



Anthony Garvey and Anne Kiely of Quinn Garvey PR. Photo: Eamonn Keogh

## A new breed of agency is adapting its practices to suit the most slender of budgets, writes Siobhán Brett.

By [Siobhán Brett](#) Apr 15, 2012

During a trying economic period, the practice of marketing - and the budget allotted to it - frequently falls by the wayside. Several Irish agencies have adopted models more amenable to brands and businesses with modest budgets and little room for trial and error. In other words, the ones that need marketing most.

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\*\*[Quinn Garvey PR](#)\*\*

PR practitioner Anthony Garvey spent the early part of his career working in-house in Britain, gradually getting frustrated with systems of long contracts, expensive retainers and inflexible agreements.

He met business associate Anne Kiely in 2010 and said the pair hit on the idea of teaming up to provide coverage for clients, rather than press releases. If they don't generate coverage - they don't get paid.

"We decided it was a better model for the client; more specific, better focused. You've only got to go online to see press releases hovering for a few weeks, inevitably in places that clients don't want to be," said Garvey.

"We manage clients' expectations and set workable targets.

"The cost-cutting and rationalisation going on in some marketing agencies means that services can be affected. We, meanwhile, maintain coverage - it's in our interest too."

Client turnover tends to be quite quick.

"We frequently see people who want six things done in a six-month period - that's how a lot of work is being done lately, and it pays to be flexible.

"We keep our costs very low, which is a real positive," said Garvey.

"When we work well, we attract further work.

"Retainers and paying for more than you receive, that's money for jam, and clients are more and more aware of that. What we're doing resonates with those in search of value and results."

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**\*\*Next Chapter \*\***

Dublin-based Next Chapter Marketing seeks to help small businesses with small marketing budgets grow, evaluating the objectives of the business and providing a marketing action plan that's budget-friendly.

"I started up Next Chapter in response to the failures of the Celtic tiger when it came to sustainable marketing," said John Jordan, company director. "Once the recession hit, I witnessed a lot of people running to social media to market themselves, seeing it as the silver bullet that would generate more business. I had a feeling that it wasn't going to be enough."

Jordan said that brands and businesses lost the ability to sell during the boom. "People became order-takers during the good times, which was disastrous for marketing know-how. Nowadays, marketing is associated with expenditure, but I'm constantly trying to get people to realise that it does not have to be that way."

Next Chapter offers a 'zero marketing budget' workshop for small businesses and brands in their infancy, taking ten to 12 people at a time.

"I teach the importance of long-term relationships and explore means of building those - be it by email, web or on social media. It's also important to look at the gains that can be made by cross-selling and up-selling in a value-driven way when marketing, which is often something people won't have considered before."

The premise of Jordan's consultancy is that marketing must be about action, not cost. He offers a one-on-one review and assessment with clients, determining goals and developing a report containing proposed solutions and

actions. The service costs €295 plus Vat, and Jordan said it was tailored to those seeking to engage in marketing on a small scale, a category he felt was poorly served by marketing agencies.

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**\*\*Wordfruit\*\***

"We're set up to take advantage of the economy and ours is a model that answers to what's happening to businesses," said Richard Clunan, director of specialist copywriter recruitment agency Wordfruit.

Wordfruit, based in Tallaght, Co Dublin, is described by Clunan as a "lean system" that doesn't charge an up-front recruitment fee. The service allows specific job descriptions to be matched to individuals, helping marketing and advertising professionals cost-effectively find the right copywriters for particular jobs.

The "free post" model sees Wordfruit taking a percentage of the copywriting fee paid by businesses, including marketing and advertising agencies. "Our work in terms of shortlisting copywriters is free, but the copywriter's work is not," said Clunan.

Wordfruit can save clients the expense of commission they would typically be charged by recruitment agencies - taking between a tenth and a third of salaries in fees.

"As far as I can see, the space is there for new, more thoughtful models now," said Clunan.

"Online job boards are time-consuming, and bidding systems are not cheap. My system is a better option for small business on a smaller budget."