



How To Brand And Market Your Firm To Attract “A” Class Clients And “A” Class People

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About the Authors ...

Ryll Burgin, Co-Founder & Director of Sales & Marketing
10x Limited

Ryll Burgin has been growing small and large companies for the past 17 years. Her background experience includes growing up, literally, in her own family's businesses; holding a Bachelors Degree in Business; being responsible for the marketing of up to 120 companies at one time and leading teams of marketing consultants working with every kind of business you could imagine - from florists, to manufacturers, to professionals, to builders, to plumbers, to restaurants, hotels, hospitals, property developers, real estate agents, software companies and many more.

While in the US, Ryll worked with Paul Dunn of Results Accountants Systems and developed a knowledge base product called 'Businesses Getting Results', 2,000 pages of marketing, management and business development strategies for Accountants to share with their clients in an effort to grow their clients' businesses and add more value. 'BGR' as it became known, was delivered via accountants all over the world to the SME market. Ryll went on to become the Global Brand Manager for 'Results Accountants Network', a branded membership program that included BGR, unique access to a worldwide online community of accountants and was designed to promote a new breed of accountants around the world. At that time, under Ryll's sales and marketing programs, 'RAN' became the largest independent network of accountants around the world.

Ryll continued her success in the US by becoming a 'Brand Strategist' with highly successful branding agency VIA, launching new brands, new products and new companies during the dot com boom in San Francisco and revitalizing the existing brands of \$400M and \$1B enterprises in various industry sectors. Her work took her from San Francisco to New York to Portland Maine, to Boston, Columbus, Ohio and Orlando, Florida. On her return to Australia through Australian advertising agency, De Pasquale, Ryll has since brought that international experience to some well known Australian brands such as Mathers, Mincom, The Myer Centre, Tourism Queensland and Corporate Express.

Ryll also founded stepUP Foundation in 2002 - a non profit with the purpose of 'shifting the future of humanity' by educating and exciting teenagers about what's possible for the futures in business and in life. Under Ryll's leadership, stepUP has worked with 7,400 teens and counting and as a successful brand, has expanded across Australia and New Zealand and has recently launched in the UK.

As Co-Founder & Director of Sales & Marketing for 10x, responsible for all 10x branding and marketing material – Ryll is our own in-house branding and marketing guru. Enjoy!

Rob Nixon, CEO & Founder RobNixon Pty Ltd, Co-Founder & Chairman 10x Limited

In 1987 Rob subscribed to his first “Business Development” program and read his first “Personal Development” book (Think & Grow Rich). Since that book he has devoured over 300 business and personal development books. He has also consumed countless articles, tapes, CDs, DVDs, manuals and seminars. And his journey hasn't stopped yet.

As his current Coaching Club clients – accountants one and all – will tell you, Rob is very action-oriented and fiercely committed to anything he does including seeing to it that all his clients produce outstanding business results.

In 1993 (after a number of sales & marketing roles) Rob started presenting seminars, where he discovered accountants and his passion for the 'Products of the Mind' industry (aka intellectual property). Since then he has immersed himself in assisting the Accounting profession and has become arguably one of THE leading advisors to the profession in the world.

Since then he has extensively researched how accountants run their businesses in 5 countries. He has developed and co-developed products for the profession – primarily software and training programs. He has been heavily involved in 3 businesses – most notably 'Results Accountants Systems' that provided business development products and training to accounting firms on 3 continents and 'Business Fitness' a software provider for the industry co-founded by Rob in 2001, now serving some 400 accounting firms across Australia and New Zealand. He even spent 9 months in an accounting firm to see how it worked – or didn't!

He has personally turned around a service-based business from a \$340K loss to a \$2.5m profit in 15 months (doubling revenues at the same time) and has helped hundreds of accounting firms grow and develop their businesses, and consequently their clients' businesses.

Rob is also the original creator of 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of the Accounting Profession Report', a report outlining the state of play and benchmarking of firms within the Australian and New Zealand accounting profession. This body of work – which is now owned by Business Fitness gave Rob first hand knowledge of the opportunities and challenges facing accounting firms.

Since selling his interest in Business Fitness Rob has been testing and fine tuning the Coaching Club model since late 2005 by operating 10 clubs personally.



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Rob sees the accounting profession as the primary "trusted advisor" to the business community and has a personal mission to help accountants be much more proactive with their clients.

It has been Rob's own success in offering 'Coaching Clubs' in his business that has been the inspiration for 10x Limited and the leverage Rob's model offers accounting firms.

Rob sees 10x as the fulfillment of a vision: to provide a vehicle for accountants to better leverage their time, increase profitability and make a difference in their local business community so they once again are returned to the status of 'trusted advisor'. Rob is also the creator of the 10x Coaching Club™ - the core business offering of 10x Limited.

Preface

Before we begin to explore how you brand and market your firm to attract “A” class clients and “A” class people we first have to address this common mistake being made in the accounting profession right now that sounds like:

“I don't want any more clients ... I can't find good people to take care of the ones I've got!”

The reality is branding doesn't just stop at clients, of course it's about attracting “A” class team members as well. One of the biggest issues you face in the accounting profession today is finding great people as you deal with an apparent shortage of people. We take the view that's actually not accurate – there are people out there, they're just not working for you right now! Given that, branding and marketing couldn't be more critical.

We say that because in our experience, the reality is that those firms that do not have a skills or people shortage in their office have and are attracting lots of people to come and work for them simply because they are better at branding and marketing.

They understand their brand must appeal to the future leaders of their business. They understand that today's graduates or even Senior Accountants aren't going to leave a current firm to go to a 'same same ho hum' environment – in that case it's better for the potential employee to 'hedge their bets' so to speak and stay right where they are. On the other hand, we know potential team members will leave a comfortable position for a firm that is going somewhere, a firm that is progressive, a firm that will include them in a future.

These days, the generation of people you are marketing to as potential employees are quite savvy in business and even on branding. They are a generation that has been heavily marketed to and they know a lot about brands – the brands they like, don't like, the brand characteristics they like or don't like etc. As a result, you have got to be

just as attractive to them in every brand touch point as you do clients. Remember, these people have a choice where they go. Here's what Rob Nixon has to say about that: “Many team members within accounting firms right now are saying "okay, I am the commodity here. I am in the box seat here as potential employee. I am going to find out which firm suits me the best; which one has the best look and feel about it, the best environment, the best equipment, the most interesting work, the most interesting clients and how they will work with me" - certainly pay scale is a consideration but not the main one. So the talent you are looking for are currently looking for accounting firms that are branded and marketed in the right way AND that brand will attract a certain type of person.

It's interesting, the other week I was in an Institute of Chartered Accountants meeting. Once a year they call us accounting profession advisors in to do an Advisory Board on them and all the advisors were clear that those firms that are better at running their accounting businesses - common term is "practice management", I prefer it as business management - those firms that are better at marketing, better at building teams, and have created a better environment and surroundings, don't have a people issue.”

Recently, the team at 10x has been doing a lot of work with the accounting firms that have come on board with 10x and reviewing their brands. As we've reviewed each firms' brand foundation – Intention Vision Mission – through to Brand Personality and more, in detail with the partners of those firms, approximately 60% have discovered that their brand does not express what they want to say about their business in the market NOR does it speak to their ideal “A” class clients or “A” class team members.

Any accountant who takes on 10x are already entrepreneurial thinkers and yet they have, from what they have learnt via 10x about branding and marketing, taken the view: "okay, wow, I now know we are missing major opportunities here because our brand isn't speaking to our target audience, isn't speaking to our ideal “A” class clients and isn't speaking to the type of “A” class team members we want to attract. What we want to communicate is clearly not what our brand communicates.”

Capacity issues = under serviced clients with fees gone begging.

Of course, the easiest and fastest way to grow your brand and your accounting firm is obvious.

Visit 10 to 20 clients per month, per partner every month and talk to them about their business, about their needs, at an uncharged meeting. Much more business will come from that for your accounting firm – including more referrals to new clients.

But, and this is a big but ...



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... You need capacity to do that.

Rob Nixon has this to say on capacity:

“You either get capacity by hiring some additional people or you get capacity by decreasing the actual time on a job. Frankly, there's so much excess capacity in every accounting firm I meet it's shocking. It may not feel like it right now but believe it or not, there is massive excess capacity in the workforce you have right now. A lot of accounting firms think "we don't have capacity, we can't do these marketing things – that's simply not true.”

