

INTRODUCTION

You are in your ice cream van. The freezer is stocked. The cones are stacked. The flakes are in position. The machine is humming away, ready to dispense dollops of heavenly ice cream to an eager public. It is so brain-meltingly hot outside people would sell their own mother for a Strawberry Mivvi. Pausing briefly to reflect on this once-in-a-lifetime perfect alignment of supply and demand, you switch on your tannoy. And nothing. Your tannoy is not working, and without its distinctive chimes alerting the public to your presence, you pass through town undetected, a stealth ice cream van. After returning home, with a full freezer and an empty till, you sit there eating your tenth choc ice, wondering to yourself: what's the point of being in business if no one knows you exist?

Getting your would-be clientele to know you exist is what *I'm Here!* is all about. Designed to put customer-generating communication skills into the hands of complete novices, it will empower those with no experience and no budget to hit the ground running with the prowess of a marketing maestro.

With the help of this book, you will be able to create the kind of exciting, enticing, ultra-effective marketing material that otherwise could only be obtained by paying lots of money to a professional copywriter. I know this because *I am* a professional copywriter that gets paid lots of money to write ultra-effective marketing material. And in this book I give you the means to do it yourself.

There is an endless tide of small businesses, sole traders and entrepreneurs that, despite knowing their business better than any marketing professional, have no choice but to pay for their services or risk oblivion. And then there are all the fabulous, possibly earth-shattering, business ideas that the world misses out on. They sink without trace because they have all the market presence of The Invisible Man. With this book, anybody with something to say will be able to bridge the gap between themselves and their intended audience, and do it quicker, cheaper and better than a whole wine bar full of marketing consultants.

Not that marketing consultants won't benefit from this book too. *I'm Here!* provides an authoritative reference point for any marketing professional

wishing to improve and broaden their skills. Everyone, from copywriters to brand managers, both beginners and seasoned professionals, should treat this book like Madonna treats her personal trainer: essential for when you're starting out, and even more so when you've been around for a while.

If you are taking a sneaky peak at this book while standing in a bookshop or browsing online, having a free read to see if it's worth forking out for, you will notice that there are quite a few other books available on the subject. Many begin with crafting a business plan and end with hiring staff, on the way briskly mentioning what marketing is and why it's a good idea. Others take the reader on a whistle-stop tour of each and every aspect of marketing, from packaging to pricing. Or, they say things like: "Ramp up your customer base!", as if all you need is more jargon.

It's the same on the internet too. A vast ocean of information is sloshing around on this subject, but it is barely deep enough to get your ankles wet. Try to uncover any real insight to help with your specific needs and you will be met with off-the-peg platitudes ('Headlines should be catchy').

I'm Here!, on the other hand, is the definitive instruction manual for anyone looking to drum up customers using marketing communications. It is filled with strategies you can understand and clear demonstrations of what works – all described in simple, clear and engaging language. Taking you from first principles through to deployment, it is packed with knowledge, know-how, tips, tricks, techniques, secrets and assorted sorcery distilled into refreshing, bite-sized segments. Practical, down-to-earth and entirely devoid of jargon, this is a marketing book for people who have better things to do than read marketing books.

So dive in wherever takes your fancy (but read the *Don't do anything until you have read this* chapter first) and very soon you will be churning out customer-generating communications like crazy and your business will be a resounding success! Have fun, and let me know how you get on.