposition.
- A clear and consistent structure to methodology naming so that you can see how it's organised to quickly find the bits you need.
- Brand new client examples from those who've implemented the ideas from the book.
- User-friendly formatting to help you navigate and annotate the book as a living tool.

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"What really makes this stand out is the direct linkage of marketing activity to sales results. Finding Watertight Marketing was a revelation and a relief." **Dave James,
Managing Director, Ascentor**

"Working systematically through the Watertight Marketing process allowed us to achieve for our business in two years what we had expected to take us seven. All I can say is thank you!" **Karen Meager, Co-Founder,
Monkey Puzzle Consultancy & Training**

"What Bryony delivers with Watertight Marketing is a whole-business process. No other process, or speaker, has made the impact as quickly with our CEO groups." **Ian Price, Former CEO, Academy for Chief Executives**

"Watertight Marketing has utterly transformed our business. We worked through it step by step over two years. In year one, we doubled both turnover and profit. In year two, we tripled it!" **Hollie Brooks, Co-Founder,
Audenza**

"I loved the book. But, what blew me away was the quality and practicality of the companion online resources. We've actually enjoyed working through the materials – not least because it works!" **Dave Carr, Managing Director,
EazyCollect**

"Running our small not-for-profit company through the 13 Touchpoint Leaks was amazing. We were able to see opportunities that we had never seen before and helped us to think differently about the ones we had identified. I can't thank Watertight Marketing enough." **Rhiannon Evans, Director, Supporting Justice CIC**

"The change we've seen in our marketing manager, and our business, through adopting Watertight Marketing is incredible. It's given her real confidence to step up in her role, and the results are clear to everyone."

Andy MacGregor, Managing Director, Face for Business

"This book has packed a huge punch for me. It has helped me structure my thinking – and doing – in a way that few other marketing thinkers or other books have. The straightforward, no-nonsense approach is so refreshing. I can't recommend it highly enough."

**Deborah Kingsley,
Managing Director, KPC Communications**

"Watertight Marketing is a no-nonsense guide to help step up the marketing of your business in a truly different way. The online resources help you to work through the necessary steps of this revolutionary process. You really do feel supported as you go."

**Christian Tait, Owner,
Creative Cadence**

"There isn't one bit of this book that isn't useful. No matter how long you have worked in marketing, a couple of hours reading this book is time well spent. The principles throughout are straightforward and clearly laid out, with great examples of how to make them work for your business."

Amy Grenham, Marketing Manager, Desynit

"Applying Watertight Marketing is like having Marie Kondo organise the marketing clutter in your mind and business."

**Cara Sherliker, Partner,
Adeva Partners**

*Watertight Marketing: The Proven Process
for Seriously Scalable Sales*

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Water, in this extended analogy,
represents money. But, more than that, it
represents the time and energy – and dare I say,
love – of those whose money is on the line.

When we use this as a lens, like looking
through a droplet of water, it turns the way
we see things upside down.



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IS THIS BOOK FOR YOU?

More Step-up Than Start-up

There are lots of books about starting a business. There aren't so many about staying in business. And, even fewer that support you as you seriously step things up.

To get the most from this book, you're most likely an established SME, or an entrepreneurial division in a more corporate setting. The point is that you're not a start-up. You'll be pretty clear about what you're selling and to whom. Now, you want to scale to reach, and systemise to sustain, a healthy business. You want to get better rewards for your effort. Perhaps you're at that stage where you need to start 'doing things properly' in order to grow, get beyond a plateau you've reached, or simply be the best you can be.

With marketing, this means you're not coming to this book with a blank sheet of paper. Many of our most dedicated followers are marketing experts. Even with decades of experience under their belt, they're using this as their roadmap and common language to lead the journey of marketing transformation within their organisations. Others come with very little formal marketing knowledge, and use this as the language they need to have productive conversations (leading to confident decisions) with the marketing experts they work with.

Used as a living toolkit, *Watertight Marketing* will equip everyone in your business with a common framework to make effective marketing decisions. It brings clarity, confidence, and often a real sense of calm.

Ditch Marketing FOMO

This book is your shield against the ever-growing sense of marketing FOMO (fear of missing out). It is designed to protect you against fruitlessly spending vast sums on activities that won't net a bean in revenue. It equips you to out-think, rather than out-spend, your competition and to calmly put a powerful marketing operation in place that really delivers. That is, marketing that delivers real and repeatable sales results.

It is often in the marketing or sales guru's interest to convince you that they are the practitioner of some sort of dark art, and that you need to spend a fortune. Indeed, a quick Internet search on 'lead generation' will return a list of potential suppliers suggesting that a business should invest in: telesales 'guaranteed to secure appointments'; direct mail so targeted that people are practically waiting to give you their money; 'one time only' advertising deals; search engine optimisation to secure your position at the top of Google's listings; social media that can seemingly replace your whole marketing team; online word of mouth that does your selling for you... the list goes on, and on. Most businesses do not need yet more marketing ideas, but a way to confidently filter and focus on the few that truly deserve their energy.

Given the flood of advice, it's no surprise that many businesses, large and small, suffer from *Tactic Burn*; that is, jumping from one 'essential' sales and marketing activity to another, never getting the consistent results that the business so badly needs. Many businesses are stuck on the yo-yo diet of the marketing world, pursued in the hope that one day they will discover that magical no-effort fitness plan. What you need to know is that there isn't one.

There is a proven thinking toolkit, designed and refined over two decades and across 2,000+ organisations. You have the key to it in your hands. It's called *Watertight Marketing*.

IS THIS YOU?

There are definitely key personalities that find themselves drawn to the *Watertight Marketing* methodology. They fall into two groups; those without any formal marketing training, and those for whom marketing is core. Within that, here's a rundown of those who get the most from reading this book, and why.

People without a marketing background:

- The CEO or MD of an established seven to eight figure business, still categorised as a Small to Medium Enterprise (SME), that now wants to systemise and scale. This is precisely who I had in mind whilst writing this book.
- The owner-manager of a smaller, but fast-growing business, with a core team and big ambition.
- A senior leader within a larger business, or corporate, looking to align disparate disciplines, and get the whole team contributing effectively to the marketing effort.
- Solo and micro businesses (particularly those who sell their expertise looking to promote themselves more effectively within the time they have available) have also found the materials useful.

People with marketing as a core or expected part of their job:

- The marketing person within the organisations described above. For example, the marketing director, head of marketing or marketing manager – and those in their team.
- A marketing consultant or business growth coach working alongside any of these people.
- A student working on a marketing or business degree, or professional qualification.

For the CEO or MD at the Larger End of SME...

You're either the founder or the person succeeding the original founder. You're pretty well versed in business fundamentals, and can certainly hold a productive conversation about marketing. Your team is just too big these days to assume that everyone has a common understanding of how this all fits together. Now, you need to get this documented, systemised and engrained in the fabric of your organisation. This might be because you're pitching for a significant investment, courting a buyer for the business, or growing at a rate that means you're bringing new people up to speed almost constantly.

Success for you means having a core common language for marketing that everyone in your team understands and actively uses to inform and implement their decisions.

You've probably heard yourself thinking:

- "We've tried lots of different marketing activities and techniques, and I'm not wholly sure they've really lived up to the hype."
- "People are very busy and deliver lots of marketing things, but I'm not sure they could easily articulate why the things they're doing are important commercially."
- "It's hard to see the cause and effect between the marketing we do and the sales results we achieve."
- "There are simply so many ways that we could spend more money on marketing. The challenge is deciding which we should truly focus energy on."
- "If I asked my people to describe how marketing works for this business, I'm pretty sure they'd each give me a different answer."

You'd feel good if you heard:

- "We have a clear framework and language that everyone understands and uses to explain why their ideas are relevant to our business objectives."
- "My team has a clear way of sequencing competing marketing priorities, so that those that make the most sustainable difference are addressed first."
- "We can map cause and effect across the whole buying decision, so that our people have a real sense of their contribution and how to collaborate effectively with colleagues across the business."
- "We're quickly able to bring new team members up to speed with how marketing and sales work in our business, which means they can understand and contribute quickly."

For the Owner-Manager of a Fast-Growing Business...

If this is you, then you're heading up a pretty successful business that you've worked hard to build, and now have a small team of people in place. What's critical here is that you are currently (or imminently) scaling things up. You're probably a technical expert in whatever the business sells, and you now recognise that there's a level of systemisation and delegation that needs to happen to release the true potential of what you've created.

When it comes to marketing, it isn't wholly new to you, but you wouldn't call yourself an expert. You feel that you need some structure, and if you're honest, you probably struggle to see the correlation between marketing activity and sales results.

Success for you is a business that can run without your hand on the tiller at every second. For some, this looks like stepping back into the bits of the job that you love, handing the day-to-day to someone else. For others, it's taking the time to pursue outside interests whilst the wheels keep turning on the business. For many, it may well look like an exit or succession in the next few years.

You've probably heard yourself thinking:

- "I'm not sure money that I'm spending on marketing is generating a return."
- "Is what we're doing supporting sales, or is it just fluff?"
- "What this business needs is a steady flow of leads coming in."
- "I'm not even sure I need marketing; a decent salesperson might be a better investment."
- "I wish I felt confident to make investments in marketing, without suspicion that I may just be wasting my money."

You'd feel good if you heard yourself saying:

- "I can visualise and communicate – both conceptually, and in hard numbers – how our marketing activity supports sales results."
- "Our marketing and sales activity is wholly aligned and works to support a steady flow of profitable business."
- "We have a system for doing this stuff that everyone understands that doesn't require my constant attention."

For the Marketing Person within a Step-up Business...

We've increasingly found that a copy of the *Watertight Marketing* book lands on the desk of the person in a growing business that has the responsibility for marketing. When this is a trained marketing professional, it can be embraced as a way of getting everyone else on board with what they've probably been saying for some time. In expert hands, the methodology can bring real focus and energy to tightening up the marketing efforts and getting the whole team working together... and prevents the need to start with a blank sheet of paper.

In smaller organisations, it may be that the responsibility for marketing sits with someone who wouldn't call themselves a professional marketer. Often, this is a recent graduate, who may have started as an intern and is kept more than busy writing blog posts and pulling together the materials that the salespeople ask for... alongside ordering the stationery and answering the phone. Alternatively, it is the person responsible for new business, who is going out doing the sales, and also squeezing in a bit of marketing when they can.

Even in those businesses that have appointed someone specifically to the role, that person often comes with little previous marketing experience. This is often also a new function within the business, which can make it particularly challenging to bring the team together and move from a tactical approach to something more strategic.

If this is you, success looks like a team on your side. A team that understands the role of marketing in supporting sales results, and how they need to work with you to make it happen. It looks like an MD who is switched on to marketing, and invests in you and in building a marketing operation as a strategic driver of growth. An MD who supports the changes you recommend.

You've probably heard yourself thinking:

- "I wish the senior management team, especially sales and finance, could see the strategic value of marketing."
- "I wish I could carve out the space from the day-to-day to take a structured end-to-end look at what we're doing to tweak it up."
- "I wish sales would get on board with what we're doing."

You'd feel good if you heard yourself saying:

- "Everyone in this business understands the value of marketing, and appreciates what I do."
- "Everyone in our business uses a common language and framework for discussing and deciding on marketing investments."
- "Everyone in our business understands their role in the marketing efforts and proactively makes compelling contributions to it."
- "We have a clear process to continually improve our marketing, with each investment building on the last."

For a Senior Leader within a Larger Business...

Entrepreneurially minded senior leaders within larger businesses and corporates have real potential to use *Watertight Marketing* to lead focused change. This often works well when initially undertaken within a division or specific market sector, then rolled out. If this is you, the powerful toolkit of book, videos, workbooks, and *Certified Practitioners* enables you to put a programme together inside your business. The aim here is to first train and motivate, and then to keep people on track in iteratively stepping up your marketing activity and sales results.

For the Owner-Manager of a Micro Business...

I hadn't anticipated these readers as an audience for *Watertight Marketing*, and was surprised when they started joining the *Watertight Webschool*. If this is you, then you are probably a specialist practitioner of some kind, selling your time for money. You struggle to find the time to work on marketing yourself properly, and even when you do – you often find it overwhelming to know exactly where to start and where to focus your precious energy. Success for you is feeling calm and confident about the marketing you do, and having a system in place that supports you, even when you are out working with clients. True success for you is working with clients that energise and appreciate you, and pay you what you are worth.

You've probably heard yourself thinking:

- "If only I had time for marketing, I know I could get some great clients."
- "I wish I knew which of the thousands of marketing options is right for me, because I simply cannot do it all."
- "I wish I knew where to focus my energy for best results."

