

Introduction

No matter how long you have been in business, there is always room to learn something new to help you increase your profits. As the face of retailing changes rapidly, the function of the High Street as a commercial shopping centre is threatened. Towns are blighted by empty shops and inward investors and consumers are put off, exacerbating the situation.

There is a strong argument for businesses to work in partnership with others to tackle the issues threatening their livelihoods. Melton Borough Council recognises the benefits of collaborative working

and has pleasure in launching a programme of FREE business seminars, for those with shops and services in Melton Mowbray.

To make them accessible to all, the seminars each last just two hours and they are being held in the early evening, with sandwiches, in a central location in the town. Each seminar will focus on a pertinent theme and will offer sound advice for businesses wishing to adapt to their changing environment.

Seminar One: Is Your Business a Dinosaur or Chameleon?

Venue: The Samworth Centre

Date: Thursday 6th May

Time: 6.00pm-8.00pm

This seminar assesses rapid changes to the way people use town centres. It predicts the future for our High Streets and draws upon successful case studies to illustrate how others are working together to stay ahead of the game. If your business fails to adapt to its changing environment then, like a dinosaur, it will shuffle off this mortal coil. If, like a chameleon, it has the ability to adapt then it may survive in the face of adversity.

Seminar Two: Selling in a Very British Way

Venue: The Samworth Centre

Date: Thursday 13th May

Time: 6.00pm-8.00pm

Many independent business people become salespeople by default. They love their product; they like the autonomy that self-employment brings, yet they hate selling. Let's face it; in the UK customers detest 'being sold to'. They don't respond to scripts and they lose patience with pushy, insensitive sales staff. However they do require honest and straightforward advice from proactive and energetic salespeople providing products or services that make their life easier.

This course will de-mystify the art of selling and help you to overcome your own personal resistances to selling. It can only help to improve business profitability.

Seminar Three: Why the Recession Has Turned Retail Marketing on its Head

Venue: The Samworth Centre

Date: Thursday 20th May

Time: 6.00pm-8.00pm

The term 'marketing' is often misused, misunderstood and confined to the bargain bin of business jargon. The chances are that you quickly put together a marketing plan to satisfy your bank lender some years ago and it has long been forgotten. However a well-prepared and consistently updated marketing plan is one of the most useful tools for small business success.

This course will help you to identify whether you are selling the best product or service at the right price for the right target market in your area. It will provoke thought and get your creative juices flowing.

Seminar Four: The Web – The Retailers Greatest Ally

Venue: The Samworth Centre

Date: Thursday 27th May

Time: 6.00pm-8.00pm

People of all ages now use the web to locate products or services in a specific geographic area. They might be looking for anything from a window cleaner to a garage, from a hotel to an ironmonger.

As a small business you can increase trade by having a slick and logical website explaining what you sell, giving a sample of your prices, clear directions to your premises and basic business details.

This seminar will help you make some important decisions. It will explain how and when to design your own website and it will help you identify when you would benefit from the services of a professional yet cost effective website designer.