At the same time, many agree that they should be servicing their clients better – “Yes, we know our clients are under-served. Yes, we know some of them would buy more from us. And yes, we know we have got a duty of care, but how do we do it? We haven't got capacity.”

There are a number of reasons why a typical accounting firm doesn't have capacity. Rob Nixon goes on to say:

“First of all, the whole work flow process is archaic and it's not through-put efficient, in so far as we need to think of capacity as faster through-put and less time on the job to do it. Some firms over-engineer their jobs, with heavy duty working papers, where it's not needed, and many firms start jobs before they have all the information from the clients in, so improved systems can address those issues immediately.

For example, systems via a paperless office will improve capacity and improve through-put so that we have got the time to spend with our clients and marketing.

Next, accounting firms do standard ads for people – nothing stands out, nothing speaks to the potential team member in a way that appeals to them. All the recruitment ads out there look the same and typically get the same result – a poor one.

But all that said, how to you really free up some serious time?

Let me share a huge secret, that every time I've seen it implemented causes an unforeseen breakthrough for the accounting firm in capacity and then the ability to better service clients AND generate more fees as a result ...

You see, what I have discovered in my work with accounting firms to free up capacity so that marketing can kick in place, so that we can actually service our clients better, is that on a daily basis most accountants are spending about an hour and a half to two hours per day per person doing administration tasks associated with the accounting job; not accounting tasks, but admin tasks associated with the accounting job.

When that's the case - and we have done time and motion analysis to prove this figure: admin on accounting jobs

takes approximately an hour and a half per person per day - there is a serious opportunity sitting right there.

Let's work through the numbers.

If your team includes say ten accountants - that's 15 hours at five days per week at 50 weeks for the year - then all of a sudden you have got 3750 capacity hours that are either getting charged or not charged in the accounting firm right now. Two people, two additional administrative people can handle all of that and free up nearly 4,000 hours of capacity to actually service clients better. And this is where - with better work flow systems and through-put processes, a paperless office, electronic working papers and getting all the information from the clients to begin with - you start to free up time.

When I've done this exact step with firms I've worked with – i.e. we've gone out and found admin people (not accountants mind you – admin people – typically much easier to find and cheaper too!) and implemented what I'm talking about here – they've run out of work within 6 to 9 months! If you are going to do this, you must start marketing immediately.

Of course, to free up capacity even further it may also be time to review your client list – A through D's and take the brave step of letting go of your “D” class clients. Think about it this way: they are not your ideal “A” class clients and they typically don't pay well, are difficult to deal with and frankly, take valuable time away from your better class of clients, many of whom are typically being under serviced now. There are several ways to remove “D” class clients –

- 1) sell them on to a smaller competing firm or
- 2) simply increase your price. Many will self select out of your firm and for those that don't at least you'll be getting paid for your efforts!

So now we have that all cleared up let's explore branding and marketing and how to improve your firm's significantly!

Confusion reigns.

Frankly, most people are confused about branding.

For instance, many people think branding simply equals a logo.

Not so.

Others confuse branding – the expression of the essence of your business and its qualities combined – with marketing i.e. generating interest and enquiry.

Not so.

Worse yet, many business owners don't think branding applies to them because they are in a small business or perhaps like you, a partner in an accounting firm. Many



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take the attitude “branding doesn’t apply to me – that’s for big businesses like Coke and Nike who have squillions to spend” when in fact, that couldn’t be further from the truth.

Others view it very simplistically: “why would we need to worry about a brand? I’ve got enough to do as it is, running my team, trying to find good people and keeping up with my clients’ work as it is ... we don’t want any more clients, branding is not relevant for us.”

(More on that shortly.)

Either way, branding DOES APPLY to any businesses large or small, yours included. Just because, as a small to medium size business owner of an accounting firm, you don’t have the multi-million dollar budgets the national and global companies do doesn’t mean you don’t have a brand.

You do.

And just because you’re taking the view “I don’t want any more clients” right now doesn’t mean your brand is not – this instant – impacting your ability to attract the right kind of clients – your “A” class clients and for some firms more importantly right now, the right kind of team members – “A” class people.

It is.

You see, whether you know it or not, whether you relate to it this way or not, every accounting firm has a brand. Your firm has a brand. And, you are communicating that brand every minute of the day, in fact, it’s going on right now even as you read this report.

The question is then - what is your brand?

And more importantly - what does your brand say to the people that matter most – your “A” class clients and potential clients – and critically, your potential “A” class people?

What is branding anyway?

Put simply branding is the culmination of and combination of all the elements of your business expressed. We call these elements ‘brand touch points’. Ultimately, via these touch points your brand sums up and communicates everything there is to say about your business to your target audience and others.

Given that, your logo then is one small piece of your brand. It’s what we call the ‘visual identifier’ of your brand. Essentially branding is far more than just your logo, in fact everything you do throughout your business expresses your brand.

A brand touch point is a point where your market ‘touches’ your brand, for example, when someone calls your accounting firm, that’s a brand touch point. What happens

on that call determines the client’s or potential client’s experience of your brand and speaks volumes to them about your brand and your business.

As we talk about branding here it’s important to remember branding is not just about attracting great clients and improving the positioning of your firm in your local marketplace.

Branding is also critical – absolutely critical – to attracting new staff.

Let’s imagine a potential client, client or possible team member calls and someone answers with “G’day, Bill here” vs. “Good morning, Smith & Smith Accountants, this is Michelle speaking”, they’ve had two very different brand experiences. The client or potential client is experiencing the brand right then and there. (In fact, even if they call your office more than once and people answer the phone in different ways, your clients and prospects will have a view on your business and your brand via that experience as well. Consistency of experience creates certainty – so you need to make sure that brand touch points like answering the phone are managed and systemized to best reflect your brand consistently.)

For a prospective team member of your firm, the first place they will often go to find out more about your firm is your website (or lack there of), and they will get an impression of your brand right there and then. They will begin to determine the type of firm yours is, what your firm is all about and where it is headed, so when we are talking about brand touch points, it’s not just about attracting new clients, it’s about getting better at attracting great people as well.

Brand touch points continue through every area of your business. For instance, how your office is designed and looks is also part of your brand; the décor, the soft and hard furnishings, the types of chairs for example, the colours you use, whether they get offered coffee, tea, orange juice or a selection expresses your brand. Even down to how a client’s particular accountant’s office looks matters. If they walk in and there’s stacks of paper on the desk or piled up on the floor (we call this ‘Random Stack Technology’!), or post it notes all over everything and stale coffee sitting on the desk - that expresses your brand immediately and in a way that’s not positive in the mind of your client or prospect.

Other brand touch points of course include your stationery, your website, your written letters, the reports you provide, the way you conduct client meetings, whether you return phone calls within 24 hours (or not), even your invoices all express your brand.

At 10x and Rob Nixon we’ve heard stories and you may have experienced it yourself, of a client leaving simply because of how they were treated by the receptionist face



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to face or over the phone – in that moment the client or prospect experiences your brand and chooses “yes” or “no”.

Here’s what accounting profession expert Rob Nixon has to say about it:

“Very few accounting firms actually see the need for marketing or branding because they are typically busy already and that’s a huge mistake. One of the things I recommend is to walk outside your office and then walk through your office and take a good hard look from the front door to the back door and everything in between, because everything that happens in that firm spells volumes about the values and the brand qualities of that firm.

You know, this is my 15th year working on and with accounting firms to improve performance, profits and service to their clients, and I have seen accounting firms where the place looks, for want of a better word, sloppy. Frankly, the environment itself is messy, so consequently what that says to the client or the prospect is simple: these guys do sloppy work.

It’s important to understand the client isn’t an accountant, they don’t know enough about accounting to really be able to tell if you’re a great accountant or not so they will make value assessments based on what you as an accountant might see as superficial things. Do they get treated well when they come? Is the phone answered in a professional manner? Do they get phone calls returned? Does the documentation they receive look good? Is it appropriate, is it professional? All of those things shape how confident and comfortable the client or prospects feels with that accounting firm.

The same applies to potential team members.