You'd feel good if you heard yourself saying:

- "I have a clear set of activities that I can commit to, and I'm confident will deliver results."
- "I have a steady pipeline of enquiries so that I never lift my head from delivering for clients to find there's no immediate work on the horizon."
- "I am appreciated by the clients I work with, and I'm able to be selective about only working with people who energise me".

For a Marketing Consultant...

An interesting audience for *Watertight Marketing* is fellow marketing consultants. The structure the methodology provides is perfect for working on strategic engagements with clients. Using the intellectual property introduced in this book (under licence) quickly gets the MD on side, and in-house teams of sales and marketing people working enthusiastically with you. It gives you, and them, clarity and confidence in the planned approach.

You've probably heard yourself thinking:

- "I wish clients would think more strategically, rather than always wanting tactical campaigns to drive leads."
- "I'd love a clear end-to-end process that got my clients excited about an end-to-end review and refinement of their approach to marketing."

You'd feel good if you heard yourself saying:

- "My clients truly value marketing as a strategic driver, and see an effective marketing operation as a key part of their future success."
- "My clients are long-term thinkers, able to resist the siren calls of the quick wins, so that energy can be directed to achieving sustainable success."

This is exactly why I created the *Watertight Marketing Certified Practitioner* network. It is an absolute joy to see these licensed professionals strengthen the methodology by putting it to use in a variety of different contexts.

For a Student of Marketing or Business...

If you're studying a marketing degree, CIM Diploma, or Apprenticeship, this book will help you to ground marketing theory in the real world. It acts as a bridge between the academic material you'll encounter and the way in which you're likely to apply it now and when you land that promotion!



You'll find the *Mortar Board* symbol especially useful as this signposts when a substantiating academic theory is available. The *Brain* symbol indicates relevant



neuroscience. If you want to find out more about these you can go to the **Academic Theories** section at the back of the book.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book has been very deliberately sequenced so that the ideas, models and frameworks each build on the last. This means you'll get the most from it if you read it as it's written, rather than dipping in or skipping to the bits you think you need. It introduces the four main parts of a unique process – which synthesises the best of marketing theory from the first decade of learning my craft with the models I've developed for practical use in real businesses over the last decade. The sequence is essential, as is the repetition of key themes. These are, again, very deliberate to ensure that you see how the strands mesh together, and to ensure core principles are crystal clear.

HOW THE METHODOLOGY IS STRUCTURED

Part One: You Are Leaking Profit

Part One doesn't make for comfortable reading. But, comfort is not where transformation happens. In this part, I map out *Leaks* in your sales and marketing set-up that silently siphon your precious money and time. Taking a look at how real people really buy things, I expose the *Touchpoint Leaks*, and turn the usual way of tackling them on its head for faster payback. Then, you'll be introduced to the *Flow Foundations*. These relate to marketing attitude and a company's internal workings.

I'll start by looking at what marketing is and how it underpins healthy businesses by mapping it to every step of the sale. I draw the path of a typical buying decision as a series of stepping stones. This allows you to picture what your marketing needs to lay down to allow a potential buyer to go all the way through from hearing about you to buying from you, and on to loving what they've bought.

With this as context, you'll be guided to run a diagnostic on your business using the *Touchpoint Leaks*. This gives you a snapshot view of where your marketing is leaving money on the table.

Think of this part as having a marketing health check, in which you find out whether you're an athlete, in pretty good shape or, possibly, in need of a serious diet and exercise programme.

OUTCOME

You'll leave this section with a characterisation of how real people buy what you sell, and a *Touchpoint Leak Traffic Light* on your marketing set-up against that. This will allow you to determine the priority order in which to tweak your marketing *Leaks* for fastest payback.

Part Two: Map Your Marketing Baseline

Part Two gets you to look at a purchasing decision from the buyers' perspective, mapping the way that real people really buy things. It's a customer journey framework that's easy to follow, explain and use, and means your marketing will deliver long-term sales results. You'll know what you need to say, how to say it, when, and to whom.

By looking at the world through your buyers' eyes, you'll see why you need to map your marketing activity to the way their brains work and in keeping with *Natural Value Exchange* in human relationships. Think of this part as being like planning your diet and exercise regime once you've assessed your level of fitness.

OUTCOME

You'll leave this section with a clear understanding of your buyers' emotional and logical needs, the time horizons they want to work within, tools that will help, and the third parties that affect their decision. You'll use this to create an outline plan for your *Baseline Marketing Rhythm*.

Part Three: Tweak Your Leaks

Part Three takes the concepts above and shows you how to apply them in practice. It works through tweaking the *Touchpoint Leaks* with real client examples and a fully worked scenario. It will equip any growing business with practical tweaks for the *Leaks* they find. It challenges the picture that a classic sales funnel paints in your mind. Just because you can draw a neat funnel, doesn't mean that there is one. In reality, the buying decision, and the marketing and sales process a business has in place to support it, is much more irregular.

Every time you see, or refer to, a sales funnel or sales pipeline, I want you to re-imagine it as:

- **Your Taps:** Ways of generating interest in your offer.
- **Your Funnels & Filters:** The tools and techniques you use to channel that interest and move the right people through to trying you out.
- **Your Bucket:** Those things that come together to keep your customers your customers.

And, although it can seem tempting to put your energy into running those **Taps** as hard as you can, to really improve your profits, you'll be asked to start at the bottom and work up. If you keep this picture in mind, you'll quickly see why this is so critical. After all, there's no point running **Taps** if you can't **Funnel** the water. And, there's no point **Funnelling** water to a **Bucket** that has a hole in it.

This is where you create the tools, and choose the marketing techniques, that allow you to consistently deliver your *Baseline Marketing Rhythm*.

This is where you roll your sleeves up and get things done. Part One sets the context. Part Two helps you plan within that. Now, you get it done. You'll leave this section with a specific list of projects to action or brief to a marketing supplier.

OUTCOME

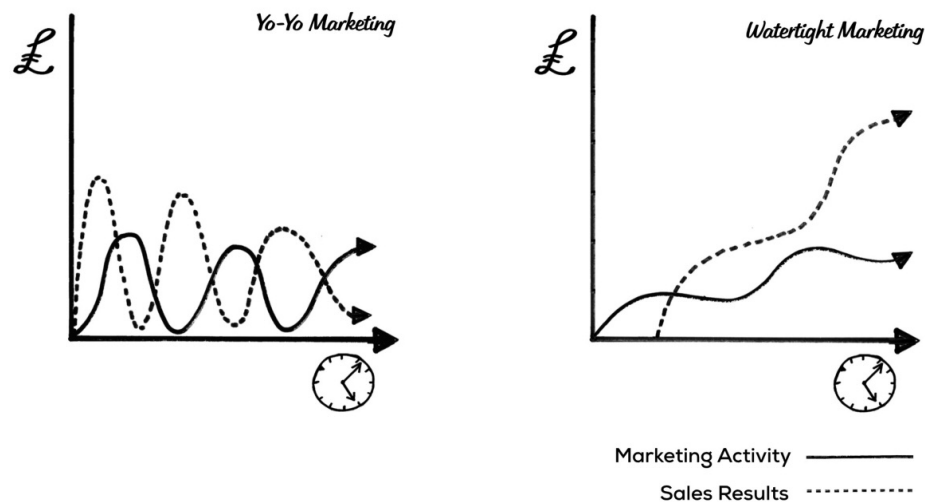
Part Four: Maintaining Marketing Momentum

Part Four is about making this happen consistently in your business. It focuses on the *Flow Foundations*, as the core elements to ensure enough energy and commitment for long-term success.

You'll do this by examining your money, measurement and mindset. Think of this part as being like maintaining your fitness regime... which you may have heard becomes healthy addiction over time!

OUTCOME

You'll leave this section with clarity on budgeting for your marketing so that you can be both strategic and responsive. You'll create a robust *Measurement Framework* for your marketing activity, and you'll get yourself into a place where you're committed to marketing as a lifetime healthy habit.



The Marketing Yo-Yo

Getting a *Watertight Marketing* operation in place means that you can ditch the exhausting Yo-Yo. Businesses without a structured and resourced approach to marketing find themselves up one minute and down the next: selling then delivering, then selling then delivering, then selling then delivering – never quite reaching those sustainable, predictable and growing sales results that any business needs to gather forward momentum.

MORE THAN A BOOK

What you have in your hands as you read this sentence is not simply a book. It's the central piece in a practical and comprehensive playbook of living tools designed to support you in putting the *Watertight Marketing* methodology into powerful effect for your organisation. You can now unlock the companion materials that come as part of the package. The methodology is fully supported by a comprehensive learning platform, *Watertight Webschool*. Your copy of the book includes an introductory video course and a companion workbook with a core exercise to complete per chapter.

If you want to go deeper, you'll find a full course to accompany each chapter, and to support you to comprehensively tweak each *Leak*. We keep *Webschool* continually updated with courses and resources to help you implement every idea in the book, and in the vast body of work that supports it. This includes a video-guided pen-and-paper exercise for every key concept and framework. That's 85+ concepts, fully explained, case studied, and applied. At last count, there were 600+ videos in the catalogue.

These exercises are exactly what we use with clients in our 12-month *Marketing Transformation Programmes*. In fact, you'll find me drawing these on a whiteboard, or bringing them to life on a conference stage, somewhere in the world most days. You may wonder why I've not included them all in this book. This is because, together, they make up almost as many pages as the book itself, and we're constantly updating them with new case study examples, and showing you how it works when a new channel or technology emerges. Also, you won't need them all; your *Touchpoint Leak Traffic Light* in Chapter 2 will determine which bits to focus on.

Please do also join our expert-moderated groups, in which you can consolidate the knowledge you gain from the book by asking questions about how to apply it to your own business, and connecting with others using the methodology... and, yours truly! I'm in there myself most weeks.



Go to: watertight.school

THIS IS A GO-TO-MARKET STRATEGY

It's important at this stage for you to clock that this is designed to help you take an offer to market... not for coming up with the offer, or deciding on the right market. Readers who get the most from it are those who know what they are selling to whom, and now want to step things up. If you're not sure what you're selling, or who would buy it, then you're not quite ready for *Watertight Marketing*. Whilst you'll certainly refine these things through the process, you do need a pretty clear idea from the outset.

What's more, if you have a range of offers for different markets, you'll need to run each market separately. (The record that I am aware of is a reader going through the process 27 times in three years!) You'll understand the concepts most easily if you choose a market and product that you know well the first time you apply it. Then, come back for trickier or less well-defined parts of your offering.

HOW TO APPROACH THE MATERIAL

Start with the Holiday Read

When you read this book for the first time, treat it like a novel. Go through it cover to cover, without picking up a pen or making any notes. This will help you to avoid the temptation of immediately implementing the ideas popping into your head. The first idea may not be the best, or most important. We've also found that if you jump into action on first pass, you may never finish the book. Once you've read it through, go back through it with the free companion course and workbook from *Watertight Webschool*.

Once you've done this, we hope you'll start putting what you learn into effect. Like an exercise plan, you can only benefit from this book if you take action on what you've learned.

Set Some Time Aside

Depending on how fast you read and how new the material is to you, you'll need around three to six hours to read the book for the first time, when read cover-to-cover like a novel. Then, our *Watertight Webschool* clients tell us that to work end-to-end through the book and the toolkit for your own business, you should set aside between three and 12 hours per month, for 12 months.

Naturally, different people work in different ways. When we asked those who fully implemented the first edition, we found four particularly successful approaches:

- **The fully supported team process:** Organisations that work directly with us, or with a Certified Practitioner, to make this a year's strategic focus.
- **The 'morning posse':** Those who like to get up at 5am to put in a couple of hours before their normal day begins.

- **The diary day:** Those who take a 'Watertight Day' out of the office each week to go through the process.
- **The immersive approach:** Those who take a focused fortnight to delve into the material in one go.

Systematically Catch Your Ideas

In my experience of working with people who've been through *Watertight Marketing* end-to-end, you're going to find ideas and insights coming to you at various times of the day or night.

It's a good plan to use the methodology language as a filing structure so you have a systematic way of referring back to your ideas. If you record everything in this way, it will be easy for you to find what you need and decide which action is the priority for you.

If you're leading the process, you should definitely have a separate notebook to jot these insights down as they come in, so you won't lose them. The tab-edged ones are great, because you can number them according to the *Touchpoint Leaks*. If you're working through this as a team, you'll need to organise team filing by *Leak* or by chapter. We also suggest that you set up an email address called 'marketingideas@...' and brief people to send ideas to that address with the *Touchpoint Leak* Number to which it pertains in the subject line.

However you organise this, the aim is to give yourself an easy way of recording your thoughts at the moment you have them, referenceable for future action.

