



**HIDDEN
SECRETS
FOR SALES
AND
MARKETING**

RORY SHEEHAN

Hidden Secrets For Sales And Marketing

Dedication

This book is dedicated to all the entrepreneurs who are serious enough about building their businesses that they are constantly seeking out new and innovative ideas. To those entrepreneurs, small business people, and sales professionals, we congratulate you on your efforts and wish you much success.

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Disclaimer: The book is intended for information purposes only. The ideas and opinions presented are solely the ideas and opinions of the individual author and do not necessarily reflect the ideas or opinions of any other contributor to this book. The ideas and opinions expressed are not intended to replace sound professional advice. Before you take action regarding your business, you are encouraged to contact a professional who can properly guide you on the specifics of your business. Should you choose to use any information presented in any article in this book, you do so at your own risk. You accept full and personal responsibility for your own decision.

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Want To Increase Your Sales? Build Psychological Debt

Tim Connor, CSP

Would you like people to do business with you because they like you, trust you, owe you, believe in you, or for some other very important reason? All of these familiar reasons have varying degrees of importance and value when trying to secure and retain business in today's competitive world. The idea I am about to share with you makes all of them inconsequential. So let me get to it.

If you had one single technique for ensuring that people would buy from you again and again, or that your boss would promote you on your terms, not his or hers, or that your competitors would sit around their conference table at midnight, night after night, agonizing over how to successfully compete with you when you easily take business away from them while, at the same time, making it impossible for them to take business away from you – would you be interested? Read on. What I am about to share with you can guarantee your continued success. When you finish reading, you may say to yourself, it can't be that easy! But, after using this technique for my entire career, I am here to tell you: It is.

The most valuable lesson I learned happened over forty years ago, in my early career. I was failing in the insurance business: I didn't sell anything in six months and I'm surprised it took my manager that long to terminate me. But, I'm getting ahead of myself, so let me make a very long story short to illustrate the essence of this tremendous career idea.

In almost every sales presentation that I gave to prospects back in those days, I kept hearing things like, "Tim, you are really good at this." "You are going to be really successful in this business." "You really know your stuff." "You have a great future ahead of you in sales." Kind words from my prospects, YES; sales, NO. So in total desperation, I met with a good

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friend who was also in the insurance business; he was one of the most successful and talented insurance people in the country at that time. Larry was making over a million dollars a year selling insurance.

I shared my frustrating plight with him. I told him, basically, that I was getting lots of compliments, but no sales. This was his advice:

“Tim, when you give a sales presentation to a prospect, are you nice to them?” Do you give them the most important commodity you have, your time? Do you educate them? Do you give them the benefit of your experience?”

My answers to all of his questions were, yes.

So Larry explained, “Here is what is happening. You are building a psychological debt with these people. Essentially they owe you something and they don’t want to owe you, especially if they have no intention of buying, so they want the debt paid before you leave. So they pay off this emotional or psychological debt with a compliment. Here’s the key: Once you accept their compliment, th

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compliment, you leave the debt still there.”

Larry continued, “Now, when you get a compliment *and* an order, you simply say, ‘Thank you very much.’”

This one piece of advice has done more for my success in sales and in business as a speaker and trainer than any other idea or education I have ever experienced. I have read every sales book I could get my hands on. I know, personally, most of the celebrity sales trainers. I have a sales audio library valued at more than twenty-five thousand dollars. And I can honestly tell you that this one technique, when mastered, is more valuable than any of the above for the galvanizing impact it can have on your life and career, regardless of whether you are in sales or not.

Consistently using this approach in your business will do two very important things for you. One, it will competitor-proof your business, making it all but impossible to lose business, no matter what your competitor’s tactics are. And two, it will help you easily take business away from your competitors.

Let me give you a few brief examples of how I still use this idea forty years after receiving Larry’s advice.

Example #1: I see a great article in a business magazine that effectively addresses a current and/or difficult issue a client or prospect is facing. I send them a copy of the article with a brief note, “Bob, I thought this might interest you.”

Keep in mind, you don’t build psychological debt when you sell something to a customer or when you solve one of their problems that relates to your product or service. The only time you build debt is when you send the clear message, “I am interested in your success, I care about your business, whether it has anything to do with what I sell or not.”

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Back to my example. Do you think that when Bob gets this article, the debt has just notched up a bit?

Example #2: How about if, a few weeks later, I send him an audio CD by a speaker or trainer (could even be a competitor of mine) that gives him loads of great ideas on how to deal with his challenge? More debt? Yes.

Example #3: What if, a few weeks after that, I send him a copy of a best-selling business book by another author that gives him even more information? Even more debt? Yes. What if I send him a copy of my book, *You Call That Selling! (91 Dumb Things Salespeople Do to Sabotage Their Success and 91 Smart Things to Do Instead?)* See the point?

In order to make this idea work for you, you need to do two things. First, you need to know what their problems or interests are – and I’m not talking about sending them a dozen golf balls; any idiot can do that. And I’m not talking about their problems as they relate to your products and services. Second, you need to make it a consistent strategy and process, not something you do once in a while when you need to increase your business.

I will guarantee you that, sooner or later, this debt will be paid in full by him in some way. He hires me to speak. He buys a bunch of my books. He recommends me to a friend. Here’s the problem: Once he has hired me, the debt is paid, and I need to start building it all over again. The trick is to get it and keep it so high that it can never be paid off.

If you called a number of my clients and asked them why they hired me to speak to their groups, you would hear things like, “I can’t get the debt paid.” “He just keeps on building the debt.”

Eventually you can trade this debt in for almost whatever you want. Things like, no resistance to price increases. Late deliveries don’t become relationship busters. Quality problems or product shortcomings don’t

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eliminate you from consideration.

Are you getting lots of kind remarks about your ability, expertise, and knowledge, but no sales or customers? Start building psychological debt ... and start today. Get creative, think outside of the box. Keep asking yourself, what are my customer's and prospect's problems, needs, concerns, and challenges that have nothing to do with my products or services?

I will guarantee you that fewer than one in ten thousand people understand and apply this idea. Who are they? They have attended one of my boot camps or been in one of my seminars.

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Gold Calling.

James Neill

For all of us who have sat in front of the phone at 8:00 on a Monday morning with a list of new contacts to call. We know the feeling in the pit of our stomach.

A fear of impending rejection. What we also know is that cold calls work.

My mathematical formula is 70 connected calls equals 2 interviews. 4 interviews equals one sale. One sale is worth X amount.

So cold calls takes an amazing amount of work to make it work.

One thing I have learned is start calling cold calls, Gold Calls. This word replacement makes all the difference in the world. It puts the emphasis on the desired result instead of the burden. And when you really think about it you are making money sooner or later on the calls you make. So keep the focus on the Gold not the Cold.

Second, rehearse your copy lines to say on the phone. Then put it down. Just use it for a refresher so you'll keep sounding natural on the phone.

Third, remember what the famous Psychologist William James said. Use the "as if" principle. Act as if, you got the interview.

Fourth, if it's to be it's up to (put your name here). In other words, force discipline on yourself to be a big producer of Gold Call Effort.

Fifth, remember to just sell the interview and make sure you are selling the interview to the qualified buyer of your product.

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Then let me leave you with this thought. Don't let rejection hold you back. This is just a numbers game. You make the numbers and you win the prize.

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5 Strategies for Getting Clients Now

Sandra Martini

I received an email from a struggling business owner the other day. She's good at what she does, but is in danger of closing her doors after being in business for over 3 years due to a lack of long term clients.

The problem? There are actually two:

1. **She's not *consistently* marketing to get new clients** (filling her funnel, pipeline, pyramid) and
2. **She suffers from distraction** (yes. . .it is like a disease).

She and I are addressing the above problems for the long term. The most immediate need, however, is getting clients in the door.

Remember the famous quote by Albert Einstein:

Insanity: Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

To get clients quickly, you must be willing to take a step outside your comfort zone – take a big gulp and confidently move forward.

1. **Make time to market for new clients.**

While she thinks she's busy now, a quick look at her time allocation shows she could tighten up her day to insure she's *productive*, not just busy.

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When you're just starting out or in need of new clients, you should spend up to half your day performing marketing activities.

Do what you need to do to make this happen – after all, without clients, you don't have a business.

2. Get clear on the RESULTS and tell everyone.

Write a letter to everyone you know (friends, family, former clients, prospects) and educate (not sell) them on your ideal clients and the results you provide (NOT what you do – no one really cares) and ask them if they know anyone who may benefit from your services.

People like to be seen as a good source of information – you are giving them the ability to help others by connecting them with you.

3. Partner up!

In the online world, we call it “joint ventures” – it can be called the same thing in the offline world.

Make a list of other small businesses who offer complementary, not competing, services and contact them about mutual referrals. For example, a bookkeeper should call CPA firms and offer bookkeeping services to their clients (especially at this time of year in preparation for tax season).

4. Get out of the office.

It's time to get out of the house/office and do some actual face-to-face networking and speaking.

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Groups are always looking for speakers – give your local Chamber of Commerce, Real Estate Broker, BNI and Rotary Club a call and offer to speak on a specialized topic linked to the services you provide.

5. Advertise to those who know you.

If you are sending out an email newsletter (or any type of CONSISTENT communications) to your prospects, let them know that you have a few openings for new clients.

You never know who is thinking about working with you and just needs to know you have the space.

These steps are designed to get you clients quickly. Once you solve your immediate “client crunch”, it’s time to put processes in place to insure you have clients in your pipeline consistently and remember, by not marketing consistently, you are denying those who need you the most!

Your Coaching Challenge If you’re currently looking for new clients, pick one of the above items to do EACH DAY of the coming week – starting tomorrow.

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Warming Up Cold Prospects

Kevin Adam

Cold calls – some people are terrified of them, and some swear they’re a great way to get customers.

But picking up that phone can be tough for a lot of people. Putting that receiver to your ear can feel just about like you’re sticking your head into a tiger’s mouth. Feeling like that is just not a great way to start a business call.

What if there was an alternative? What if there was a way to “warm up” that prospect?

Fortunately, there is.

Tell them who you are and what you do

I have a simple suggestion: warm them up with a letter. Not a “hey-buddy-how-you-doin’” letter. Instead, a business to business direct mail letter that tells them who you are, and even answers an objection or two.

Doing this warms up the prospect more than you may realize. In your letter, they’ll learn a few things about you. Things like:

- Your name, and what you do.
- Why you’re contacting them, and what you think you can do for them.
- That there are good reasons to do business with you.
- That what you offer will help them, and/or their business.
- The answers to your most common objection or two.
- Include a call to action.

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All on one side of a page.

Get a great response – use a pro

If you aren't comfortable writing letters on your own, there is a very easy solution: hire a professional copywriter. An experienced copywriter will be able to fit all the above, and more, into a one-sided letter.

Warming up the prospect doesn't end with writing a letter, tossing it in the mailbox, and praying for a call. While the letter is important, there is a process to follow to help the letter do it's job. That process, while simple, is at least as important as the letter.

A simple process to getting more appointments

Here is how the letter fits into the process:

- Compile your prospect contact data, and write a letter (or have it written by a copywriter – *highly* recommended).
- Print and send out a limited number of letters each week. *Limited* because you'll be calling the recipients, and you can only make (or only *want* to make) a limited number of calls during your marketing time.
- Mail them to arrive on *Tuesday* if at all possible. This way, you can call them on Friday, or the next Monday – but not later.
- Keep a copy of the letter in front of you as you call.
- Enjoy the increased number of appointments.

Let's look at why this works. First, you've introduced yourself on paper. They know who you are, what you do, why you contacted them, and what you can do for them. I'd say that's a pretty good start considering you haven't even picked up the phone yet.

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Plus, you've answered an objection or two that they were likely to have. So, at this point, they're "warmed up." They may not be interested in or need what you have to offer, but they know at least what you do and why you called.

A small cost with a great return on investment

I wrote a letter of this type for a client, and increased the number of appointments they booked from making calls from one in fifteen to about one in four. That's quite a difference. And all it took was a letter, some printing, and some postage.

Combined with some good, old-fashioned "pull" marketing (advertising that brings customers to you), this could, if properly done, dramatically increase your business fairly quickly.

That kind of result seems to me to be worth some time, paper, and postage. Try it, and let me know how it works for you – or if you need a responsive letter to send to your prospects.

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The Foundation Of A Salesperson

Diane Helbig

My father was the quintessential salesperson. He believed completely in his product. He was confident but not arrogant. He truly cared about the well-being of his prospects and clients. And they knew it. It was a pleasure to watch him interact with his customers. Needless to say, he was very successful.

Let's explore each of these aspects of the successful salesperson in more detail.

1. Belief in one's product or service.

If you are going to sell something, you should believe it is the best thing out there. Understand what makes it stand out; what its benefits truly are. Be realistic. If there is something better on the market - know what it is and what makes it better. Then ask yourself – can I really sell my product?

I don't know about you, but I would find it difficult to sell something I didn't believe in completely. What you believe emanates from you. If you aren't completely sold, people will know it. Then they won't want what you have to sell.

On a separate note, your knowledge of and belief in your product will provide you with your marketing message. What you know and believe about your product or service is what you want to share with others. Small business owners have an advantage here. They believed so much in something that they were compelled to start a business around it. All that is left for them to do is share.

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2. Confidence not arrogance

This is critically important. Being confident – in yourself, in your product or service, in your message – is essential. However, being overly confident or arrogant will destroy you. Arrogance leads people to ‘sell’. To talk instead of listen. After all, they believe they know best.

You simply have to think about your experiences with arrogant people to know this is true. They’re self-absorbed but not self-aware. A confident person doesn’t have anything to prove. They possess a depth of belief so they don’t feel the need to convince anyone of anything. You see, arrogance is born from insecurity – it’s overcompensating for what one doesn’t know or believe.

3. Truly care about the well-being of your prospects and clients

It is this caring that creates an environment where you are actively listening, and processing what you are hearing. You are realistic, honest, and capable of seeing things from the client’s point of view. It’s basic respect. You aren’t trying to ‘sell’ them. Rather, you are trying to help them solve a problem.

You care about their well-being when you:

- Care that they get their problem solved – whether YOU can solve it or not
- Care that they pay a fair price
- Care that they make an informed (not coerced) decision

You can see how when you believe in your product or service, are confident in yourself, as well as your message, and care about your client’s well-being, you will develop outstanding relationships. It is those relationships that will bring you quality business for years to come.

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Who Else Wants More Referrals?

Stephanie Wand

Getting new clients by referral is one of the most effective, simple, and low cost ways to grow your business. So how many referrals have you received lately? How often do you ask for referrals?

It's exciting to open an e-mail or pick up the phone to find that unexpectedly someone you know wants to introduce you to a potential new client. Some people will give you referrals without you asking for them. And while that's great, it is an unpredictable situation.

Another relevant question is how many referrals have you given lately? By giving referrals you understand the process better and demonstrate that it's not only about getting. And if you're like me, you enjoy connecting people who can help each other.

The people you give referrals to may not be the same people who give you referrals. The point is, what comes around goes around in its own way.

In order for referrals to be an effective marketing strategy, you must create a structured system and stick to it. This is the best way to generate referrals on a consistent basis. Asking for referrals randomly or when you remember won't cut it.

I know from my clients that sometimes they are reluctant to ask for referrals because they are afraid of being intrusive or pushy. Find a way that feels right for you, and remember it's just a question. A great time to ask is when someone compliments your work.

In addition, think about asking clients before, during, and after they buy from you. Asking for referrals is like any other skill, the more you do it the easier and more natural it becomes.

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WHO TO ASK

- Current clients
- People in your professional networks
- Strategic alliance partners

WHAT TO ASK

This is actually very important and it's not just about semantics. Don't ask someone this question: "Do you know anyone who might need my services?"

Why? Because it's vague and makes it difficult for the person to come up with 'someone' because you're asking for 'anyone.'

Make it easy for people to give you referrals. Ask them something specific that is simple to answer. Ask something like this: "Who is one business owner you know who may need help attracting more clients to his/her business?" See the difference?

You need to be clear about the next step you would like the person giving you a referral to take. You can ask them to make the introduction via e-mail and copy you. Or you can ask the person to phone the person before you make contact. Another idea is to ask the person to direct the interested person to your website to obtain some preliminary information.

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HOW TO ASK

There are loads of opportunities to ask for referrals. Decide what you feel comfortable doing and commit to taking action. Think about asking for referrals:

- * In person
- * On the telephone
- * In an e-mail
- * Using snail mail (postcard or letter) and follow up with a phone call

In general people you know are happy and willing to help you by giving you referrals. But, remember it is you who wants something so it's up to you to check back about your inquiry. People are busy and can forget about your request. A friendly reminder can do wonders.

WHAT TO GIVE TO PEOPLE WHO SEND YOU REFERRALS WHO BECOME CLIENTS

Many times the people who send you referrals will let you know. But that's not always the case. That is why you must ask everyone who contacts you how they heard about your business. That way you are always able to thank people who give you referrals.

There are infinite ways to thank people who refer clients to your business. Be creative and come up with things that are valuable to them. Here are a few ideas:

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- > One of your products for free
- > Free additional services
- > Recognition for them in your ezine or blog
- > 2 for the price of 1 to an upcoming event
- > Training or education to the people who give you referrals

When you know the people who give you referrals well, you can share more personalized gifts like:

- > Concert tickets
- > Coffee or tea with a cup
- > Gourmet food basket
- > Designer chocolate
- > A relevant book
- > Movie passes
- > Restaurant certificate for lunch or dinner

Gift or no gift, at the very least do say thank you. Pick up the phone, send an e-mail, or drop a handwritten note in the mail. If you like referrals, and want to keep them coming, be sure to thank the people who send them to you.

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Are you starting to see how creating a referral system is an easy and effective way to grow your business? Give referrals, ask for referrals on a consistent basis, and thank everyone who sends you referrals. And discover how attracting more clients has never been so fun!

© Stephanie Ward, 2008

Stephanie Ward is the Marketing Coach for Entrepreneurs who want to set their profits on fire! Grab your copy of the FREE Special Report '7 STEPS TO ATTRACT MORE CLIENTS IN LESS TIME' plus free monthly profit tips at: <http://www.fireflycoaching.com>

The Key to Attracting Clients

Michael J. Beck

The first key is to understand that people will be attracted to you by WHO YOU ARE, rather than by WHAT YOU DO. While there will be a small group of people who will do business with you strictly based on your depth of knowledge, most people - in fact, the majority of people - will do business with you because of who you are. Having good knowledge of your products, services, and industry is important. And having strong technical skills is useful and important as well. It's just that being knowledgeable and skillful isn't sufficient.

