

# HOW TO MARKET YOURSELF



## AS AN INTERIM



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# Simply having skills Is no guarantee of success

Just like a great product won't succeed without proper marketing, having strong skills, experience and a solid track record doesn't guarantee success as an interim.

This is where a lot of aspiring interims get it wrong.

They assume it's enough to update their CV and send it out to a few interim providers. It isn't.

Interim work is heavily relationship-led, and most opportunities never go near an agency.

On average, only around 20-25% of interim assignments are placed through service providers. The majority are secured directly with clients.

That means if you're only relying on agencies, you're automatically limiting your chances.

To succeed, you need to think of yourself as a service, not just a candidate. You're effectively running your own business, and that comes with a level of visibility, positioning and consistency that many people underestimate.

It's not about spamming your CV everywhere either. It's about being clear on what you offer, who you help, and making sure the right people know you exist.

On top of that, many providers tend to prioritise proven interims, making it even harder to break in if you're new to the market.

That's why building your own network, staying visible, and actively promoting your value is so important. The more people who understand what you do and trust you to deliver, the more likely you are to be brought in when the right opportunity comes up.





# Marketing yourself effectively Is a critical component of success

For a lot of people, this part can feel uncomfortable.

If you've never had to actively market yourself before, it's easy to feel a bit out of your depth or unsure where to start. Most professionals are used to being judged on their work, not on how well they position themselves.

But it doesn't need to be complicated.

You're not trying to become a marketing expert. You're simply making it easier for the right people to understand what you do, where you add value, and why they should bring you in.

This section is here to simplify that process and give you practical ways to approach it with confidence.

At its core, effective self-marketing is about consistency and clarity. It's about showing up in the right places, staying visible, and making sure your message is easy to understand.

The time you invest in this pays off quickly – and not just in winning work, but in the quality and consistency of opportunities that come your way.

**Done properly, it has a direct impact on your interim career:**

## **01. Less unwanted downtime**

You reduce the gaps between assignments because you're consistently in front of the right people.

## **02. More control and confidence**

You start to enjoy the space between roles, knowing you can generate opportunities when you need them.

## **03. Better quality assignments**

You're no longer forced to take the first role that comes up – you can be more selective and focus on the right fit.

Over time, this shift is what separates reactive interims from those who build long-term, sustainable careers.



# Marketing your company

Even if you're the only person in your limited company, you still need to wear multiple hats.

One of those is the marketing hat.

A simple shift that helps a lot of interims is to think of it as marketing your company, not yourself. It sounds minor, but it changes your mindset. You become more objective, more focused, and ultimately more effective in how you position what you offer.

Defining your product

A lot of interim managers describe themselves by their previous job title.  
"I'm an Interim Finance Director."

Or they list out their qualities and experience.  
"I'm a results focused project manager with strong commercial awareness."

That works to a point, especially when you're dealing with service providers or writing a CV.

But it's not what grabs a client's attention.

Clients aren't looking for a title. They're looking for a solution.  
The interims who stand out are the ones who clearly position themselves around the problems they solve. Problems the client already recognises and wants fixed.

For example, you might specialise in helping organisations relocate operations to lower cost locations. Or supporting businesses through outsourcing or insourcing an IT function.

That is far more compelling than a generic title.

Most people prefer to buy from a specialist rather than someone who does a bit of everything.



# Marketing your company



Think about it like this. If you had severe back pain and were faced with a shelf full of painkillers, you wouldn't spend long choosing. You'd go straight for the one that clearly says it targets back pain.

That's exactly how clients think.

A common concern is that specialising limits your opportunities. In reality, it tends to do the opposite.

Yes, your target market becomes more focused. But your chances of winning work within that market increase significantly because your value is clearer and easier to understand.

You can still have more than one specialism. Just keep them clearly defined and position them separately. Otherwise, you risk coming across as too general.

## How to define your product

To get clear on your positioning, focus on this:

### 01. What problems have you actually solved?

Not just job responsibilities. Real problems.

What was happening before you came in?

What changed after?

What did you actually do that made the difference?

### 02. Who has those problems?

What types of organisations face them?

Are there enough of them to form a market?

And importantly, do they see solving that problem as urgent or important?