Make It Manageable

You're aiming to create a flow through your marketing operation, but you won't get it until you have a basic plan in place and then stick to it. People who pile into this process at full pelt often run out of steam to see it through. This is an iterative process, not a quick hit. You start by understanding what you need to do. Then, your aim is to ensure you have a marketing operation that has flow. From there, you use the *Touchpoint Leak Traffic Light* to iteratively tweak things up, with each investment building on the last.

What this often means is that the first bar to reach on any *Leak* you find is to simply put something in place that reaches what I call *Functional and Not Too Embarrassing*. Don't aim for world class on the first pass. This has many benefits – you don't stretch yourself too far, you don't unbalance the flow through your buying journey, and you get to test the early version before investing lots of time and money. This really is like fitness. You don't start by attempting to beat the world record. You're more likely to start with just a few press-ups a day, in time you increase this, and once this feels habitual you step it up again. You're aiming to make what currently feels challenging the new normal, and then to keep making it better.

The Community Connection

We're excited to invite you into a growing and supportive community of people who are continually learning from and using this methodology. When you've created your free learning account on *Watertight Webschool*, you're warmly welcomed to:

- the free 'getting started' and overview courses;
- closed Facebook and LinkedIn groups;
- regular updates on case studies and new models & frameworks;
- deeper courses and resources, with regular live Q&A;
- a growing range of online tools to help you implement;
- a range of printed planners, posters, etc. to support the process;
- conferences, events and workshops.

You'll also find thousands of people who, like you, have read this book and want to share their ideas and experiences. This means you don't have to implement it on your own. You'll also find that the more you participate, the more you'll get back.

What's more, our *Watertight Marketing Certified Practitioners*, along with myself, are in the community to guide you. In larger businesses, these highly experienced marketers can support you through an initial implementation, and then act as a coach and mentor to your own marketers on an ongoing basis. In smaller businesses, you may decide you would like additional one-to-one support from them to keep you motivated and on track, a bit like a personal trainer helps you to make more of your fitness regime. Or, simply get a little input for free in our community groups. That's entirely up to you.

To Make It Even More Useful

The VA-Voom! Worked Scenario: Throughout the book, I build out a fully worked scenario to bring the ideas to life. Doing this allows me to give you an end-to-end example of the methodology being applied. This example draws on work with various clients, but VA-Voom! is an entirely fictional company. Any resemblance to real businesses, operational or defunct, is purely coincidental. (Funnily enough, none of our clients wanted us to publish their entire marketing plan!)

Understanding the symbols: You'll find a few symbols running through the book to help you get even more from it.

To maintain the flow whilst reading, I have not used footnotes. Instead, the Mortar Board symbol indicates an existing theory on this topic. You are directed to further reading on this in the **Academic Theories** section.



The Brain symbol indicates that there is a neuroscience theory that validates the point being made. You are again directed to further reading on this in the **Neuroscience Signposts** section.



Phrases in Italics: This indicates a named model or framework in the methodology and that courses and resources are available on *Watertight Webschool* to go deeper into this framework or model provided in the book. A glossary of these can be found at **watertight.school/definitions**

Lightbulb: A practical idea that you could put into practice immediately. These are also supported with mini tips videos on *Watertight Webschool*.



Have you completed the 'How to get the most from your copy of Watertight Marketing?' short video course?

If yes, let's continue...

If no, go to: watertight.school



MEET VA-VOOM!

To really bring the ideas in this book to life, you'll be following the progress of an imaginary company, VA-Voom!, as they put a *Watertight Marketing* operation in place for their business.

VA-Voom! is a small business offering Virtual Assistant services. There are two founders, who act as joint managing directors. They've been in business three years, employ 15 people, and turn over just over £1m per annum.

They provide secretarial and administrative support over the phone and online. They do the sorts of things that a personal assistant would do, for example:

- Diary management, travel arrangements, etc.
- Telephone answering
- Dictation, proofreading and document formatting
- Website updates, social media management, marketing administration.

In addition to these services, they also provide packaged training and templates for key administrative activities, and run an annual conference on productivity and personal effectiveness.

There are three key groups of people for whom their products and services are useful:

- Small business owners, sole traders and freelancers
- Directors and senior managers in larger businesses without access to administrative support
- People running one-off large projects or with peaks in administrative requirements looking for overflow support.

Services can be paid for in the following ways:

- A monthly package of hours, with a minimum three-month contract. The more hours, the lower the hourly rate.
- A prepay account at a higher hourly rate that can be topped up at any time.
- A bespoke project or overflow support contract.

Growth Strategy

The VA-Voom! founders are proud of the business they've built. It's grown organically and they now feel ready to step things up. They've set themselves an achievable target of doubling the size of their business in revenue terms in the next two years.

They have set the target of upping their monthly personal subscriptions from 160 customers paying an average of £350 per month, to 225 customers paying an average of £425 per month. This takes annual revenue against this offering from £672,000 to £1,147,500. We will follow the marketing plan they put together to meet this target. The remainder of the growth will be made amongst corporate contracts, template sales, one-off projects and events.

To help them with this, they got themselves a copy of *Watertight Marketing*, and accessed the courses and resources on *Watertight Webschool*. The two founders took a week out of the business to work through it and draw up an outline plan. They then kicked off a strategic initiative internally. The first phase was an intensive review and action plan to systematically address the *Touchpoint Leaks*. The whole team was involved. Depending on workload, each member of the team was able to give between 10 and 20% of their working week for 12 weeks to get the groundwork done. In addition, each of the founders gave it 50% of their time for that concentrated period. So, in total, that was a time investment of 70 hours up front from the founders, a further 210 hours of their time over the 12-week period, and 63 hours from the rest of the team.

As we go through the book, we'll use this scenario to bring key models and ideas to life. We also use this extensively in our courses and resources to demonstrate how to apply the methodology in practical terms.

This company is entirely fictional. Any resemblance to real businesses, operational or defunct, is purely coincidental.

PART ONE



As a child I enjoyed watching the Road Runner cartoons; it was hilarious to watch Wile E Coyote go crashing down a ravine through a great big hole disguised as part of the road. It's not so funny to watch a potential customer crash out of their decision to buy from you because you've left a gap in the path. But that is exactly what happens every day, to businesses large and small. Somewhere along the way there's a leap too far, and your potential new customer crosses you off their list.

YOU ARE LEAKING PROFIT

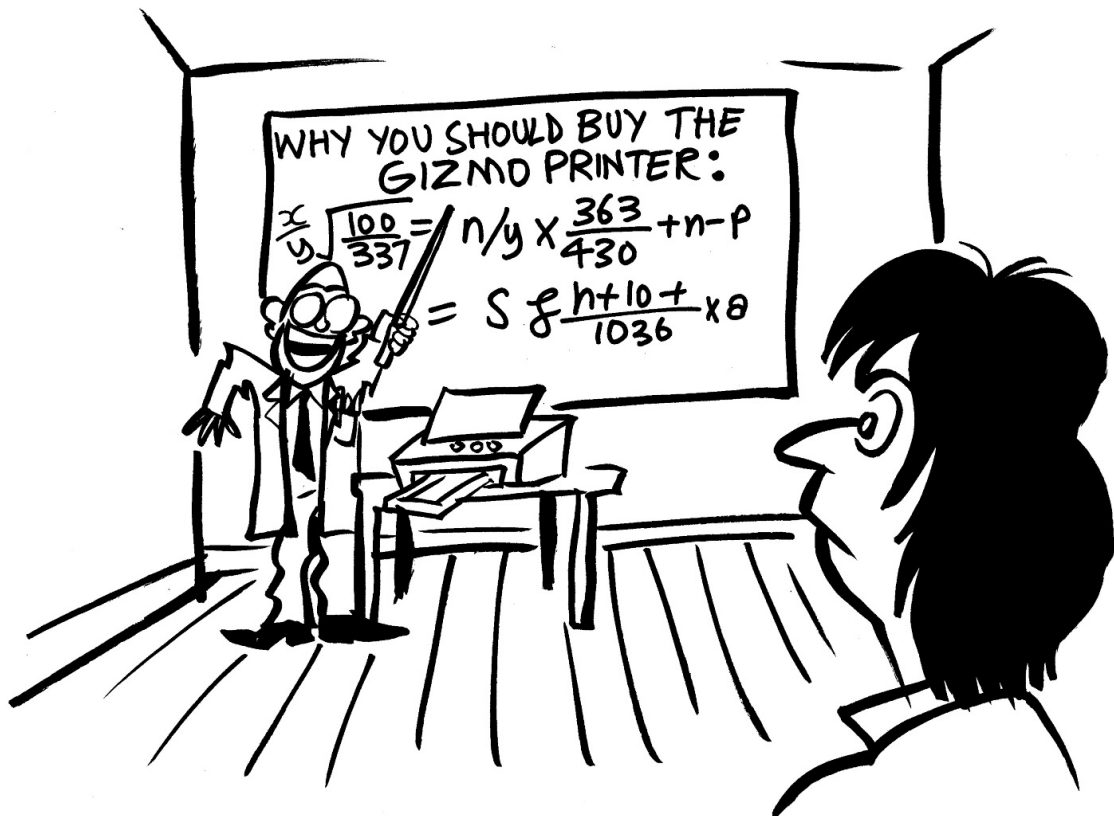
A buying decision is made in steps. How many steps is largely related to its importance, or perceived risk. The less important, or risky, the purchase, the fewer thought processes involved. Something like grabbing a coffee at a train station, or buying paperclips for the office, is pretty simple. The more important, or risky, the decision, the more elongated it becomes. Like an annual family holiday, or a new software system for your entire organisation. It's a *Considered Purchase*. The more considered the purchase your buyers are making, the more relevant *Watertight Marketing* becomes – with almost every concept being meaningful. If yours is more of an impulse purchase, you'll want to pick and mix the ideas that work – which are most likely to be those at the top and bottom of the buying journey.

The thought processes that a buyer goes through are the key to how you structure your marketing. You're not going to change human psychology. You can't shortcut their thinking. And, you shouldn't try. You absolutely should understand what these thought processes are, and why someone might count your business out when moving from one step to the next. But before that, let's see where your business is currently leaking profit. By the end of this section you'll know which of the *Touchpoint Leaks* affects your business. You'll also be able to identify whether your business is securely underpinned by the *Flow Foundations*.

CHAPTER 1

THEIR THINKING = YOUR MARKETING

Purposeful Pause and Active Choices



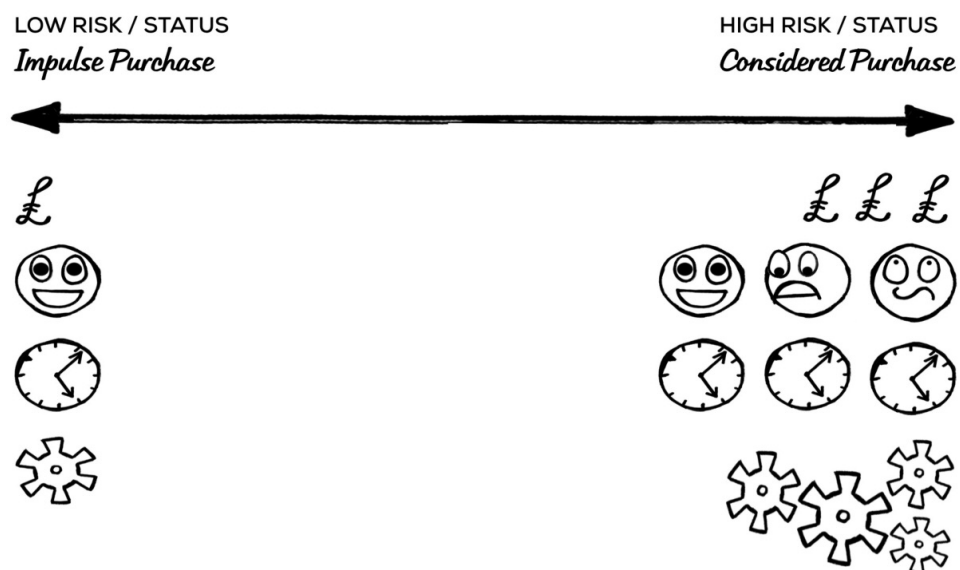
When people are buying something that's important, expensive, or risky, they don't generally do it on a whim. They go through a few stages weighing up options and looking at alternatives. You will never find a magic formula that shortcuts the psychology of this decision-making process. Every step on this journey is one where they could lose interest if your message isn't right in that moment. By plugging gaps between stages with effective marketing, you will generate and retain more profitable customers.

A CONSIDERED PURCHASE



You'll see buying journeys mapped out in various different ways in sales and marketing books going back decades. No one model fits every business, nor indeed every product, but the core principle remains that people rarely go from blissful ignorance to paying customer in one great leap. They go through a series of thought processes along the way. The more important or risky that decision, the more this seems to apply.