Let me offer some proof. I'm willing to bet that we've all known one or more professionals who were an absolute fountain of knowledge regarding product and service info. And yet, they went out of business due to lack of clients. In contrast, I'm also willing to bet that we've also known professionals who really weren't all that sharp when it came to understanding the details. And yet, these professionals built and sustained large businesses. The reason, of course, is that clients were attracted to them for who they were, more so than what they knew.

So, how do we maximize "Who We Are"? We maximize and amplify who we are by continually improving our communication skills, our social skills, and our integrity. In short, "who we are" is defined by our people skills. When we have good people skills, we:

- Communicate clearly and cleanly
- Are relatable
- Do what we say we're going to do

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- Are professional in attitude and manner
- Have a positive attitude
- Take an interest in others
- Treat people with respect

How do we improve in these areas? The easiest way to start is by simply being more mindful of each of those people skills. Just by drawing our attention to each aspect of good people skills, we can begin to improve. However, one of the challenges most of us have in improving ourselves, is that often we're blind to what we do and say. We operate on "auto-pilot", and as such, aren't even aware of how we come across to others. Additionally, how we think we come across to others doesn't really matter. What matters is how others feel about us. Therefore, an excellent way of improving our people skills is to enlist the help of others. Ask people around you to help. Ask a spouse or significant other. (Hey! They're always hoping to improve us anyway, right?) Ask a fellow professional. Ask a manager. Tell them you're working to improve your people skills, and 1) ask them which people skills they feel you're really good at, and 2) ask them which ones they feel are candidates for improvement. Then, ask them to point out to you any words, actions and reactions which represent opportunities for improvement as they arise. Not only will people be happy to help, but they will respect you for your efforts.

The second key component in attracting clients is actually getting out, so that people get a chance to see you, know you, and be attracted to you! The reality is that when you are in your office behind your desk, prospects never get to experience you and those people skills you possess. The result? If you try to get clients from behind your desk, you end up having

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to pursue them. On the other hand, when you get out and allow people to interact with you, you end up attracting them.

The way to successfully attract clients is to improve your people skills, and get out and meet people. I know it's a pretty simple formula, but ... it works like magic.

Written by Michael Beck, Executive Coach and Trainer. He can be reached at 866-385-8751 or <http://www.clientmonkey.com> Get your free program on "Power Recruiting & Prospecting" at: <http://www.powerrecruitingandprospecting.com>

Getting Free Publicity

Ian Marsh

Imagine, waking up at 6am in the morning, going to your front yard to get the local paper and on the front page you see your picture and a story telling about how you went above and beyond the call of duty to help an 82 year old pensioner. She was living on her own in an old fibro house that nearly burnt down due to old and faulty wiring. The house was a potential death trap.

It went on to explain how you rewired her switchboard free of charge because she had just asked you to turn off her electricity as she only had \$20.00 in her bank account and could not afford to get the wiring fixed.

The next thing you know, your phone goes crazy with calls from people who had read that article. These people want you to do work for them. Why? Because you now have celebrity status in your local area and people will feel that they can trust you. They only want you to look after them, you showed that you care and have integrity in this cut throat world.

This is a simple example of what many of us do in our businesses time after time without thinking about it because it is the right thing to do, but rarely does the world hear about it because you just get on with the challenge of running your own business and hope that there, but for the grace of God go I.

Well what I am about to reveal is how you can capitalize on this good community work that you do. It is very important that you help others around you where you can, but there is nothing wrong with making the most out of the situation to help yourself as well.

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"How do I do that?" You might ask. Well, to tell you the truth it's not that hard. Just like you might sit there and wonder to yourself "Where Do I get my next customer from?" the poor old reporter has to come up with story after story, day in , day out, Year in Year out. That is why sometimes the stories you see in the paper are very ordinary to say the least.

They want to hear from you, they want to know what you are up to, they need you, because wether you realise this or not they are writing about your world and you are a very real part of it.

I found out this lesson five years ago, and since then I have been on national TV twice (for 15 minutes both times), I have been on 2WS, 2GB, 2UE, ABC, local newspapers etc etc.

How much did I pay for all of this exposure? Nothing, Nada, Nil. I have had hundreds of thousands of dollars of free publicity because I have been proactive and let the media know about me and the things that I do.

So I thought I would share one of my best kept secrets with you today so you can get your story out into the world.

How Do I Get Thousands Of Dollars Of Free Advertising?

First off, don't think that you have nothing to talk about.

1) If you're an electrician, you could talk about the importance of having a safety switch installed in your home, and the things you can do to make your home safe for children. (especially if you hear of someone being electrocuted, or a house burning down.)

If you're a plumber, you can talk about how dangerous Hot water tanks can be and that they can literally blow up if the pressure release valves are not checked and maintained.

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If you're a landscaper you can talk about water conservation tips to make your garden thrive with very little water.

If you're in air conditioning you can talk about the latest advances in energy efficient systems.

2) Once you know what you would like to talk about the next thing is to make sure its not a sales pitch to the reporters. The story should be about educating the public and helping them, the reporters know that you would like publicity so they will look after you if you are the genuine article. But one thing they hate is overt self promotion. If you talk about ME, ME, ME you will not get to first base.

3) So now all you need to do is find out how to make contact with the reporters. Here are a couple of ways that this can happen.

Look in the front page of your local paper for the editor's number. If you go to your local library there is a media directory there that lists all of the local media outlets and contacts for you as well. Also you can email TV stations with your story, such as Today Tonight by going to the internet. There is an email system there where you can email your story straight to the station.

But, to be perfectly honest, nothing is better than the old fashioned telephone. Just pick up the phone, ask for the producer or editor and let them know that you have a story for them.

This is a brief rundown on how you can get free publicity for your company. I can tell you that there is nothing better than someone else writing about you to generate business. This is because it is one thing for you to tell everyone how wonderful you are, some people may believe you, but when someone else writes about how good you are you will be flooded with requests for your services.

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This is a critical part of your marketing strategy, and if done properly will generate FREE advertising that you never could have hoped to achieve yourself.

I hope you are taking these strategies I am sharing with you and developing a simple marketing plan for yourself. I like companies to have at least 10 methods of marketing in their business. This is one of the most powerful tools you will ever use.

Ian Marsh Profit Strategist. streetsmarts@bigpond.com "You Will Build A Million Dollar Business Within 24 Months Implementing My Strategies Guaranteed!"

10 Quick and Easy Ways to Have Regular Contact With Your Clients

Natalie Alaimo

Staying top of my to our clients is very important to ensuring repeat business. Your clients see thousand of advertising messages each and every day. To make sure you and your company are the next choice for their job you need to remain top of mind. In this article I have listed 10 quick and easy ways to have regular contact with your clients.

1. Regular Newsletter

Send your customers a regular newsletter, monthly, weekly or quarterly. Decide on a schedule which will suit you and your customers. Then stick to it! Your newsletter should include information of interest to your target market. Aim for 75% information for your clients and 25% sales and information about your business. You can either use a printed newsletter or email. Remember with email you must get permission before sending to comply with the SPAM Act.

2. Thank You Cards

Everyone likes to feel appreciated, so make sure you send thank you cards and lots of them. Send them for;

- completed jobs
- prompt payment
- when meeting someone new
- referrals

For best results use a company branded card which is hand written including the envelope.

3. WOW Letters

When you notice something special about your clients, send them a WOW letter. It could be a newspaper article about them, or a music cd you know they would love. People buy from people they know, like and trust. So get to know your clients and WOW them with information they want. Again for maximum impact, make it personal, hand written and on a nice company branded stationery. You can see a [sample of our WOW letter](#) here. It's branded to our company but not over the top branding.

4. Pick up the phone

When was the last time you called a client for no reason, just to see how things are going. Make it your aim to call 5 existing clients per week and watch your business soar. We get so caught up in the ease of email and Facebook that no one takes the time to call anymore. Schedule in time each week to make sure this happens.

5. Brainstorming Sessions

Get a group of your clients together and everyone can brainstorm ideas to improve a certain area of their business. It may be marketing, sales, staff training, anything at all. You can guarantee your clients are all going through similar issues, go give them the avenue to assist and be assisted.

6. Seminars and Workshops

Create and deliver a 20-30 min presentation designed to solve your client's problems. Make it information rich and offer a seminar only special. If you are not a confident speaker you can get someone else to present for you. Put on drinks and nibbles and add value to your clients. The best ones are activity based - so your clients achieve a result by the end of the seminar. You could charge for the session with all money donated to your chosen charity.

7. Coffee Catch Ups

Take your top 10 - 20% of clients for coffee or lunch or breakfast. Get to know them better. Males are great at this, conducting business on the golf course. Get to know your clients and care about them and they will do business with you.

8. Networking

Attend and invite your clients to networking functions. Not only do you get a chance to catch up with your clients, you and your clients get the opportunity to meet new business contacts. Make sure you invite them to relevant networking groups. If your client is aiming at retired couples, don't invite them to a Young Guns Lunch. Your clients can also act as a live testimonial for your business. It's a win win situation for both of you.

9. Articles & Tips

We live in an information age and your clients want more and more information. Write articles and tips (like this one) relevant to your clients and send it to them. Publish them on your website or include them in your newsletter. Articles and tips should be all about your client and nothing about you. The topic must be relevant to your target market so don't send small business marketing information to retired couples.

10. Seasonal Events

Send cards and letters and notes on special events; Easter, Birthday's and Christmas. Hint: To stand out from the crowd send your cards either early or late. ie send your Christmas Cards in October or January or create your own seasonal events. Remember to make them personalised and hand written.

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Unique Selling Proposition

Farhan Ishaq

What is a unique selling proposition? Or put it into another sentence unique buying advantage. It means what is the number 1 reason why should anyone drop everything at once and do business with you.

For example, we all have a favourite hairdressor to go to. Why do we go there? It could be he/she cuts exactly according to your liking. It might be the extra foot massages included in the cost. Or a special VIP morning tea break while getting your hair coloured. Look inside your life and see the reasons why you go to places. That's your USP!

Look around you and find some examples. Federal Express is said to be the most expensive 'start-up' capital company in history - "When it absolutely has to be there overnight.... Fed Express it!"

Having spent more money than ever recorded, charging three times the parcel rate of UPS (United States Postal Service) and budgeting to move 800 parcels on their first day, they actually moved the grand total of eight parcels on day one.

The main reason was they had a poor USP - "Federal Express it because we have our own aeroplanes."

Eventually they redefined their USP from their clients' perspective and came up with a winner which is responsible for there success.

Domino's Pizza was a struggling business started by two university students. One of them decided to move on whilst the other went on to develop a multi-billion dollar empire based on one unique promise - "Piping hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or it's free."

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So let me ask the question, were Domino's the first company to deliver pizza? No! But they cleverly created a unique promise and has now reshaped the pizza industry.

Unfortunately thousands of business owners are not aware why customers attend to their products/services. If they knew they would tell everybody in their advertising and would get a bucket load of customers in no time.

Every business should have one. I'm not saying just better service or better quality. That's part of the norm with every business. I'm talking about going deeper into what your point of difference is with your competitors and even better, provide evidence to support your claim.

Farhan Ishaq (aka Fuzz Ishaq) specializes in teaching people how to rapidly improve their results in marketing their product or service. Fuzz Ishaq has a degree in business and has written over 6,000 sales messages for 153 different industries since 1996. To get instant access to marketing reports, products and LIVE training, visit:

<http://www.ishaqmarketingsolutions.com>

Simple Business Growth

Allen Robertson

10 Quick Simple Ways to grow your Business

1. Find a way to praise and reward your staff, if done properly this will have an extremely positive impact on your business
2. Publish a newsletter (if you are too busy there are companies who will do this for you with minimal input from yourself) make sure it is informative and is not just a disguised sales letter!
3. Make sure your telephone system sells your services when anyone is on hold, this is an inexpensive way for promotions, specials etc.
4. Ask everyone you meet for an extra business card, and explain you need the extra card as you may come across someone who might need their services. (great way to start a strong business relationship)
5. Ask your customers what they value from your service and give them more of this. (reward them for telling you, cinema tickets, meal vouchers etc.)
6. Always have a special promotion for new clients when they first 'sign on the dotted line'
7. Make sure you are known as the 'expert' in your business. Position yourself with talks to local groups, writing articles for your local newspaper etc.
8. Keep your eyes open for advertising that you could modify and use in your business, read every promotion you come across. (look in media which is not in your industry to get new ideas)

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9. Make sure you have a system for thanking your customers, (thank-you cards, cinema tickets, meal vouchers etc.) Make sure you don't lose them.

10. Write articles for your industry publications

Quick Referral Systems:

1. Competition: Run a competition in your local newspaper or other suitable media, the prize should be something from your product range, the main reason is that they have pre-selected themselves as interested in your product. Once you have the entry forms send a letter and explain that they haven't won the competition but they are a winner and include a gift or voucher for your stores. (Make sure the competition winner and you receive press coverage)

2. Box Competition: Similar to number 1. You need to ask local businesses who have similar customers if they will place a competition box in a prominent area, you then run a competition and collect the forms on a weekly basis. (Make sure you provide some reward for the partner business as you are getting access to their customers)

3. Free Advice: This is a simple way to generate interest in your business, it is most suited to the service industry but many people have modified this system for all sorts of business. Basically what you do is offer a Free Advice clinic which will introduce people to your company and the benefits of your product/service. The information needs to be informative and helpful for the participants, again you are looking to develop some 'offering' that will bring them back.

4. Pre-Nuptial Agreement!: This is a method which incentivises the customer to give you referrals as a way of doing business with you,

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providing some form of promotional discount or discount price to the new customers can be helpful in this method.

5. Pre-Nuptial Twist: A chiropractor used a twist on this method by giving the customers FREE treatment if they provide a certain number of referrals. Any professional service provider who advertises can lower their customer acquisition costs dramatically with this method.

6. Barber/BeautyShop: Ask your local barbers to distribute your business cards/vouchers for your business etc.

7. Endorsed Letters: This can be very powerful especially if you have been in business for a time. The concept behind this idea is to get other businesses to endorse your business by letter to their customers, you would normally want to give these potential customers an 'offer' to bring them into the fold. Look for businesses that have similar customers otherwise it won't be effective. (call me if you need to get a template of this type of letter)

8. Thank-You: The concept here is very simple, all you do is make sure you send a thank-you card to everyone you deal with, you include a 'referral only' paragraph at the bottom of the page, this explains you are a local business and don't have large budgets for media advertising. (contact me to get a script if you cannot think of the correct wording for your 'referral only' piece)

9. Charities: Why not sponsor a local event and give money to charity, this will provide good media exposure, remember that you must focus on helping the charity. If people see you are doing this only to benefit your business then you may lose some good will.

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10. Retailers: This can be very effective in shopping centres or high streets, you basically get together with all the other non-competing businesses and provide a card that gives the customers some coupon or voucher for each store. (You could also get the local councils/government involved as they want their shops to be busy)

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10 Ways to Get Customers Referring Your Business

Fiona Adler

Most businesses know that the best way to get new customers is through word-of-mouth recommendations. Almost all of us base a lot of decisions on recommendations because we tend to believe someone who is not trying to sell to us. (Think about the last few purchasing decisions you made - whether it's choosing a restaurant, a tradesperson, or a hairdresser, most of us rely on word-of-mouth to some extent.) But the tricky part about word-of-mouth, is that it's largely out of your hands. However, there are several things you can do to encourage your customers to recommend you to others.

1. **Make sure customers are happy with your service**

This is literally as simple as asking them what they thought of your service. For some businesses it might mean making it policy to ask how the customer's meal was, or calling a few days after a service has been completed to make sure everything is ok. If there was any problem, this gives you the opportunity to find out about it.

2. **Ask them to rate you on the web**

For some businesses this sounds scary but if your customers are happy with you, all you need to do is ask if they'd mind posting a rating on the web for your business. Most people love to feel needed and if they're happy with your service and you've developed some level of rapport with them, they'll be more than happy to help you out. Misty's Diner has been doing this for

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several months and at the time of writing has 120 customer ratings in WOMOW. Obviously we suggest you use WOMOW, but the key is to have your customer ratings in a public forum run by an objective third party. That's what makes them believable!

3. **Ask for personal referrals**

At first glance this can look desperate, but all it means is letting your customers know that your business is built on word-of-mouth and if they know anyone that would be interested in your product/service, to point them in your direction. Later, when they're having dinner with friends, hopefully they'll remember this simple prompt and it's amazing how often a referral will come about.

4. **Let them know some inside secrets**

Give customers something interesting to say to other people. It doesn't have to be particularly ground-breaking stuff either. It could be something about yourself and why you got into this business, the types of clients you deal with, something about a major project you're working on, really anything that gives them the opportunity to tell someone else something they don't already know.

Imagine the difference between saying: "I know a great plumber who might be able to help you out with that" and: "I know a great plumber who specialises in grey water solutions. He was just telling me about a job he just finished where..."

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5. **Keep in contact**

Your customers could be in a position to give you a recommendation at any time, but if they haven't heard from you in years its not likely they'll remember you. The key is to stay in touch through personal phone calls, mailouts, newsletters, emails, lunches, whatever it takes to make sure that when the opportunity arises and a friend asks "do you know a good accountant around here?", your name will be the first they mention.

One way to achieve this and combine with point 2 above is to email your clients saying that you'd like their feedback. Let them know that you're using a website to collect feedback and would really appreciate it if they could rate you (if you want to use WOMOW just include a link to your listing).

6. **Dare to be different**

Another way to ensure your customers remember you is to be different in some way. There's any number of ways you could do this but some businesses I've come across that do this use things like bright uniforms, posting a quote of the day, asking customers to pay what they think is a fair price instead of using a price list, use dramatic packaging, provide a mobile service (instead of in an office), or serve each customer a fresh muffin on arrival. Really this is marketing 101 in terms of setting yourself apart from your competitors, but think of it not just as a way of being better, but as a way of being remembered and talked about.

7. **Let everyone know about your ratings**

When people are checking out your website or in the midst of the

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8. sales process, let them know what your other customers say about you by showing them customer ratings or testimonials. These could be printed out in your office, a link to you WOMOW listing from your website, or included in your written quotes (eg "See what customers are saying about us here xxxx")

9. **Thank people for their recommendations**

When you do get a recommendation, make sure you thank the person and let them know how much it means to you. This could mean phoning the customer that just sent their colleague to visit you, sending a box of chocolates or bottle of wine. When you get ratings on WOMOW, you can post a comment on their rating thanking them for their rating and for using your service - they'll be more inclined to give you more recommendations, plus for everyone else reading, it looks like you really care. And unless the rating is anonymous, you can send them a private email too with a personalised thank-you.

