

PROFITABLE PRINT RELATIONSHIPS

The Successful Print Sales Circle

Print Product Inspiration Podcast 12:

Chocolate

Hello, and welcome to the final episode of the Print Product Inspiration Podcast. In this episode, we're going to talk about something very close to my heart: chocolate.

Now, chocolate may sound an odd if very appealing subject matter for a print product, but actually what I want to do in this episode is to introduce the idea of a sector-led product line. In other words, how can we as printing companies, help businesses in particular sectors? And by the way, this sector isn't really chocolates. I just wanted a catchy headline. This sector's really small retail. However, no matter what type of customer you're specializing in, I'd like you to listen to this episode and think about how you can replicate this process across any market sector or vertical.

What we're going to do is we're going to follow the journey of a potential customer, my friend, Nick, and see how print can help them. We're going to make sure that we have all the products that Nick needs to grow his business in so many different ways. We're also going to productize each of these opportunities so that we're moving away from selling print, as I've said before, into selling products and results. You're going to see how this works across a variety of products for one business. We're moving from the product to the vertical.

Now, you'll hear many products that I've already discussed in previous episodes, but this time I want you to think of us as creating a journey for Nick or for many other similar businesses. And I want you to think about how you can use the products and services that you offer to your clients to create a similar journey for other businesses.

Let's start off by introducing you to Nick. Nick is a good friend of mine. He used to own a builder's merchant, and then he decided to change his lifestyle completely and to become an artisan chocolatier. He now owns and runs Seven Hills Chocolate. It's an excellent chocolate-making company. And I would thoroughly recommend if you're based in the UK, that you go to his website, it's <https://www.sevenhillschocolate.co.uk> and have a look at the online shop there.

Nick sells handmade chocolate. Most of them are in bars. He also does individual one-off chocolates as well. They're all handmade using very good ingredients and they're definitely at the premium end of the market.

Now, Nick's primary channels are the Farmers' Market in Bath and some other local markets as well, going out to retail and his web shop as well. For the purposes of today's podcast, we're going to focus on his business to consumer sales. So we're going to focus on the Farmers' Market and we're going to focus on his web shop sales as well.

How can a printing company help Nick and help Seven Hills Chocolate? Well, naturally the first and most obvious one is packaging. Nick needs to package each of his bars and because they're artisan chocolate bars, they need to have a high perceived value. So Nick spends a lot of time and resources on getting the right designs and the right print look as well as, something else that I haven't thought of, how quick and easy it is for him to package the finished bars, because that can take up a large amount of production time.

So the more that we can think about people who are producing any sort of item, what can we do to produce great packaging for them? How is it going to be eye-catching, give that feel of luxury? And how are we going to make it work so that people can package their products quickly? I'm not going to talk too much about packaging because that's a fairly obvious one. I want to think more about the marketing side.

Let's start off with this. Nick primarily works at a fairly local farmers' market and he needs to encourage people to go visit him there. So it would be really useful for him to do a door drop or direct mail and to send a leaflet and tell people that delicious, fresh, locally handmade chocolate can be purchased from Bath Farmers' Market. And at the same time, he can say that if people don't want to visit the market in these COVID times, or if they don't want to make the trip out on a Saturday morning, that they can actually order their chocolate from the website.

There's a couple of things that we can add to that leaflet as well. First of all, we could do a map to the market. So if we know that we're producing a set of leaflets for a particular street, we can actually create an almost personalized map from the street to the farmers' market.

The other thing Nick could do is to introduce a pre-order option. He could even put in a little catalog on the door drop and say, "Choose your bars now. Ring me up or order on the website and I'll have your order ready to collect at the farmers' market when you arrive. That makes sure that you know you're going to get the chocolate that you want, that none of those bars would have sold out. And you won't have to spend so much time queuing at the farmers' market; you can make a much quicker visit."

Also he can potentially get people to pre-pay for their orders online. Perhaps giving a small discount if they do that. That helps his cashflow, and he knows he's got those orders coming in each time he goes to the farmers' market.

Now, again, we can track the success of whatever he's doing with this leaflet, making sure that he's got a special offer code. He could also put, "I'll give you 10% off if you spend more than a certain amount of money with me," and quote this code. That way Nick knows if his leaflets are having a success, if people are moved to buy chocolate or buy more chocolate as a result of receiving that leaflet.

The next stage is to think about packaging again. Both at the market and home delivery, Nick sometimes gets large orders, so he needs to package those orders up and put them in boxes. Ideally,

we'd persuade Nick to invest in some pre-printed boxes that look really nice when that delivery is made. Now, because he has to work with a huge range of different order sizes, that may not be possible, but at least we should encourage him to print labels to make the boxes look good and to print address labels so that people really feel that they've got a special Seven Hills delivery coming to them, that looks really nice when they receive it, even before they've opened it.