Ultimately, if you don't have all of those things right, you will be missing out on opportunities because people will be not buying from you or not staying with you because your brand doesn't speak to them in a way that works.”

Your brand then is literally everything from your logo including the colours and fonts you use, to how your team answers the phone, to what your signage looks like, to the colour of your carpets, to how your team dress, to the way your office is designed, to the experience the clients have with you; to the work you actually do for them, to whether they can get thank you letters or contact each quarter; to whether you speak in a language they understand, in the written form or verbally and much more - all of it is your brand.

What’s the key to branding then?

While that might sound like a lot to manage the key to branding is simple really.

The key or what we call the 10x X-Factor to branding comes down to one thing:

Your Target Audience

Who is your target audience?

And then, what do they want?

You must be crystal clear on the answers to these two questions - who your target audience is and what they want - or you will simply be flying blind, hoping the right people show up as clients and as team members. Worse yet, without that clarity you will make the common mistake of trying to appeal to everyone all the time which never works.

Typically, for many accounting firms an “A” class client is a high wealth individual or a small to medium-sized business. From a staff point of view, typically it’s a senior accountant who can take some pressure off the partners or a new graduate you can groom through the ranks ...

Critically though, you must take that summation a step further to where it’s not based on a generic statement like those above or simply your opinion about who they are and what they want – you must actually find out.

For instance, you could do an analysis of your top 20 clients – average fee per year, list of services typically used, and common preferences or issues they face in the lives or businesses or needs etc.

You could then take that a massive step further by analyzing other elements like their average ages, marital status, hobbies or leisure activities e.g. rugby vs league or AFL, what kind of cars they drive, suburbs they live in, schools their children attend etc. and start to truly profile who they are, what they need and where they are in business and in life.

You could do the same for your ideal team members.

You see, when you can identify those aspects you’ll be better able to ensure your brand touch points are appropriate for your clients needs and wants (doing so will have them stick like glue to you) AND you’ll be better able to find more of them in the marketplace. For instance, you could then market your brand where more of these people are likely to socialize, live or educate their children. The same applies to team members.

So then the only key to whether your brand is on the money or not comes down to just this one thing and this one thing only: your target audience. The most important



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question then is, who do you want as your ideal clients, your “A” class clients? Who are the “A” class clients for you? And then, what do they want and need? And from there, who is an “A” class team member for you? And what do they want and need?

Building and reviewing your brand ...

Given a brand expresses everything you want to say about your business to your target audience, clearly, it’s critical to get right.

Unfortunately most accounting firms, like most small to medium sized business just start work without much thought about the brand. In other words, we get going with the business of our firm and don’t take the time out to think about what we want our brand to say to the marketplace. And yet, it’s critical to do so.

Using this report, let’s now review how you build a brand, the critical elements etc. and as we do that you can review if your current brand is a true reflection of what you’d like the market to think of your firm. You’ll also begin to see if your current brand and brand touch points are truly a match for your ideal “A” class clients and “A” class people and what they want in an accounting firm ...



There are various aspects to work through to develop a brand. To begin, we say the 10x x-Factor for a brand is its foundation – your ‘Intention’, ‘Vision’ and ‘Mission’ for your accounting firm.

There’s a lot of confusion in the marketplace about Vision and Mission Statements – what they are, what the difference between them is, what they’re for and how to use them best, etc.

At 10x, we take that one step further adding an ‘Intention’ and clarifying Vision and Mission further. The points below outline each and provide 10x’s Intention Vision Mission as an example of the foundation of our brand.

Brand & Business Intention

Your ‘Intention’ is your business’ reason for being, if you will. If you ask most partners “What is the intention of this business, what is it here to do?” Most will answer “to make money” however, that’s hardly ever enough to keep

you, as the business owner, truly inspired about your firm. Instead, there has to be other elements at play – making money is one, others typically though include “to have a better lifestyle” and lastly “to do a great job of helping clients do better in their businesses”. When you take a close look, you will probably find for you that it’s far more than just making money; however most of your clients and your team wouldn’t know about your other intentions and therefore be inspired by them. Your Intention is a rallying point for you and your team. Here’s our 10x Limited Intention ...

10x Limited Intention

Why 10x Limited exists, what the business is out to accomplish overall:

- To expand the profits and business asset value of at least 150,000 businesses across Australia and New Zealand
- To create a successful business model that adds value to all participants while building our business asset value at the same time
- To fulfil stepUP Foundation’s mission of “shifting the future of humanity in a single generation” in the Australia and New Zealand regions.

Brand & Business Vision

Your Vision is the size and scope of the business e.g. global, national, regional, local; revenue and profitability levels. This lays out where you’re business is heading, provides clarity about that for your team and gives them a future to focus on. It can also be quite inspiring and relevant to your clients and potential clients. Here’s 10x’s...

10x Limited Vision

The planned size and scope of 10x Limited:

- An entity operating across Australia and New Zealand generating (excluding the initial sale of Franchise territories) approximately \$17M in Gross Revenues and \$4M in profits per annum
- Reaching and positively making a difference to approximately 12,000 business owners per year, their staff and families
- THE brand for the SME market, known as “the business performance specialists”
- Have a minimum Business Asset value of \$24M AUD with the opportunity of going private (ASSOB) and or then public (ASX).



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Brand & Business Mission

Your Mission is how you fulfill that Intention and Vision each and everyday. This is your team’s day to day focus and they can use this to make decisions and stay focused on the job at hand.

10x Limited Mission

The day to day focus of the 10x Limited team

- Attracting 10x Entrepreneurs/Business Owners – our shareholders – who are a match for our Intention and Vision, committed to making a difference, living passionately and profitably, willing to bring their professional skill, strategic thinking and heart to our network
- Doing whatever it takes to ensure our 10x Entrepreneurs/Business Owners are winning the game – being successful, adding value, expanding their own skills and thrilled to be part of 10x Limited
- Attracting Business clients who are committed to expanding their businesses, their knowledge, their leadership style and their ability to produce results
- In partnership with our 10x Entrepreneurs/Business Owners, we fulfil our collective client’s visions, increase profitability and the value of their business asset. We positively impact who they are as leaders in their businesses, their communities, their families and their lives.

To give you another example of a powerful intention Vision and Mission here’s one that shares stepUP Foundation’s Intention Vision and Mission, 10x’s charity of choice. (10x donates 10% of profits and \$10,000 from every franchise sale to support stepUP’s work with Australia and New Zealand’s future leaders – our teens - some of whom are underprivileged and at risk. To find out more go to <http://www.stepupfoundation.com/partners>).



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“stepUP: shifting the future of humanity in a single generation...”

stepUP Intentions

The first intention of stepUP Foundation is to educate and excite teenagers about the possibilities for their futures in business and in life i.e. that anything is possible and to deliver on key outcomes of creating empowerment, self worth, inspiration, renewed strength, tools, strategies and fun. They literally shift their future from what’s probable or likely to what’s possible as a result of participating.

The second intention of stepUP Foundation is for any adults associated with stepUP such as Foundation Members, Volunteers, Coaches, Speakers, even Suppliers and Sponsors to have breakthroughs in their own lives, create new opportunities for themselves or their businesses, learn new skills, establish new relationships and discover new possibilities professionally and personally.

Lastly, the final and fundamental intention of stepUP Foundation – what we’re ultimately here for - is to contribute to world peace. We do that by having Teens – who are our future leaders (the ones who will determine our futures as nations and a planet, our economic stability, world peace and more in the years to come) realize that someone from different circumstances than their own, is really not so different after all, and their job, after having their own lives work, is to make a difference out there and stand for a world that works for everyone. And this is where the future shifts for all of us ...

stepUP Vision

stepUP is THE leading youth organization and resource in the world, operating on all 6 continents by the year 2013, each year reaching hundreds of thousands, later millions of young people around the world.

Given stepUP’s size, scope and success it has the ability to contribute to other programs and charities globally as well as continuing the expansion of stepUP.