10. **Above all, provide great service**

This underpins everything else, but I can't let it go unmentioned. Sometimes it's easy to get caught up in the mechanics of the business and forget about the customer experience. Be a customer for a day and put yourself in their shoes. What's it like to phone your company, walk into the waiting room, email you, visit your website for the first time? Is there anything you could be doing better? Are there any basics that you're missing? Once you get a few ratings, you'll soon know what aspects of your business

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customers value the most.

11. Go one step extra

I know of one car dealership that provides a lifetime of free carwashing to anyone that buys a car from them. Not only does this provide a great talking point, it ensures the customer remembers them next time they're looking to buy a new car.

If there's something you can do to really wow your customers, they'll be so grateful, they'll look for opportunities to even the score. As they say, the difference between extraordinary and ordinary is the "extra"!

If it's at all possible, make it a policy to do something extra that customers wouldn't expect. Call the next day to see how everything is working out, remember their order from their last visit (or set up a system that does), give them a coffee / wine / mineral water / chocolate on arrival, set up a TV with relevant DVD's in your waiting room, offer a free fitting service, write to them and offer a free maintenance check, give them a free air-fragrance with your service, or allow them to keep something else associated with your business.

Once you start regularly implementing just some of these ideas, the referrals will start flooding in. It's a great way to do business!

Fiona Adler - <http://www.WOMOW.com.au>

WOMOW stands for Word Of Mouth On the Web and it's an Australian website where people share their recommendations with each other. It uses word-of-mouth to help people find the best businesses and avoid the worst, while helping good businesses stand out from the crowd.

Forget Rapport, Get Respect

Rory Sheehan, B.A., B.Ed., M.B.A.

When people talk about the importance of rapport, their focus is often on getting people to like them. That may be helpful if you want more friends, but if you want more business, you want people to respect you, and there is a big difference. You pay people you respect for their knowledge and service. However, you expect friends to help you for free.

Stop trying to be everyone's best friend and start getting respect for being the expert in your field. Unfortunately, many of you may be thinking about the old saying, "people buy from people they like", but there is a limit. It is fine to be helpful, and it is fine to be friends, but you still have to put food on your table. If you are constantly giving away for free what you should be selling, at some point, you will be out of business.

The relationship you want to create should be based on respect for your knowledge and for your professionalism, not based on being a friend. If you want to be respected, then always be professional, and always set professional boundaries.

When someone asks for your opinion or help with something, ask yourself, would a lawyer, an accountant, or a doctor give away advice for free? Absolutely not! If these professionals set professional boundaries, then you must set similar boundaries if you want to be perceived as a professional.

If you want to make a strong living, you need to help people feel comfortable with you, and respect you. This has nothing to do with being their best friend.

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Just like all the parts in your sales presentation, you must prepare and practice what you are going to say when you want to set professional boundaries. Do not leave this to chance. You will only feel awkward and uncomfortable. Take the time to write out what you are going to say and rehearse it several times. This way you will come across as being confident when you let others know of your boundaries.

Rather than getting drawn into a free consulting or coaching session, one simple option is to tell the other person that you would be happy to make an appointment for them to stop by your office. There you can discuss how you can best be of service to them, and how your fee structure works. This sets the boundaries, and will only upset people who were looking for something for free.

Setting boundaries earns you respect, and will earn you a lot more money over time. Now is the time to start acting like other professionals and start setting professional boundaries. People will respect you for it.

Rory Sheehan, B.A., B.Ed., M.B.A. is an award winning trainer, sales coach, and best selling author. Rory's highly successful approach to achieving sales and business results has been featured on television, on radio, in newspapers, and in magazines. To find out more information on Rory's unique approach to sales and business success, visit Rory's website at www.rorysheehan.com or you can email Rory at rory@rorysheehan.com.

How to Transform Prospects into Eager Clients when Selling Business-to-Business Services

By Stuart Ayling

One of the difficulties in selling a service is that potential clients (we'll call them 'prospects' here) often don't know whether they should be using what you provide.

Your prospect has a problem, but they may not understand how your service can help them. And even if they have tried a similar service in the past, or used a competitor, they're still not sure how your service will compare to that experience. They are full of doubts.

Selling services can require a **much more sensitive approach** than selling tangible products. Lets have a look at some of the things we can do to create a successful sales process when selling B2B services.

1) Identifying prospects.

Before you can sell you must have prospects. Identifying a prospect can be difficult because they may not know they could be your customer.

Attracting prospects requires you to get their attention and help them to understand 'how' you can help them. This is not the same as telling them 'what' you do.

To encourage this understanding you really need to provide some relevant, helpful and insightful information. Prospects who are 'in the market' for your type of service will be sensitive to that type of information. They will pay attention to it and remember it. Ideally you'll be able to stimulate the prospect to feel like "I need more of that" and to contact you.

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In doing so, you'll help the prospect **pre-qualify themselves** to a large degree. By the time they contact you they'll already have some understanding of what you might be able to do for them and very importantly, they have taken a positive action in contacting you. They're now a 'warm lead' for you.

But don't be mistaken, at this stage they have not made a decision to buy from you. Don't interpret their enquiry as a buying decision. You've still got quite a way to go.

So what's next?

2) Understanding the prospect.

At this point you don't really know if you can help them. So you should be using the initial meeting with your prospect (in person or over the phone) to gain a better understanding of what they are trying to achieve, and to discover their real needs. Ask lots of sensible questions, without interrogating them, and listen carefully to the answers. When you are planning your questions think about:

Why

- Why are they are making this decision?
- Why now?
- Why your type of service?

What

- What is the process they will be following?
- What is their budget?

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Who

- Who is involved in the decision making process?
- Get names and positions of influencers and decision makers. You need to speak with them.

When

- When does the prospect want the job completed?
- Check that this matches the information you obtained in the What section.
- When does the prospect expect you to do what has been discussed?

Now that you're finished asking your questions, and knowing your own capabilities... Can you still help them?

If so, proceed to make...

3) Suggestions for future progress.

Note that this stage may be a separate meeting, or even a series of meetings. This is especially important if your prospect is a larger firm with multiple decision makers and influencers, or when the service you are offering is complex.

During this phase of the selling process explain:

- Why you can help them.
- What they can expect in terms of timeframe, resources required, results, etc.
- What they will need to do.
- What you will be doing.

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In some situations it might be wise **not to give exact details** of your activities. This could be the case if:

- For competitive reasons you need to protect your information.
- If you think the client may decide to do it for themselves (using your process).
- If there are issues to do with intellectual property (IP).
- If the process is so complex/technical that it might confuse the prospect.

Using written proposals.

As part of the overall sales process you may need to submit a written proposal. If you do submit a proposal, make sure it is done at the end of the sales process - when you have identified all relevant needs and discussed the scope of the solution.

Important:

Don't use a proposal to "guess" at what the prospective client wants. If your proposal only contains guesses, then you'll usually be wasting your time. If you have trouble getting details because your prospect won't spend time with you to discuss their situation, maybe they're not very serious about making a decision. Should you continue?

The written proposal should reflect what you have discussed with them, covering their stated needs and explaining how you will work with them. The proposal should be a summary of your previous discussions.

When to use a "draft" proposal.

If your service is complex, or carries a large price tag, then consider using a draft proposal as an interim measure. How do you do this?... When asked for a proposal, rather than just saying:

"Yes, you'll have it next week"

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... when really you are still not sure what to write, try saying:

"OK, we can get a draft proposal to you next week for discussion".

Use the occasion of presenting the draft proposal as an opportunity to further build the relationship and clarify all the important issues. When handled properly, this process will make you look like a professional, rather than an amateur trying to guess the clients needs.

After you've got this far, is your client still happy and eager to proceed?

If so, then...

4) Agree to the terms of the relationship.

By this time you have developed a degree of rapport with your prospect. You may have spent some hours together, and have looked carefully at their situation and considered some options.

Now is the time to **close the sale**.

- Confirm 'how' you will work with them in writing.
- The degree of legalese in your document will depend on what tasks you are undertaking, the scope of the risk, and their expectations.
- Be clear about payment - how much, when is it due, how is it paid.
- Clarify responsibilities on both sides - who will do what and when.
- Confirm start date and key milestones if applicable.

Congratulations... you now have an eager client.

You have found a prospect, identified their specific needs, matched your benefits to those needs, confirmed that your prospect recognises those benefits, structured a workable program to complete the job, and gained their agreement to start.

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Now it's a matter of following through with your promises and providing exceptional client service.

But there's one last thing I'd like to mention...

5) When to do a "demo".

If you need to demonstrate your service or discuss how you have handled similar projects, think carefully about **when** this should be done. Many service providers start off their sales presentation with this type of demonstration. They tell their prospect about what they can do, and detail all the benefits they can offer.

But beware; the prospect is waiting for you to **show interest in their specific situation**. So pay attention to them and start asking questions. When you know what is important to them you can do your demonstration with confidence, emphasising aspects that are particularly relevant for your prospect, and avoiding aspects that aren't important.

By planning and controlling your sales process you can easily turn your warm leads into eager clients, developing a strong relationship along the way.

Happy selling!

Stuart Ayling runs Marketing Nous, an Australasian marketing consultancy that specializes in marketing for service businesses. He helps clients to improve their marketing tactics, attract more clients, and increase revenue. For additional marketing resources, including Stuart's popular monthly newsletter, visit his web site at www.marketingnous.com

It's Ridiculously Difficult to Increase Sales...If You Think Sales is Just a Numbers Game

Cheryl A. Clausen

Every time I hear someone say, "it's just a numbers game" it sets my temper off like a rocket on the fourth of July. What makes me the maddest is that millions of small business owners and sales professionals believe this out and out lie. It's one of those things people believe just because they've heard it so often.

It's not just a numbers game! Don't allow yourself to fall into this mindset trap because you're either too gullible to know any better, or too lazy to do what it takes to prove the falsity of this old adage. First; let's look at why people say, "it's just a numbers game".

When you believe your sales success is just a numbers game what you're really saying is that when you randomly contact people you may or may not find a prospect. That is true. It's true because you aren't contacting specific people for a specific reason with a specific offer. Therefore, following reasonable logic you shouldn't be bothering those people in the first place.

You're truly hunting for a needle in a haystack. You know here in the Midwest a farmer doesn't expect to harvest a crop he doesn't plant. He certainly doesn't expect to harvest corn when he plants soybeans. Furthermore the farmer understands there are only a couple months out of the entire year he can expect to harvest anything because it's only during this short time frame that anything is ready to be harvested.

When the farmer goes out to harvest it isn't a question of if he will harvest the specific grain it's a question of how much grain there is to harvest, and if he can gather the grain fast enough to beat the weather.

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Boys those farmers are dumb like a fox, aren't they? So why can't you be more like the farmer? You can, and when you are you don't have to play the numbers game anymore.

So what's the first thing the farmer does that you should do too? Oh, that's right he plants the grain. You need to plant the seeds of interest, curiosity, and attention in the minds of the right people. The right people are, of course, those most likely to do business with you.

The farmer knows he can't harvest a crop that isn't ready, and neither can you. You throw away perfectly good prospects every day because you destroy the relationship before it has a chance to start. Rather than trying to "always be closing" how about if you found out if there was even a reason for the other person to want to do business with you?

No one is going to buy anything from you unless they have a good reason to do so. This is similar to the process of selecting the right seed to harvest the right crop. If you want corn you have to cast off all seeds that aren't corn, or all prospects that aren't a good match for you.

So like the farmer you have to plant the seeds to get the right prospects reaching out to you. Focus your attention only on the right prospects. Next you have to tend your prospects like the farmer tends his crop. All prospects will not be in the same stage of the buying process when you contact them.

If you want great sales you need to nurture those prospects who aren't ready to buy today through the buying process so when they are ready to buy they'll buy from you. You have an advantage the farmer doesn't. The farmer can't form a relationship with his crop, but you certainly can and should form one with your prospects. And you should be building on and strengthening that relationship every step of the way.

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You have another advantage in that your prospects may not be seasonal in their buying patterns. Thus as soon as you focus your time and energy on the ready buyers you get more immediate sales. And it takes you a whole lot less time and effort than it does when you randomly chase after people you have no valid reason to chase.

Now you may think this sounds time consuming and that it requires a lot of effort. It does at first just like it takes time and effort to excel at anything. However, it takes a whole lot less time and effort in the long run than dialing the phone 100 times to secure one appointment with a prospect who doesn't have any interest in doing business with you anyway.

And it's certainly far less frustrating. Rather than reactively "hoping" something good is going to happen to increase your sales you're proactively taking positive steps to "make" things happen. And when you do it right and get it down like the farmer you can make a pretty good estimate of your harvest year in and year out.

Isn't it time you broke out of the limiting mindset that sales is a numbers game and entered the world of consistent, predictable, and profitable sales? The quickest way to increase sales isn't increasing your level of senseless activities. The quickest way to increase sales is to focus on doing the right activities in the right way producing results.

Cheryl A. Clausen Get your free copy of the "7 Secrets Top Producers Know" by visiting <http://IncreaseSalesCoach.com>

Warming Up A Cold Call

Roger Bauer

Whether you're new to sales or a grizzled veteran, the thought of making a true cold call is unlikely to be on your favorites list. Luckily, there are simple ways to warm up a call that don't require major changes to your approach. Let's take a peek at six of them.

TARGETED PRE-CALL LETTERS

One of the easiest ways to warm up a cold call is to send a series of pre-call letters to the decision makers you are trying to reach within a company. Yes, I said letters. Michael Boylan in his latest book "Accelerants" talks about a simple methodology of sending letters to each of the key decision makers within a company under the guise that they'll talk to one another, and there will need to be a decision made as to whom the call should be fielded by once you actually do call. This turns the tables to where the decision maker actually expects your call versus being blindsided by it. Place a date and time to expect your call, and be sure to make the call on time. Often times, you'll have a decision maker within the prospective company call you to where you don't even have to place the call.

USE FIRST NAMES ONLY

When you finally do call that key decision maker on your list, try using his/her first name only when the gatekeeper answers the phone instead of their formal name. If the gatekeeper asks "who is calling?" simply state your first name in return. This will make the call sound more personal in nature and greatly increase your chances of getting through. If the gatekeeper asks if the decision maker is expecting your call, the answer is obviously yes if you sent the pre-call letter ahead of time.

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DO A SOFT TRIAL CLOSE

When you cold call someone, your objective is to get the prospect to say “yes” to something (or many somethings). Instead of pushing for the hard close outright, try asking them if they’d like to hear more or if they’d object to hearing more. It’s a little “softer” and should lead to a positive response if there is even the most remote of opportunities. Once they’ve agreed to hear more, you can dive into the meat of your call to better qualify them and/or uncover more pain to position your product as a potential solution to that pain.

LEVERAGE THE WEB

Having your own website that captures basic leads is a must in today’s business climate. Don’t expect your employer to develop a website for you either. After-all, why should they? It’s your job to make sales so what is holding you back from having a website working to capture leads for you 24/7? The beauty of having your own website, aside from the obvious, is you can change it up should you change jobs, and the leads will go with you versus sticking with your employer. If you have a non-compete, you’ll obviously have to avoid the clients you signed for your employer for a set period of time, but your pipeline will be relatively full if you’ve done a good job with the site.

START A BLOG

The next step after setting up your own website is to launch a blog so people can keep up with you and your tribulations. Blogs are more personal or journal-like in nature so you don’t have to be as formal which will allow your personality to shine through a little more, and people will feel as if they know you better. Look at it this way, if your prospect is digging through information on each company pitching them today, your website and blog will set you apart from your competitors that don’t have such tools implemented. You’ll look more professional, and they’ll feel as if you’re in it for the long-haul versus a one time sale.

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JOIN BUSINESS SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Sites such as Xing, LinkedIn, Spoke, or Tribe all provide social networking for the business professional. Even MySpace or Facebook are getting some corporate play these days because people want to connect and get to know who they are dealing with. The days are almost gone where someone is completely unknown so it's probably better to embrace that fact than to fight it.

Cold calling can become warm calling with a few minor changes that turn the tables more in your favor. Try a few of these tips to see if they can improve your success rates.

Roger Bauer is CEO of SMB Consulting, Inc. a nationally recognized small business consulting firm specializing in business planning, competitive intelligence, marketing, sales, search engine optimization (SEO), strategic planning, and technology guidance. To learn more about the firm, please visit <http://smbconsultinginc.com>

Red Hot Prospecting – Modern, Electronic Strategies that Get Your Customers Coming to You!

Christine Sutherland

For better or for worse we are more and more moving toward becoming a “digital society” and certainly the evidence is that our customers are not only relying on the internet to source information, goods and services, but that the most canny of our competitors are right there, beating us to our prospects and building their total loyalty before they even become aware that it’s time to buy. In fact the very smartest of our competitors are delivering service to customers that could be ours, BEFORE the customer even becomes aware they have a need.

This is bad news for any sales people who have been left behind as far as internet strategies go, and they need to catch up fast if they’re to survive, let alone thrive. “Business people who avoid online strategies are like dinosaurs that gather together to eat the last leaves” warned Mark Walsh, president of VerticalNet. However for those who are willing to learn and to embrace the new way of doing business, the reward is not only survival, but far more efficient and productive prospecting, which is incredibly enjoyable and personally rewarding at the same time.

The key to being an effective sales person is to master internet marketing. That is the key that every expert agrees is fundamental to your success. Master that, and your prospecting will turn red hot! Master that, and you will also build **additional income streams** for yourself, far and beyond the commissions you are earning now. But internet marketing is a whole different kettle of fish to offline marketing. Even though I had many years of success at senior levels in mainstream businesses, I admit I struggled when it came to internet marketing.

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In fact when I used to read articles about how easy it was, I would often just break down and cry totally overwhelmed and frustrated because I knew how hard it was, and I knew only too well how hard I was working and so for me it sure wasn't easy. Despite paying out many thousands of dollars for training and support, and putting my heart and soul into it, nothing worked. But then I got lucky. I just happened to latch onto a little piece of the puzzle, not so much by accident but because when you keep trying, and you keep trying different things, sooner or later you're probably going to hit paydirt. And with that piece falling into place, the whole picture became very clear. And I also understood what was missing from the articles, videos, and books that the guru's produced.

First they did not clarify the steps, and differentiate between what was proven and what was trial and error. Secondly, unless they were charging tens of thousands of dollars, they did not hold your hand through the process.

