

Spring clean your business

1. **Get rid of the clutter:** Not just the physical clutter in work spaces, but also the clutter within business activities themselves. If products or services no longer suit the market, clear them out or give them a makeover.
2. **Tidy the front yard:** Your business entrance, foyer or reception area says much about your business attitude, culture and likely service standards. Have a good look from a customer's perspective. What's the experience when they visit the business, phone your team, or order a product from your website? First impressions count.
3. **Fix the fence:** Review business insurances, document management and disaster recovery systems. Create an 'Important documents' folder and store insurance policies and vital business contracts, both in electronic and physical format.
4. **Throw some paint around:** When's the last time you refreshed your brand? Is it consistent with your culture and values? Maybe you are serving new markets now, or you've extended your products and services. Make sure your brand is applied consistently across all collateral, including your web presence.
5. **Sharpen any blunt edges:** Now's the time to learn new skills or develop simple training programmes to increase your team's productivity, or sales effectiveness. Internal training does not need to cost a lot of money. What it does need is your time, attention and commitment.
6. **Get the duster out:** Revisit old business plans, mission and vision statements. How relevant are they to today's world and markets? Plan a three-monthly goal check-in to review progress on your 2011 goals.
7. **Sow some seeds:** It's amazing the number of small businesses that don't have a marketing plan. Some of the most effective marketing plans are simply a list of activities, identifying the 'what' (the activity itself), the 'who' (who's the person driving the idea?) and the 'when' (when are we aiming to get this to market?). A marketing plan creates marketing gravity.