Expansion into New Zealand and the United Kingdom was achieved in 2006/7. Further expansion is planned across Australia, New Zealand and the UK in 2008. International interest is mounting. stepUP is particularly keen to go to countries or areas where there are significant barriers to communities working together such as Palestine and Israel, North and South Ireland and many more regions around the world where the youth are the future and yet are constrained by the past.

stepUP Mission

Day to day our purpose is to educate and inspire youth, particularly those who are underprivileged or at risk, about the possibilities in business and in life. We do that via exceptionally well delivered 2 day events, an online community that is second to none, ongoing programs, products and communication with participants. stepUP Foundation aims to go beyond what is considered ordinary or "good". We strive to give participants a full blown, thought altering and rewarding 'experience'. An experience that is for most, unlike anything they've ever participated in before. At stepUP 2002 our founding event, it became known as a 'Sliding Door' moment. This watershed in the minds of our participants – whether Coaches or Teens - is what we're out to create - something where they know undeniably in their hearts and minds that what comes after, will never be the same as what came before ...

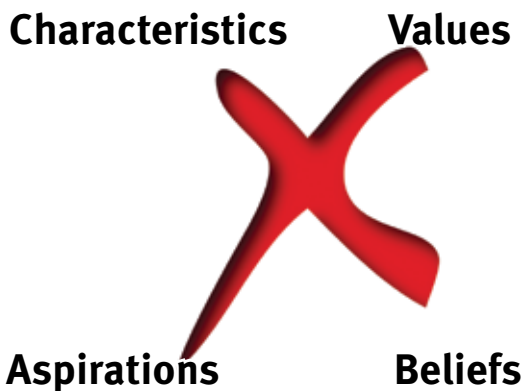
Given your Intention, Vision and Mission lays the foundation for your brand, take a few moments now to draft your Intention, Vision and Mission or review what you already have in place.



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What’s your brand like? Conservative and solid or fresh and innovative?

Once the Intention, Vision and Mission are set, its time to look at your brand personality. Just like people, a business and your brand has certain elements, almost personality traits, that must be considered. At 10x, we suggest the X-Factor for your brand’s personality is made up of the following elements:



Your brand today has a current ‘personality’ but the question is this: is that ‘personality’- made up of your brand’s characteristics, values, aspirations and beliefs - what you want? And even more importantly does that ‘personality’ appeal to your ideal “A” class clients and “A” class people? If the answer is no on both counts or even on one, you must refresh your brand to better suit what you are committed to as a firm and what better appeals to your market.

Brand Characteristics

Brand Characteristics reflect the qualities you want to express across your business via your logo and all brand touch points. To give you a sense of it here’s some of 10x’s:

- Intelligent
- Bankable
- Strong/Powerful
- Sophisticated
- Adaptable
- Creative
- Stand Out

If you look, you’ll see our distinctive name and logo design, express many of those characteristics in a moment.



Now combined with our tagline we fulfill on those characteristics further:



To give you a better sense of this, let’s review your brand characteristics for a moment. As you read this section, make sure you have your business card in front of you so you can review your logo and characteristics as we move through this example.

Let’s use two firms as examples and review how their brand characteristics determine their branding and marketing style so you can get a better sense of the characteristics you brand is expressing right now.

FIRM A Brand Characteristics

- Conservative
- Solid
- Trustworthy
- Professional
- Credible

FIRM B Brand Characteristics

- Innovative
- Creative
- Thinkers
- Vibrant
- Entrepreneurial

Now how do those characteristics influence the branding of these firms – the logo and all other brand touch points?

Let’s start with the logo.

To begin, colours, shapes and fonts all speak to us.

Right now, if you think about the colour maroon - what immediately comes to mind?

What does that colour express to you? Typically, dark maroon expresses conservative or established. Dark blue, gold, dark purple and dark green all express similar characteristics, whereas, if we said lime green, typically you would think young, fresh, new.

Now try yellow. You might think bright and happy. Red is usually equated with passion and power. So you can see that the colours in your logo, even your colour scheme at the office, expresses certain characteristics.

Those characteristics need to match your firm and how you want to be seen and what is most going to appeal to your target audience. So if you want to be seen as a conservative accounting firm that is solid, been around



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for many years, experts etc., you typically want to be using conservative sorts of colours. If you want to be seen as an up and coming, fresh, young, innovative, not your traditional accounting firm, a firm that does things differently, then you wouldn't go anywhere near those conservative colours.

The colours, shapes and fonts you use to create your logo speaks to and appeals to certain types of people. For instance, people who perhaps are very established high net worth individuals may want conservative and safe and so will be more attracted to a conservative/safe visual identifier. Conversely, that may not appeal to people who are looking for a firm who is more entrepreneurial.

So the question comes down to, again, who do you want on your team as staff members? Who do you want as your clients? Who really are your “A” class clients for you and what are they like?

Brand Values

Brand Values are those things that are important within your firm. You could ask yourself and your partners “what values do we say are really important to this business and brand or to each of us personally?” (You can extend this question to any team members as well.) At 10x when we asked ourselves that question, and what’s important to us was and remains very clear:

What we value at 10x:

- Confidence & Energy
- Professionalism, Productivity & Passion
- Team
- Integrity, Loyalty, Fairness & Respect
- Growth, Wealth & Abundance
- Contribution & Possibility Thinking

Brand Beliefs

Brand Beliefs are what your brand stands for or believes in ... How you would establish yours is to ask yourself and your partners (and or team members) “what beliefs or commitments do we, this business and brand hold dear and follow through on as we make decisions moving forward about our roles, our future, our team and our clients?”

Here’s the 10x example:

Our Brand Beliefs – what we believe in at 10x:

- We believe in delivering value to anyone and everyone who our brand touches – our team, our franchisees, their clients and even, their local community.
- We believe that creating significant wealth for all involved, combined with very real life balance, has enormous value for our collective families and communities. Freedom for all is what we are out to create.

- We believe in having absolutely everybody win.
- We believe growing profits and cashflow, increasing the value of our shareholders’ and clients’ business assets and planning for the future are all critical.
- We believe in providing certainty and confidence for our shareholders and clients. We believe powerful strategy will prevail.
- We believe in constantly expanding our own expertise so that we bring new and powerful strategies to the marketplace and, have our brand and our clients remain at the leading edge.
- We are committed to fulfilling our client’s vision – for their life and business - in reality.
- We believe in doing things differently, creating a “Wow” factor and adding fun and adventure into business.
- We believe providing people with access to growth via personal and professional expansion is worthwhile and life changing.
- We believe in acknowledging performance, celebrating and appreciating achievements, and creating a sense of belonging for our team, shareholders and our clients.
- We believe in our team.
- We believe in contribution – giving something back to make a difference.
- We believe in stepUP Foundation. We believe, like them, that teens the world over are our future leaders, and it’s our job to educate and excite them about what’s possible for their futures in business and in life.
- We believe in what’s possible – really – being possible! What you think you can create.

Brand Aspirations

Brand Aspirations point to where you want your business and your brand to be in the future. You could ask yourselves and your team “who do we want to be when we grow up? When this business is all said and done how do we want to be thought of or known as?” For 10x it’s straightforward:

Our Brand Aspirations – what we aspire 10x to be:

- THE Market Leader
- Known
- Inspirational
- Innovative

A Common Mismatch ...

A Brand Strategist’s job is to make sure the brand you are working on and its values etc. is aligned with and correlated to what the market says about that business or brand. When working with billion dollar companies and multi-million dollar companies many would say ‘Our company stands for x y and z’ except the market would clearly disagree and say ‘No you’re a, b and c’. Typically, that was not where the company wanted to be positioned but was where it stood in reality in the eyes of



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the customers and potential customers. The challenge is then how to get those two to meet – how to bring what the company or indeed your accounting firm says about itself and what your market says about you to ‘line up’ if you will. Many of the accounting firms who have stepped up to 10x are finding that their brand values, what they want their brand to stand for in their local market, is clearly not being communicated in a way that works with the market having not heard of them, or if they have, having a different impression of the firm that the partners would like.

Just like them, how you want your firm to be perceived and how the market - your local target audience of ideal “A” class clients and “A” class people – actually perceives it, are critical to bring together. We say this because typically, accounting firms have a mismatch almost immediately because:

- A) many partners bought into the firm with an already established name, brand and logos as well as internal systems that impact the customers experience of the brand
- B) many simply went with the industry practice of using surnames and firm names
- C) most did not review or identify who their ideal target audience and clients are and what they want (or do the same for ideal team members)
- D) most did not stop and do the work outlined here to create a strong brand and ...
- E) most are unaware of brand touch points and how critical they are in expressing your brand to your clients and prospects and potential team members.