In my opinion that "hand holding" is essential for the strategy to work. It's not enough to tell people, you must also show them. So before I list the steps, I urge you to align yourself with someone who can help you through them. You won't have to pay a fortune, and in fact there are sites that will help you, personally, for free, so you can take these steps confidently and effectively.

Why will they help you for free? Because they realise that marketing has changed, and that these days they need to be able to demonstrate, in real time, how you can literally "put your finger on the switch" that turns on the money. If they can do that, they know that there can be no question in your mind that they are the company to take you forward, and that they are worth many times what you will pay them if you proceed further. Now here are the steps, as briefly as I can possibly state them within a single article, that a professional salesperson needs to take, in order to take absolute control of your prospecting:

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- 1) Register your own domain name and arrange hosting. Yes, no matter what, you DO need your own independent web site. Also, the NAME does matter because it should contain the very keywords that your target audience uses in searching for a solution to a particular problem. Don't pay more than \$8 or so for your site and top-rate hosting can be obtained for as little as \$1 per month. (You see why you need "hand holding" on this, to help choose the right keywords, the right host and the right domain name, and to set up your list building mechanism?)
- 2) Get an autoresponder so you can keep in good touch with your growing list. There is an art to communicating with your list so you don't turn them off, and instead build trust to the point that when you do actually recommend something, they will tend to listen to you because they respect you. Look around at autoresponder reviews and pick the highest quality one that comes with a free trial. Unless you've got spare cash to invest in a proven, paid system, don't spend a cent, but use free trials or a free version instead.
- 3) Build your site. As a minimum it needs to have a mechanism to collect names, fresh new content each week, a forum, a way to feature product (eg reviews) and a blog or two. There are a number of free site building software programs around that we recommend.
- 4) Get FTP (file transfer protocol) software so that you can upload files (documents) to your web site. In the beginning you should not pay money for this – get the free version.
- 5) Develop or find quality giveaways to act as bait to your target market, to use to reward your growing list, or to sell as an affiliate. Be very careful how you select these or you could damage relationships instead of build them!
- 6) Visit forums where your target market gather and contribute in a valuable way to the discussion. NEVER even hint at a sales spiel. Your signature line should contain a courteous invitation to grab one of your freebies. If you diarise maybe 30 minutes a day on this activity, it will pay dividends for you.

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- 7) Keep your site fresh by uploading new content at least once each week.
- 8) Undertake free advertising, using ad structures that have been proven to work (so you're not wasting your time, or burning valuable leads).
- 9) Remain a learner, studying search engine optimisation, Adwords, customer service, marketing, financial management, and other concepts that can help you succeed.
- 10) Lean heavily on your support group to execute all of the above as well as you possibly can.

I hope this has been helpful to you, and that you will committedly work through and tick off each item. If you will only do that, you WILL find that your prospecting is indeed "Red Hot!"

Christine Sutherland can be reached at info@speedbusinessnetworking.com. If you'd like to read more detail, just grab the free ebook "Red Hot Prospecting" from the classified section at <http://www.betterbusiness.speedbusinessnetworking.com>

Never a Cold Call—Always and Introduction

Paul McCord

I'm a salesman. I sell sales training, management consulting, coaching and speaking presentations. My clients are companies, individual salespeople, business owners, and business and industry associations.

I prospect. I have to if I want to stay in business. I, like every other salesperson, am constantly looking for potential new business.

I also market my services and myself. I have to invest a significant amount of my time and effort in getting my message out to potential clients. The marketing I engage in takes many forms--from writing articles to giving interviews to writing newsletters to attending events and functions to networking and seeking referrals.

In other words, my business is exactly like yours. I engage in the same activities you do. I face the same obstacles, the same setbacks, the same disappointments, and enjoy the same victories.

Whether you sell insurance, parking lot maintenance, copiers, communication systems, or the most sophisticated computer networks, business-to-business selling is in its essence the same for all of us. The details are different. The process may be vastly different. The sales cycle may be months or even years apart. But the basic essence is the same, and the most basic is you have to have a prospect that will accept your efforts to connect with them.

Like almost every other salesperson, I must use the phone to connect with some of those prospects. Nevertheless, I refuse to make cold calls. In my opinion, there is hardly a more worthless use of time and energy than cold calling. Cold calling is time consuming for the salesperson and it immediately signifies to the recipient of the call that the person making the call isn't an expert in their field because most prospects assume that true experts aren't sitting at a desk pounding the phone.

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Yet, that creates a dilemma for me—there are prospects I can't find a way to reach without picking up the phone and calling them. Despite being a strong advocate of referral selling, networking, and developing referral partnerships, those methods, no matter how expertly I implement them, just can't get me to every possible prospect that I'm interested in reaching.

Not having a way to connect through other means and refusing to cold call presents a bit of a problem.

Fortunately, there is a solution that allows me to NEVER make a cold call. In fact, it almost always allows me to begin establishing a relationship with the prospect that I can expand and nurture over time. In addition, this simple method allows me to gather a wealth of information about the company, their needs, their plans, and in many cases, key information about the person I'm about to speak to before I ever make the call. Before I call, I know whom I'm calling, why I'm calling, and I have a very good idea of where the conversation will be going.

Moreover, seldom do I have a voice mail message go unreturned.

What is the incredible system I use?

Actually, it is so simple and so obvious I almost hate to admit it. But it works. It takes the pressure off me, as well as off the prospect. When I call, I'm simply doing follow-up work, fulfilling my obligation to one of the prospect's employees.

Once I've identified a company to approach about any of my services, I do my homework. I call three or four of the company's salespeople. My hope is to speak to a salesperson that has been with the company for only a short time, to another who is an old hand with the company, and one who is a top producer.

When I speak to these individuals, I am upfront with the purpose of my call. I let them know who I am, why I'm calling them, what my intentions are regarding calling the company about my services, and request their permission to ask them some questions about the company and their experience with the company. Seldom does anyone refuse speaking with me. If they do, I'll just call another salesperson within the company.

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I ask a number of information gathering questions such as:

- what type of sales training the company provides
- their personal evaluation of the quality of the training
- whether training is provided by outside vendors or in-house trainers
- if they use outside trainers, what companies do they use
- what training needs do they see the company has that aren't being met
- who in their opinion I should speak to about training
- if there is anything else I should know prior to calling the person they suggested I call
- prior to ending the call, I ask for permission to use their name when I make the call.

Three or four short calls—each will only last a very few minutes—gives me a tremendous amount of information about the company and potential opportunities for me. Often I learn a little bit of personal information about the person I'm about to call that helps me connect with them. Typically, at least one and often two or three of the individuals will not only give me permission to mention their name, but will encourage me to call, giving me a referral into the company. Now, I've not only upgraded the call from a cold call to a warm call, but I've upgraded the warm call to a referral.

When I do call the company, I use the introductions provided by the salespeople to break the ice and gain credibility. Those introductions turn the call into a conversation about their needs and observations rather than a sales pitch.

If I am directed to voice mail, I don't panic. I don't hang up without leaving a message. I don't leave some misleading message hoping to trick someone into returning my call. I leave a very brief factual message that introduces myself and mentions that salesperson X and salesperson Y asked me to call about some issues that concern them. I almost always get a return call.

Naturally, the person I'm calling wants to know how and why his or her salespeople encouraged me to make the call. Again, I don't beat around the bush. I tell them that I was doing my homework prior to making my introductory call. The fact that I was willing to spend time learning something about the company, their needs, their salespeople, and their processes tends to impress the person with whom I'm speaking.

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Seldom do salespeople take the time to be prepared before making a call. Seldom do they find a way to turn a cold call into a referral. So unusual is it that when someone calls who is fully prepared, the impression is not only positive but also deep and lasting. Furthermore, by demonstrating my ability to find a positive, honest and effective way to connect with them that pricks their interest and almost demands they pay attention to me, they make the connection that I just might have something of value to teach their sales team.

Naturally, I don't turn every call into a sale. I do, however, begin the process of developing a positive and trusting relationship that will, hopefully, turn into a sale in the future.

My method of reaching the prospects that I otherwise cannot find another way of reaching doesn't allow me to make tons of calls. I give up quantity for quality. And to tell you the truth, I'd much rather have an introduction to a quality prospect than sit and pound the phone hoping that sooner or later I'll fall into an appointment.

No matter your product, you too can find individuals within your target companies who can give you the information you need—and their endorsement when you do make the call. Getting past gatekeepers and gaining the prospect's interest doesn't have to be a game of deception or manipulation. Investing a little time before calling your prospect opens doors, eliminates resistance, pricks interest, and helps begin the relationship building process.

You virtually never have to make another business-to-business cold call. With a little bit of research and effort you can turn almost every cold call into a referred call. Give it a try, it makes life much easier and making those calls much more enjoyable—and productive.

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Filling Up the Sales Funnel: 12 Tips for Earning Consistent Revenues - and Commissions - All Year Round

Colleen Francis

Many sales reps and managers complain that they can't create a consistent flow of revenues or commissions month after month. Instead of a nice, straight line increasing consistently over time like an upwards pointing arrow, they find themselves staring repeatedly at sales results that look more like a hockey stick: nothing for two months, a sharp increase for a month or two, then back down again to nothing a month later.

So what can you do to keep your sales funnel full of leads, to ensure a consistent, reliable flow of revenues all year round?

Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, a lack of consistent revenues - the "hockey stick syndrome" - is caused by a lack of consistent prospecting. A failure to prospect on a regular basis will inevitably result in irregular revenues, and inconsistent commissions. It's that simple.

This is especially true when we're doing well. It can be so easy to forget about prospecting when we're wrapped up with following a dozen or so hot leads, who are demanding lengthy proposals and multiple meetings, conference calls, demonstrations and references. But this is precisely the time when we need to be prospecting, to ensure that steady sales flow doesn't suddenly dry up.

Yes, prospecting can be a difficult and, for many people, daunting task. The simple fact is, not all sales reps like doing it. But I've yet to meet a top sales professional for whom prospecting hasn't played a pivotal role in their success.

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And let's face it, prospects don't fall from the sky. We have to work at getting them consistently, so we can close sales consistently. After all, even if you've mastered all the questioning, closing and objection handling techniques in the world, you'll still almost certainly fail if you don't have any prospects to use them with!

So if you find prospecting always somehow slips to the bottom of your "To Do" list, here are 12 Tips to help you ensure your sales funnel is consistently full of leads:

1. Sell more products to existing customers. This can include selling additional quantities of the same product, selling add-on services or products from your existing portfolio, or introducing your existing customers to a new product they might be interested in. To get started, plan to stay in touch with your current customers through a combination of direct (phone calls) and indirect (email, direct mail) methods about once every six weeks, with the goal of selling them additional products or repeat orders. Just don't go overboard, or you may cross that magical line between persistence, and stalking.
2. Set a goal for the number of networking events you will attend each month, and the number of new people you'd like to meet at each event. Then don't leave until you've collected that many business cards.
3. Reward yourself for closing new business. Treat yourself to a trip to the spa, your favorite Bordeaux or dinner out at that great little Italian restaurant. Remember: what gets rewarded, gets repeated.
4. Take a look at opt-in email lists. Set up a targeted email marketing campaign to acquaint potential new customers with your company or products, then follow up by phone.

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5. Ask your current customers for referrals. The key is to be as specific as possible. For example, don't just adopt a generic, "do you know anyone who" approach. Instead, make a list of all the companies or people you'd like to meet, approach any existing customers who might have a contact at those new prospects, and then simply ask: "Mr. Customer, I've been trying to get hold of the VP of Marketing at ABC Corporation - you don't happen to know them, do you?" If it's one of their business partners or associates, or even just a firm that's in the same industry or building, chances are your customer will know the person you want to meet, and will probably be only too happy to make the introduction.
6. Go for a walk or drive around your territory, and take a look at who is in the neighborhood. Then, try making some face-to-face cold calls. The change of perspective can be refreshing, and you never know when you will find business in the least likely of places.
7. Make a habit of having lunch, coffee or breakfast with at least one new person each week. Share ideas, and give them any leads that might help them first.
8. Write articles for relevant on-line or print publications your prospects might read. It's not as hard to get published as you might think, and once you've been published once, it only gets easier. Just make sure to retain full rights to your articles by not being paid to write them. Then, once they've been published, send an email or mailing to your prospects and clients inviting them to read them. Plus, try sending your articles to larger publications, too - trust me, they don't bite, and if your article is accepted, you can't beat the added credibility and visibility.

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9. Volunteer to speak at trade shows and conferences. As a rule of thumb, you should speak at every trade show where you exhibit. This will increase your credibility, and drive traffic to your booth. Even if you aren't exhibiting, you should still submit a proposal for a workshop or showcase. If you secure a speaking spot, let your customers know that you'll be there, and when they can see you. Then invite prospects to visit you at the show, and set specified times for meeting people at your booth. That way, you will get a steady flow of traffic, and others will be attracted to your booth to see why so many people are gathered there.
10. Be excellent at what you do. Word travels fast, so do everything you can to make sure that all the talk about you is positive!
11. If possible, join the trade associations or organizations your clients and prospects belong to. Not only will these associations keep you up to date on what's happening in the industries you sell to, they'll also provide you with a great opportunity to meet key people on a regular basis. To build a successful network, be sure to attend the meetings as often as possible - not just once or twice a year.
12. Lastly, for a cost-effective way to keep your name in front of potential clients, try sending mailings to prospects, complete with relevant items of interest. Send these mailings about once every 6 weeks, and you'll also benefit by learning when key people in the organization leave their positions due to a promotion, reassignment or departure for a new company.
Of course, this isn't a complete list of all the possible ways to build your network and find new prospects. But they are some time-honored ideas that I've found work for almost every business or situation I've encountered.

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And remember, you don't need to pursue all of these ideas at once to become a successful prospector. In fact, it might be unproductive to do so! But at any one time, you should be involved in at least four of these twelve techniques, and make sure that the four you choose change as your company - and your clients - evolve.

The key is to make prospecting a regular habit. By committing a set amount of time each day, every week towards meeting new people, in the long run, your sales funnel will be more full than you can handle, and your "hockey stick" revenues will be a thing of the past.

Colleen Francis, Sales Expert, is Founder and President of Engage Selling Solutions (www.EngageSelling.com). Armed with skills developed from years of experience, Colleen helps clients realize immediate results, achieve lasting success and permanently raise their bottom line. Start improving your results today with Engage's online Newsletter *Engaging Ideas* and a FREE 10 day intensive sales eCourse: www.EngagingIdeasOnline.com

The Best Low-Cost Marketing Tool on the Planet

Allen Taylor

If you want to keep your name in front of your customers on a regular basis without appearing as if you are shoving sales pitches down their throats, an electronic newsletter is the perfect tool for you. You can write and design an electronic newsletter at no cost and send it out once a week with minimal commitment. Nothing but your time. In most cases, you can have a newsletter that sells your business effectively in less than one hour a week. The benefits are enormous:

- Low-cost, high-value
- Customers benefit from your knowledge
- A free newsletter sent once a week is great marketing
- Delivered electronically so no stamps to lick
- It shows your customers that you really care about their needs

Let's face it. The 21st century is here to stay - at least for another 94 years. If you haven't caught the digital wave yet, then you are about 10 years behind the curve. Where will you be 10 years from now?

No matter what business you are in, you - and your highly valued clients - can benefit from a newsletter. While print copy can get costly, an electronic newsletter is a no-cost way to keep your name on everyone's lips. Whether you are a published author, a financial services consultant, a non-profit agency executive, an insurance agent, a mechanic or a member of a million other occupations out there struggling to maintain contact

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with an ever shifting customer base, you need all the low-cost advertising you can get.

You can write and design a newsletter in any word processing program on the market. You don't need to know any HTML or computer code and you can have it written, designed and mailed in a couple of hours. It doesn't need to be elaborate. Some electronic newsletters are just a couple of paragraphs and a link. Anyone can do it.

If you're not sending out a free newsletter then you are missing out on a great opportunity. I highly recommend this low-cost, high-value commitment to meeting the needs of your clients. And if you're looking to expand your business it's a tool you can't do without. Why wait for the next century to begin before you get with the times? Today is the day to communicate for tomorrow's customers.

Allen Taylor is an award-winning journalist and freelance ghostwriter. Learn how an electronic newsletter for your company can give a big boost to your marketing efforts at <http://taylor-and-associates.com>

Top 10 Marketing Concepts For Small Business Marketing

Nate Stockard

Over the past decade more and more people are getting fired, getting downsized, or getting fed up with their corporate jobs and embark on the journey as a small business owner. Unfortunately, most of the new small business owners fail to consider their marketing plans or strategy. There are many marketing concepts for small business marketing to consider and plan for, but here is our list of Top 10 Marketing Concepts For Small Business Marketing.

Marketing Concept # 1: Consistency

Consistency is the number one marketing concept for small business marketing only because it is left out of marketing concepts for so many businesses. I have worked with a long list of clients, big and small, that are extremely inconsistent in all areas of their marketing. Consistency helps lower the cost of marketing and increase the effectiveness of branding.

Marketing Concept # 2: Planning

Once small business owners decide to be consistent with their marketing, planning is the next major concept to engage. Planning is the most vital part of small business marketing or any level of marketing, for that matter, and so many owners, marketing managers, and even CMOs plan poorly. Put the time into planning your marketing strategy, budget, and other concepts presented here to ensure success.

Marketing Concept # 3: Strategy

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Strategy immediately follows planning because your strategy is the foundation for the rest of your marketing activities. In the process of planning, you must develop your strategy: who you will target, how you will target them, and how will you keep them as a customer.

Marketing Concept # 4: Target Market

Target market is also another key concept for small business marketing. Defining exactly who you are targeting allows small business owners to focus on specific customers and reduce marketing waste. A well-defined target market will make every other marketing concept so much easier to implement successfully.

Marketing Concept # 5: Budget

Although it is listed at number 5, budgeting is important throughout the entire process. Creating a marketing budget is usually the hardest and most inaccurate part of small business marketing. Most small businesses owners lack a great deal of experience in marketing, so their budgets usually end up skewed. The most important part of this marketing concept is to actually establish a marketing budget. From there, you can worry about how to distribute your available funds.

Marketing Concept # 6: Marketing Mix

The marketing mix is usually defined as product, pricing, place, and promotion. As a small business owner, you must specifically decide on your products (or services), the appropriate pricing, where and how you will distribute your products, and how will you let everyone know about you and your products.

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Marketing Concept # 7: Website

In today's market, a business of any size must have a website. I hate when I see businesses that have a one page website with out-dated information. Customers, be it businesses or consumers, will search the web over 60% of the time before making any purchasing decisions. This marketing concept contains a slew of additional components, but you must at least develop a small web presence of some kind and keep it updated.

