



Read about our **MAGIC CIRCLE** method of gaining new business, on page two of our newsletter.



Our sector and locally focused **Networking Organizations** really work – raising our clients profile and creating new business relationships.

cowellconsulting|building *your* business

promoting excellence + sustainability in design, engineering and contracting,

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Hello and Welcome to cowellconsulting

cowellconsulting exists to help companies and practices serving the property development and end-user markets to gain favourable introductions that lead to new business.

We are a bit like a commercial dating agency and marriage counsellor!

Our clients range from designers and engineers to contractors and industry specialists, all of whom want to gain more from their existing client relationships and gain new business from existing and new market sectors.

We assess how your organisation presents itself – your branding, web site and communication media such as prequalification, proposal and bid documentation and how this relates to your chosen markets.

We lead, create and implement a strategy that suits *your* business, *your* aspirations and *your* budget.

We provide research, appointment making, event organisation and most importantly – effective follow up activities....

All of which, leaves you free to do what you do best - run your business.

NEW BUSINESS? WHAT NEW BUSINESS!

The media headlines don't make pleasant reading this autumn. Talk of a slow-down in construction activity and a worsening in 2011 is making the majority of companies extremely nervous.

There is certainly a need to reassess your marketing in the current climate but every reason why you should not be considering cutting back on this vital activity.

The question is how do you continue to seek new business, and raise your profile at a time when cash is hard to find and budgets are being cut. The answer is to be more focused, spend more wisely and look for ways to collaborate and generate new business.

The following articles offer our take on how to do this and how we can help. I hope they inspire you to get in touch and I look forward to meeting you.

John Cowell

DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC?

Someone in Brighton said to me recently: 'We do alright generally, but when a major project comes to town, so do the big boys. Clients don't think we have the clout!'

I've heard this story so often and have suffered myself when with a sizable contractor in Canterbury. But it doesn't have to be the case. Paradoxically, this recession and the Government's new policies on local communities offers smaller, local firms a great opportunity to punch above their weight.

cowellconsulting is supporting them with what I have christened Marketing and Group Initiative Concepts: MAGIC for short.

It was born out of our policy of only working with one of each discipline at a time. Together they have as a by-product, formed complete project design and build consortium.

There then emerged opportunities to apply for OJEU advertised projects when, having identified a relevant architect several of my clients banded together to apply.

With Public Sector work on hold, the concept of promoting integrated and organised consortia to the market as a whole has gained momentum and credibility. As Government policy develops we will be in a pole position to benefit from this new focus, gaining opportunities for local publicity to back our initiative.

For example, a Retail focused group headed by an acknowledged architect in the sector and supported by engineers and cost consultants with relevant and current experience could be promoted to this sector as a regional solution to their expansion in that area.

Another consortium with for example, Conservation experience could apply for the many new Heritage Lottery Funded projects in their region and when appropriate a contractor can be included to provide a complete design and build solution.

The secret is close co-operation and leadership by **cowellconsulting** to create the central 'bond' that ensures that consortia are promoted as working partnerships that can deliver projects reliably and cost-effectively.



The Main Ingredients

Once a local and/or a sector consortium group have been formed we will initiate a strategy designed to give it strength and credibility in the marketplace and to build the bond between its members. These will include:

Branding: Creation of an identity that can be utilized in promotional activities.

Web Presence: The building of a clear-cut web site to communicate our skills and intentions. This will be equipped with email accounts and enquiry facilities.

Presentation Material: A simple but effective format for brochure, prequalification and bid documentation.

Project Research: To identify and track live projects and key players.

Introductions and Presentations: Securing meetings and hospitality with key developers and end users.

Networking: Regular meetings between members of the 'magic circle' and with the property sector community at large.

Each consortium will require something a little different from the other, but the common thread will be a collaborative and locally relevant approach to securing new business from major players, sustainably and cost-effectively.

Not *another* networking organisation!

Suddenly the country is full of networking clubs. You can move and shake, rattle and roll all day and all night if you had the time and a high boredom threshold. I have neither. However these events CAN be excellent ways of meeting new people if they are well thought through and well organized.

Rather than stop going, I decided to start my own. The ground rules would be that they would be relevant to the people I was hoping to attract, that we would keep out the usual hangers-on, we would ensure that there were enough hosts to ensure that guests attending alone would not be left out and that our events would have a focus, relevant to the locality, sector or current events, usually with a speaker on that theme.

The first one created was targeted at architects and property companies based in London SE1. An SE1 based client, boutique quantity surveyors and project managers FOM LLP, were targeting these organisations. We thought *'why chase firms all over London when there are 165 architectural practices in SE1 and numerous local property companies too!'* So **fuSE1** was born with FOM and local law firm Norton Rose as its sponsors. (www.fuseone.co.uk)

From the first breakfast event opened by **Sir Paul Smith**, the idea captured the local imagination and the subsequent events were well attended and well received.

So, having cut our teeth in SE1 we have great plans for more! The first of these is a much more wide-ranging organisation focused on London's Heritage.



The Heritage Property Guild

I love buildings! It's what brought me into the industry. I never get tired of looking up, above the shop fronts, seeing how buildings have been changed and re-invented over their lives. I can't pass a City of London church without peering in or enjoying how a derelict building has been brought back to life with imaginative regeneration.

Not being a craftsman, despite my early efforts as a stone mason, I have long wanted another way of getting involved with buildings and their development. So I am delighted to be a founder sponsor of **The Heritage Property Guild**.

This is a new organization created to embrace the entire spectrum of professional, trades, crafts and suppliers with an active interest in retaining the best of our built heritage *whilst working to ensure that these buildings are relevant and sustainable within today's and tomorrow's environment.*

We are not seeking to set the past in aspic, but to ensure that well designed, aesthetically pleasing buildings are kept in active use.

Membership will soon be open, but in the meantime there are opportunities for other firms to become Sponsors or Principal Specialists.

For more information the HPG and our planned networking events, seminars and Heritage Property Awards please email me or call me on 07796 144703. The web site will soon be online and more information will follow.



The finale of this Newsletter is to highlight the fantastic opportunities offered to the industry by producing solutions to this fast-evolving problem. Some companies such as clients Kier and engineers Gary Gabriel Associates are ahead of the game in their thinking and have teamed up with other specialists to offer property portfolio owners a one-stop solution which can include sources of funding.

In amongst all the Government's doom and gloom for the construction sector, this is one of the rare highlights and one reason to be cheerful. We need others certainly, but this has the advantage of creating work for your company and contributing to the welfare of the environment.

cowellconsulting is teaming up with a leading specialist in the field to offer a valuable consultancy service that will advise your firm on how to gain work in this sector and increase your credibility on sustainability, environmental and energy efficiency issues.

More information on this service will be in our next Newsletter and on our web site. In the meantime please call or email me on john.cowell@cowellco.co.uk to register your interest.

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