



MAY 2019

## **When is an ice cube worth a euro?**

We were in Rome last month looking at hotels to hold an event later in the year. We visited six hotels which had been recommended. They were mid-range with one 5 star hotel.

What surprised us was how we were treated by the different hotels. In the main we were totally un-impressed. Their welcomes were muted and we felt four of them couldn't care less about our event.

Of the two that could, the manager of the smallest and cheapest hotel was a people person. He realised his hotel probably wouldn't get the main business but he was there to help.

But it was the staff of the 5 star hotel who went out of their way to make us welcome and left us in no doubt they would do everything they could to make our event a success.

Whilst there they offered us a cocktail – the main ingredient was Campari. It came with a large ice cube which filled the glass and gave it a dramatic look.

The manager said his barman had persuaded him to spend a euro per cube for each cocktail. The manager thought he was crazy.

Anyway, the barman won and the cocktail has become a talking piece among their clients.

It was delicious. If you're in Rome visit Hotel Locarno and ask for an Americano Grand Cru. Cheers & Saluti.

## **What do you do to make your offering more impactful?**

### **Coffee shop stories**

Most days we get a coffee in our local Torelli bar in Kew. The coffee is good. The staff are brilliant. And the locals have stories to tell. Here's one from our local garden centre owner, Daniel.

In this digital age, he told us a counter story of using a mail drop.

He wanted to test out what impact a 5,000 leaflet drop would have on his business. The total cost of the leaflets and distribution was £1,000. (To save costs he got two of his gardeners to distribute.)

Over the next 6 months he got additional business worth £36,000.

He had always thought that people knew his centre well enough that they didn't need reminding.

## **Do you have any potential clients who could do with a reminder?**

### **Time yourself**

We were discussing with a client a 5 minute presentation he had to give.

It reminded us of a presentation which Barry had to give many years ago to the Marketing Director of Playtex. Barry was a young a/e and the MD had asked him to make a 5 minute presentation.

Barry felt comfortable, knew his stuff and was passionate about his subject. Unfortunately, he exceeded his 5 minutes - not by much - but the MD thanked him and asked him to come back the next day and give him a 5 minute presentation.

Barry went back – he had rehearsed several times overnight – and had nailed his presentation at 4 mins 50 secs. His proposal was approved.

Barry never forgot this lesson. Rehearse every presentation. Time yourself.

(As a guide, a 5 minute script should contain no more than 800 words. But we all deliver at a different pace so time it.)

**Timing is key.**

## **How do you clean a Zipcar?**

The car sharing brand Zipcar - where you can rent by the minute, hour or day - has been extremely successful.

We have a Zipcar station at the end of our street. It's used every day by different drivers and it hadn't occurred to us that unlike the Hertz and Avis operations where cars are cleaned between each hire, it's returned sometimes extremely dirty.

Well the other day, we saw what Zipcar do. A mobile cleaning service comes out roadside and does the cleaning and vacuuming leaving it clean and sparkling.

Nobody wants a dirty car.

It reminded us of the importance of appearances.

**Does your reception look good, inviting and reflect the quality of the ideas you produce?**

## **Cutting Response**

Here's a story about a long winded speaker. He was a vicar invited to preach at a church one Sunday. Halfway through an interminable sermon, one of the congregation got up to leave.

"Where are you going?" the vicar asked.

"To get a haircut." came the reply.

"Why on earth didn't you go earlier?" the vicar said, to which the man replied:

"I didn't need one then".

**Good luck with your stories, presentations and pitches in 2019.**

*Barry Graham & Sally Clare*