Once you’re clear about who your target audience is and what they want, everything about your brand - from the foundation of your Intention, Vision, Mission to brand characteristics, values, beliefs, aspirations, colour and shape of your logo, to the way you answer your phone, to your website has to be related to your target audience and how you want them to see you.

Many accounting firms have not reviewed their brand since inception. This is critical to your ongoing success and shouldn’t be neglected.

Your target audience is key NOT your opinion.

When you are reviewing your accounting firm brand and all the elements described earlier in this report, you must focus on your target audience. Who are our ideal clients? What do those “A” class clients and “A” class people want? What do they really want from us? And how would we appeal to those people? How do we want them to see us? Ask these questions versus reviewing your brand based on your personal opinion or preferences.

You see, sometimes what we like or personally prefer is simply irrelevant and here’s why.

You are not branding and marketing for you.

You are branding and marketing to attract your target audience, your “A” class clients and “A” class people.

For example, you might not like the colour aqua however aqua expresses fresh and young – if those are brand qualities you want your firm to project - aqua might be the way to go!

Another example is even simpler – you might not like opening a letter with ‘Hello John’ instead of ‘Dear John’ except ‘Hello John’ is friendlier and younger in attitude than ‘Dear John’.

What we personally prefer may not communicate what we really want and need to communicate to those “A” class clients and “A” class people to have your firm appeal to them. It’s really more important then, that they like it and they respond to each of your brand touch points versus your own opinion.

The 10x X-Factor required to maximize your brand and have it most appeal to your target audiences is simple. You must have:

1. An in-depth knowledge of and about your target audience, including their wants, needs, business and lifestyle
2. You must offer value based on that knowledge to that target audience
3. You must design for e.g. logo, brochures etc to appeal to that target audience (they’re likes and dislikes verses your own)
4. And you must communicate and speak to that target audience over the phone, face to face and in writing, in a way that matches and again appeals to that target audience.

Knowledge

Value

Factor

Speak to...

Design for...



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Next Steps ... A change is as good as a holiday!

Given the brand equity in accounting firms that have been established for sometime, changing your firm name can be costly, a huge distraction for the partners and not achieve what you want. In the process, you also lose whatever brand equity you have established in your area via your marketing done to date.

A brand ‘freshen-up’ however, is highly recommended. Use this report to check where your brand is at and where you’d like it to be ... If you haven’t already done so, take the time to explore your Intention Vision and Mission. From there, consider your brand personality – characteristics, values, beliefs and aspirations. Be sure to take the time to research your ideal target audience from a client and team point of view. You must also review some of your systems and operating practices such as your customer service standards, that all impact the client and team experience of your business via your touch points and ultimately your brand.

From there, review your marketing as an expression of your brand – again designed to build your profile and attract the right clients and team members to you.

Lift your brand profile massively via cost effective marketing.

Once you have your brand created or in most firms cases ‘freshened up’ your job is to lift the profile of your firm via increased marketing activity.

When you look at the marketing of huge companies they spend funds on what’s called ‘brand marketing’ where they’ll create, for example, artistic ads with ‘lots of white space’, potentially their name and one line. This is not the kind of marketing that works for accounting firms (or your small business clients). It’s frankly, a waste of money. In a small to medium size business your marketing must actually begin the sales process – it must generate enough interest to make the phone ring or it hasn’t been worth your investment.

The key then is to create marketing that is leveraged – does more with less – is impactful and reaches your ideal target audiences directly.

And, to be incredibly effective at lifting your firm’s profile and attracting the right type of “A” class clients and “A” class people to your firm, you must be marketing via many channels at once.

A common mistake of most accounting firms is that they simply don’t market or if they do, they may only work within one or two marketing channels or mediums for example, sponsoring the local soccer team and placing a Yellow Pages ad.

Here’s a list of some of the ways you can grow your profile and generate more effective marketing results in attracting clients and team members:

- Referral System e.g. a structured way that clients refer other potential clients to you; structured way for existing team to refer colleagues to you e.g. \$1000 signing bonus if a colleague joins the firm
- Endorsed Marketing e.g. a legal firm or brokerage house endorses your firm to all their business clients
- Direct Mail/Email Campaigns e.g. to a list of local businesses over a certain size, or to individuals
- Website Marketing e.g. enter your details to download this free report valued at \$xxx.00
- Newsletters e.g. create a newsletter that adds value to your clients and builds a relationship between your firm, your team and your clients and prospects.
- Public Relations e.g. press releases to your local paper announcing innovations, wins or providing value to the local business market
- Advertising e.g. local paper, Yellow Pages, Sensis
- Speaking Events e.g. send the partners out to speak at Rotary and Lions Club meetings,
- Chamber of Commerce meetings, Events etc.
- Seminars & Teleseminars e.g. market a value added event where you provide information on certain key topics relevant to your ideal target audience and “A” class clients, invite your existing clients to attend and ‘bring a friend’. For staff, invite your staff and targeted potential staff to a cocktail party, give an overview of what benefits your firm has over others while building relationships
- Sponsorship of local sports teams or events, however this must be supported by additional marketing, client nurturing strategies etc to have any value.

And many, many more.

The question is then how to you make sure all of those marketing activities are successful?

The Secret ‘Top 6’ is the Key.

One of the things we regularly deal with at 10x when talking with accounting firms about the 10x opportunity, is the partner’s concerns from the past. Specifically that the marketing they’ve done in the past to their own clients and prospects has never worked, why should 10x’s be any different?

For instance they say things like: "Hang on a minute. We have marketed to our clients before. We have tried to sell them business development before. We have tried to invite them to seminars on financial planning or Super - we have put on value added events and we can only get 10 people there when we really wanted 200 – it has just never worked. So how come the 10x marketing stuff actually works and why will this be different?"



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The answer is 1) we know our marketplace and we’ve done the research into who our ideal clients are and what they want. And 2) the “Top 6 Elements of Successful Marketing Campaigns” and our application of them in almost all marketing pieces ensures success.

You can apply these ‘Top 6’ to your accounting firm and lift your firm’s marketing effectiveness dramatically. Essentially, every marketing piece you do, whether it’s an ad or a letter, really has to have these six elements in it for maximum success.

Interestingly, we train the accounting firms that have stepped up to 10x on these ‘Top 6’ and those who’ve taken them on board have seen their accounting firm’s marketing improve dramatically. (At 10x, we are very committed that the accounting firms grow as a result of their association with 10x and our exclusive IP.)

The ‘Top 6’ elements in short are outlined below.

6 Keys to Success

1 x Headline

2 x WII-FM

3 x Offer

4 x Guarantee

5 x Graphics & Layout

6 x Response Device / Call to Action

While we can’t give away all our secrets here, let’s review each briefly ...

1. Headline

If you look at the advertising of most accounting firms, let’s say their Yellow Pages advertising or advertising in the local paper, what do most accounting firms put at the top of their ads?

That’s right.

The name of their firm.

That is not a headline.

At 10x we like to joke with people, “The only people who are interested in the company name are you and your Mum.” Nobody else cares less, seriously. That’s not meant harshly but when people are in the market for a product or service they are interested in solving their problem and do not want or need to hear about your firm - the headline then should speak to that for maximum effect. A headline can affect the result your ad or even letter produces by up

to 20 times- it really is critical, so much so, it’s the ‘ad for the ad’ if you will.

Using the Yellow Pages ad example further, typically most firms will put their company name at the top, then a couple of bullet points underneath stating to be frank, the obvious, for e.g. they’ll say things like ‘At Firm Name, we do: tax returns and planning, BAS statements etc’ and under that, they’ll include their phone number, possibly their website, and that’s it.

There are three major problems with this ...