Marketing Concept # 8: Branding

Many small businesses owners also neglect this concept. Small business marketing must focus on this marketing concept just as much as large corporations do. Branding consists of the pictures, logo, design scheme, layout, make up, and image of your products and even your company. Branding is how your customers perceive (please place a lot of emphasis on that word!) your products and company. Make sure to pay special attention to what kind of brand you are building through each step of your planning and implementation.

Marketing Concept # 9: Promotion and Advertising

Promotion and advertising is a very complex marketing concept, but must be considered for any type of business and its products and services. Once you engage the previous 8 marketing concepts, you must finally let your target market know about you and your products. Proper promotion and advertising will result in effective brand recognition, and, ultimately, increased sales.

Marketing Concept # 10: Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

The concept of customer relationship management has become a huge industry in the marketing world. There are many types of software and services offered to help businesses of any size handle their customer relationship management. Since there is so much available, usually for a large sum of money, small business owners usually look at this concept as something they are not big enough for or have enough money to implement. Don't be fooled by the massive industry that has evolved from this concept. Maintaining proper customer relationship management is essential to creating loyal and consistent customers.

This list of marketing concepts should be examined, researched, planned, and implemented, especially by small businesses, in order to be successful. Also, your marketing doesn't stop here. Each business is unique and will have additional components that must be considered, but this list will jump-start any marketing plan.

Nate Stockard is the owner of www.stockardandassociates.com, a marketing and design firm in Houston, TX specializing in small business solutions.

Attract the Clients You Want - Know Your Target Market

Michelle Salater

Defining and understanding one's target market is critical to a successful business. There is plenty of information out there on this topic, yet with this wealth of information, how many businesses fail to do the required work?

Identifying and knowing a target market-inside and out-requires us to look at ourselves, at our company, and look into whom we serve and why. Too many companies have a general idea. Some have no idea at all.

The key is to get specific.

Stating a target as "anybody who needs my product" won't cut it. Defining your target as "people in the medical field" won't help much either. Trying to be everything to everyone isn't going to get you the sales you want.

If you want more customers, you have to know whom you are selling to. And you should know as much about them as you can.

The more you know, the better you can target the group, speak their language, and give them what they want. If you speak to them specifically, create desire, and offer something they need or want, you will gain clients.

Speak to everyone, and you're likely to get no one.

4 steps to defining your target market . . .

1. Identify your target: know whom you are selling to or serving

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Let's say you own a high-end ladies' clothing boutique. You sell products to women, but identifying your target as "all women" is much too vague because most of your inventory is designed for a younger crowd. Look closely at your clientele, and you may find most of your patrons are between 24 and 35. Look even closer, and you may uncover a majority of your clients are young professionals who make over \$60,000 a year.

2. Understand your target: get specific

Now that you've identified your target, it's time to roll up your sleeves and brainstorm. Make a list of questions you'd like to know about your target, then answer the questions to the best of your ability. You want to define their lifestyle, hobbies, profession, anything you can that will help you speak to their needs and wants.

Ask questions. Where do they shop, dine, drink? What do they read? Did they graduate from college, have a bachelor or master's? Are they active in their community? Do they bike on weekends, or do they spend time with family? Don't limit yourself. Keep asking questions until you feel you know these people.

The more specific you are, the better you will be able to speak to your target market.

3. Know what your target wants

Once you know whom you are talking to, you need to understand exactly what they want. Don't assume your target knows what service you offer or product(s) you sell.

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How do you know what your target wants? It's simple: ask them. Send out a survey, interview current clients, or post questions on your blog.

Once you know what they want, not what you think they want, then give it to them. Create services and products to meet their needs. If you can figure out what your target really wants, you'll attract all the clients you want. You will tap into that sweet spot that will keep them coming back for more.

4. Research your competition

You aren't the only company trying to attract your target market. Researching your competition will help you discover what methods the competition is using to attract this group. Study the competition's website, research their keywords, subscribe to their ezines, and study their advertisements and sales copy.

Michelle Salater offers a bimonthly ezine, Your Business Marketing Solution, is packed with small business marketing tips.

<http://www.mlsalater.com/newsletters.cfm>

Lead Generation = Dollar Creation

Mark Tewart

All businesses are built on two areas of competency - people skills and marketing skills. Many sales people who are more than adequate in their sales and people skills are struggling today. The reason is most sales people lack enough opportunities with customers. Lead generation = dollar creation

As a sales person you are in business for yourself. Having a mentality of being the CEO of your company is crucial to developing your business. The dealership signs your check, and you fill in the numbers.

You have a better opportunity than ever to be successful. The key to your long-term success as a sales person is the creation of a dynamite marketing strategy that dealers overlook and most sales people are too lazy to do.

Your first step is to create a marketing web. Take a sheet of paper and list every way that you receive customers. The first two ways you probably listed were from walk-ins and phone prospects. These are produced by the dealership and are therefore the ones over which you have no control. Begin to control your destiny and think of ways to produce customers from other resources.

What other sources of leads did you list? Here are some suggestions: referrals, service drive, service tickets, be-backs, affiliations, repeats, targeted phone calling, database marketing, targeted list mailings, orphan owners, lost customer marketing, coupon swaps, joint-venture advertising, community board flyer, door-to-door flyers, Web site and many more.

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For each source at least one strategy of creating leads should be chosen. If you execute one strategy a day on 10 ways to create leads, your leads will grow exponentially over time. Your business will hit a period of critical mass and explode.

At that point, a sales person has the best job in the dealership. Your pay, hours, stress and job security will be better than the managers'. Your risk will be zero, your investment minimal and most everything is supplied for you.

Why don't more sales people take this road of action to success? Usually, it's a lack of buy-in. If you haven't begun to create a business of your own, it's because your belief system doesn't buy into the idea of a self-created destiny in sales. Either you have "Manageritis", don't believe you will be selling vehicles for a career, don't believe you will be at your current dealership in the future, don't believe it can be done or you're lazy. The truth sucks sometimes.

Success and failure are all about belief systems and habits. You have to believe and live it everyday for it to work. Speaker and business philosopher Jim Rohn once was asked if you had to take successful actions everyday to be successful and he replied, "Only on the days you want to be successful." Actually, if you only take successful actions every once in a while, you can't even be successful on those once-in-a-while days. It takes sustained effort.

If you begin to execute a strategy of marketing and don't have immediate success, you can't quit. It's easier to say something doesn't work than it is to use the lack of success as a path to figuring out successful actions. Marketing in itself is a series of miscalculations to figure out what works. The greatest marketers of all time have failed more than they have been

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right. To great marketers, all failures are just tests on the road to figuring out the right formula.

As a small marketer in the Internet age, you can appear to be bigger and more successful than you really are. You can create a successful brand. You can be more agile and target more than larger businesses such as dealerships can do with traditional advertising. The over-hyped, over-competitive marketplace is perfect for the dedicated and creative sales person of today.

Mark Tewart - Speaker, Consultant and Author of "How To Be A Sales Superstar: Break All the Rules and Succeed While Doing It" published by Wiley - ~~Order~~ copy rublt.

Why Sizzling Hot Prospects Suddenly Go Stone Cold - And What to Do About It!

Stacy Karacostas

It happens all the time...

You get a call or email from a prospect. They sound interested, and interesting. You chat. It goes swimmingly...Perhaps so much so that you're already mentally shifting your calendar to fit them in.

Then, suddenly, they start giving you the cold shoulder. Or come up with some lame-sounding excuse for why they can't move forward just yet (these usually arrive via email).

You go from excited about this hot new prospect, to slightly deflated, a little frustrated, or possibly even incredibly worried about where your next client is going to come from now.

Maybe a touch of self doubt even starts to creep in. Thoughts like, "What's wrong with me and my services?", "They seemed so excited to get started...What happened?" tend to follow.

Well, I can't answer the first one for you, but I can tell you exactly what's happened in 99% of these instances...

Life happened!

Yep. You read right. Life got in the way of you working with that top-notch, seemingly red-hot and raring to go prospect.

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Here's the deal. Most people are going to call because they have a problem they believe you can help them solve. And right that second, their problem is a biggie. It's top of mind and top of the to-do list.

So they make calls, interview service providers, and start deciding who to hire. Then, something happens...Literally.

And that something suddenly makes

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- 1) Collect their contact info (at least email, ideally physical address and phone number too) so you have a way to stay in touch
- 2) Keep a copy of your notes regarding their business and needs. That way you can reference details down the road.
- 3) Immediately send a thank you card after you chat. They took the time to find and call you. The least you can do is let them know you appreciate their efforts.
- 4) Ask if you can put them on your newsletter list. This could be email or snail mail. Doesn't matter. Just be sure your newsletters offer valuable information, not just sales pitches or coupons.
- 5) Follow up periodically with information that may be of interest to them. If you write or run across an article you think might be helpful, pop it in an envelope and send it to them.
- 6) Send birthday and holiday cards. Don't just do this for your clients, do it for prospects too so they know you are thinking of them.
- 7) Be a great resource. If they keep getting valuable info from you, they'll want to keep hearing from you. That's good for everyone involved.

Keep it up and before you know it, the problem that originally brought them to you is likely to rise back up to the top of their priority list. When it does, those icy prospects will get all hot and bothered again. And who do you think they'll call...?

With more than 20 years experience running small businesses, author Stacy Karacostas has developed a variety of proven tools, tips and tricks that take the struggle out of growing your small business. Discover all kinds of powerful resources, free for the taking, at <http://www.success-stream.com>

Five Key Marketing Strategy Fundamentals

Ron Abbott

Before you start creating a marketing strategy, you must understand that a strategy is a continuous process of testing and adjustment and not a single event or a majestic document. A strategy must be a dynamic and flexible set of long-term ideas that guide your marketing decisions. It's the game plan that you take into battle that is elastic enough to adapt to the ever changing market.

However, although these strategic principles are evolving they are built upon several key fundamentals that fit your business philosophy and match the needs of your market. These key fundamentals are:

1. Who is your best qualified prospects and clients
2. What unique value you offer to the market
3. The tone and style of your marketing message
4. The desired perception of your product and service offering
5. The reasons why should they trust you and buy from you rather than any other choice in the marketplace

These five concepts must be at the core of your marketing strategy development. They are the guiding lights that you should never take your eye off of when developing any of your marketing tactics.

Too often when a small business purchases advertising from newspaper and yellow page companies they lose sight of these critical fundamental

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elements. Typically, the salesperson will offer free design services with the purchase of the ad space to close the deal. This seems like a no-brainer but has severe consequences to their marketing strategy.

The designer of these ads has no clue about the marketing strategy of the business. They end up designing an ad that looks the same as all the other competitors on the page. They know how to design an ad that fits the space, but they don't have a clue on how to sell and market a product or service.

When there is no marketing strategy in place the effectiveness of your advertising severely erodes the return on your marketing investment.

Flip through the yellow pages book in your office to see the worst examples of this practice. It's pretty scary when you really notice it.

When you have a marketing strategy in place and apply these five key fundamentals to all of your advertising and promotional tactics you create consistency. Consistency and repetition are the drivers of marketing success. By establishing your five key fundamentals, you will always have the basis to create powerful and effective marketing that creates sales.

Ron Abbott teaches winning marketing strategies and tactics which help entrepreneurs play the marketing game and dominate their competition, visit www.td-marketing-system.com

A Simple Shortcut For Writing Irresistible Benefits

Tom Trush

Do you know if you're promoting features or benefits in your marketing materials? The answer to this question plays a significant role in the effectiveness of your marketing message. While features are facts, benefits explain why facts are important. It's these benefits that target your prospects' emotions - a key factor in selling situations. People buy for emotional reasons first. Then they look for facts to validate the purchase. When you only use features in your marketing materials, you ignore the real reasons why your prospects need your product or service.

An easy way to write response-boosting benefits is to follow your features with the words "so that." You can physically write these words or just say them mentally. Here's a basic example: Let's say you're promoting a computer monitor with a 19-inch screen. Your primary feature (or fact) is the 19-inch screen. With a little research, you can quickly create benefits, especially when you understand your prospects' needs. Maybe studies show a 19-inch screen is the optimal size for reducing eye strain. One benefit might be ...

The computer monitor screen is 19 inches ... so that ... you can reduce eye strain by up to 57%.

But why stop with just one benefit? You'll discover even more powerful benefits when you use "so that" multiple times. You can reduce eye strain by up to 57% so that you can diminish the times you experience blurred vision, neck pain and fatigue so that you can work more comfortably so that you can complete more projects in the same amount of time ...

A description only touting a computer monitor's screen size does little to

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target a prospect's emotions. However, once benefits are added to the copy, prospects learn why they are better off purchasing the product. Below is an example of a benefit-oriented sentence pulled from a Sleep Number advertisement I recently saw online.

The feature is the "Outlast® Adaptive Comfort® material." The material's benefit (or the "so that") is that it warms and cools "to keep you comfortable through the night."

Here are more examples from an advertisement for Amazon's new Kindle wireless reading device:

- Revolutionary electronic-paper display (feature) provides a sharp, high-resolution screen that looks and reads like real paper (benefit).
- Wireless connectivity (feature) enables you to shop the Kindle Store directly from your Kindle - whether you're in the back of a taxi, at the airport, or in bed (benefit).
- Unlike WiFi, Kindle utilizes the same high-speed data network (EVDO) as advanced cell phones (feature) - so you never have to locate a hotspot (benefit).
- Email your Word documents and pictures (.JPG, .GIF, .BMP, .PNG) to Kindle (feature) for easy, on-the-go viewing (benefit).
- No monthly wireless bills, service plans, or commitments - we take care of the wireless delivery (feature) so you can simply click, buy, and read (benefit).

Give the "so that" technique a try the next time you need to transform your facts from features to response-boosting benefits. This simple shortcut is certain to increase your prospects' interest while generating more sales.

Tom Trush is a commercial copywriter for Write Way Solutions (<http://www.writewaysolutions.com>) in Phoenix, Arizona. You can view more free copywriting and marketing articles on his blog at <http://www.tomtrush.blogspot.com>

Acquiring Business With Persuasion

Kim McGinnis

So, what's the deal with the power of persuasion? Is it just a good business skill or is it manipulation?

Let's talk about manipulation first. A typical sales pitch involves the motive to manipulate. It will look like a set up, and the one being set up will feel like a caged animal. The salesman begins zeroing in on the target's pain. It starts as an introduction and a handshake. Then the manipulator picks up an on accent as the potential customer begins speaking, or he strategically notices a ring that the target is sporting on his right pinkie. A calculated intention is set in motion that moves the conversation to a more personal nature. This probing leads the manipulator to ask what city the target was raised in, what he likes to do for fun, and what he wishes he had more time to do...until before you know it, the poor creature is bearing his vulnerabilities to the vulture. And then, of course, the manipulator goes in for the kill.

The persuader works differently. His appearance is less slick. You feel comfortable in his presence because, even though you are caught off guard by his inherent confidence, there is something familiar about him. Where the manipulator has a desperate (hungry) quality that seems to motivate him, the persuader has no hidden agenda, so he is relaxed. The persuader does not have a goal to "find your pain." Instead, a professional presentation is made based upon the persuader's ability to exude success. The persuader is always cordial and professional, and if compliments are given they are always sincere. Again, no ulterior motives are prompting him. You are drawn to him because you know success follows the persuader. Because of this, you want to give him your business without the persuader having to convince you.

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Get the difference? If you have leaned toward manipulation to get the client or deal that you were after, you might want to seriously consider reevaluating your approach. And, to be truly powerful and successful you must always be willing to take it to the next level, and walk away if the situation calls for it. This is not because you are playing a game of Chicken, but because you have integrity. No job or client is worth having to trench through muddy waters.

Many successful business people have degrees in Psychology, or at least make it a point to know the field. When you understand what draws people in, and makes them act or behave in a certain way, it is much easier to get what you want from them. The art of practicing this type of persuasion is to do it in an honorable way. A degree of finesse is required which taps into the best part of who you are.

"The most important persuasion tool you have in your entire arsenal is integrity."

-Zig Ziglar (American motivational Speaker and Author.)

A large portion of the population wants what they can't have. Taking the example in this article about the confident business person who is willing to walk out the door, the potential customer will feel even more inclined to come after him. If he does succeed in retaining the persuader, and this business person is as good as he has demonstrated, then that customer will very likely be his for life.

Canadian Psychologists conducted a detailed experiment in which they studied people's actions and behavior at a Racetrack. The research revealed that the people making bets on their horses were much more calm and self-assured after they placed their bets than before. Circumstances remained the same, and no new facts were presented regarding the horses, the people involved in the study simply had followed through on their decision to place their bets.

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The conclusions based on this study revealed that humans are inclined to take a stand (and feel good about it) once they complete a transaction. Another mitigating condition is that human beings are influenced by peer pressure, whether conscious or unconscious. This condition points to people wanting to be winners, and wanting to be associated with winners.

And, it just so happens, that winners are masters at the art of persuasion. For this reason it is imperative to begin each day with the winner's frame of mind. Start your days off with confidence. If you are not feeling it, fake it. Believe you are the best at what you do, and behave accordingly.

There is no substitute for being branded as an executive or as a company with class. Become an expert in your field, and treat everyone you meet with respect. Persuasion will become less something you do to another person, and more of a way of being. From there, everything will fall into place. Easier said than done, I know. But, the journey will be a whole lot more pleasant when you take the high road.

Kim McGinnis is a freelance writer and entrepreneur. Kim and her partner, Mark McGinnis, own and operate a full service marketing firm, Avenstar's Video and Marketing Boutique, <http://www.avenstar.net>. To download Kim's free ebook, *The Passive Income Mind Frame*, go to Bring You Success <http://www.BringYouSuccess.com>

Who Says Marketing Can't Be Fun?

Robin Jones

Many independent professionals do lots of marketing, yet feel confused or frustrated that they don't see more results. "Why isn't it working?" they wonder. "I'm out there month after month to build my business, but my growth is so slow!" I can relate.

When I first started my coaching practice, I went to networking events with a goal of enrolling three new clients. Somehow, I really thought that I could meet three people in that hour and be so charming and compelling with them that they would want to hand me a check right there! I was delusional.

Marketing services is somewhat like dating. You wouldn't walk up to someone you just met and ask if they'd like to have a committed, monogamous relationship for the next few years, would you? It takes time to develop rapport and trust, and it must be clear to both parties why that relationship should continue.

Prospective clients need several things before they'll be ready to think about doing business with you, such as a need or desire for your services, clarity about who you are and what you do, trust that you can and will deliver on what you say, and a degree of rapport with you. They will only get these things if you consciously take them through the required steps to get there, and it's your job to make those steps happen.

