

# LEGAL SURGERY

agentbase  
THE UK SALES AGENT REGISTER

## What is the secret to a successful agency?

PANDORA™  
crocs™

**It's the question that all principals and agents would love to know the answer to but, unfortunately, there isn't a magic formula that can guarantee that an agency will be successful. However, there are some products that have achieved tremendous success in the UK using the agency model, such as Crocs shoes and the Pandora range of jewellery. What can we learn from these and other successful agencies?**

The first point is a common sense one. Put a good product together with the right agent at the right time. With Crocs, for example, the shoes were becoming popular in the US but Crocs had no footprint in the UK or the rest of Europe. Mr Anderson and Mr Albrecht had excellent connections with shoe and fashion retailers in the UK and immediately saw the potential of Crocs shoes in the UK market. They got in touch with Crocs and became Crocs' agents in the UK. They were able to utilise their connections to quickly build up the Crocs brand in the UK from zero to being one of the must have items in a very short space of time. Popularity levels were phenomenal.

It's not always possible to have a product which has such mass appeal, but that doesn't mean it can't be successful within

a specific industry. Engaging an agent who has the right connections can be tremendously beneficial. It is also very important to give that agent the support they need. Again, there is an element of common sense to this but giving the agent the marketing materials, product samples and other support they need makes their job easier.

Motivating the agent is equally as important – if they act for an organisation and/or a product that they believe in, it can make a real difference to their performance. There are a

number of elements to this, from getting the right remuneration package to building a strong relationship

between principal and agent. There is no magic formula for that either – you have to find what works best for you. However, there does seem to be one common strand for a successful agency and that is good communication between the principal and the agent. That applies in the good times and also in bad times. Performance is much stronger when the principal and the agent are pulling in the same direction and are both focussed on the success of the product, than when there is friction between them and their focus shifts to what the other is or isn't doing.

The method you use to advertise your product to the market can also be very important. Much will depend on the type of product you have and the market you are targeting but the importance and ever changing nature of social media should not be underestimated, particularly if your product is aimed at younger demographics.

We can regularly see how social media is used to build a real groundswell of support or opposition on a specific subject. This has been seen recently where certain airlines have faced a backlash from the public when they have handled delicate situations poorly.

Contracts are put in place to set out the rights and obligations of principals and agents, but the relationship between the parties is often one of the keys to a successful agency.

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