- If people are going to a Yellow Pages ad (which of course is not where the majority of accounting firm clients come from anyway, referrals being a much more important source of leads) to look for an accounting firm, when they get there the ads all look the same. Pull out your Yellow Pages now and you’ll see that’s true! The ads don’t differentiate. They all look exactly the same. Everybody has got a company name at the top, a few bullet points and then their phone number.
- The market already knows what an accountant does. Those bullet points outlined ‘Tax Returns, BAS Statements’ etc are essentially a waste of time and space. You pay good money for that space - why not write something that’s of interest to your ideal client? For example: “Here’s how our firm can help you grow and then bullet point how you do that. Or, “Here’s how our firm saves you time and money and bullet point that. Or “At our firm we aren’t just ‘bean counters’” and go on from there ... Instantly your firm stands out.
- You’re not speaking to what your typical “A” class clients let’s say small to medium business owners, for example, want. You are breaking the golden rule that your brand and all your marketing **MUST** speak to your ideal target audience’s needs.

You see, the other reason our 10x marketing works so well is that it speaks directly to their needs based on extensive research we conducted. We interviewed 1,077 small to medium sized business owners across Australia and New Zealand via 129 accounting firms and found out what our ideal target audience – business owners – want.

Number one? They want a proactive accountant.



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Next, they want that proactive accountant to help them with what we call “The Fab 5”. Your clients and prospects want help with:

- 1) Growth Strategies
- 2) Profitability
- 3) Cashflow
- 4) Increasing the value of their business asset and protecting their assets
- 5) Succession planning or sale of the business.

In our research within the business community, this is exactly what they want over and above accounting compliance work. Think of it this way, they have to buy their compliance work but they really want those five things - growth, profit, cashflow, asset protection, succession or sale.

Other research with a further 1,500 accounting firm clients essentially said they wanted more ‘financial management accounting’ support. An opportunity gone begging for most accounting firms ... all while your clients are being done a disservice where they really aren’t getting the full help they need to improve their businesses and situation.

Given that research, if you want small to medium size businesses as your “A” class clients – you need to demonstrate you are that proactive accountant who can and does deliver on the Fab 5. (It’s why our 10x accounting firms are now doing so well in their marketing).

How you do that begins with your marketing. For instance you would never use your firm name as your headline. Instead you’d say something like ... "Discover how to", "Find out the 5 steps to", or in a letter that you are promoting, "Cashflow problems.

Here's how you can alleviate those forever" that's speaking in your customer's language, that's what they want to hear.

That brings us to our next point, ‘Top 6’ element #2.

2. “What's in it for me?” body copy or text.

The other reason why a lot of marketing that accounting firms have done in the past – whether to attract new clients or team members - hasn't worked is that it doesn't speak in the client's or prospect's language. Instead it talks in accounting speak versus what the small to medium-sized business owner or that “A” class client or team members wants.

In any material, you must begin to solve their problem, meet their needs and in the process add value to the client while differentiating your firm INSTANTLY.

In all your marketing material – letters, ads, brochures, website, you must write in a way that people can relate to, that people can understand and that's why information

like the ‘Fab 5’ is so critical, because you can speak to that in the written word in your ads and letters etc.

3. An offer makes all the difference ...

The next thing that you need to have in any marketing material is an offer of some sort. That offer can impact the results you get by up to 350%. Typically it must have a high perceived value to your “A” class clients or prospects and a low dollar cost to you. Some examples are: a free report, or an offer for a consultation or a ‘Needs Analysis’ which of course you can provide easily.

4. A guarantee – reduce or remove the risk and you'll win.

When a client is thinking about moving across to a new accounting firm, it can seem like a risk on their part, after all they typically won't know you very well, they've never been able to trial your work so all they have to go on are the brand touch points we've been discussing and potentially the referral from a friend or colleague that has brought them to you. To alleviate this somewhat, you can offer a guarantee that reduces that perceived risk and removes the associated fear. There two types of guarantee: one reduces the risk; the other, removes the risk. If you are going to reduce the risk for example you might say something like: "Just let us know if you are not happy, and we will keep working with you until you are." To remove the risk entirely you would say something like, "If you are not happy, simply let us know and we will refund your money in full." One reduces the risk and the other removes it entirely.

The interesting thing about guarantees is that if you are not getting returns or complaints now, you are not going to get any more when you start to offer a guarantee! That just doesn't happen, what will happen instead is that a prospective client's willingness to come across to you will increase, they'll do so more easily and confidently, sales and fees will go up, and you'll be working with a better class of client as a result because they'll be more relaxed in their dealings with you thanks to the added security of you letting them know where they stand.

One tip: if in a particular marketing piece it's not appropriate to share the guarantee then instead use testimonials from existing clients (and team members). Today, you can do that in many innovative ways, for example you could simply film or record some of your clients talking about how they love your accounting firm and the difference you've made to their lives and businesses and post it on your website or email those out to prospective clients and team members during the enquiry process.

5. Graphics and layout – copy intensive works!!

Essentially element #5 says your ads or letters can't look like everybody else's! And there shouldn't be lots of white space because that's a waste of time and money. Copy



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intensive ads may not be as ‘pretty’ as branding type ads and yet they far better provide what your target audience wants – information and value.

6. Response Device & Call to Action

People are used to being led - from the moment we start kindergarten we are led through our lives – which means you must then tell people what to do and explain what they’ll get. For example, you must give them something to respond to, whether it’s tickets to an event, a voucher for a report or consultation, etc and a call to action – you must tell them what action to take, by when and for what. For example: ‘call before 5.00pm Friday August 21 and book your complimentary Needs Analysis & Consultation and when you come in, you’ll receive an additional report titled: ‘How to xxxxxxxx’ valued at \$95.00 FREE’.

Remember, these ‘Top 6’ even apply to attracting new team members. You must consider each of these as you create your recruitment ads because again if you look at recruitment ads, they all look the same. There’s no differentiation. Make your ads stand out and you’ll attract stand out people.

Here’s an example headline from a 10x firm in New Zealand:

Big Four Accountants ...

Tired of being a “back room bean counter” - discover how YOU can make a hands on difference with business owners ...

If you’re like most accountants working at a big firm, you probably see more paperwork in a week than a partner sees in a month AND yet you rarely get the chance to get your ‘hands dirty’ and work directly with the clients – that part – the best part – is left to the partners.

And the ad goes on from there. Immediately you can see how this ad is targeted to the type of accountant they want – their ideal target audience of “A” class people – speaks to what that person is looking for based on their research and stands out from the crowd instantly.

Another opportunity for growth for your firm, improved branding and marketing and how to help your clients massively to boot!

For years, accountants have wanted to be able to help their clients better and improve their branding and marketing skills and tools. Via 10x you really can make that difference, service your clients’ needs and profitability all while growing your firm and lifting the profile and position of your brand.

10x is a business opportunity for the right firms around Australia (just over 100 remain available), who are committed to having a highly leveraged, effective and profitable business development division.

This ‘add on’ division is designed to be a revenue and profitability centre, on its own, that adds value to your existing clients as well as attracting new clients to your firm. BTW: It does that without you having to be involved day to day in a highly leveraged way. Here’s what some of our existing Franchisees (we call them 10x Entrepreneurs) have to say:

- “All the hard work has already been done. The system is simple and the resources available are impressive. The information content is excellent, the passion, knowledge and commitment from the Founders & team is inspiring.” Peter Lines, Tax & Financial Services - Adelaide
- “In 10x, we’ve finally found a systemised approach and model to delivering business advisory services. While we have been offering business development and consulting work, we have never ‘shouted it from the rooftops’ so to speak, now we can. We also like the highly leveraged nature of the support our clients receive.” Ashley McGuirk, Focus Professional Group – Sunshine Coast
- “10x is a Business System that is fully supported by quality systems, documentation, know how, and leadership team.” Scott Atkins, Partner, Acumon - Newcastle
- “An extremely profitable - great business model, multiple benefits - complimentary to our current accounting business.” John Capuana, Partner, CP Partners - Melbourne
- “I look forward to marketing 10x - the potential to expand 10x & our accounting business at once is significant.” Garry Williams, Partner, Thornton Partners - Perth

Explore what 10x could offer your firm ...