Drawing a line from left to right: at one end you'll find buying decisions made in a heartbeat (a coffee at the train station), and at the other end are those decisions that can be agonised over (a mortgage). There's a great deal of science and marketing expertise that goes into triggering an impulse purchase, but this book looks at the other end of the line: the *Considered Purchase*.



The Considered Purchase Continuum

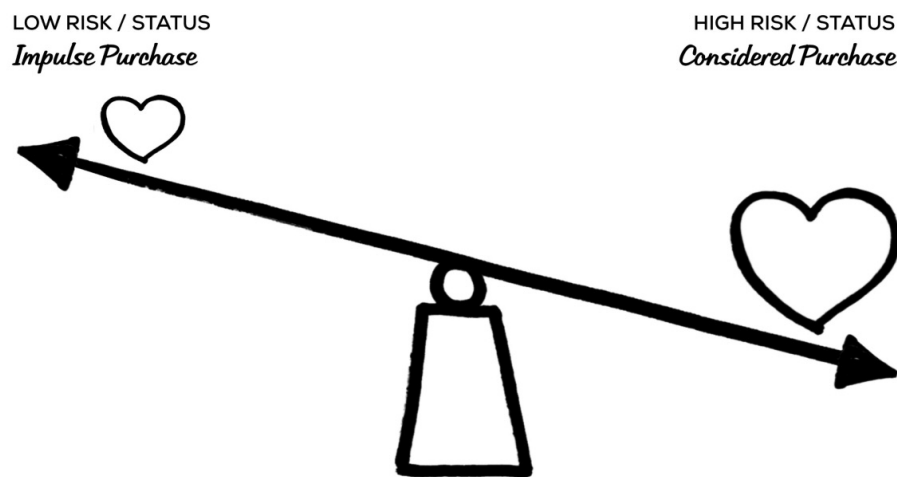
Where on this line your buyers would place the decision to buy the sorts of things you sell is usually based on a combination of these factors:



- **Finance:** the relative impact of the financial outlay involved or the level to which they are entering an ongoing commitment.
- **Time:** the amount of time it will take for them to reach a decision with which they remain happy, and the time it will then take to get the value they wanted from what they've bought.
- **Other people:** the level to which the decision affects others, and how important those opinions are to the buyer.
- **Functional complexity:** the degree to which the buyer easily understands how to get the value they were looking for, or the number of moving parts involved in implementing whatever they've bought.
- **Status:** the degree to which a person's sense of identity or reputation is affected by the purchase.

These elements come together to give the decision an emotional weight. At the impulse end the decision will feel emotionally light. It will tend to either manifest as the bubbly excitement of a 'had to have it' moment, or the deep dullness of restocking the toilet paper on autopilot.

At the considered end, the decision is a weighty one. Whether it's a positive decision (like a wedding venue), or a professional decision for a business (like a multi-million-pound software rollout), it feels heavy. Here the tummy flutters are more likely to be anxiety than excitement.



Emotional Weight of Decision

The key thing is that when one or more of these elements lands at the considered end, the buyer has a lot to lose if they get their decision wrong. They are taking a risk. The job of your marketing is to reduce that risk. This means building trust, and that can only truly be done over time.

THE CRISIS CUSTOMER

Whilst most high-risk purchases take time, there are occasions when a purchase that would usually be considered at length is made on impulse. This is when it's made in a crisis. If your company IT crashes and you quickly find what looks like a pretty reliable IT provider, you will call them up without delay and may very well buy their services that same day. You now exist on that IT provider's database as a client, but you're not fully a client in your own head. You've bought their service, but you haven't bought *into* it.

This means that if they immediately attempt to sell you their outsourced IT support package on a retained basis, you may resist because you've not had the chance to go

through the consideration process. When a customer buys from you in a crisis, you need to walk back through the same thought process as if they'd been purchasing according to their normal pace to truly earn their loyalty.

LOYALTY IS AN ACTIVE CHOICE

My definition of marketing (in a commercial context) is supporting people through to a buying decision with which they remain happy, even if that's not to buy from you. Taking this further, I believe marketing provides moments of *Purposeful Pause*, so a buyer can make an active choice to move forward at each stage. If this is a considered purchase, it really shouldn't be rushed.

When I talk about a stepped buying journey, most people will picture a sales funnel (or pipeline, or hopper). It's a ubiquitous image. There were over 36 million image results the last time I searched the term.



A sales funnel diagram is used to represent a decreasing number of people moving from one step to the next. This is because people can cross you off their list at any of these stages. These diagrams are often used to create a sales pipeline report, labelled with internally driven criteria, for example: Audience, Respondents, Leads, Qualified Leads, Proposals, Sales, and Renewals. Whilst this might serve as a useful snapshot of where you are now, it doesn't help you to plan your marketing. It's a matter of cause and effect. The labels above are the effect; the thoughts of your buyers are the cause. If you understand the cause, you will have more control over the effect. This means that you need to map their thinking, as well as your internal metrics.

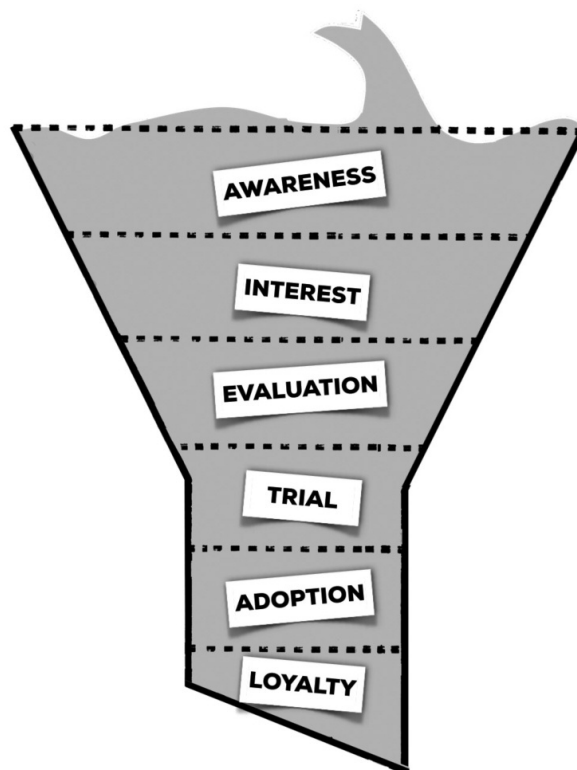
The theory that I've found most useful for getting a deeper understanding of the thought processes involved is a six-step model originated by Dr Philip Kotler (lots of similar, shorter and extended, models of buying journeys exist and

the *Watertight Marketing* methodology can be equally overlaid on any of them). I've found the Kotler model useful for both business-to-business and personal buying decisions, and it goes like this:

A person has some sort of need, which triggers them to...

- **Awareness:** They notice that you offer something that could help.
- **Interest:** They decide to find out a little bit more.
- **Evaluation:** They see if you look credible.
- **Trial:** They find out what it would be like to buy from you.
- **Adoption:** They become a customer.
- **Loyalty:** They keep buying, buy more, and/or tell others about you.

Overlaying this onto a funnel image is the first step in unpicking this.



Kotler Model Overlaid on a Sales Funnel

CAUSE AND EFFECT

To be useful for marketing planning, the internal reporting labels mentioned earlier should only be used as the result of a person moving from one thought to the next. This can only really be done by virtue of having taken some action. So, we're aiming to build out from your typical funnel labels to the step in the decision. Then, to the action you want someone to take, which can then be mapped to the task your marketing needs to perform to facilitate that.



YOU MIGHT REPORT THE EFFECT	WHAT STEP ARE THEY AT?
Audience	Awareness
Respondents	Interest
Leads or Qualified Leads	Evaluation
Proposals	Trial
Sales	Adoption
Renewals	Loyalty

The only time when someone should pick up the label relating to the next step in the decision is when they've made an *Active Choice* to move forward. If you ask yourself whether they would pin that label on themselves by virtue of the action they've taken, you're more able to determine what stage they're at. People in business often apply the wrong label to people in their sales pipeline. This shows itself particularly when they talk about leads. You can't buy a lead, you can only enable a person to become one by laying down the next stepping stone for them to choose to take. To be useful, the labels in your sales system need to reflect the psychology of a person's step in their decision. This can be most easily seen by applying a verb to each step. Ask yourself what someone needs to have done to move from one step to the next.

THE STEP (AND LABEL)...	THEIR ACTION...
AWARENESS (Audience)	See It
INTEREST (Respondents)	Like It
EVALUATION (Leads or Qualified Leads)	Suss It
TRIAL (Proposals)	Try It
ADOPTION (Sales)	Choose & Use It
LOYALTY (Renewals)	Love It

Once you've determined the action you want someone to take, you can understand what might most effectively elicit that response from your potential buyers. These become *The Six Tasks of Marketing*.

THEIR STEP...	THEIR ACTION... (EFFECT)	YOUR MARKETING TASK... (CAUSE)
AWARENESS (Audience)	See It	Be There
INTEREST (Respondents)	Like It	Be Relevant
EVALUATION (Leads or Qualified Leads)	Suss It	Be Proven
TRIAL (Proposals)	Try It	Be Helpful
ADOPTION (Sales)	Choose & Use It	Be Friendly
LOYALTY (Renewals)	Love It	Be Consistent

When mapping cause and effect in this way, the question to ask yourself is: have I laid a clear path to my door? Different marketing tools and techniques are more effective at different stages, each with their task to perform. If you put together an integrated set of tools, techniques and materials that perform these tasks, more people will make it all the way through to **Loyalty**. And, you'll have a healthier business.

A MARKETING TASK FOR EVERY STEP OF A SALE

Many businesses see the task of marketing as generating leads for salespeople to follow up. It's a short-sighted view that costs millions. Marketing is the *whole process* of taking your goods or services to market. Broadening your view to see *The Six Tasks of Marketing* that we've just mapped can radically alter the effectiveness of your activity. Marketing is made up of many different disciplines, each with their own skills and expertise. The key to choosing the right mix is to map at least one tool or technique to each step in a buyer's thought process. A tool or technique that facilitates pause and invites an active choice.



Step 1: generating **AWARENESS**

This is what most people think marketing is all about. It's getting your name known. For this you need to **Be There**. Find out where your buyers hang out, in person or online, and make sure your business is represented so that they can **See It**.

Step 2: stimulating **INTEREST**

Let's imagine that someone knows of your company, and they've started to think about buying something along the lines of what you sell. You need to draw them in with something of interest. For this you need to **Be Relevant**. Find out the questions they're asking themselves at this moment. Answer them so that they **Like** what they see.

Step 3: surviving **EVALUATION**

Once you've gained their **Interest**, people will start weighing up whether you meet their buying criteria. They'll be looking for evidence that you can deliver what you say you can. Here, you need to **Be Proven**. For every promise you make, you need to provide proof so that they can **Suss** out if you're good at what you do.