Introducing Marketing Ball:

Marketing Ball is the first of the Seven Principles I work on with my clients. Think of the bases of a baseball diamond and how a runner must

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tag each one, in the required order, before returning to home plate. Like those runners, your ideal clients must go through the following steps with you, or else you'll lose them.

Stranger - this is simply where all clients-to-be start out. They don't know you, and you don't know them.

Affiliation - rather than cold calling people, it's easiest to connect with people you have something in common with. It could be membership to the same organization, being a part of the same industry, having similar interests, or anything else that provides an opening to the relationship.

Attention - where the relationship is borne of affiliation, it really gets going when you get their attention, by appealing to a need or want they have. This means they have a cursory understanding of what you do and how you might be able to help them. When you have their attention, you have them on first base.

For a lot of service professionals, this can be misleading; often we think that because someone's interested, they're ready to become a client, so we rush into talking about our process, and how they can become a client. But it's too soon for that. Before they're ready to think about becoming a client, they want to become familiar with you.

Familiarity - this is anything that advances the relationship and you develop a comfort level with each other. It could come in the form of coffee or lunch with the prospective client and finding out more about their business. It gives them the opportunity to feel who you are and what you're about. They want to make sure you're genuine, credible, and find out if there's a real chemistry between you.

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Familiarity is where trust begins, and without that, a real relationship-business or otherwise-is out of the question.

Information - Once someone feels more comfortable with you, and sees that you might be able to help them, they need to fully establish that what you offer is right for them. They need to know more details about what results they can expect, the process or methods you use, and so on. By this time, they have a metaview of your services, and they're starting to understand how you might help them. The information stage fills in the gaps for them.

At this point, some people might be on second base-ready to explore working with you, and it can be appropriate to start the sales conversation (more on that later). However, one way to strengthen and advance the relationship before that is to give them an experience of who you are and what you can do for them.

Experience - this might come in the form of a presentation you give to them or their company, it could be a sample session, or just spending some time looking at their business and evaluating what's needed next for them, all depending on what's appropriate to the service you offer.

Most importantly, it's a chance for you to show off your skills and abilities, and for them to really see and feel what it would be like to work with you. Again, you're building their trust that you can truly help with their needs.

Once you have a prospect firmly on second base, it's time for the selling conversation. The selling conversation is not convincing, persuading, or manipulating them to work with you. It is nothing more than getting clear on what they want, what obstacles are in the way of them achieving it, and

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letting them know specifically how you plan on helping them with that.

These steps can't be rushed, nor can they be skipped. Just because you're hungry for more clients doesn't mean they're ready for you-yet.

The point of Marketing Ball is this: everyone in your pipeline, everyone that could become your client, is in one of those stages. Now that you understand the stages, all you have to do is identify where a given prospect is and do what you need to do to take them to the next.

If someone is familiar with what you do and you have (or have had) their attention, it's time to get them some more information. If it's someone you just met and you need to follow up with them, do what you can to build some rapport and familiarity.

And most importantly, always remember that there are plenty of clients out there. It's your job to meet them where they are, communicate clearly, and build strong relationships. If you do those simple things, you'll have an abundance of new business in no time.

Robin Jones is a Certified Professional Co-Active Coach and author of "Success, The Ezine" (offering a free worksheet each month). To schedule a free introductory session, contact robin at robin@robinjones.biz or visit his website <http://www.robinjones.biz>

The Difference Maker in Success

Steve Martinez

If you are watching the motivating Olympics, you are watching dreams come true. I enjoy watching perfection being executed on a world platform. Most of us will never have the opportunity to perform on a world stage of this magnitude.

That being said, one of the questions I'm frequently asked is - what makes the difference in selling or success. This question is often related to the Selling Magic program we customize for clients and how they can implement it successfully. This is an easy question, because the answer is so evident to us. We find that there are specific factors to success in selling or just about anything in life that must be applied.

Step One - Start with a Clear, Vision

Every achievement begins with a dream. If this is true, do you dream of reaching success in your daily selling activities? If you are not, you are missing out on a powerful motivator and success stimulant. Professional athletes are noted for practicing the art of visualizing success. For me, a great example of creating a vivid visual of success is watching Tiger Woods. Tiger will patiently and clearly visualize the path of a golf ball in his mind before his putter touches the ball. Visualization is one of the reasons he is the best golfer in the world. If we want to achieve success in our chosen field, we must visualize what successful selling will deliver. This visualization includes more than just seeing ourselves successful. We should also imagine hearing customers saying yes to a closing question and the feeling of a completed sale.

Step Two - Crystallize Your Goal with a Written Plan of Action

When you picture success in your mind, the picture can be as clear as you want it to be. So, make it a clear, vivid image. It will help if you slow

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down the mental moments in you mind. Our minds are memory recorders so we can relive these powerful success motivators whenever we want to. With a strong visual memory, you can describe this on paper and create a written plan of action. This plan of action defines what you must do to reach your goal. This sales action plan must be detailed and written. Anything less, will not be good enough.

There are many people that will say "I have a plan." However, in many cases, the sales plan they have is NOT written down and only in their heads. This imaginary plan doesn't count as a qualified plan of action. The plan of action could be on a napkin or in a bound note book as long as it has multiple steps to follow and is written down. There is something magical about having a written plan of action you can follow that makes a difference. The important thing is to have a sales plan you can visualize and relate to on a regular basis. For example, many of my clients post our sales map on their wall so they can visually see their proven sales plan workflow. The sales work flow map serves as a visual reminder of what needs to get done and the route(s) to move the prospect forward.

Having a sales plan by its self is good, but it is not enough unless you develop a habit of measuring your success, following and implementing your sales plan. It is important to know how you are doing so you can adjust the activities of your success plan.

You will want to adjust your sales plan like an airline pilot who makes adjustments to a flight plan to stay on course so you reach the right destination. Airline pilots are subjected to multiple reasons for changing a flight course. Businesses and salespeople need to consider the same mind set, because things change and we will get off course if we continue to follow the original sales plan with each client. With a complete sales plan that maps out different sales workflow options, you will have multiple ways of charting a course for success. For this reason, you must have a well thought out sales plan.

Fishing for Leads - the 5 Steps

Peter Lawless

If you have a new experience everyday, you will lead a fulfilling life. I had one during my summer holidays, when I went out fishing for mackerel. After the trip, I had an epiphany – I felt I was now able to explain easily, in 5 steps, how small companies can effectively increase their business. We start with an anecdote, which captures the essence of the 5 steps, and hopefully will help you land next year's profitable catch.

Speak in your prospects language, about what they want

The first thing that I noticed when I got onto the small boat at the harbour in Enniscrone, Co. Sligo, was the cleanliness and order of the boat. The skipper in charge had all of the rods, upright, with their lines neatly tucked away, in holders. The holders were made out of piping, about 30cm long, which had been welded to the side of the boat.

A simple, inexpensive aid had made me sit up and pay attention. This skipper thought about his customers, and this device left a strong impression. We then got a very short lecture on safety, checked we had our life jackets on, and off we went. About 12 of us!

Finding your target market

About 12 minutes later, the skipper stopped the boat, and told us we should find some mackerel here. He explained that the lures on the hooks looked just like what mackerel wanted to eat. It certainly was not something I would have fancied!

He explained that through his experience and the help of a little sonar gadget on his boat, that he knew there was a shoal of fish below. We all

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slung our rods over the side and dropped our lines.

Reeling in the sale

Now I don't know about you, but this was totally new to me. I wound up the line frantically, as soon as I felt a tug, and hey presto, there were three fish dangling off the hooks. I started flailing about, one jumped off before I even got it in over the side, and when I was trying to reel it in the final bit I lost an other one. The one that I got in, I lost down the gutter when I finally got it off the hook.

The skipper explained to me, that once a fish took the bait, I should give a quick tug on the rod, to make sure it was firmly hooked. I should then take my time, to reel it in. Secure the rod in the holder, with the fish hanging over the bucket and deal with them one by one – I did, and I ended up with 20 fish, which delighted me, as I had set a target of 10, since my friend had caught 9 on his first time.

So what are the lessons for marketing – if you are still with me, and have not already got most of them, here they are in business speak;

- Set goals and targets that are realistic, and based on some valid foundation or research.
- Have simple procedures set up, to make it easy to operate and for your customers to conduct business with you.
- Speak in your prospects language, about what they want – it's a bit like the fish bait, unlikely that strawberries and cream will catch many mackerel!
- Once you know what your prospects like, find out where they are, do some research and target them accordingly – as in our example, not much point in putting down shark bait in a shoal of mackerel.
- Once you get your customers attention, or have a lead, qualify it,

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and ensure you follow up at all time to close the sale. Again the use of a good sales process is essential here.

The bottom line, if you know what problems or desires your customers have, and you can solve or fulfill these, while providing value for money, you will always be a winner.

And if you don't know the answer to that question, go ask the people who have already bought from you – they do!

Peter Lawless, founder of 3R Sales and Marketing - www.3r.ie. Subscribe to Success our free monthly Information Bulletin with sales and marketing articles. This will grant you access to Interviews and articles on sales, marketing, CRM and wealth creation as soon as they are written. This is a great way of getting advice to help you increase your bottom line.

26 Reasons Why People Buy

Chris Newton

One of the most common frustrations I hear from business people is that they can't write words that sell.

Put these same people face-to-face with a prospect, and they're in their element. But put them in front of a computer screen and ask them to create the words for a compelling, tightly written ad or sales letter or brochure ... and they freeze up.

True, there are very few professionals who can write in a way that moves people to action. Indeed, my own 'baptism of fire' in learning to write RESPONSE GENERATING copy was the direct marketing industry. Not only is direct marketing a totally accountable form of marketing where response rates can be measured to the decimal point, in many cases, it entails 'selling off the page'.

In other words, you're inviting prospects to put money in the mail or to call up with their credit card details to buy something, sight unseen.

NOTHING focuses you on good writing more than a challenge like that!

Yes, writing selling copy isn't easy. But here's the good news. When you learn the basic tools to move people through the written word, you'll BLITZ your market and leave your competitors in your dust. You'll have the power to bring sales and enquiries flowing into your business whenever you need them, like turning on a tap. And you'll be able to do it in ANY business you run, manage or consult to.

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Why IS 'the written word' such a powerful business weapon?

Think about those face-to-face encounters. How many places can you BE in during any one day? On a good day, you MIGHT get in front of four or five prospective clients.

But when you write compelling copy, you can engage THOUSANDS, or tens of thousands of people in a 'conversation' in a day. And guess what! Out of those thousands, only those who are QUALIFIED will 'put their hand up' and ask for your attention. These are people who want to buy.

When you've got people coming to YOU, you can say goodbye to cold calling. And YOU you control the transaction. Does that make sense?

To write compelling copy ...

Start with Power Words

'Power words' give you an almost unfair advantage when you write.

John Caples, a member of the Advertising Hall of Fame, identified some fascinating 'power words' when he studied the top 100 headlines of his time. Of the 100 great headlines he analyzed, he discovered that certain 'power words' appeared over and over again:

You (or Your) - 45 times, How - 12 times, New - 10 times, Who - 8 times, Money - 6 times

Of course, this is just a small selection of power words. But this tells you something! Why do you think the simple word 'YOU' appeared 45 times? Clearly, this word focuses on the reader. It forces the writer to write 'through the eyes of the prospect'.

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It's known as the 'Point-of-YOU'.

When you use the 'Point-of-YOU', it's almost impossible to talk all about your yourself, your company or your product ... you know the stuff ... "We have a big factory", "We are proud to announce ...", "Our product is so great ...".

Write in that self-focused way and your prospects will very quickly flip the page, hit the delete key, or toss your message in the rubbish bin.

Talk about THEM, and what THEY want ... and you'll rivet their attention! Can it be this simple?

I've had one client who attended one my workshops, who then re-wrote all his communications from a 'Point-of-YOU'. He achieved a 5 TIMES increase in response. From nothing more than that one change in focus!

Think about that. He didn't have to spend 5 times the advertising dollars. He didn't have to hire more people. He simply re-positioned to a 'Point-of-YOU', and achieved a 500% increase in leads! What would doing that achieve for you?

26 Reasons Why People Buy

I could write a whole course on copywriting techniques. And in my program, 'Write and Design your Own Ads, Sales Letters, Brochures, Flyers and Sales Presentations', we do exactly that. We work though the powerful yet logical steps to re-writing your own copy with response generating techniques, so that you move people to act.

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It's a fun process, and once you 'get it', there will be NO stopping you. For now though, let's look at another critical element in achieving effective communication ... And that is WHY people BUY? The late and great Ed Mayer compiled these 26 reasons why people are motivated to buy:

To make money, To save money, To save time, To avoid effort, To get more comfort, To achieve greater cleanliness, To attain better and fuller health, To escape physical pain, To gain praise, To be popular, To attract the opposite sex, To conserve possessions, To increase enjoyment, To gratify curiosity, To protect family, To be in style, To have or hold beautiful possessions, To satisfy appetite, To emulate others, To avoid trouble, To avoid criticism, To be individual, To protect reputation, To take advantage of opportunities, To have safety in buying something, To make work easier

Some fairly primeval motivations there! Some we may not even readily admit to. But they ARE the things that drive us!

Now ask yourself, how compellingly does your collateral zero in on and develop one or more of those motivators? Or does your literature fall back into 'we have a big factory' mode?

If you're going to MOVE people to action, you need to really get inside their heads, understand what their 'buying drivers' are, what their fears and uncertainties are, and their doubts ... and address those compellingly.

When you do that, when you craft compelling copy into your message, that's when you start to TAKE CONTROL of the market. That's when people buy from you because you've inspired them, because you've inflamed their imaginations, and educated them that you've got what they WANT.

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At this point, the focus goes OFF price and onto your value package. More about that another time.

In the meantime, do you think now might be a great time to do a 'Point-of-YOU' communications audit on your marketing collateral?

Chris Newton's track record of producing profit results for small to large business is well documented. Chris Newton's new Virtual Business Library (found at: <http://www.marketinghelponline.com>) is a world first, and is the flagship product of his successful career.

Eliminating Mental Interference and Chatter

Kendrick E. Cleveland

Part of what keeps people from achieving their goals in life and in persuasion is that they are their own worst enemy, constantly mucking up the mind with static and internal chatter -- does my hair look okay, do I have spinach in my teeth, is my fly zippered up, what's for dinner, I wonder what the kids are up to, gee, I sure can't wait to see that new movie, oh yeah, wait a minute. . . I should be paying attention to what this guy is saying because he may want to buy my product or service and I'm sitting here worrying about things I have no control over at the moment when I really should be gaining his trust and eliciting his criteria and defining it so that I can better figure out what he needs and wants in terms of an agent (or advisor or whatever). . .

We've all been there. We can be having a conversation with our loved ones and fade out to obsess about a work related issue and conversely worry about the family when we're supposed to be concentrating on our prospect or client.

There is incredible power in 'being here now'. Living in the exact moment in which you find yourself and committing to it with your mind, body, and soul, is the key to self persuasion and persuasion of others.

So what does this mean? Am I saying you're not allowed to think? Absolutely not. Thinking is good. Thinking about useless crap, like, I wonder if this person likes me.

I like to operate out of presupposition and assumption, as in, A, yes, this person likes me, B, this person wants and needs what I have to offer, C, I am going to make this sale, and D, if none of the above happens to pan out, there are always other prospects and clients in the queue. This line of

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thinking eliminates the self doubt, removes the impossible state that insecurity places us in, and discards the extra needless noise that slows down our ability to really get into our persuasion techniques as we have been trained to.

If I'm thinking about how I'm seeding and pacing and leading and focusing on the criteria and values of my prospects, throwing in language patterns, presuppositions, maybe a little rhythmic speaking, I don't have the time for those inner voices that try to undermine, and have, in concentrating on the practice of persuasion, virtually eliminated or silenced these critics or demons that try their best to trip up even the most confident.

How? Well, meditation is one of the tried and truest ways of doing this -- silencing the mind with intention and patience. There are light and sound session specifically designed to move our minds in the exact directions we would like. Exercise is really good at silencing the chatter, especially if you're working out in the perfect zone. Music also has the capability of putting me into this state.

Really, the first step is noticing it and continually correcting until it no longer rears its ugly head. However this is achieved by you is exactly the right way.

Kenrick Cleveland teaches techniques to sell to affluent clients using persuasion strategies. He runs unique public and private seminars and offers home study courses, audio/visual learning tools, and coaching programs in persuasion techniques. Find more articles at <http://www.MAXpersuasion.com/blog> - Be sure to sign up for his free report entitled "Yes! Persuasion."

Turn Off the Email and Pick Up the Telephone

Bob Poole

What would you do if you opened up your email box tomorrow morning and it was empty? You'd probably assume the email server or the ISP is having problems. But, what if everything technically was working? What if it were true that nobody sent you any email in the last 24 hours?

Would you say Hallelujah and have an extremely productive day? Would you quickly compute the amount of time you'll now be able to devote today toward - oh, how about that exercise program you keep promising to start? Or, would you start sending emails to a few friends and ask them to send you a test email just to make sure things are working.

I have many people who tell me they get an average of 150 or 200 or 300 emails a day. They say it with an eye roll and a sigh - but I always wonder why they tell me how many they get. It is always unsolicited information on their part usually during a discussion about the workplace.

I think they protest too much. I have come to believe that some people attach a level of self-worth to the number of emails they get. If you get hundreds of emails you must be very important. Right? Here's a program I use with clients that will actually make you feel good. More importantly - it will make your clients and customers feel good about you and your company.

Take one day a week and unplug from your email. (If you feel yourself getting anxious at that idea, start with every other week first.) Use the auto-response feature of your email program that will automatically let everyone who sends you an email that day know that you are "unplugged"

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and will be responding to emails tomorrow. Tell them they can phone you if it is urgent and include your phone number.

Next - pick up the telephone and call the top ten or top ten percent of your clients. Tell them that you want to know if you and your company are doing a good job for them. Ask them how you could do an even better job. Ask them if they were in your shoes, what would they do to provide better (whatever it is you sell) for the customer.

That's all there is to it. And, yet nobody does this. Too many people hide behind their voice mail and use email with clients so they can avoid talking to them How crazy is that!

So, go ahead. Shut down the email for one day and then pick up the phone. Even better, get a headset so you can keep on dialing and talking. Set a goal of a certain number of people you want to reach. Yes, you'll get a lot of voice mail but leave a message and I bet you'll get a call back. And, then have that conversation using the questions above to get started.