Spend 45 minutes to an hour with a 10x Business Advisor over the phone and we’ll be able to talk through the branding and marketing concepts discussed here. We’ll also explore your plans for growth and better servicing your clients and find out how 10x has you do both incredibly well and profitably. We’ll soon discover if 10x is a match for your firm. On the call, we’ll also explore the 8 unique aspects of 10x that make it a great fit for qualified firms as THE answer to successfully adding a highly profitable, (if you follow the system to the letter) minimum \$300,000 to \$1,000,000+ BD division. Aspects like:

- the most effective client profit improvement method we’ve ever seen;
- revenue and profit potential like no other (i.e. how the 10x model produces an average
- hourly rate of \$1,000 to \$1,728);
- exclusive marketing territories of around 5,000 employing businesses;
- how it will attract new clients to your firm
- shareholding in the national franchisor, 10x Limited;
- how we only win when you win and our extensive support structure;



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- how this is resourced in a leveraged way that creates little dependence on the partner/s
- 10x Limited – gives back in a charitable way to the future leaders of Australia and New Zealand.

10x is literally, like nothing else out there.

Email your interest to nick.howard@10x.com.au or call 1300 658 221 now and ask for Nick Howard.

Case Studies: How 10x Branding & Marketing has Assisted in Growing Your Accounting Firm...

On the following pages you'll see real examples of how 10x has assisted other accounting firms in improving their branding and marketing, having them add more value to their clients and potential clients, lifting the quality of their clients, attracting higher paying “A” class clients as well as “A” class people and growing their firm. Review these carefully and you'll no doubt see other opportunities for your accounting firm.

Thank You ...

The team at 10x hope this report has been of value and look forward to talking with you in the future and hearing how you've benefited! Feel free to send an email with your comments or feedback to emma.lobb@10x.com.au. Thanks again and best of luck for your growth and success.

Case Studies: How 10x Branding & Marketing has Assisted in Growing Your Accounting Firm...

Case Study #1

Partner: Peter Lines

Accounting Firm: Tax & Financial Solutions

10x Business: 10x Walkerville, Adelaide, SA

What had you say yes to becoming part of 10x?

PETER: For some time we had been looking to try and build up a business development/business coaching arm and we found it very difficult as accountants to do it ourselves.

When we saw the 10x model and realised that basically it was all there done for us, we just needed to put the right people in the right place and then we could use the systems that you guys had developed, it was a relatively straightforward exercise to introduce to our clients and add as an extra arm to our business.

What sort of marketing have you been doing using the 10x tools and how has that increased your ability to attract “A” class clients and or more work with your existing clients?

PETER: Our initial marketing foray was with 'The Edge' event, and as a consequence we have picked up a number of additional accounting clients and also our current accounting clients who did attend, all expressed an interest in talking to us about the additional services that we can provide them. That was totally separate to the 10x side of things and just purely accounting that they feel we could provide and that has led to quite an increase in revenue per client. In fact, we found that about 20% of the clients that attended 'ticked the box' on the night for "Yes, I want more management accounting support".

How much would you say those requests for additional accounting support has been worth to you financially, exclusive of any 10x income generated?

PETER: Well, I think that on average we would be picking up somewhere between \$1,000 and \$3,000 per client and we ended up with about 23 that ticked the box asking for additional accounting support. So that's additional work over and above the work that we are currently doing. It does vary, I mean, there's actually a couple of examples where it's probably closer to maybe \$9,000 or \$10,000 in addition per client. But there's a couple of stand-outs, where they have basically gone from being very small clients, very compliance based, to requiring a lot more management involvement from us. So that first event alone has probably been worth an additional revenue of somewhere between \$35,000 and \$50,000.



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Regarding the Edge event, how effective has the 10x marketing been for you?

PETER: We ended up with 100 people in the room, though we were actually limited by capacity – we sold out – we couldn't take more than 100. So we actually stopped marketing.

We only did half the follow-up 10x outlines in the system and IP, because we actually had more people attending than we thought would actually fit in the room.

When attracting “A” class clients and “A” class people, positioning is critical. How have you found the positioning of your firm and 10x together has lifted the position of your accounting firm itself?

PETER: It is interesting that the way the letters are written are not a normal accountant's letter and as an accountant we felt somewhat cautious about sending the letters out, in fact uncomfortable even but we decided that we would follow the system. As I said, we ended up having to stop our marketing because we ended up with too many people in the room. So, yes, the system does work. It does get people there. And then once they are there, they definitely do see the benefit of attending. The feedback on the seminar has just been, well, over the top, really. I think Ryll got 11 out of 10 because she actually conducted our particular seminar. So, yeah, it was very successful, from that point of view.

What is it that you have learnt, do you think, about branding and marketing by being part of 10x, that you've actually been able to take across to your firm and either use to enhance your accounting firm and/or even to add more value to your clients?

PETER: It's interesting. We have actually been starting to talk to our clients about things like marketing and branding which formally we would just never do, but because of the association with 10x we have actually been able to pass information onto our clients which has been considered by them to be very beneficial. And again, looking at the way 10x is structured and set up, we have looked on that model as being a very good model to apply to a lot of our accounting side of things as well. We are trying to obviously improve our systems and have everything documented and make sure that everything is done the same way and so 10x is extremely well set up for that.

How has that flowed through to - we have talked about opportunities for clients, existing clients and new clients for additional services and servicing them properly - what about any feedback from potential or existing team members that you have got?

PETER: We have actually had team members who have expressed interest in expanding into the 10x side of things. So they are actually looking at the possibility of

sort of a career path, if you like. So there's definitely an interest from that perspective. Interestingly enough, we have actually had clients who have expressed interest in becoming coaches for us for 10x – joining our team. It's very positive and I guess people look on it as being something that they do want to get involved in. So, yeah, I think there's plenty of potential from the staff point of view as well.

Based on your experience now and the new strategies and techniques you've learnt via 10x, what would you individually advise other accounting firms to do when it comes to branding and marketing?

PETER: From the outside looking in, accountants are hard to distinguish, really, and so branding can be a means of actually showing that we are different to, well, the average accountant, I suppose. And certainly, aligning ourselves with something like the 10x brand has certainly lifted our profile and so I would recommend to anyone that they look at their branding and look at the image that they are portraying to the public and to their clients and also consider 10x.

Notes:

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How to brand and market your firm to attract “A” class clients and “A” class people

How 10x Branding & Marketing has Assisted in Growing Your Accounting Firm ...

Case Study #2

Partner: Greg Smargiassi

Accounting Firm: FCFB

10x Business: 10x Geraldton, Regional WA

What had you say yes to becoming part of 10x?

GREG: The reason that I went into 10x, was to satisfy an interest in business coaching and offer that to the Geraldton region where I am based. There's a distinct shortage of that type of service in this area and the business people in this area definitely are looking for that type of service. So very much, an untapped market and also a personal interest in business coaching.

What sort of marketing have you been doing using the 10x tools and how has that increased your ability to attract “A” class clients and or more work with your existing clients?

GREG: We have been running Edge events, which is a 10x designed marketing process and value added event. All of our marketing has been co-branded, our logo and 10x. My existing business here, as a result of the marketing that we have done with 10x, has definitely received a significant lift in profile. Just out of our first marketing program for our first Edge event, we picked up a couple of “A” class clients for my existing business, outside of 10x revenue and that is what I would call collateral wins, I guess.

Regarding the Edge event, how effective has the 10x marketing been for you?

GREG: I know many firms that we've spoken to in the past regarding seminars struggle to get 10/20 people there, but using the marketing material we had 160 people attend, which was representing 80 businesses, and the region here is a smaller - in a regional centre with about 20,000 in population only. This stuff works.

When attracting “A” class clients and “A” class people, positioning is critical. How have you found the positioning of your firm and 10x together has lifted the position of your accounting firm itself?

GREG: The positioning has been great – as I mentioned we've co-branded everything and it really has lifted people's awareness of our firm and our position in their mind as leaders for business advice in this community. The system does really work and we follow the system to the best of our ability and the results speak for themselves. The 10x systems that are provided to us work very, very well.

What is it that you have learnt, do you think, about branding and marketing by being part of 10x, that you've actually been able to take across to your firm and either use to enhance your accounting firm and/or even to add more value to your clients?

GREG: Yes, I have learnt a lot with this. We are applying many of the principles that come from 10x to our existing business here and we have seen some fantastic results with that. And even just talking to clients, you know, whether we are talking to clients about a 10x Coaching Club or talking to them about branding, which is something that you would not normally hear from an accountant in particular, they - you know, they are taken aback that you would even be talking about that sort of a topic. So it's really been two-fold in the effect that it's had on the existing business and also the response you get when you start talking to them about those sorts of things.