Step 4: enabling TRIAL

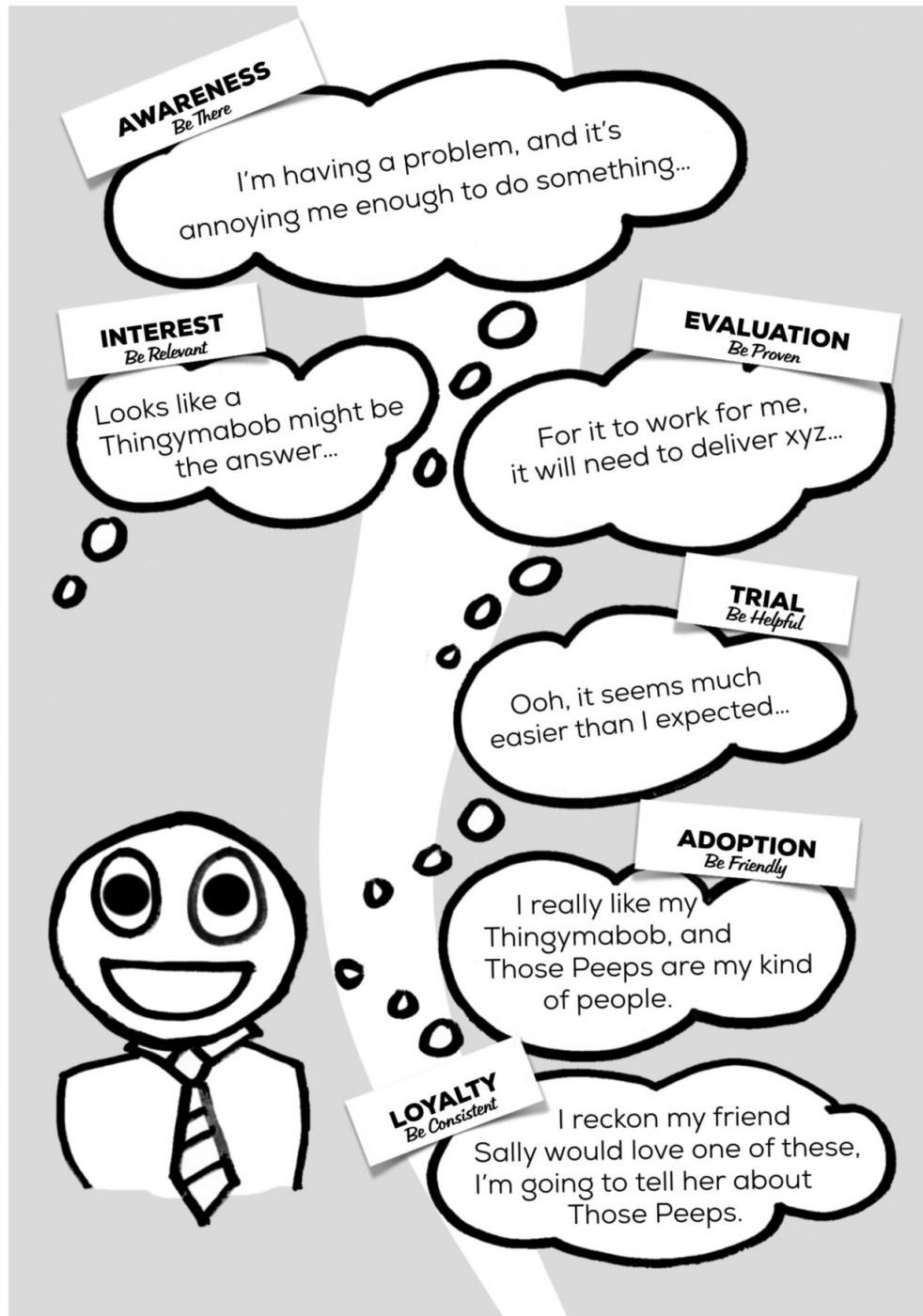
If you've survived scrutiny to the extent that your potential buyer believes that your company is a real contender for their business, the next step is for them to establish a sense of what it would be like if they bought from you. For this, you need to **Be Helpful**. Facilitate some way of your buyer experiencing being your customer before they become one. Don't tell them; let them **Try It** to experience just how much you'd resolve their problem or satisfy their need.

Step 5: securing ADOPTION

It's essential to recognise that people will often go with their gut at this critical hurdle. As such, you need to **Be Friendly** to ensure that they feel comfortable working with you. Friendly support in helping them **Choose It & Use It** is critical here. This can also often be by virtue of the opinion or support of someone else in their circle. This means that you need to be friendly (or, at least respectful) to everyone who could have their ear. To my mind, this works like *Commercial Karma* – a concept that we'll return to in Chapter 5.

Step 6: encouraging LOYALTY

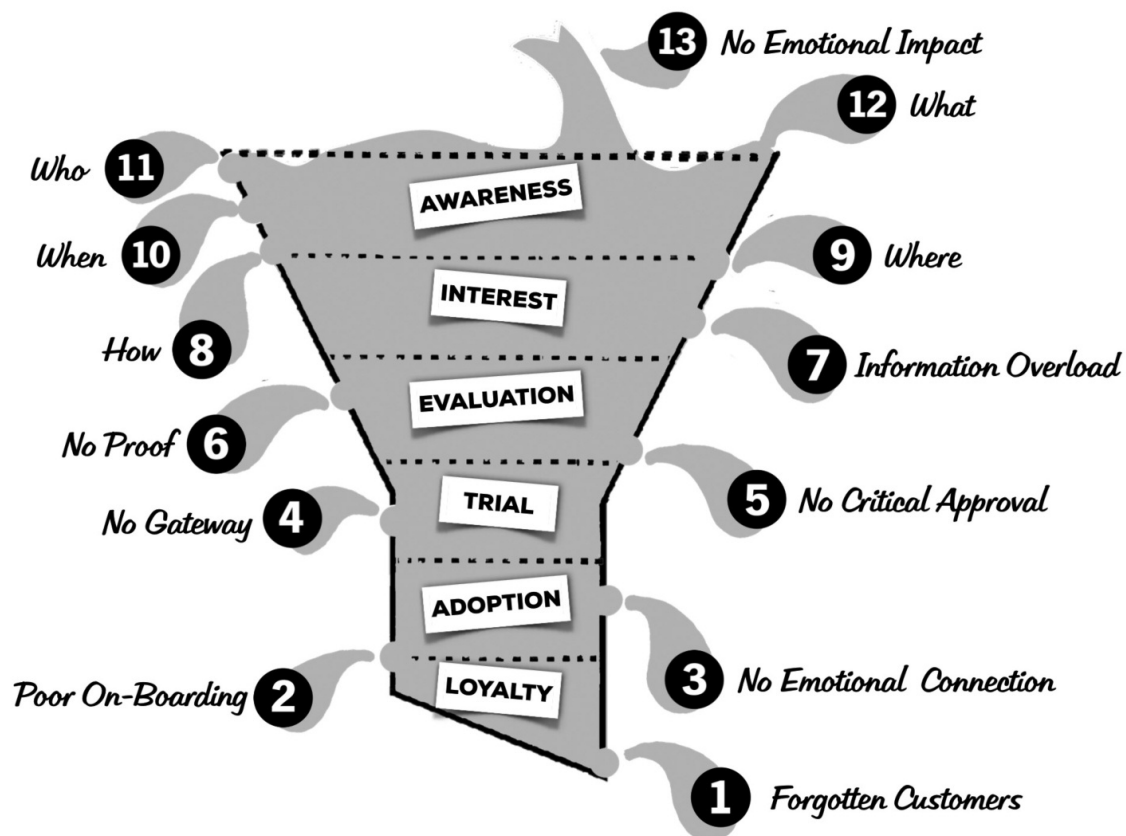
Here you need to ensure that a customer is in fact a customer in their own mind, rather than just on your books. And, you need to make sure that they remember why they chose you in the first place. To do this you need to **Be Consistent**. This is a big one. You'll need to be consistent with the expectations you set through the sales process. You'll need to be consistent with the style of interaction that's been established. And, you'll need to remain consistent in talking to, and valuing, your customers. Effectively, you need to be consistently doing all of the above. All of the time. Done well, this means that they'll come to **Love It**.



Marketing is about purposeful moments of pause from which people make *Active Choices*. The task of marketing, therefore, is to create the spaces in which people can pause, think, and then actively choose to move forwards.

BUT REALLY IT'S A SIEVE

The funny thing about the sales funnel image is that it depicts precisely the opposite to an actual funnel. The diagram shows a decreasing number of people at each stage in the process. If it behaved like a real funnel, everyone who had ever heard of you would eventually buy from you. It only looks like a funnel on paper. In reality (and if you had to choose a kitchen utensil) a colander or a sieve would make a better visual metaphor for most sales processes. The point is that people leave the process between each stage. These are your marketing *Leaks*.



Touchpoint Leaks on a Sales Funnel

Across the six steps you'd imagine that there are five potential *Leaks*, as people don't make the leap from one to the other. That's certainly a good place to start. But digging a little deeper, initially across 200 organisations, and subsequently verifying across a further 2,000, exposes 13 *Touchpoint Leaks*. Each one represents leakage at the points of interaction with a buyer in their path to purchase. Tweaking these *Leaks* with marketing tools up to the task means that more of the right people will make it all the way through to being loyal customers. Assuming you have a sound business model – more demand means a healthier business, either through customer growth, higher prices, and/or the ability to be selective about who you work with.

KEY POINTS

- Some buying decisions are made in a heartbeat, some take months – the more considered the decision, the harder your marketing needs to work.
- When you map the thoughts and actions of your buyers to the stages in the buying decision, you can work out what the marketing task is for each one.
- A sales funnel is a ubiquitous diagram, but an awful metaphor – it's more like a sieve where people 'leak' through the gaps.
- Putting effective marketing tools in place for each point of interaction means that more of the right people will make it through to buying from you.
- When more people want to buy from you, you can grow by serving more customers, putting up prices, or by being more selective about who you work with.



Go to: watertight.school/chapter1

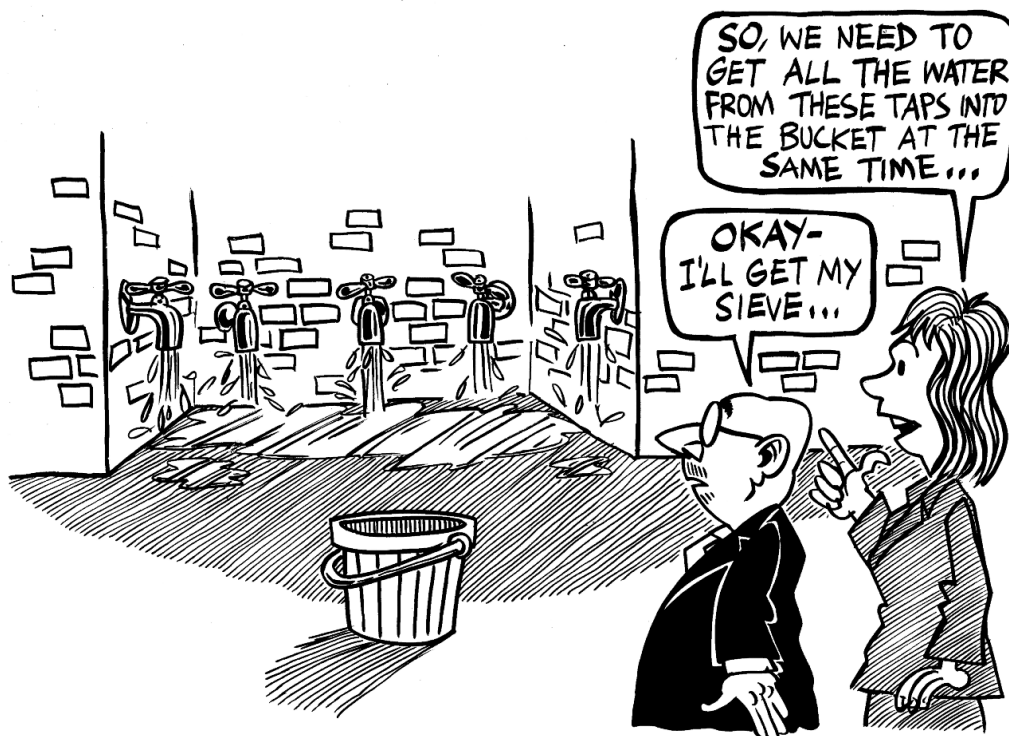
In your workbook exercise:

How considered is this purchase?

CHAPTER 2

IDENTIFY YOUR MARKETING LEAKS

Touchpoint Leaks and Flow Foundations



I want you to turn your thinking about your sales funnel on its head. I want you, for the moment, to stop thinking about how to pour more into the top and look instead from the bottom upwards. This way, when you do come to spend time, money and energy telling the world about what you do, you'll get more back. In fact, by addressing the Touchpoint Leaks from the bottom up you won't need to pour as much in the top to get the same, or better, results. Underpin this with the Flow Foundations, and you'll be on the path to sustainable sales results.

KEY POINTS

- A *Touchpoint Leak* is a point of interaction where you don't have an effective marketing tool to support a buying decision.
- A marketing tool is repeatable and tangible and becomes an asset to your business, a skill resides in a person who can leave the building.
- You can grow a business using skills or tools, but having both makes this sustainable.
- Assessing your marketing tools against the *Touchpoint Leaks* creates a sequenced plan for marketing investments that each build on the last into a *Watertight Marketing Operation*.
- A *Flow Foundation* is the underlying attitude or mindset about marketing in your business; without these in place tweaks to your *Leaks* won't stick.






Go to: watertight.school/chapter2

In your workbook exercise:
Touchpoint Leak Traffic Light

SUMMARY OF PART ONE

The more important or risky the decision the longer someone will think about it. In this time they will move through a series of interlinked thoughts until they have reassured themselves that they are making the right choice. This extended thought process can be helpfully broken down into six steps, and for each step there is a particular task for your marketing to perform. These tasks exist to provide moments for *Purposeful Pause*, and to invite *Active Choices*. If your company doesn't stay on a person's list of potential organisations to buy from as they move from one stage in the process to the next, you've lost a sale. There are 13 key points at which you're in touch with that person – each representing a potential marketing *Leak* in your new business pipeline.

