# PR Smith, Internet Marketing Author, Trainer and Consultant
## *Digital Planning and Strategy*

**PR Smith** (www.prsmith.org) is a best-selling business author and creative business advisor who helps organisations to break into new markets. Paul's books, DVDs and SOSTAC® planning system are used by marketers around the world. He advises innovative organisations from global wind farms, to short game golf in China with clients including a virtual creative digital hub in Belfast (Crea8ivity.com); TheScreenbiz.com, a UK indie film site; ThisAdWillChangeYourLife.com (by ThisDiaryWillChangeYourLife.com); and the unique 15SecondFilmFestival.com. Earlier this year, he held a parallel virtual launch of Crea8ivity.com in Second Life.

Paul created the award-winning PR training video called 'Actions Speak Louder Than Words' and produced ten marketing training CDs with world gurus and top marketing directors – used by organisations around the world. He produced the Chartered Institute of Marketing's (CIM) online eMarketing course and wrote *eMarketing eXcellence*. Paul also wrote the best selling *Marketing Communications* text which CIM describes as 'a marketing major alongside Peppers and Kotler'. He has written four marketing books (now translated into seven languages). At the end of 2008 Paul launched a book (with supporting Web 2.0 application) called *Great Moments Of Sportsmanship and Kindness*.

This was an interactive workshop with delegates in which Paul explored the role of digital marketing in arts organisations including tried-and-tested techniques to help develop and refine digital marketing strategies.

Developing and refining your e-marketing strategy

There are three key elements required to develop and refine our e-marketing strategy:

1. Strategy and plans – in which we can formulate a SOSTAC plan:

   Situation
   Objectives
   Strategy
   Tactics
   Action
   Control                    + 3ms

2. Strategy and trends – built on verifiable needs …

   Unlike the Sinclair C5 phenomenon

   It is about basic marketing strategy:

   Segmentation
   Targeting
   Positioning



When the Sinclair C5 went wrong, a Mancunian investor bought the whole lot, doubled the price and sold them all within six months. He sold them to holiday resorts and other specialised outlets.

There is a brand about which people are so passionate they will sing about it, clap about it and pay huge amounts of money to watch dull entertainment – football – and yet most football clubs are losing money. This is because they don't know how to market themselves.



Manchester United has a stadium with a capacity of 70,000 and there are 360,000 subscribers to Manchester United TV yet the fan base is 70 million people worldwide. These are willing buyers who are happy to spend a great deal of money on the club. Yet their website is not great. It's very ugly, confused, messy.

Why do people want to be associated with football? As with the arts, you need to ask them.

[PR Smith played a video of an interview with Manchester United fans who were attending a Wednesday evening match].

If you were to map what they say on to Maslow's hierarchy of needs the obvious level which they seem to fit into is 'social needs' – their need for belonging. However, this didn't seem entirely satisfactory. Theodore Levitt, the great Harvard marketing guru, had another view. For him participation in sporting events like these fulfils needs all the way up the hierarchy including self-actualisation.

The empty grounds that we are seeing around the country seem to demonstrate that football clubs are not understanding and fulfilling the needs of their customer base.

On the other hand, the London Irish rugby club is encouraging people to let go and enjoy the entertainment, even reflected in their e-mail sign up forms which include a title drop down list with possible titles like HRH, Imam, Reverend Motherdom, Chief Rabbi, Lord instead of Mr or Mrs.

It can be about forgetting the nine to five, the family, the financial worries – it's a chance to escape and let go. Do we know the real reasons why people want to attend arts events?

Why do you have a website?

   - Websites need to be built on verifiable needs which ride the right trends.

So what are the right trends? What are the ones which are affecting your market place? Research them, discuss them, work out how the affect your particular market.

Some wider digital trends worth considering are

- Virtual worlds (like Second Life)

- Web 2.0 – social networking, digital groups

    *'Companies that don't understand digital communities will die.'*
    Economist April 2005

    *'It is so huge, it's the biggest change since the industrial revolution.'*
    Business Week June 2005

Web 3.0 will probably be more like Second Life all the time – existing in 3-D virtual presences in virtual worlds all the time. In Ireland they are putting a government department into a virtual world, so important do they see it.

- Use of new materials for broadcasting, from thin foldable materials to scent and smells

- Time Compressed, Expression of Love, Missing Role Models, New Network. This is the subject of PR Smith's book – *Great Moments of Sportsmanship* (www.GreatMomentsofSportmanship.com) which is all about love and acts of nobility and kindness.


3.  <u>Strategy and components</u> – STOPP & SIT

    Segmentation
    Targeting
    Objectives – keep an eye on your objectives – is your strategy delivering these?
    Positioning
    Partnerships – this is the eighth *p* and online it is so important
    Sequence – is there a sequence in your communications – credibility before visibility
        for example. How does your blog connect with twitter etc. Create a web
        around it all – and make it fit together.
    Integration
    Tools – what tools are in your strategy – simple website or 2.0?


<u>Partnerships</u>

These are increasingly important and you could become partners with people without even having to talk to anyone or ask permission.

A web ring like British Airways uses is a good example. You've booked a flight but you might need a hotel and a hire car and so there is a little partnership built into a web ring. It builds on our need to save time in looking at the options around what you are doing.

In producing your digital marketing strategy as an arts organisation we could ask – what else might people want? How can you accommodate their wider needs? These things need to be considered for the long term not the short term.

The most potent form of online marketing is probably 'affiliate marketing'. So Amazon encourage traffic to their site by encouraging and paying people to link through to them.

Cre8tivity.com exemplifies another sort of partnership which is the integration and linking into available web resources like YouTube and Google Maps which are specifically designed to encourage people to integrate them into their own sites. You don't even have to ask permission.

And taking it from the other perspective, you yourself might have something which others might want to integrate into their site. So you would need to consider how you develop a widget for your online material so that others can easily use it – a process of 'atomisation'.

So, start your own web ring, grow your own affiliate network and develop new working partners.

Sequence

- Develop credibility before raising visibility. It's all very well encouraging people to come and buy your product but if it's no good they'll be disappointed. Make sure everything is soundly working.

- Create contact strategies – sequence of contacts for different segments. Use a cutback strategy if people aren't responding – don't keep pestering them.

- Objectives – awareness before conversion – loyalty ladder – why do they come back to your site? What are you doing to engage them in a new way each time they visit? How are you moving them on?

Integration

Integration is often the weakest link. Make sure that front end is fun – but back end does the business. It's essential that the back end works well otherwise you will be undoing all the good things you've done up to that point.

[PR Smith then provided a sequence of examples of frustrating experiences on the web including the inability to find a concert and buy a ticket, buying a record, going abroad – frequently because of basic website errors, sites that don't work properly, are out of date, impossible to follow or simply bizarre]

Watch out for techies. What are these bizarre messages that come up from Norton written in another technical language? What's a 'white list'?

On the other hand, there is always room for creativity; online and offline. That should be at the forefront in the arts. Break the boundaries and create new rules.