Keep track for the next few months what happens with the customers that you called. See if business doesn't increase. See if they don't send you referrals. And, after you have computed the numbers - send a check to your favorite charity with some of increased sales dollars.

Bob Poole's Water Cooler Hangout can be read at www.pooleswatercooler.com Contact Bob at bob@PooleConsultingGroup.com or www.PooleConsultingGroup.com

Selling Without Cold Calling-Prospecting Among Your Current Customers

Jerry Kennedy

You may have heard it said that the cold call is dead. While I'm not entirely convinced that this is the case (I still firmly believe that cold calling is an essential aspect of every salesperson's life; no matter what anyone might tell you, if you choose to sell for a living you are going to have to get used to making cold calls) I'm willing to concede that there are many other ways to generate new business. One of the best and easiest to mine opportunities (and possibly one of the most neglected) is literally at your fingertips: your current customers!

For a lot of salespeople, their current customers fall into one of two categories: the "needy" and the "friendly". The "needy" are those existing customers who need something from you: help with a billing problem, a resolution to a missed delivery or some other service-related concern. Basically, these are the folks who seem to always be reporting fires that you then have to spend time putting out. The "friendly", on the other hand, are those customers who you feel comfortable with, the ones who have become personal friends. You feel at ease dropping by their place of business for a leisurely chat, and they consistently show up on your expense report as golf or lunch appointments.

If you think about it, I'm sure you'll agree that these two groups occupy a large percentage of your time, and that is as it should be. After all, your current customers provide you with a solid foundation for your business and with residual income; you *should* spend a lot of time with them. At the same time, I would encourage you to place both the "needy" and the "friendly" in a third category: the "opportunities".

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The "opportunities" are your existing customers who want or need a product or service that you sell but who are currently buying that particular item from one of your competitors. Why would they do that? There are a lot of possible reasons. It could be they don't know that you sell that product or service. They may feel they are getting a better value from your competitor than they could get from you. They might even be doing it simply because that's the way they've always done it. Whatever the reason, you have the opportunity to rectify the situation. You also have a distinct advantage in that they are already buying other products or services from you.

I challenge each of you to review your customer list this week with a view to identifying five existing customers who buy a product or service that you sell from someone other than you. Once you've located five, start asking questions. Do they know they can buy this item from you? If so, why are they not buying it from you? What would you need to do in order to win that portion of their business? The answers to these questions should provide you with enough information to design a solution that will help the customer to appreciate the benefits of buying the product or service in question from you.

With just a little attention and effort, applied correctly, I'd be willing to bet you can convert at least three of the five you've identified. Just imagine the boost that will give your next commission check! Prospecting for new opportunities among your current customers is one of the easiest ways to boost your sales, particularly if you have done a good job of providing excellent service to them in the past.

Jerry Kennedy is the owner of Inside Out Business Solutions, a sales and customer service training and consulting firm based in Northern California. He is a STLE Certified Lubrication Specialist® with an

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extensive background in the petroleum industry and an accomplished public speaker.

Jerry Kennedy has combined his field experience as a sales rep with his personal development philosophy to produce sales and customer service training programs that get back to the basics and focus on building lasting relationships with customers. If you have comments, questions or would like Jerry to speak at your next sales meeting, feel free to contact him today! For more information, visit www.inside-out-solutions.com or Jerry's blog at www.dropdeadsales.com.

Three Steps to Effectively Marketing Your Business in a Depressed Economy

Nicky Bowden

Owning a small business in a depressed economy can be hard, but it is survivable and many businesses prosper during these times. Marketing is a large part of what will bring customers to your business, but you don't want to blanket the whole country to get just a few people through the door. It is very important to know who is still purchasing your type of product or service in a depressed economy and be able to target them specifically.

To effectively market your business in a depressed economy there are THREE steps you need to take.

STEP ONE:

Know your Technicoloured Coat. Your Technicoloured Coat is what makes your business stand out.

What is your Technicoloured Dream Coat? This means, what is the thing that makes your business stand out?

There are a lot of accountants, lawyers, business coaches, child caregivers and photographers in this world and each one is uniquely different. It is important to identify how you are different from the rest.

What makes you the only one in the world to do what you do, to offer what you offer? What is your Unique Selling Point (USP)?

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Your Technicoloured coat could be Location, Specialisation, Brands, Range, Experience, Guarantee or Warranty, Packaging of Products or Services as examples.

A USP doesnt mean that it is the only benefit that your business has, but it is a main differentiator from your competition.

It is important to have a Technicoloured Coat so that you dont blend in to the rest of the crowd. If you completely understand what makes your business unique then it is a lot easier to create promotions, and campaigns that reach the right people with your unique message.

STEP TWO:

Know your Target Market. This may sound easy, but in a depressed economy your target market will shrink as fewer people are in a position to buy. You need to precisely identify who is purchasing your type of product or service. I have identified six groups of consumers who are still spending in a tight market.

In a depressed market people still purchase, either because 1. they HAVE to, with a product of necessity or 2. because they are not willing to do without that product or service.

There are also some groups of people who 3. will carry on behaving as they always have, maybe because they have enough money that they are not affected by a tighter market or 4. they are ignorant of the situation until they find themselves in trouble.

Some people are 5. very calculated about their spend at this time and often need convincing of the merits of a product or service much more than they regularly would.

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Others will only spend small amounts that seem to fly under the radar of having spent anything at all.

Once you know which groups you are targeting you can tailor your marketing to reach them.

STEP THREE:

Knowing the Size of Your Pond. If you are trying to reach your Target Market to tell them about your Technicoloured Coat, then you need to use media that is reaching them and only them. There is no use going on National TV if your Pond is your local community. Understand which media reach your Target Market best in a depressed economy and don't waste money by going outside of your Pond.

The Size of Your Pond is the geographical area that you regularly attract customers from and that you aim your advertising towards.

If you understand YOUR Target Market and their behavioural traits AND you understand the Size of Your Pond, it is going to be very hard to waste money with your advertising.

Examples of advertising used for different Pond sizes are below. Which ever level you choose, the advertising media in the levels below this will also work eg. National advertising will also include Regional, Local and Internal.

International - International websites advertising - selling on the internet, sponsorship of international team or sports.

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National - National television, nationwide radio, internet advertising on mainly national traffic sites, magazines.

Regional - Regional newspapers, regional radio, website for directions and information not for selling.

Local - Local newspapers, magazines, sponsorship of clubs, school events, newsletters, prizes at events.

Internal - Database marketing through email or posting addressed mail.

If these three steps are followed it is nearly impossible to waste money on advertising and you will maximise your chances of making money despite a tightened market.

Nicky Bowden can be reached at Cost Effectively Marketing your Small Business, visit <http://www.adconomy.net>

Cold Calling: The Last Dinosaur

Adam Broomfield-Strawn

This subject is one that I feel very passionate about, it is something that affects every one of us in business today, it is something that is being outlawed in some countries and it is something that, I believe, only the lazy, poorly trained or undedicated sales people continue to do.

My subject is the last remaining dinosaur in today's business world that is known as **COLD CALLING**. So what is cold calling, why does it still exist and why should we stop doing it? Let me give you an example.

Imagine you're single and you're looking for a partner. Now, there are 2 methods you can adopt to do this. The first is the **SELF MARKETING METHOD** which works like this:

You go to a bar or club looking your best. You relax, let your hair down and generally enjoy yourself. If someone pays you a bit of attention, you chat to them, take their number and arrange to call them. You then go on a date, you see how you get on, you see if you have anything in common and you try to establish if you're both looking for the same thing. If you don't get on, you don't go out again. But if you do get on, you continue to date, possibly leading to engagement, marriage and even children.

This is how clever companies do business, **THEY ATTRACT PEOPLE TO THEM.**

The second method is the **COLD CALLING METHOD** which is very simple and it works like this:

You find a bar or club and you proceed to approach every woman there and say something like this:

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“Hey my name’s Adam, do you mind me asking, are you looking for a relationship because I’m currently looking for a relationship and I would be a fantastic boyfriend. I’ve had loads of girlfriends and they’ve all been really happy with me. I’ll take you out, wine you, dine you whatever you want. So how about it, you fancy going out for a drink sometime?”

Now if the girl says no, and let’s face it if she has half a brain she will say no, that’s not a problem. You simply move on to the next girl and try again, the theory being that if you ask 100 girls 1 of them **HAS** to say yes. It’s just **A NUMBERS GAME**, just **INCREASE YOUR ACTIVITY**.

Now this is how a lot of companies do business, they interrupt your day, tell you about themselves, ask you a load of questions and try to sell you something when they have no idea if you’re even **looking** for what they’re offering, if you even **want** what they’re offering or if you’re even a **suitable match** for what they’re offering and all they end up doing is totally destroying any chance they had of doing business with you.

So why does cold calling still exist? Simple, laziness. It takes a lot less energy to do what everyone else does than to try to find another method, a newer method, a better method. Like spam e-mail, junk mail and reality TV shows, all the time they produce some figures they’ll exist. What most fail to realise is, only dead fish travel with the current.

So why should you stop cold calling? Simple, **IT DOESN’T WORK ANYMORE**. Or at least it doesn’t work well enough in today’s business world. Sure, it used to work a long time ago and the methods you’ve probably been taught were once very effective but, in today’s world, the results you get from the effort you put in is ridiculously low. Cold calling does nothing but make you work harder for longer, destroys your credibility and hinders possible relationships.

People today are busier, are under more pressure and have less time than ever before. So when you cold call them, how happy do you think they are that you called? What’s more, when they need something they go out and get it.

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Today's consumer is better informed than you probably realise, they know what they want, they do their research, they do the comparisons, they look for the best deal, **THEN** they go out and buy. And who do they buy from?

The most professional?, The most attractive?, The most well known?, The most reputable?, The most referred?

How about, **ALL** of the above and then some? Today's successful sales people know that the only way to excel is to **BE** all of the above **AND THEN SOME**. They also know that you don't get that from dialling numbers and knocking on doors.

They invest in their business, they study their business, they do the things that 95% of sales people don't or even **won't** do and **THEY MARKET THEMSELVES**. So, if you're serious about succeeding in sales, why not stop using methods that worked 10 or 20 years ago and start using the methods that work **TODAY**. Invest the time, money and effort required and push the dinosaur that is cold calling into extinction where it belongs.

Not sure where to start? Just go on to Amazon and look up "Sales" material. Jeffrey Gitomer, Frank Rumbauskas, the list goes on and there's plenty to choose from. Just find someone whose style you like and take it from there. Do it **today** and start succeeding tomorrow.

Adam Broomfield-Strawn is an on-line author, and Toastmasters speaker. He can be contacted at abstrawn@googlemail.com

How and When Should You Follow Up With a Prospect?

Hillel Porath

You have just contacted a prospect via the phone who is interested in hearing about your service, business or product. You received permission to email /fax him more information about it.

Remember:

- 1] The email/fax is your third party in this case. They need to contain enough information that will help your prospect reach a decision.
- 2] Once he has your information in his hand - this sets room for the follow up process.

A majority of sales closed in this world are closed in the follow up process. Many small business owners leave out the follow up process because it demands leaving the comfort zone and pulling the trigger...aka: asking the prospect: "are you interested?".. People fear rejection so they prefer not to follow up and hope for the best.

Follow up is critical because it closes the process of the sale.

There are three main aspects in the sales process:

- 1] Initial contact of the prospect
- 2] Prospect receives the information via third party
- 3] Follow up.

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Now the question is: how and when should you follow up?

There is no real answer to this question; so many people do some many different things when it comes to follow up.

Here are some follow up tips:

1] Ask your prospect when would be a good time to follow up with him. This is probably the most important tip since you need to talk to him when his mind is relaxed and not calling him by surprise when he is really busy. He may want you to call in two weeks and not the next day. Follow up as often as they say you should.

2] If your prospect is in your local area - ask if it's possible to show up at his office for just a few minutes. Face to face is very important. When you show up offer him a free sample of your product or what ever it is you can offer him from your company - for free. People like gifts. A great tactic is to offer your free sample together with your companies' pen or business card so he has your contact information.

3] If you are sending your prospect an email - it is also very important to send out follow up emails. Not to bomb them on a daily basis but at least two emails. The first follow up email should be sent at least two days after the initial email and the second email should be sent three days after that. Some studies have shown that it takes up to seven follow emails to close a sale!

4] Remember: the reason for follow up is because your prospect is busy. When you first contacted him, he listened, he then said something like "sure send me an email" and then he went back to work and probably

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forgot about your call. The follow up comes into place to remind him about your call and to get him to start thinking.

5] Don't be pushy on the phone - prospects don't like that. On the other hand don't be shy. The prospect should not be the one leading the conversation. It is your job to get him to start thinking and to start talking. You need to start with something like: "Did you receive my email?"

6] Another aspect in the follow up process is to listen to his or her tone of voice. Are they busy? Do they seem relaxed? If they are busy then your tone or rhythm should be tuned in with them. You need to roll with the punches on the phone. If the person is relaxed - don't try to rush things.

7] When it comes to follow up - never leave any prospect out. Don't pre-judge anyone because you never know who is going to buy.

8] What ever follow up strategy you have - stick with it. When you are working on a clear strategy it will help you get better with the follow up. Your prospects will also be aware of that and this will help you improve your credibility and professionalism. Of course you can modify your strategy as you go along - but get the foundation right.

9] This is very important - always make sure before your contact any company that they have a need for your product or service. This will help you in the follow up process.

10] "Don't go chasing birds in an open field" - This means if you see someone is not interested leave them alone and move on to the next prospect. So many people spend so much time following up on a small group of prospects that are just not interested, its like chasing birds in an

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open field - you will never catch them. Your data base of prospects should be large enough that it should allow you to move on to the next prospect.

11] Be patient!

Hillel Porath is the founder and developer of iyazam.com **Hillel Porath** has been working in marketing for several years learning many valuable lessons along the way, the fruits of which appear on his website.

How to Turn Callers Into Paying Clients

Bernadette Doyle

One of the main principles of the Client Magnets approach is that it's easier to close a sale when a prospect has sought YOU out, rather than when you approach them. One of the reasons for this is that when a prospect approaches you, the business relationship starts out on a more equal footing. Contrast the situation where a prospect approaches YOU with the built in resistance and or skepticism you encounter when the first contact is made via a cold call or unsolicited mailing.

When people feel that they've discovered YOU, you don't encounter the resistance that can occur when YOU approach them. Defenses are down, the buyer feels more in control of the communication. Instead of YOU saying, 'Here's how I think I can help you' and then having to prove your claim with lots of convincing and persuading, the prospect is saying, 'I think YOU'RE the person who can help me. Tell me how this works.' They are much more motivated to listen to your answers!

So usually in these articles I share ideas on what you can do to make the telephone ring, but once they've called you, how you handle that all important first phone call can make the difference between you landing a client - or losing them forever.

When I was selling training to corporations, I found that the first phone conversation played a critical part in the overall sales process. Handled correctly, the prospect was 'pre-sold' even before our first meeting, the progression from initial enquiry to signed contract was smooth and in some cases the phone conversation went so well that the caller made the decision to buy without us having to meet.

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So the first phone conversation is a crucial moment in the overall sales process and sadly many opportunities are lost forever by mishandling this critical stage. It's not your job to 'convert' every caller. The purpose of this first phone conversation is to find out more about each other, and if appropriate, progress to the next step. But that doesn't mean that every phone conversation will or should result in a sale.

For a multitude of reasons, you may not be a good match for each other. I've witnessed many sellers put themselves - and their prospects - under unnecessary pressure because they were 'going for the order' before it had been established whether that was the appropriate next step.

Shift your goal for the call to 'let's find out more about whether we're right for each other' instead of 'must get the sale at any cost'. You'll be more relaxed, and when the prospect doesn't feel pressured, they are more likely to lower their defenses and tell you what they really want and need.

Result? When appropriate the sales will flow naturally, without you having to push. And, if it's not appropriate to progress to the next stage right now, you have left the door open for future business and/or referrals.

Bernadette Doyle publishes her weekly Client Magnets newsletter for trainers, speakers, coaches, consultants, complementary therapists and solo professionals. If you want to get clients calling you instead of you calling them, then sign up for her free weekly e-zine at www.clientmagnets.com

Prospecting For Many Is Truly Chaos and Yields Few Sales Results

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

Professional sales people prospect each and every day for that new potential customer. Their hopes are to land those big sales to meeting those nefarious, BHAG (Big, Hairy Audacious Goals) or quotas.

Unfortunately, quite a few of these folks embrace what I call the “Spray and Pray” tactic of prospecting. They spray their prospecting activities all over the place and then pray that something will stick.

The National Sales Executives Association seems to agree with the results of all this spraying and praying. Their statistics indicated that almost one out of two sales people (48%) never follow up with a prospect. Imagine all those countless hours of prospecting, attending business networking events after business networking events and spending thousands of dollars with nothing to show for all of those valuable resources of time, energy and money.

Given that many businesses less alone sales professionals lack an overall strategic action plan, this dramatic prospecting statistic should not be surprising.

Possibly, these sales people confuse prospecting or marketing skills with selling skills given that only 2% of all sales are made on the first contact.

The prospecting statistics do not become any more optimistic as sales professionals continue with their activities. Only one out of four actually make a second contact be it a call, direct mail or email. Now do you begin to see why there is so much more opportunity than most folks in sales realize? The majority of sales professionals’ prospecting activities are not

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only limited, but are probably disconnected. Simply speaking, these folks are in the state of Chaos.

A little over 1 out of 10 (12%) sales people actually take action to contact the prospect three times. Proactive prospecting requires follow up and is the precursor for relationship selling.

When it comes to contacting that prospect four or more times, only 10% of sales professionals make those additional contacts. Consistent and committed prospecting skills appear to be embraced by a true minority of sales professionals.

Now what is interesting to note is the relationship between prospecting (making the contacts) and sales results (money in the bank). For those sales professionals who make four contacts or less, they will secure 20% of all sales. However, those who have taken the time to actively prospect multiple times from five to twelve, these folks realize 80% of all sales.

Simply speaking, on average 10% of any sales force generates 80% of all sales.

No wonder companies continue to look for great sales people. Possibly, they need to find outstanding prospectors who truly understand the necessity of multiple contacts and building that relationship. My father who was a professional salesman for his entire career shared these wise words with me:

People buy from people they now and trust. Rome was not built in a day and neither will your sales come in one day. Take the time to be authentic and care about your prospects. You will reap incredible results provided you remain patient and stay the course.

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Prospecting is all about staying the course that being your marketing plan. When you know you are mining for gold, you best not be in a granite pit.