### 03. What do you enjoy solving?

Where do your strengths and interest overlap?

The best positioning usually sits where you're both good at something and actually enjoy doing it.





# Identifying your market

People can't bring you in if they don't know you exist.

That's the starting point.

For interim managers, one of the biggest challenges is simply creating enough visibility in the market. And the reality is, you're not the only one trying to do it. There are plenty of others competing for the same attention, so it's easy to get lost if you're not deliberate about how you position yourself.

You may have heard of the "Rule of 7" in marketing. The idea is that someone needs to see or hear your message multiple times before it actually sticks.

Whether it's seven or not isn't the point. The point is consistency.

A single message, sent once, won't do much. You need to show up more than once, in more than one place, before people start to recognise and remember you.

Most interims don't have huge marketing budgets or teams behind them. So instead of trying to reach everyone, you're far better off focusing your efforts.

That means being clear on who your market actually is.

There's also another reason this matters.

People don't just buy specialists in terms of what they do. They buy specialists in who they do it for.





# Identifying your market

For example, if a practice manager at a large accountancy firm is looking to grow their business, they're far more likely to engage someone who understands that environment. Someone who has done it before, in similar firms, with similar challenges.

That relevance is what makes the difference.

A common mistake is trying to keep things too broad to "not miss out" on opportunities. In reality, it usually has the opposite effect.

When your market is too wide, your message becomes vague. And when your message is vague, people don't remember you.

When you narrow your focus, everything becomes clearer. Your messaging improves, your visibility increases, and you're more likely to be recognised as the right person when a need comes up.

You can absolutely have more than one target market or specialism. Just keep them distinct and position them separately.

Otherwise, you risk blending into the crowd as someone who does a bit of everything, but isn't known for anything in particular.





# Factors to consider when selecting your target market

You're most likely to succeed in a market where three things are clear:

- **Competence** – you know what you're talking about
- **Credibility** – you've done it before, or something very similar
- **Compatibility** – you understand how they operate, speak their language, and fit their culture

If you've got all three, you're already in a strong position.

From there, it's about narrowing things down.

There are plenty of ways to define your target market, but some of the most useful are:

- **Size** – this could be turnover, headcount, or level of complexity
- **Industry** – the sector they operate in
- **Stage** – start-up, growth, turnaround, maturity
- **Location** – regional, national, or international
- **Typical challenges** – growth, restructuring, regulatory pressure, outsourcing, transformation

The key is to be specific enough that your message feels relevant, but not so narrow that you limit yourself unnecessarily.

That said, one factor gets overlooked more than anything else.

Do you actually want to work in that market?

You can tick every box on paper, but if the interest isn't there, it shows. And if it shows, it becomes harder to build relationships, stay consistent, and ultimately win work.





# Routes to market

Once you're clear on your message and your market, the next step is getting in front of the right people.

This is the part a lot of interims avoid.

Mainly because it feels like selling.

But there's no getting around it. If people don't see you, hear from you, or come across you in the right places, you won't get considered.

That doesn't mean doing everything.

You could easily fill your week with networking events, online groups, and conversations that go nowhere. The focus should always be on quality over volume.

It's only worth your time if it's putting you in front of:

- Decision makers who need, or are likely to need, your services
- People who influence those decision makers

Some markets have very clear routes that work.

There might be specific conferences everyone attends. Certain publications they all read. Communities where conversations actually lead to work.

Understanding your market properly helps you identify these faster and avoid wasting time elsewhere.

It's also worth being honest about how you prefer to operate.

Yes, the client comes first. But your approach still needs to be something you can do consistently.

Some people are strong on direct outreach. Others are better in person, speaking at events, or building visibility through content.

There's no single "right" way. What matters is that you choose a few routes that work, and stick with them.





# Example Market Routes

## Example routes to market

Here are some of the most common routes interims use:

- Direct outreach – email or phone
- Referrals from past clients, contacts, and partners
- Industry and professional associations
- Conferences and events
- Other interims operating in the same space
- Interim service providers
- Alumni networks (universities, business schools)
- Investors and VC networks
- Management consultancies

You don't need to use all of them.

Pick the ones that align with your market and play to your strengths, then focus on doing them well.



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