	THEIR STEP	MARKETING TASK	TOUCHPOINT LEAKS
	AWARENESS	Be There (See It)	13 No Emotional Impact 12 What 11 Who (Influencers) 10 When (Timing) 9 Where (Channel) 8 How (Format)
	INTEREST	Be Relevant (Like It)	7 Information Overload
	EVALUATION	Be Proven (Suss It)	6 No Proof
	TRIAL	Be Helpful (Try It)	5 No Critical Approval 4 No Gateway
	ADOPTION	Be Friendly (Choose & Use It)	3 No Emotional Connection 2 Poor Welcome
	LOYALTY	Be Consistent (Love It)	1 Forgotten Customers

Seeing this process not as the linear funnel or pipeline that's often depicted, but instead as made up of a **Bucket**, **Funnels & Filters** and **Taps**, quickly reveals why tweaking these *Leaks* one by one and from the bottom up will definitely improve your sales results. However, this will only be maintained in the long term if you also address the *Flow Foundations* to make marketing part of the fabric of your business, and a common language in your team.

PART TWO



Understanding how real people really buy things is central to getting your business onto an upward curve. Your products and services can be the most innovative, effective, beautiful or useful things on the planet and still not achieve great sales results. Some pretty dodgy products are bought in their millions, whilst better alternatives lie undiscovered. The difference between those that sell and those that don't is how well people are supported to buy them.

MAP YOUR MARKETING BASELINE

First there's the psychology of it all. For this you need to master *The Logic Sandwich*. There's an interplay between the instinctive and intellectual parts of the brain. To win that new customer, you'll need to appeal to both. You'll first need emotion to catch their attention, logic to address their specific requirements, and emotion again to cement the relationship. Address these needs in the wrong order and you will lose the sale. This is about your marketing messages. It's about knowing what to say, and when.



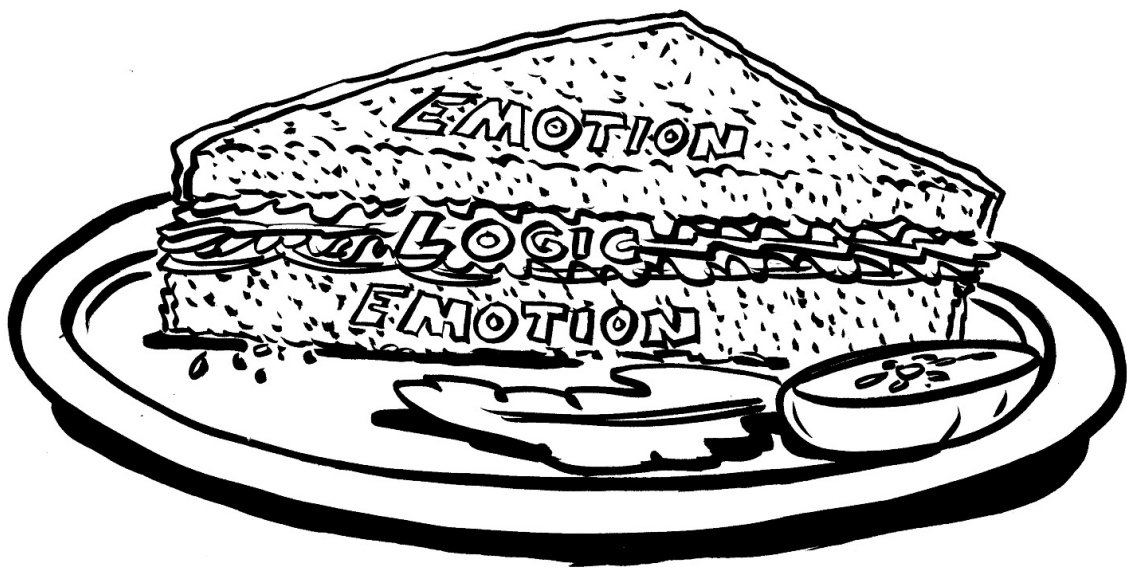
The word 'when', i.e. timing is crucial. Again, I want you to turn the normal way of approaching this on its head. Don't think about how long you need to explain your offer, think about how you can explain your offer in the amount of time your buyer wants to give you. Responding to the pace your buyer sets means more sales and longer-lasting relationships. This is less about getting your timing right, and more about earning the right to a person's time. In visualising this, I paint *The Time Triangle*.

Then, there's the outside world. Buying decisions aren't made in a vacuum. I want you to think about who is on your buyer's team. That is, whose opinion matters as they are making their decision. When long listing companies they might buy from, people may initially cast the net quite wide – wider by the minute with the ubiquity of social media. As they get nearer to parting with their hard-earned money, they will tend to turn to a decreasing number of select people. You need those people to say the right things about you at the right time. This is about your extended marketing audience. It's about knowing which third parties to consider at each point in the process. In sketching this out visually, I call this *Influencer Icecream*.

CHAPTER 3

THEIR NEEDS = YOUR MESSAGES

The Logic Sandwich



To successfully take people through a whole buying decision, you need to find the right balance between satisfying their emotional and logical needs. The human brain has been described as responding in two ways, the instinctive (fast and emotional) and the intellectual (slow and logical). To really get someone on board, you need to appeal to both modes of thinking. In short, you need marketing messages that tick their emotional and logical boxes. Critically, there's a specific order in which this is most effective.



KEY POINTS

- Start with *Away From* emotion, go on to logic, then move to *Towards* emotion.
- Negative emotions are best at kicking off a buying journey.
- Positive emotions are important for maintaining momentum.
- Logic alone will rarely get you noticed.
- Emotional answers to logical questions seem slippery.
- Overstated messages are often ignored.
- Making an emotional connection reduces price sensitivity.
- If all things are logically equal, the emotional connection will win the sale.
- Emotional connection and comfort creates inertia, increasing customer retention.
- Making an emotional connection protects your company from criticism.



Go to: watertight.school/chapter3

Workbook exercise: Create your Messaging Matrix

CHAPTER 4

THEIR PACE = YOUR TIMING

The Time Triangle



A person's time is precious. It's their gift to allow you time to tell them about your offer. So, whilst the right timing is important to catch someone when they're in a buying frame of mind, earning the right to take up a person's time is critical. This is especially true if you want to build long-term customer relationships.

KEY POINTS

- You need to earn the right to take up a person's time.
- Think of ways to help people rather than sell to them.
- Cut your material into chunks of time that increase in duration through the buying decision.
- Never try to shortcut accrued time, though you can shorten elapsed time.
- Reward long-term sales results more than you reward the speed of a first sale.
- Build in rewards for nurturing buyer relationships.
- Use your marketing materials to qualify potential buyers.
- Only ever sell the 'next step'.
- Respond quickly when someone enquires.
- Have enough fresh content to enable people to stay interested for a period of time.
- Use interactions with different materials as indicators of future business so that you can be ready for it.

Go to: watertight.school/chapter4

Workbook exercise: Choose your Tools & Timings



CHAPTER 5

THEIR TEAM = YOUR AUDIENCES

Influencer Icecream



Buying decisions, particularly high-value or complex ones, are not made in isolation. An enthusiast might spend time on a forum and reading reviews, a husband might ask his spouse and children, and an employee might ask colleagues or their boss. In many cases gaining the input, and approval, of others is essential in the buying decision. You need to know who your buyers are talking to, and get those people on side. You need to know who's in their ear, and get them on side. You also need to take account of the other voices in your buyer's head.

KEY POINTS

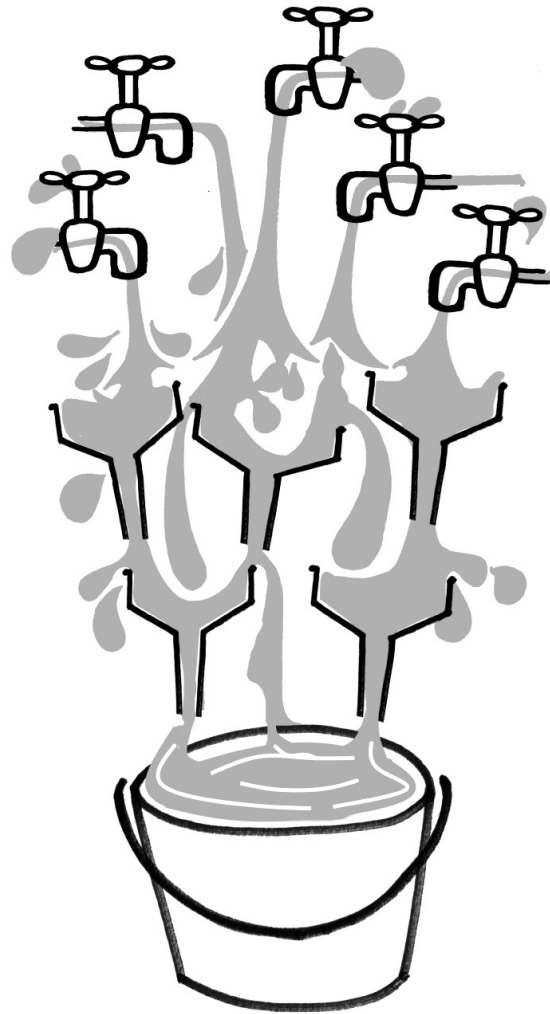
- Buyers talk to different people at different stages in their decision.
- They cast the net wide, then reduce their focus to key trusted people as the decision draws near.
- Different people need to know different things about your business.
- Think about the media consumption of the third parties, not just the buyer.
- Be particularly alert to people with the power of veto.
- Think of ways to equip your buyer to become an *Internal Salesperson*.
- Start first by building relationships with people your business already touches, before moving onto those you've never met.
- Consider the legacy of all of your interactions.

Go to: watertight.school/chapter5

Workbook exercise: Identify the Influencers



PART THREE



So far we've looked at the whole purchasing decision from your buyers' perspective. It's now time to look at what you need to do about it. With their thinking firmly in your mind, I'm now going to get really practical. Here, I map the tried and tested tweaks to the *Touchpoint Leaks* against your Bucket, your Funnels & Filters and your Taps. This means you can work out exactly what to do about them. It's time to roll your sleeves up. It's time to tweak those *Touchpoint Leaks* – starting, of course, at the bottom!

TWEAK YOUR LEAKS

I want you to think of your offering, your product or your services, as a **Bucket**. This is where you collect customers. It's what keeps a customer happy with what they're buying from you. It's the area traditionally associated with customer service, but tweaking the three identified *Touchpoint Leaks* across **Adoption** and **Loyalty** will ensure that you're not allowing good money to *Leak* from your bottom line.

Then it's time to make sure you have those **Funnels & Filters**. In most organisations this best equates to your sales function. It's those things that you put in place to invite the right people to undertake an **Evaluation** of your offer, and **Trial** your company in order to convert their initial enquiry into a sale. There are a further three *Leaks* to tweak here in terms of supporting the sales skills with the right marketing tools.

When you have these things in place, and only then, it's time to turn the **Taps** on. This is probably what most people think marketing is all about. That is, generating **Awareness** and stimulating **Interest** in what you have to sell. With seven *Leaks* to tweak here, I can't imagine there are many companies who couldn't squeeze a little extra from their efforts.

CHAPTER 6

YOUR BUSINESS BUCKET

Keeping Loyal Customers



Filling a leaking Bucket is a fool's errand. There are already too many demands on your resources to risk leaking any precious funds unnecessarily. Keeping the customers you spent money acquiring is essential to making a profit. To do this you'll need to pay special attention to how the customer relationship begins, and to keeping them interested in what you do. The word 'relationship' is key. And real relationships are based on an emotional connection.

YOUR WATERTIGHT BUCKET CHECKLIST

Tweaking the three *Touchpoint Leaks* in your business **Bucket** puts you in a much better position to keep the customers you have. Here you're looking to **Be Friendly** and **Be Consistent**. If you're meeting these tasks, you'll have stemmed the first three *Leaks* that mean that the time, energy and money that you spend in filling your **Bucket** isn't wasted.