Then we need to think about people opening the box as well. Nick should be upselling at this point. Again, we've got an opportunity to produce more leaflets for him. We should be putting a special offer leaflet in every box. So again, think about the upsell. "Order again from Seven Hills within a certain timeframe to a minimum order value and we'll give you a discounted price as long as you quote the order code that we've put on the leaflet." Again, it's encouraging people to take action again quickly because they get a better price that way to reorder, to increase Nick's sales, and he can track how successful that offer is. And perhaps create a number of leaflets all with different codes and different offers and see which one is most successful and which one gets him the most revenue.

Another thing he can put in the box is a small catalogue or a leaflet with his most popular regular products or his special edition chocolates that he produces saying, "Buy these now; they're limited edition," letting people know about those. Or he could go to the last thing that I'm going to suggest as well. And that is going to be diversification. Nick could do so much more than just make the chocolate. He could put in leaflets and vouchers for masterclasses, a regular chocolate club or affiliate marketing.

First of all, he could think about having a masterclass for people where they can learn to make chocolate or have a special tasting event life. He can sell those at a premium price and just put in a leaflet into his box advertising those.

Next, he could create a subscription club for keen chocolatiers. I'd definitely sign up for this. Where you pay a monthly fee and Nick puts in a package to you every month with maybe three small different bars with tasting notes, and maybe there's also a forum or a live call on Zoom, where they can all be discussed with members as well.

And then finally, the chance to do some affiliate marketing. Nick could actually charge people to put leaflets inside the box. And maybe he could team up with a brewer, who's going to say, "Buy these beers because they go really well with Nick's bars," or wine. Or maybe just a local florist to say, "If you like chocolate and you're giving chocolate, give some flowers as well." There's all sorts of things that local businesses can do to help each other. Instead of charging those businesses, potentially Nick can give those businesses a leaflet about his chocolates and it can be co-opetition.

There's lots of opportunities here for print to help Nick's business. And how much of this print could you produce? Even if I've suggested things that you can't produce, partner with other suppliers, create the whole solution for Nick.

Now, we don't have to sell all of these items at once. My preferred solution is to persuade a client to go with one idea first, and when I've proven that that's working, they're then happy to listen to me and to go onto the next stage. So maybe start with the door drop and then move on to packaging and vouchers inside the box or the other way round. None of these have to be particularly expensive

for Nick to put into practice but, combined, they could make a very valuable account for a printing company.

The key thing is throughout this that we have been in the customer's shoes. We've tried to understand the challenges that Nick faces. So we need to sell him things that he wants, not pieces of prints, but more customers from the door drop, repeat business from the special offer leaflets and being able to price highly with having the right look on the packaging that Nick produces as well.

The first thing that we should be thinking about when we're going to approach a business and selling this way is what do they need to do, and how can we help them achieve that? Not what print can we sell them.

We also need to remember that we need to do everything for our customer like this; we need to work out their journey, we need to understand their issues and solve their pains and we also need to do this painlessly.

As I've said before in this podcast, we can't sell prints; we need to sell solutions and those solutions need to include everything that has to happen to make a successful project. That includes copywriting. It includes design. It includes providing the Door drop services or putting it into the post. Those are just as important as prints. Just doing the print on its own is not going to be enough to persuade the average business to invest in these sorts of activities these days.

Now we've moved from product sectors to customer sectors. We've gone through a big journey in the Print Product Inspiration Podcast, and you've now reached the end of it. I hope that this final episode has helped you bring everything together and made you think exactly how you can use the right products from your company to help customers and make sure that they want to use you and don't just view as a commodity service.

Next month, I'm starting a brand-new podcast for you. This is the Sales Phrase Podcast. We're going to cover what to say in a sales conversation. Every month I'm going to share with you one of my favourite, most effective phrases that I personally use when I'm talking to prospects. I think you're going to find some of these quite unusual, and you're going to find some of the strategies interesting and thought provoking. I certainly hope that's the case. I'm going to tell you not only the phrase that I'm using, but why I'm using it, how I'm using it, in what situations and what results I expect to get from it. By the end of this podcast, you're going to have a really useful toolbox that will make your sales conversations so much more effective, whether they're verbal or written.

We're going to kick that off next month. I'm going to talk to you about the phrase, "What would make this a good conversation for you?" Why is that so important? Why is it effective? Tune in next month to find out. I look forward to talking to you then.