

Strategic Plan Marketing Case Study Two

The key to successful stud stock marketing for the breeders featuring in case study two say it's vital to know what you are producing and who your market is and then breed the livestock and build your brand accordingly.

"We are breeding for the commercial cattleman who wants fast growing calves with heavy weaning weights that will finish to Hereford Prime specs before their second winter and we have branded ourselves as beef focussed genetics."

When it comes to the practicality and logistics of marketing they say identifying maximum exposure for minimum investment is important.

"Where do you get the best exposure for your money?"

They advised looking at the circulation area of publications and their target audiences which ties into knowing what market you are breeding for. Your location is another factor to consider.

"We target North Island regions where most of the beef cow herds are, so we look at publications in those areas and some national ones too."

They target national papers because it helps with expanding their customer base, which they are continually looking to do but encourage new breeders not to overlook local advertising.

"If you don't put your name out there, people don't know you exist. You do have to spend money each year, set a budget for advertising."

"We do what we think is right and what will give us maximum exposure."

This stud spends time on the phone because they don't believe in relying on advertising alone and they like liaising with potential clients and past clients.

They are aware that some clients would rather be left alone and are happy to not have that follow up and they take the lead from individuals. With their follow up phone calls, they try not to "interview" the client, opting to develop the conversation and relationship over time.

"It's about creating a rapport with people and our clients."

They did acknowledge that getting out to industry events is something they don't do enough and they believe it's important to do that – whether it be attending the local sale yards or discussion groups.

"We'd like to do more networking so we have more opportunity to tell farmers about what our genetics can do in their herds and encourage them to visit the farm and have a look at our operation."

This stud developed a website and has found it's given them international exposure along with providing regional clients somewhere to connect with them.

While having a website has provided a lot of international exposure they are a tool that need regular updates to keep the audience interested which can be done by changing photos and content regularly.

Photos are an important part of marketing and branding and they say having a camera handy (or a phone with a good camera built in) helps to capture photos on a regular basis. Photos can also be fed into social media profiles.

"If you get a good photo, they are worth a whole lot of words in our opinion."

They see social media as growing in importance because the next generation of farmers are younger and “tech savvy” so with this in mind they feel it’s important for stud breeders to be progressive in their branding to help attract the young and up-coming farmers and farm managers.

This beef focussed stud hosts an on-farm sale and put a lot of time and detail into producing their bull sale catalogue.

“It goes out to all stud breeders and several hundred other farmers.”

Because of that they invest a lot of time and energy in it and pay close attention to detail.

“We focus on good quality photos and include our stud sheep – the catalogue is important and we don’t skimp on it because clients do spend time looking at them.”

The stud spoken to support the Hereford national show and sale held at AgInnovation and have previously supported A&P Shows.

They believe it’s important to support AgInnovation and see it as a chance to showcase what your stud has to offer – but they say just because a breeder takes one bull there doesn’t mean that’s their only good animal. “Most have a paddock full of them.”

They suggest trying to pick an animal that represents what you are trying to achieve with your breeding programme and gives people an idea of what you have at home.

They see AgInnovation as the shop window to the breed and the opportunity to put forward an animal that gives people an insight into what you are doing within your breeding programme.

In summary:-

- Get out and about networking – ask a lot of questions, get as much information as you can out of other breeders. Attend events and functions that give you the chance to meet new clients and interact with existing clients.
- Identify your market and breed the livestock accordingly.
- Research the options for advertising of where you will get the best return on your investment.
- Look for opportunities that will help grow your (potential) client list.
- Put your name/brand out there – that’s the only way people know you exist. Create a marketing budget to spend.
- Great photos are worth a thousand words. Carry a camera so you can readily capture photographic opportunities or use your phone camera. Strong photos are an attention grabber. If you produce a sale catalogue use plenty of photos.
- If you choose to have a website, update it regularly.
- Follow up with clients without it being too imposing – create a rapport with them.