How has that flowed through to - we have talked about opportunities for clients, existing clients and new clients for additional services and servicing them properly - what about any feedback from potential or existing team members that you have got?

GREG: I currently have a waiting list of people that want to come and work for me. At last count there's four people on that waiting list. Yeah, it's interesting. I have got one guy as far away as Ireland that's moving back to Geraldton, who heard about what's happening here with us and 10x. So he has been in touch with us wanting to come and work here on his return. And another three that I worked with in another firm, that have all touched base and said, "When the work is there, give us a yell," and they're on.

Based on your experience now and the new strategies and techniques you've learnt via 10x, what would you individually advise other accounting firms to do when it comes to branding and marketing?

GREG: Branding and marketing is very, very important. It's something that accountants are not known for being good at and by getting involved with 10x, it's something that I have learnt a lot about and it's had a fantastic impact on my business. So a very, very important part of any business, be it accounting or non-accounting type business.

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How 10x Branding & Marketing has Assisted in Growing Your Accounting Firm ...

Case Study #3

Partner: Kevin Bertelli

Accounting Firm: Accounting West

10x Business: 10x Bunbury/Bussleton, WA

What had you say yes to becoming part of 10x?

KEVIN: In our case we tried a couple of different areas of business development over the years that we have been doing and sort of had limited success and eventually it was dropping off, in the sense of being able to keep delivering new and interesting information month after month. And when we heard about the 10x product and saw the processes and the systems behind it, we just thought it would be an ideal way to get into the business development market in our area and be able to continually deliver a good quality product for a decent length of time.

What sort of marketing have you been doing using the 10x tools and how has that increased your ability to attract “A” class clients and or more work with your existing clients?

KEVIN: Basically, we're following the 10x system. We ran our Edge event using 10x and our co-branded stationery back in May and we actually had quite a good proportion of people who aren't our clients, probably almost fifty-fifty. We have had in numbers terms, for the size of our business, quite a good response of picking up new work and I would say we picked up between 10 and 12 new clients from that event, at a higher fee range per, say from \$2,500 to \$5,000 fee range. There's even one quite large motor vehicle dealership that we have been talking with, that are now, thanks to that event, about come on board as well, so the follow-on from the accounting work has been quite significant for us.

How much would you say those requests for additional accounting support has been worth to you financially, exclusive of any 10x income generated?

KEVIN: Just looking at those numbers then, it's about 12 new clients, at the figures I mentioned, it's probably worth about \$45k or so to us, without the large car dealership we're about to secure. That's a significant set of fees for one night! It represents an increase of about 20% too on our previous average sale/fee per client as well – so the clients were better quality and ready to do more with us from the outset.

Regarding the Edge event, how effective has the 10x marketing been for you?

KEVIN: We had about 91 or 92 people there representing about 60-odd businesses and we only marketed to about



How to brand and market your firm to attract “A” class clients and “A” class people

600 businesses in our local area which has a population of about 50,000 in our total area. So we had not all clients – if you look at those numbers Ryll quotes about 30% to 42% of your own client base should respond positively to 10x, the numbers were spot on, in terms of clients we marketed to about 80 and about 35 of those businesses actually turned up. The rest were all non-clients that we’d never spoken to at all before.

When attracting “A” class clients and “A” class people positioning is critical. How have you found the positioning of your firm and 10x together has lifted the position of your accounting firm itself?

KEVIN: Yeah, it's quite encouraging. When you have the follow-up appointments with the people who attended the event, you don't have any resistance of trying to - what's the word I am looking for - justifying yourself of who you are and what you can do. They have already seen that and while a couple of the people who have come along just want to do accounting work with us and there were some start up businesses, you can tell by meeting them they are actually quality people that are going to take their businesses somewhere. So it's all been pretty positive from that side of things.

Just one comment I got from this large motor vehicle dealership. I asked him, "What made you come along?" He said to me, "Anyone who can write a letter like that, I have got to go and see what they have got to say".

What is it that you have learnt, do you think, about branding and marketing by being part of 10x, that you've actually been able to take across to your firm and either use to enhance your accounting firm and/or even to add more value to your clients?

KEVIN: From a branding perspective, I think what 10x has given us, with the co-branding and going into this area of work, I guess for want of a better word, it's given us credibility, having someone there behind us and giving our own business the image of being able to deliver coaching and that sort of work. From the client's perspective, I guess the ones who came to the event and we have spoken to subsequent are much more aware of new marketing ideas, so we're now talking with them about advertising and how to write an ad and that's been something that's come up in quite a number of discussions since, is the area of actually the advertising; one element of marketing that we would never have spoken about before at our accountant's level anyway, so that's been great.

How has that flowed through to - we have talked about opportunities for clients, existing clients and new clients for additional services and servicing them properly - what about any feedback from potential or existing team members that you have got?

KEVIN: One of our more senior people who has been with

us for ten years has certainly seen it first-hand and is embracing the change in the way to deal with clients and the types of things that they are looking for, rather than just the straight compliance, which is where he had been focused on for most of his career. So that's probably been the biggest impact in our firm – not just that one individual - but everyone has certainly learnt a lot from it.

Based on your experience now and the new strategies and techniques you've learnt via 10x, what would you individually advise other accounting firms to do when it comes to branding and marketing?

KEVIN: Yeah, I think if anyone wants to add business consulting and business coaching as a new division to their firm they should certainly look at the 10x franchise opportunity. If they want a greater accounting business, it just happens automatically with 10x and they can be confident in the process and system that 10x provides you. It will definitely work, as long as you follow the systems as given to you.

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About 10x ...

10x is a business opportunity for the right firms around Australia and New Zealand (just over 146 remain available), who are committed to having a highly leveraged, effective and profitable business development division.

This ‘add on’ division is designed to be a revenue and profitability centre, on its own, that adds value to your existing clients as well as attracting new clients to your firm. BTW: It does that without you having to be involved day to day in a highly leveraged way.

Here’s what some of our existing Franchisees (we call them 10x Entrepreneurs) have to say:

- “All the hard work has already been done. The system is simple and the resources available are impressive. The information content is excellent, the passion, knowledge and commitment from the Founders & team is inspiring.” Peter Lines, Tax & Financial Services - Adelaide
- “In 10x, we’ve finally found a systemised approach and model to delivering business advisory services. While we have been offering business development and consulting work, we have never ‘shouted it from the rooftops’ so to speak, now we can. We also like the highly leveraged nature of the support our clients receive.” Ashley McGuirk, Focus Professional Group – Sunshine Coast
- “10x is a Business System that is fully supported by quality systems, documentation, know how, and leadership team.” Scott Atkins, Partner, Acumon - Newcastle
- “An extremely profitable - great business model, multiple benefits - complimentary to our current accounting business.” John Capuana, Partner, CP Partners - Melbourne
- “I look forward to marketing 10x - the potential to expand 10x & our accounting business at once is significant.” Garry Williams, Partner, Thornton Partners - Perth

Explore what 10x could offer your firm ...

Spend 45 minutes to an hour with a 10x Business Advisor over the phone and we’ll be able to talk through the branding and marketing concepts discussed here. We’ll also explore your plans for growth and better servicing your clients and find out how 10x has you do both incredibly well and profitably. We’ll soon discover if 10x is a match for your firm. On the call, we’ll also explore the 8 unique aspects of 10x that make it a great fit for qualified

firms as THE answer to successfully adding a highly profitable, (if you follow the system to the letter) minimum \$300,000 to \$1,000,000+ BD division. Aspects like:

- the most effective client profit improvement method we’ve ever seen;
- a revenue and profit potential like no other (i.e. how the 10x model produces an average hourly rate of \$1,000 to \$1,728);
- exclusive marketing territories of around 5,000 employing businesses;
- how it will attract new clients to your firm ;
- shareholding in the national franchisor, 10x Limited;
- how we only win when you win and our extensive support structure;
- how this is resourced in a leveraged way that creates little dependence on the partner/s;
- how 10x Limited – gives back in a charitable way to the future leaders of Australia and New Zealand.

10x is literally, like nothing else out there.

Call 1300 658 221 now and ask for Nick Howard or email nick.howard@10x.com.au to find out more about the 10x Opportunity.