STEP & TASK	TOUCHPOINT LEAK	TWEAK THEMES
ADOPTION Be Friendly	❶ Forgotten Customers	Service Social Special
	❷ Poor On-Boarding (Welcome)	Thank you Helpful Celebration
LOYALTY Be Consistent	❸ No Emotional Connection	Visual Written People

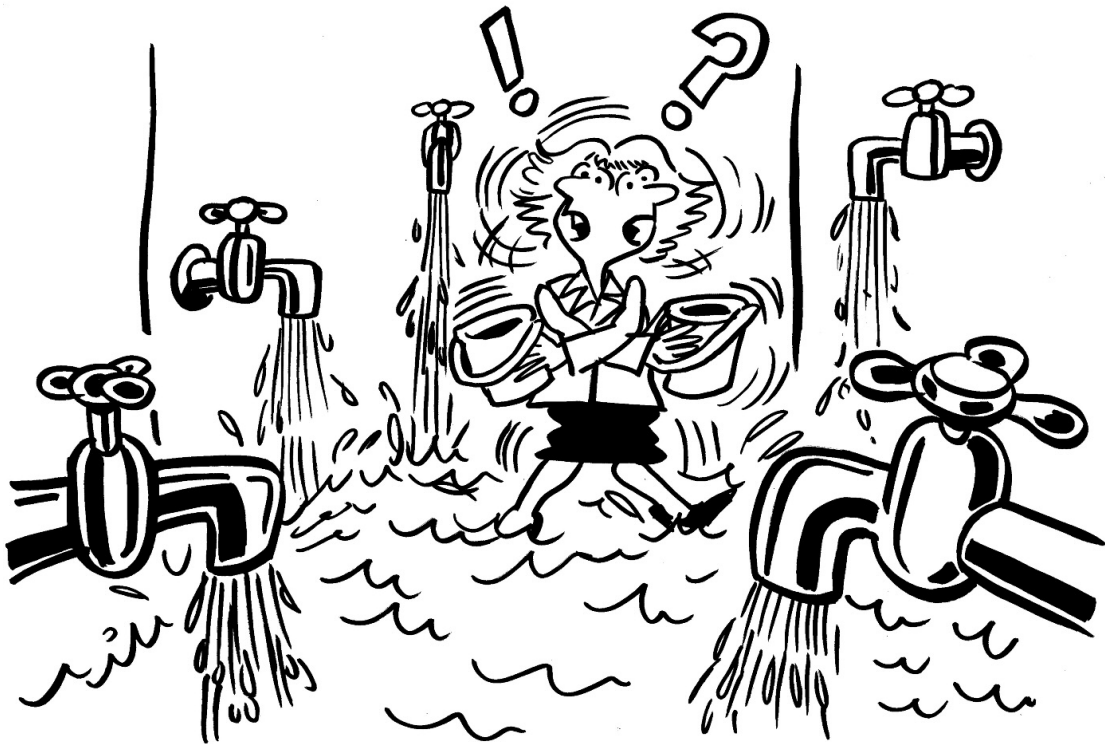


Go to: watertight.school/chapter6
Workbook exercise: Your Business Bucket

CHAPTER 7

YOUR FUNNELS AND FILTERS

Converting the Right Customers



If all of your customers come from just one source, you're either missing a trick or you're on dangerous ground. The most successful businesses have identified a number of different ways of getting themselves noticed. This is not least because different people respond to different things, but also to reduce the chances of someone turning off a single Tap, and with it your income. This means you'll also need a number of Funnels to channel new customers to your Bucket. And, for these to be the right kind of work, you'll need some Filters too.

STEP & TASK	TOUCHPOINT LEAK	TWEAK THEMES
EVALUATION Be Proven	6 No Proof	Fact Feeling Library Guarantee
TRIAL Be Helpful	5 No Critical Approval	Content Direct Indirect
	4 No Gateway	Time Data Money

Go to: watertight.school/chapter7

Workbook exercise: Your Funnels & Filters



CHAPTER 8

NOW, TURN YOUR TAPS ON

Reaching New Customers



When you find a Tap that works it can be tempting to run it at full pelt. A smarter approach is to have a number of Taps generating a steady, and predictable, flow. This means that when one dries up, another can be adjusted. It also means that you have time to tweak your systems downstream to make sure you're ready for what's coming. A deluge of new business can seem like a nice problem to have. But, in an increasingly connected world, there's nowhere to hide if you get a soaking. And, once spilled, water – like a person's good opinion – is tough to recover.

YOUR FLOWING TAPS CHECKLIST

When all these suggestions come together for your business, you'll have a steady flow of interested people to talk to. These are the **Taps** for your business. When putting this guidance into practice keep reminding yourself of what you're trying to achieve. Here, you need to **Be There** and **Be Relevant**.

STEP & TASK	TOUCHPOINT LEAK	TWEAK THEMES
AWARENESS Be There	13 No Emotional Impact	Instinct Intellect Over/Under
	12 What	Clarity Context Consistency
	11 Who	Perennials Voxpops Controversy Paid!
	10 When (Timing)	Selectivity Seasonality Scheduling
	9 Where (Channel)	Home Work Pixel
	8 How (Format)	Written Visual Auditory
INTEREST Be Relevant	7 Information Overload	Questions Jargon Tips

Go to: watertight.school/chapter8
Workbook exercise: Your Taps



SUMMARY OF PART THREE

The starting point for any business that wants to make a profit is to secure its **Bucket**. If you can reduce the effort that goes into keeping your coffers topped up it's much easier to move your business forward. The marketing tasks here are to **Be Consistent** and **Be Friendly**. Your three areas of focus are:

- **Leak 1 – Forgotten Customers** – Consistent customer communications that proactively address any service needs and keep your business in their minds.
- **Leak 2 – Poor On-Boarding** – A structured approach to communication with new customers as they settle into their relationship with you, which demonstrates that your service is consistent with the expectations they had.
- **Leak 3 – No Emotional Connection** – A visual and written style with a personal touch that's friendly and allows people to make an emotional connection with your business.

Once you have a **Bucket** that holds water, you need to ensure that you have **Funnels & Filters** in place to direct people to it. The marketing tasks here are to **Be Helpful** and **Be Proven**. Again, there are three areas of focus:

- **Leak 4 – No Gateway** – A coherent set of products that lead helpfully from one to the next with the inclusion of a stepping stone that allows people to understand what it's like to be a customer before they are one.
- **Leak 5 – No Critical Approval** – A clear way of educating, or helping your buyer educate, anyone who could veto the purchase decision.
- **Leak 6 – No Proof** – A systematic approach to signposting some sort of proof against every promise or claim that you make.

With all this in place, it's time to turn the **Taps** on. The marketing tasks you need to keep in mind are to **Be Relevant** and **Be There**.

This is a big subject, in which seven key areas need to be carefully considered, set in context of *The Awareness Equation*:

- **Leak 7 – Information Overload** – A steady stream of relevant information that invites people into finding out more.
- **Leak 8 – How** – A range of familiar and novel formats so that people can engage with ease and enjoyment.
- **Leak 9 – Where** – A selection of at least three places to put your materials that you know your potential buyers already access.
- **Leak 10 – When** – A commitment to timing the release of your materials so that people are most likely to notice it.
- **Leak 11 – Who** – A way of getting people talking about your business so that buyers hear something good about you regardless of who they turn to.
- **Leak 12 – What** – An absolute clarity of purpose in telling people what your business does.
- **Leak 13 – No Emotional Impact** – The ability to strike an emotional chord with your potential buyer that means they can't help but notice you and they feel compelled to take action.

With your *Baseline Marketing Rhythm* mapped out from Part Three, this will now act as your *Touchpoint Leak* tweaking checklist. To ensure that each tweak builds iteratively on the last, you work up from the bottom addressing Red ones first.

PART FOUR



Those focused on long-term healthy business are those who truly contribute to a thriving economy and community. Resisting short-term temptations in order to build something stronger and more sustainable is an enormous effort. Being true to your values and treating people decently can be a challenge in a profit-pressured world. As a founder, leader, or employee, in one of these businesses, I know you work exceptionally hard. As you're reading this, I want you to have your thinking cap on, coming up with ideas for putting this all into action. Then I want you to make it happen. I want to hear that it's working, delivering long-term sales results for your business. So, let's make your marketing transformation one that sticks.

MAINTAINING MARKETING MOMENTUM

Making It Happen

Equipped with the ideas you've come up with to tweak your *Leaks*, you're probably bursting to jump into action. I'm guessing you don't have limitless resources at your disposal, so you'll need to be smart about where you put your effort. Here, you'll be guided through developing a plan that covers every step in a person's buying decision whilst leaving enough in reserve to respond to changes as they happen.

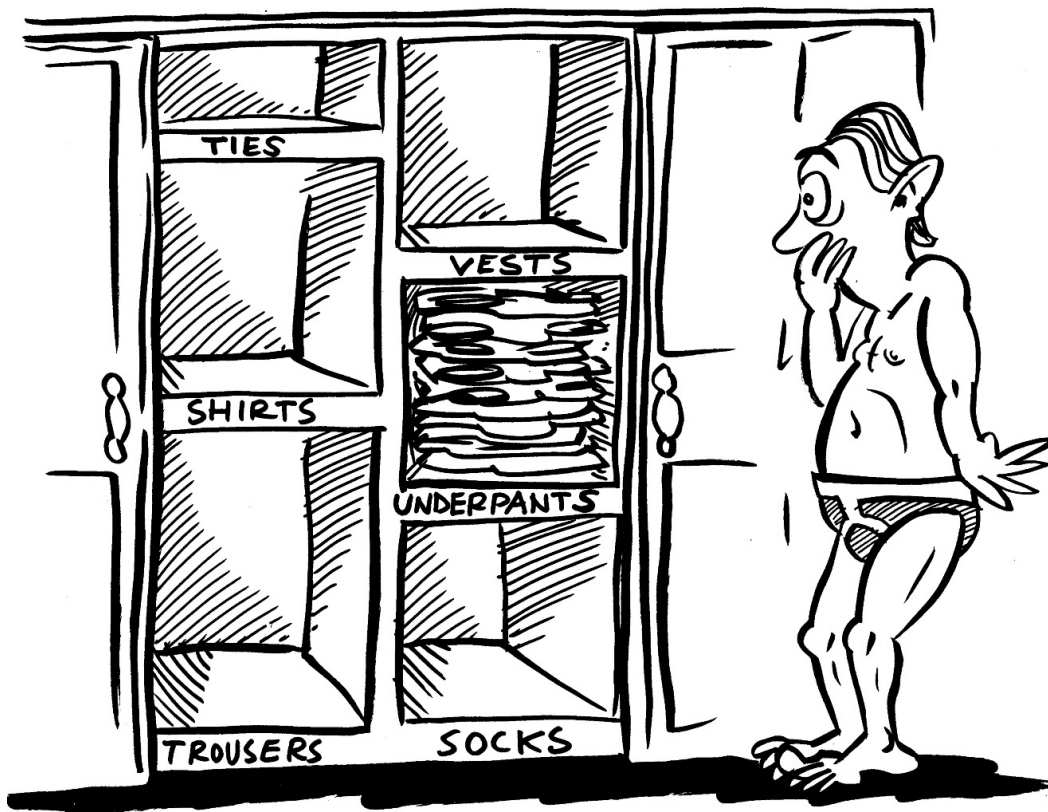
You'll want to know that your ideas are fruitful. To do this, you'll need sensible marketing metrics that build towards your financial goals. Getting this right means also being alert to becoming overly reliant on analysis at the expense of maintaining your company's stand-out qualities.

Then, there's sticking at it. Marketing is like fitness. You'll be challenged to commit to a lifestyle change rather than be tempted by the allure of quick fixes.

CHAPTER 9

YOUR RESPONSIVE MARKETING BUDGET

Budget Shape and ABC Planning



It's so easy to blow the budget before you've completed the job. Most often, and because marketing is seen as those Taps, the activity plan and budget are loaded onto driving Awareness. This leaves nothing to support a person's decision-making all the way through to a sale, and beyond. To make sure you have everything covered, you need to map your marketing activity, and spend against the *Six Tasks of Marketing*, making sure there's a tick in every box.

KEY POINTS

- Make sure you have a marketing activity or tool to support each marketing task.
- Establish the influence each investment has across the whole process to understand your *Budget Shape*.
- For each activity, work out three levels of spend (your *ABC Activity Plan*) at which a functioning marketing-supported step could be delivered.
- Commit to a *Baseline Budget* attached to the middle level of activity across the whole process.
- Monitor your spend across the whole process.
- Establish time horizons and checkpoints to review your spending.
- Make sensible allowances for predictable ad hoc spending.
- Set a contingency budget to cover an *Issues Jump* and *Crisis Communications*, with fall-back spending plans if those urgent situations don't arise.
- Bring your whole team on board with your visual snapshot.

