

HOT TOPICS: 5 Top themes & questions for research project – Question 2

Q2 The BIG challenge: [*Thinking Points: If you could click your fingers and 'it' would be solved/ changed/ go away / transformed/ dispensed with, what would you invest to make that happen? What is that 'it'?*]

Here is a flavour of The Big Challenges shared by those asked:

Embracing the massive technological change that is fundamentally changing the industry. Constructively managing this disruption. It won't go away, but it would be good if the fear of it / defensiveness about it would gradually subside to enable everyone to embrace it and master this change. **The 'it' is fear.**

It's marketing and sales strategy in a broad sense. To be able to generate plenty of new business to sustain growth plans in a less onerous, more automated way ie. finding a marketing and sales track that requires less work to maintain and that just works. **That's the it.**

Big challenge is to get a shift from what producing at the moment to where we need to be.

Enable people to produce at profitable level & above + create business

Part of the process is to take excuses and roadblocks away

Transform 'it': enable people to operate their own PNL – understand how to do their job / make it work & company experience = the why

The biggest challenge for our organisation is **data**. Having the right systems in place to capture meaningful data and having the right people in place to understand the data. And finally, being agile enough to react to the data. Consumer behaviour and insights are key for a consumer facing, fast business. **That's the it.**

Constant flow of work throughout the year, to ensure staff are busy at all times. I would invest enough to get enough ROI to maintain a healthy gross margin. Also having a steady supply of reliable, knowledgeable client focused staff. **That's the it.**

If I clicked my fingers I would love someone to knock on my door and say here's 3 big projects that would help see me through the next 12 months.

Feel that it is getting work secure = 2/3 projects now for next 12 months to get breathing space to build the next pipeline of projects: to give time to get thoughts & plans together. It's like getting the boulder up the hill and nearing the summit you know there's a tipping point when the boulder will have enough momentum to roll over and need much less effort until the next hill. People will come to us. Educate people to understand. Knock on the door with 4 projects and that's sorted.

Need operational stuff to be taken off hands; there's a group resource for sales & marketing we could use however he is in high demand. Projects take too long to get over the line. Spending 80-90% pushing the boulder. Anxious in the short term. It's finding the person to join team who's excellent at sales & marketing. **That's all the its.**

I wish that there was just the one big challenge! Being a small business competing with the larger design agencies there always seems to be a multitude of challenges. **That's the it.**

A constant challenge for us is to carve our niche and be brave about it, not to become a jack of all trades design agency where the market is already saturated and very competitive.

The core of our business is in creating B2B presentations which we are very good at. Our clients often come to us with complicated, heavily content led information about a new product / solution to launch or a change to communicate or an event that they have to have the WOW factor at and it's our role to play the audience in the room, coming up with a story that will resonate with the audience and then visualise it in a clear, succinct way supported with excellent creativity – our focus is to really bring that information to life. Because we are so good at what we do in producing visually engaging content we do get asked by our

clients a lot to do other work aside from presentations - for example we are in the process of redeveloping Exeter and Norwich's Airport websites, we do a lot of video marketing for the Royal Mint and print marketing for the West of England and we equally enjoy this work. But for our general marketing purposes of who we are and what we do, we need to differentiate ourselves from other agencies in a similar space, not to get side tracked but stay true to our core offering and the more varied work will come from this. Another constant big challenge for us is to stay on top of our game with the latest technology trends and innovations that are out there as our clients look to us to be the experts in this field. Content Marketing is another BIG, BIG, BIG challenge, this is something that we haven't had to do until now as we've relied a lot on repeat business so we are a little behind the curve on this one. We've always seen it as a nice thing to do, and something that the bigger agencies have done but moving forward we need to treat it as a key revenue stream and prioritise it weekly. It's a scary fact that your brand's reputation is pretty much online and 91% of B2B clients look at your web presence in their initial search.

