



MODULE SIX

workbook

Presenting Your Business Professionally



PRESENTING YOUR FARM BUSINESS PROFESSIONALLY

The image your farm business presents to the world matters, but to be honest, it matters to some farm businesses more than other farm businesses and to some people more than others.

It will matter more if;

- You contract some services to others
- You sell a product rather than a commodity (stud stock are a product)
- You employ staff and want to be seen as an employer of choice
- Your business is at a scale where you want to be seen as a supplier of choice, even in a commodity market
- You want to be respected outside of your own local area where you are known and trusted
- You often deal with new suppliers, customers, tradespeople and business contacts that don't know and trust you yet
- You rely on funds from banks and others and want to look professional
- You like things to look nice

In this module we look at a few aspects of a professional farm business image. Firstly we look at communications and understanding the appropriate format for letters, reports, emails, invoices etc.

The other aspect we discuss is visual imagery including logos, websites and email addresses.

Presenting a professional image can also increase our sense of pride in our own work and the feeling of being in a team. It can be an important step in introducing a new generation into the farm business.



BUSINESS IMAGE

QUESTION #1: What message do we want to convey with our business image?

QUESTION #2: What do we need to do to communicate this message to our business stakeholders?



BRANDING AND IMAGE

SMART AND SIMPLE FARM BUSINESS

LEVEL

01

SMART AND SIMPLE

If you are a sole trader or running a smaller farm business that sells mainly into commodity type markets your need for business branding is possibly low. You may also want to keep a lower profile, that's okay too. So what is the minimum you can get away with, while still presenting as professional to those you deal with.

You will need:

- A registered business name. If you are not trading under your own name, you will need to register your business name. See <https://asic.gov.au/for-business/registering-a-business-name/>
- A respectable email address related to your name or business name
 - eg kellytrust@gmail.com or pjkelly@bigpond.com. Drop the email addresses that relate to nicknames or could be offensive eg collingwoodlover@hotmail.com or spanner69@yahoo.com
- An email signature with your name, business name and contact number. They save a lot of typing. These are pretty simple to set up within your email management software such as Outlook or gmail. They also have templates that you can use and copy. Most corporate type signatures include a position title, in farming family business this could feel a bit awkward. If it does not feel right for you, leave it out. Here is a simple example

Paul Kelly
0457 585 953
Kelly Family Trust
"Old Boggabilla"
Nyngan West NSW 2568

- A template for letters with your business details
- A registered domain name - if you have some ideas for business growth in the future it is worthwhile registering a domain name, even if you may not use it in the short term.



BRANDING AND IMAGE

PROFESSIONAL BUSINESSES, HAPPY TO STAND OUT

LEVEL

02

PROFESSIONAL FARM BUSINESS

Presenting a more professional image can increase pride for those who work in the business and potentially improve connections and relationships with other businesses.

Things to consider:

- A business logo - This does not have to be too fancy you can design one yourself online, but I would recommend using a graphic designer. They get the colours right, can design something that will look good at different sizes (signage and workshirts), can give you various version and represent good value for money.
- Logo on uniforms - screen printed or embroidered
- Logo on invoices and correspondence - all accounting systems will have the ability to upload your logo into the tax invoice template
- A website - at this level you can probably build one yourself using something like Square Space, Wix or Crazy domains. They work on a template basis so you can click to change photos and text to suit what you are after. Build a one page website, most access these days is on phones and this allows for a longer scroll.
- An email address with your own domain name eg paul@kellytrust.com.au accounts@kellytrust.com.au.
- A Facebook page. This can remain relatively static if you like, but a few posts can give prospective employees or customers and idea of your business.



BRANDING AND IMAGE

ESTABLISHED AND PROFESSIONAL

LEVEL

03

ESTABLISHED AND PROFESSIONAL

If your farming business is selling directly to clients (stud stock or direct marketing), is of a corporate scale or if contracting is the main focus of the business you may wish to have more of a focus on branding.

At this level things to consider over and above the other levels are

- A professional website containing reviews and testimonials, potential downloadable information on your product or service
- Professional photography (to illustrate website or brochures etc)
- Facebook page - regularly updated
- Instagram page - can replicate content with Facebook
- Logos on machinery and vehicles
- Property signage matching corporate image

There are industry based specialists who can take care of a lot of this for you, they might be very important in your industry or if you are selling stud stock. Look to see what your peers are doing and ask them who they used for help.

If you have staff or younger generations working with you, it is important to be clear on your social media policy. You might have seen lots of people posting pictures of themselves dancing on tractors, having lunch on top of moving headers, doing unsafe things on silos. Explain how in your business these sorts of actions will cost them their job. Also explain how posting these sorts of videos to social media will also damage their future employment prospects. It might impress some mates and get a few likes but farmers and contractors just will not want to give them a job.

Conversations like this can feel awkward, especially if you are having them with people you consider your equals in terms of experience and age. Like a first kiss, the more you do it, the better at it you get.