Go to: watertight.school/chapter9

Workbook exercise:

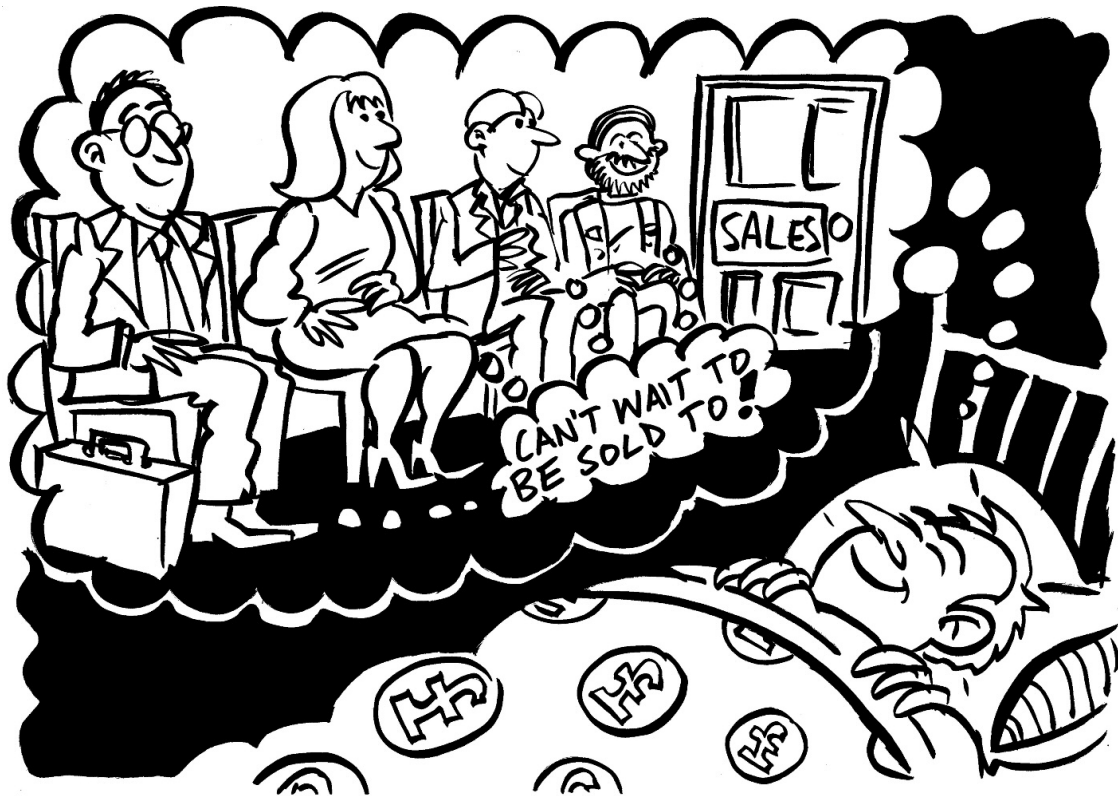
What shape is your marketing budget?



CHAPTER 10

MINDFUL MARKETING MEASUREMENT

Time Horizons and Starting Points



Having a steady queue of people wanting to buy your stuff... now that's the dream! And, if you apply *Watertight Marketing*, it can be achieved. In fact, if you really master it, you won't have to do much 'selling' at all. What you need from your measurement is information that tangibly helps you make decisions about your marketing that keep you on track to the sales results you want. We've talked a lot about not wasting money. So, it's essential to know if that budget is working.

REAL BUSINESS EXAMPLE

Ascentor Cyber Security | The Ascentor team was originally pretty sceptical about the value of blogging. Their instinct was that their senior public sector clients just aren't blog readers. In trusting the theory that the lighthouse simply has to keep flashing, they have blogged on key industry topics since 2011. Over the first four years this drove up their web traffic by 400%, and put them at the top of Google searches for key industry terms. Eight years later, and their main inbound enquiries are for services in a niche government framework that they've blogged about consistently.

KEY POINTS

- Choose indicators that you can count to show engagement at each stage of the process.
- Work out average ratios between one step and the next.
- Understand the financial outcome your business needs.
- Understand all the costs of customer acquisition.
- Measure when customers reach *Payback*.
- Understand the average *Lifetime Value* of your customers.
- Address improvements in the process from the bottom up.
- Have a commitment to core values and standards.
- Be mindful of things that cannot be measured.



Go to: watertight.school/chapter10
Workbook exercise: Create your
Measurement Framework

CHAPTER 11

YOUR LIFELONG HEALTH HABIT

Purpose Profit Matrix and Flow Foundation



The long-term health and growth of your business is based on two things. 1) How energising your customers are – this is like your diet. 2) The balance and consistency of your marketing – like an exercise routine. And, like exercise it's best when it's a fun and healthy lifetime habit, rather than a chore or short-lived fad.

REMEMBER...

Get a *Watertight Marketing Operation* in place for your business and you can really show the world what you can do. You'll have sustainable sales results, as a result of the combined powerful effect of all of your structured, sequenced and consistent effort. This means that:

- You will do more of the right kind of work.
- You will ditch the Yo-Yo.
- You will have more control over your business growth.
- You will attract the very best people to work in your business.
- You will build a positive momentum that pulls you forward.
- Your business will be scalable.
- Your business will be saleable, and...
- You will have helped tens, hundreds or thousands of people to solve that problem they were having!

Go to: watertight.school/chapter11
Exercise: Your Vision & Next Steps



SUMMARY OF PART FOUR

Marketing that truly supports long-term, sustainable sales results is marketing that is mapped to the way that real people really buy things. This means having at least one marketing tool or technique for every step in that process. How much emphasis you put on each will depend on your specific offering, and your business objectives. The key is to appropriately cover every step, and to keep doing so whatever your budget and whatever new challenges come your way.

To know that this investment is giving you a return, you'll need to have a way of seeing the *Volume* and *Movement* through the buying decision. This will enable you to plan and prepare your business to deliver brilliantly. Achieving this might mean using muscles you've not flexed before, so you'll need a strong vision to keep you motivated and the commitment to take the time to build core strength before seeing those visible results. But, when you do, you'll really mean business.

So, here we are. What you do next is up to you. You might put this book down and never think of it again. You might implement one or two of the ideas it's sparked. But, I'm hoping you'll really go for it. If you do, please go on over to **watertight.school** to make the most of the free companion course and workbook, and I'll see you in our community soon.

Much love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Byron', with a stylized, flowing script.

ABOUT BRYONY THOMAS

Bryony's early life, on the Preseli Hills of West Wales, is almost as far from entrepreneurial life as it's possible to get in the UK. She describes her childhood as somewhere between TV comedies 'The Good Life' and 'Absolutely Fabulous'. Like many teenagers, she rebelled... though for Bryony this meant securing three degrees and landing as divisional director of marketing for a FTSE 100 company at the age of 28. And, yes, her father disapproved!

Professionally, Bryony fell into marketing when studying Politics at the University of Bristol. Taking a telephone fundraising role to finance her studies, she left three years later as a campaign executive with clients including ActionAid, The Samaritans and Mind. Looking back, she describes her formative years as those spent with tech marketing agency Mason Zimble, where clients included Dell, IBM and Microsoft. Consolidating this experience with an MBA, Bryony wanted to make her assignments as practical as possible, and found willing clients on which to base them. One of these was ClarityBlue, a 'big data' consultancy to the country's largest brands. Her initial project with them became the basis for an award-winning dissertation and secured her the role of director of marketing. The business later sold to Experian for £85m, and Bryony's role expanded into a divisional role within the UK marketing services division. In 2008, Bryony started the journey towards what is now *Watertight Marketing* – where she's taken what she learned with organisations with serious money to spend to distil how any size of business can out-think, rather than out-spend, their competition.

Her approach is unusual, and undoubtedly informed by the values of the alternative community in which she grew up. Unlike many writers and thinkers on marketing, Bryony is not focused on profit at all costs, but on building healthy and respectful long-term relationships. She calls this *Commercial Karma*... so perhaps those hippy roots weren't too bad after all?!



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Clients that see the most dramatic and sustainable change are those that undertake a deep, company-wide, *Marketing Transformation Programme*. These are fully supported by us within your organisation over 12-24 months, and transferred to you within our powerful OutThink software to drive continuous marketing improvement.

For more, go to: watertightmarketing.com/transformation

Book Bryony Thomas to Speak

Bryony Thomas is a highly engaging speaker, much in demand for large conferences, workshops for business leaders, or in-house for team away days or board facilitation to gain alignment around marketing priorities.

For more, go to: watertightmarketing.com/bryony

Workshops, Events & Public Programmes

We run regular online and in-person events, where you can see detailed examples of *Watertight Marketing* in practice. You can dip into a single event on a particular topic, or join a group programme to work through the material in a structured way with support from an Expert Practitioner.

To register, go to: watertightmarketing.com/events

Self-Serve Learning Platform & Regular Live Q&A

You can work systematically through this book with the video-guided companion exercises that Bryony has designed for each key concept within the *Watertight Webschool*. To access these resources, you can purchase a subscription, or credit bundles to redeem against the courses you feel you need. This is supported with regular Q&A with Bryony, and the network of *Expert Practitioners*.

To register, go to: watertight.school

Free Companion Materials & Community Support

All readers are invited to access the core companion materials, delivered as free video courses, unlocked when you complete the 'Getting the Most from Your Copy of *Watertight Marketing*' introduction. This also includes an invitation to join our expert-moderated discussion groups.

To register, go to: watertight.school

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When writing this page for the first edition, I gave my final words in recognition of my father, Colin. Little did I know that he would no longer be with us just weeks later. And so, it is with true gratitude that I first deeply acknowledge all that both my parents gave me in their too-short lives and in their too-soon deaths.

This book draws together so much of my thinking, and so many of my influences, that crediting all who've been part of this journey makes it quite possibly the toughest section to write.

My Professional Journey...

Every client, every colleague, and every challenge since starting my marketing career in 1997 has shaped me. Rather than name them all, I would like to thank those who were there at pivotal moments. Firstly, Dr Mark Mason MBE, for giving me the role of marketing assistant at Mason Zimbler that led me to working on the game-changing pitch for Microsoft that we won three years later. Veronica Wardell for spotting something in me and championing my progression. Raymond McDowell for igniting my academic curiosity. Professor Chris Archer-Brown for trusting a 28-year-old with a marketing director role. Richard Tremellen for giving me confidence in the value of my upside-down way of seeing the world.

My Journey to Authorship...

The idea for 'my book' started to surface in Twitter chats with Sonja Jefferson and Heather Townsend in 2010. That chat became words on a page after meeting Mindy Gibbins-Klein at the first Professional Speaking Association event I attended in 2011. I will be forever grateful for her support in birthing this book! Stepping it up, and taking the decision to start our own imprint, for

which this is the hub resource, was expertly supported by my publishing partner, Sue Richardson, and her team.

The Watertight Community...

I know that my words will not do justice to the Watertight Community. From those first 87 people who crowdfunded the first edition, to the two brave souls – Rachael Wheatley and Ben Wheeler – the first independent marketing consultants to be licensed in 2014, and every subsequent licensee. Each has strengthened this methodology through its use in contexts I could never have anticipated.

The hundreds of clients who've completed our one-year programme, the thousands who've accessed our companion resources, and the tens of thousands who've read the first edition... I cannot thank you enough.

Alongside those who've taken counsel from what I've written, there are also those whose wisdom I've been lucky enough to have in my ear. Amongst these, I would like to thank particularly Alison McDougall, Ian Price, Simon Bottle, and Emily Hillman.

Standing by My Side...

Anyone who has followed my journey will know that there's a name missing from this list. That is because I could name her under every one of the titles above... my most loyal friend and colleague, Cheryl Crichton. I cannot quantify what this incredible woman has done for me, and also for this community. If my daughter finds just one friend as important to her as Cheryl is to me, she'll be a lucky woman. And, I really am a lucky woman. Cheryl is just one of the amazing tribe of friends and family I have to thank. Which, of course, includes my wonderful husband Tom. His love and support in all areas of my life has been, and continues to be, a source of strength in all that I do.

Thank you all.

Academic Theories: Having worked in marketing for nearly two decades and undertaken various professional qualifications, I have encountered hundreds of marketing and management theories, concepts and models. I have made every attempt to highlight these throughout the text with the Mortar Board, and worked with leading neuroscientist Lynda Shaw to indicate scientific theory with the Brain icon. More detail is provided on these at the end of the book with references to textbooks in which these theories are more deeply explored. The key six-step model on which *Watertight Marketing* methodology is overlaid is an adapted version of Dr Philip Kotler's model of rational decision-making and it is duly acknowledged as such. The methodology can be equally overlaid on other models of stepped decision-making.

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Note: As this second edition of *Watertight Marketing* went into production, Bryony was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer (December 2019). The manuscript has been left as it was at the time of diagnosis and therefore some of the companion resources may change or cease. It is Bryony's wish that 20% of the royalties from this edition goes to Pancreatic Cancer UK (www.pancreaticcancer.org.uk).

Please recommend and share your love of *Watertight Marketing*. Bryony would love to see a photo of you with her book – please use the hashtag #TweakYourLeaks

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The sad truth is that most businesses are. But there is an answer, and it's in this book!

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- £ create consistent routes to customers you'll love,
- £ successfully scale your sales results, and
- £ significantly and sustainably increase your profits.

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– Alison Edgar, The Entrepreneurs' Godmother

"I think it might be quite good."

– Colin, Bryony's Dad



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