Remember, these 3 key strategies and turn them into measurable actions:

- Make sure that you have clearly identified your target market
- Contact them on a regular basis.
- Be proactively patient

Leanne Hoagland-Smith of **ADVANCED SYSTEMS** a business coaching training firm helps sales professionals to unlock results by achieving tomorrow's solutions today. If you want to improve marketing efforts and increase sales, then call 219.759.5601 for a free strategy session.

www.processspecialist.com

5 Marketing Activities a Day Keeps the Feast Or Famine Away

Helen Dowling

One of the biggest complaints I hear from small business owners is that they don't have time to do marketing. What this probably translates into though is that they don't like marketing; they find it frustrating and they're not sure where to start. And if I even dare to suggest that ideally you should be doing five marketing activities a day, most owners would tell me that this is unrealistic and there is absolutely no way that they can do this.

But, wait. Before you throw up your hands in horror, let me explain.

Have you ever experienced the horrendous ups and downs of feast or famine? In other words at some point of the year you're really busy doing client work and at other times you're so quiet you could scream. I'm willing to bet that when you're busy, there's absolutely no way you can find time to do any marketing and when you're quiet you have no choice but to do some marketing as it's vital that you get business in.

Most businesses will tell you that the feast or famine is just part of business life and you should get used to it. But, you see - I don't believe that's the case. I believe that if you market and promote your business to the same intensity when you're busy as when you're quiet, you'll get business throughout the whole of the year.

You see, it takes time for any marketing you do to work - around two to three months. That means that any marketing you do now will come to fruition in two to three months time. Let's imagine you're quiet at the moment and you start marketing your business today. You won't see the

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results of this immediately so you'll keep doing some bits of marketing until you get too busy to do any. If you don't see any results for two to three months time, that means that you'll be doing two to three months worth of marketing which will continue to have an effect two to three months after you stop marketing - hope that makes sense.

That's why I describe marketing as similar to riding a bike - when you're starting to market and promote your business, it's like you're peddling really hard. After you've peddled really hard, you can coast for a while, but if you don't start peddling again, your bike will stop. And then each time you're quiet in your business, you'll need to start peddling really hard again.

So, how can you make sure you promote your business even when you're really, really busy with client work? There are two main ways - either do five small marketing activities a day that you can fit in easily with your workload. Or, get someone else (preferably my company) to do it for you.

Seriously though, this article is all about helping you to help yourself so let's go through some small marketing activities that you could do each day. Here are my 5 small marketing activities for today. They take no more than an hour and a half to do altogether and have a huge, huge benefit to my business. Is it worth finding an hour and a half to do? Absolutely!

My marketing activities today with the time it took me are:

- 1) Write this article and publish it on 5 internet sites (30 mins)
- 2) Send out some follow-up emails from a networking event (15 mins)
- 3) Make a call to a potential customer (5 mins)
- 4) Record a radio interview (30 mins)
- 5) Write a short article to promote my workshops (10 mins)

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Tomorrow, my marketing activities are:

- 1) Go to a networking event (1 hour)
- 2) Make a call to a potential customer (5 mins)
- 3) Update my blog (5 mins)
- 4) Send out some emails to previous clients to see what they're up to (10 mins)
- 5) Check on the internet for any relevant tenders for my business (10 mins)

If you really haven't got time to do 5 marketing activities, try cutting it back to two marketing activities or even one. One marketing thing is much, much better than none!

And if you really haven't got time to do even one marketing activity, I would have a look at what you're doing throughout the day. Is there any time that you 'waste' talking to colleagues, making coffee, in meetings that you really shouldn't be in etc? Look at what you're doing. Are you sure there isn't even 5-10 minutes that you could spend doing some marketing?

Doing marketing all the time means that you'll be much less likely to suffer from feast and famine. By doing this and making sure I promote my business even when we're really, really busy (believe me we're absolutely mental at the moment), I make sure there's never a dull moment around here. We've had our best year ever this year - make sure you do too.

Helen Dowling. Exceptional Thinking

(<http://www.exceptionalthinking.co.uk>) provides advice and help to small business owners on their marketing and to people starting a business.

Emotional State of Prospect is Critical

Rory Sheehan, B.A., B.Ed., M.B.A.

When it comes time for a prospect to make a final decision about purchasing your product or service, the emotional state they are experiencing is critical to making their purchase decision. If your prospect is feeling upset, or is feeling unsure, they are not going to buy. However, if your prospect is feeling positive and excited about what you are selling, they are far more likely to purchase your product or service. Your ability to manage the emotional state of your prospect is critical to your success in sales.

The first emotion you want your prospect to experience is curiosity. When you first meet a new prospect you must get them curious about what it is you are selling and how it will help them. Getting the prospect into a state of heightened curiosity will allow you to keep their interest during your sales presentation.

As you go through your sales presentation, you want to get your prospect excited about the benefits you are able to provide and the problems you are able to solve. The stronger their excitement about what you are selling, the greater their desire to purchase your product or service.

Finally, you want the prospect to feel confident in their purchase decision. It is this feeling of confidence that allows them to make their final decision to purchase.

Depending on what you are selling, different emotions may be involved. The important point to remember is that sales professionals understand the role of emotions in completing the sale. You must identify how you are going to take your prospects on an emotional journey from initial contact right through to their final purchase decision.

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A very effective way to influence the emotional state of others is for you to enter that emotional state first. When you experience an emotional state, you attract those around you to join you in that emotional state.

When you want to get someone curious, you must first feel curious yourself. Then you are congruent when you adjust your tone and mannerisms to be consistent with curiosity. That will make it easier for your prospect to become curious.

When you want someone to feel excited about what you are selling, you must first feel excited so that your tone and mannerisms are in line with that excitement.

When you enter the emotional state first, it is far easier for you to guide your prospect into that desired emotional state. The strongest emotional state always wins, so make sure that the emotions you are feeling are strong.

Try this experiment. Do a sales presentation in an objective and monotone manner and note the effectiveness. Then do a sales presentation where you get yourself into the desired emotional states first. Once the different reactions from your prospects are clear, you can decide the most effective approach to increasing your sales.

Rory Sheehan, B.A., B.Ed., M.B.A. is an award winning trainer, sales coach, and best selling author. Rory's highly successful approach to achieving sales and business results has been featured on television, on radio, in newspapers, and in magazines. To find out more information on Rory's unique approach to sales and business success, visit Rory's website at www.rorysheehan.com or you can email Rory at rory@rorysheehan.com.

Effective Networking Tips

Martin Henley

Networking is about getting face to face with potential customers and partners and building relationships through trust. Good business contacts are achieved by getting to know people and establishing a mutual understanding and liking, not simply bombarding them with what you are selling. Networking is so hugely effective because you get straight into a face to face relationship, and people buy from people they know and like.

1. Warm Up

The majority of people walking in to an unfamiliar group will feel some level of anxiety, just thinking about being in this demanding situation can produce strong emotions. You need to remind yourself that everyone at these events feels the same and they are there for the same reason, to network, so there will be lots of people wanting to talk to you. Before you walk in get yourself in to a positive mind set, hold your head high and smile.

2. Break the Ice

You will have something in common with everybody in attendance, whether that's how you travelled there, being associated to the same organisation, or having mutual acquaintances. You have something in common and you are there to learn something new, so start every conversation with an open question like how are you? or if you are feeling bold - how's business?

3. Approach New People

Its fine to spend some time with the people that you feel comfortable with, in fact its good to strengthen existing relationships, but remember you are

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there to meet new people so make sure you don't spend too much time hiding behind your friends. You can approach people on their own, even groups of 2 or 3 will usually welcome you to join, however, avoid closed groups of 2, 3, 4 or more unless you already know members of the group.

4. What to Say

You don't have to be loud or overtly confident to be a good networker, overly loud personalities are quite often particularly bad at networking. You don't learn anything by talking, the only way to learn something new is by listening. An excellent networker will have bags of self esteem and will spend the vast majority of their time listening and learning new things.

5. Don't Hog People

When you do hit it off with someone be mindful that they are there with their own objectives, most likely to meet new people, so don't spend too much time with them. Just because they have intimated that they buy what you have to sell from time to time and their current supplier isn't great doesn't give you licence to follow them around like a stray. They will be keen to make the most of their time and maximise their networking. Take their card and arrange to call them back or perhaps meet another time. If you are in a group and are not part of the conversation excuse yourself and move on.

6. Buy Things

We are all motivated to network for the same reason, to meet new people and win new business, the whole thing breaks down however if nobody is prepared to buy. Supplier relationships are as important as customer

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relationships and we would all prefer to be buying from people that we know and like and meet face to face from time to time, this is why networking works. So, if you meet someone and you like the look of their stuff and their attitude give them a go. It's also worth noting that supplier relationships can quickly and easily become referrer relationships.

7. Prepare

As well as having a brief outline of what you do as a person or business, what you want to say and a good amount of business cards there are a few other things you may find useful. Most networking groups provide name badges, however some, perhaps the more casually arranged events don't, so having your own will make it easier for people to remember you. Also a pen and a small pad will be useful for making notes on who to contact, when and about what as notes written on the back of cards or cigarette packets can easily be lost.

8. Hang Around

The really good networking very often takes place before or after the scheduled time of the event, remember this when you put it in your diary and aim to get there a little early and stay a little later. Why not set yourself a target of not leaving until you have spoken to at least 5 new people and gained 4 new pieces of information or gossip.

9. Keep Your Promises

Diarise any follow up calls or actions that you have promised, make notes of the information you gained and add it along with the name of the event into your database. Memories fade quickly so if you have made a useful contact invest a little bit of energy in following them up in the way that

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you said you would, failed promises will be seen as an indication of unreliability on the networking circuit.

10. Go A Lot

Networking is about building relationships through trust which takes time. You will need to keep attending the networking events on a regular basis to get to know the members really well, and be on the tip of their tongue when they are referring somebody.

11. Spread The Net

Networking is a fantastic way to get your name known in areas you don't usually work. The internet is the best way to find new networking groups, however you should also speak to your customers, suppliers and any other business associates as they may be attending events that they could introduce you to.

12. Enjoy It

Most networking goes on in pubs or restaurants in the evenings or hotels around breakfast time. Networking is a necessarily social affair and could become the most social aspect of your job, if you compare it to other forms of prospecting like cold calling or knocking on doors its easy to see how people grow to love it and the people that they meet on the networking scene become really good friends. So, smile, have fun, put your best foot forward and go win yourselves some business.

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The Most Effective Marketing Secret You'll Ever Hear

Darlene Willman

Women love to talk and are naturally supportive in almost every environment, especially in their business. How many times have you talked with a woman and gave her a recommendation on where she can get her hair done, offered her a time-saver or told her where she can buy what she needs, ON SALE of course! By offering just a few referrals, you have just made her beautiful, gave her more precious time and saved her money. By now, you have just become her new best friend. She feels that if she needs support, she can contact you for advice or possibly offer her help by putting her in touch with someone else. This referral system is also known as a "Network". Most women are born with this technique and some have become "Networking-A-holics!" They love to connect others and find a way to help one another.

Here are a few secrets to help you become a powerful networker:

- Always have your business cards on you, with a back-up stash in your car!
- Wear a nametag everywhere you go, it identifies who you are and provides the other person something to talk to you about
- Ask how you can personally help them
- Listen to her and be fully engaged in the conversation
- Follow up by phone, email or another in-person meeting. Join her for a cup of coffee somewhere.
- Be on the look out for what she needs
- Keep a contact management system like ACT! so you can easily retrieve information for your referral
- Hand write a note on the back of your card with a lead, a contact or other valuable information
- Be a giver of referrals without any strings attached, remember the old saying, "Give and ye shall receive".

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- Attend networking events whenever possible
- Make it your goal to meet 3 new people each week and learn as much as you can about them
- Find a way you can promote them and get them more business
- Be prepared to introduce yourself (in 60 seconds or less).

Networking is one of the most valuable skills you can develop for the success of your business. There are plenty of organizations that can provide you access to people locally or nationwide. You should visit a few and determine if they offer a full assortment of ways to help you market and promote your company specifically to your target market. Remember, networking is about building relationships so don't assume everyone will do business with you immediately. It's a process and takes time to cultivate and grow. Make a commitment to be involved and attend regularly otherwise you might just miss shaking hands with your next customer!

"You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you." - Dale Carnegie

Darlene Willman aka "The SASSY Networker" is an expert in networking and referrals. She's a SASSY speaker, author and coach. Subscribe to "The Referral Marketing Newsletter" (a \$68 Value) containing unusual tips and tactics that will dramatically increase your referrals at <http://www.SassyNetworker.com>

The Six Rules That Will Help You Make More Sales

Don Westacott

According to Websters dictionary "Ego" is defined as the entire man, body and soul. The physical and psychical being that fashions peoples drives, desires and ambitions that makes each person unique. Because every person is different, in order to make a person buy, you have to recognise their differences in order to get through to their ego. Every person is egocentric, which means people spend 95% of their time thinking about themselves and how their world is affecting them at that moment.. In order to break through their ego barrier we must do two things, focus our own attention on them as a whole person and then apply the 6 rules of good human interaction.

The six rules were set down by Carnegie in a bestseller he wrote on how to make people like you. Remember as a salesperson you are in the human relationship business and people will only buy from people they KNOW, LIKE and TRUST.

The six rules to get people to like you are:

- 1) Show a genuine interest in the person you are meeting, by focusing on them and making good eye contact.
- 2) Smile.
- 3) Remember the persons name. To that person their name is the most important sound in the English language.
- 4) Be a good listener. People crave attention ,so give it to them by asking them questions about themselves, the more time you focus on their lives and interests, by the law of reciprocity the more time they will be

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prompted to give you back.. It takes time to build rapport and the best way to earn it is by giving people the attention they crave and seldom get.

5) Make your presentation or conversation in terms of their interests. Get them talking about their interests whether it is their business, their hobbies or their families.

6) Make the other person feel important. and do it sincerely.

The majority of people have a natural resistance when meeting a stranger but this is doubly true when they meet a salesperson.

Good human relations act as a catalyst in the sales process and they speed up a positive reaction towards you.

You can help the process along by applying an activator to the catalyst called "A compliment" This is a sure-fire way to getting the person on the road to liking you.

Don Westacott has over 35 years experience in sales and sales-management in the advertising and insurance industries. Don can be contacted at dawestacott@aol.com or <http://www.successful-selling-secrets.com>

10 Reasons Why Newsletters Are a Very Powerful Sales and Marketing Tool

David Durham

A newsletter is an exceptionally powerful sales and marketing tool. In this article, I explore some of the reasons why this is the case, and some of the many advantages a well thought out newsletter can bring to your business.

1. Regular Communication

A newsletter allows you to communicate regularly with your target market. This means that they see your company name, message, logo, services or products time and time again. And if they like what they see, they will come to feel as if they know you and can trust you. And people will buy from those they feel they know, like and trust.

They are also a simple way to invite feedback from your customers.

2. Repeated Message

The sales benefits of this medium are huge. You can get your message over to people each time you send them your newsletter.

People will seldom buy on first exposure to a new company, service or product, so they need repeated exposure. This is why the advertisements you see on TV etc., are repeated over and over again, at vastly greater expense.

3. Establish Your Authority

The production of a newsletter will begin to establish you as an industry leader, or to reinforce this perception of, if you already are one.

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This re-assures a buyer that they are dealing with people that they can trust, and who they can have faith in.

4. Make Special Offers

They give you an opportunity to make special offers to valued clients / customers.

This reinforces the relationship, and makes it easier for them to buy from you again and again.

5. Test The Market

They can allow you to test the market for new products, ideas etc. This can be done, for example, through pre-release offers and surveys.

6. On-Sell Advertising Space

Once your mailing list becomes large enough, you may be able to generate additional revenue through selling advertising space on your newsletter.

7. Detailed Information

They allow you to promote your company etc. in a level of detail that would be totally impractical through conventional advertising.

8. Repeat Business

New business, the first sale is traditionally the most expensive. In fact, some companies make a loss on their first sale just to get a customer onboard.

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Repeat business is usually the most profitable. Why? Because you already know who your buyers are and can reach them directly, with a precise message tailored to them, and in a very cost effective way.

9. Inexpensive to Produce and Distribute

With the advent of modern software and email, they are relatively easy and inexpensive to create and distribute.

10. Referrals

They offer a great medium for asking for referrals from existing clients. Which in turn can be a great source of new business.

What a Newsletter is Not

A newsletter is not a quick way to make a sale to new customers. They are a way of building and developing a business relationship with your clients in the medium term, that will in time lead to more sales.

Some Tips on Newsletters

- Include genuinely interesting articles related to the business sector you are in
- Keep the News element up to date
- Do not sell your email list, and advise subscribers that you will not on-sell their details
- Make their visual layout and design attractive
- Add your contact details every time
- Distribute it regularly and on time
- Keep it snappy and to the point

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David Durham is a Business Consultant with some 10 years+ of commercial experience, and has a special interest in the pivotal role that marketing plays in any successful enterprise. He also has a keen interest in efficient website promotion techniques. Email: PWF_Marketer@Safe-mail.net web: <http://www.pwfmarketer.net>

How to Get Past the Gate Keeper!

Steve Flashman

Getting in front of the right person is crucial to the success of any construction related business. The beginning and end of marketing for construction is found in "building the right relationships".

So here is the scenario we have all encountered:

You are facing an impenetrable fortress. There are guards on the main entrance and you cannot get through without a secret password which is changed on a regular basis. The person you want to see is on the other side of the reinforced wall and is rarely seen in public!

What does this remind you of? Yes, right! It's that **BIG PERSON** who makes the decisions about who gets on the tender list who is sitting at a big desk behind the wall. How do you get through? Perhaps the question to ask before you even reach the wall is: "Who do I call?" "Who is the decision maker?" "How do I find out the right person to speak to?"

It goes without saying that even trying to penetrate this wall is crazy without adequate research and preparation. Checking out the company website may reveal all, often giving a list of directors and management personnel along with their job titles. You may even get an email address or a direct phone line number, although that would be unlikely in the larger corporations. In a larger organization it may not be immediately apparent who is the decision maker dealing with your construction sector.

So where do you start?

I have found that once you start to dig, you can uncover the identity of the person you need to speak to even if it takes a few phone calls. This is

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where keeping notes on all your calls is essential. You can easily build a company profile and structure chart and it's often the first person you speak to i.e., the person on reception who will help you.

There are a few obvious things to understand before progressing to your final objective:

1. Large companies and corporations are made up of smaller, autonomous units with their own staff structure and management responsibilities and once you have established the key pecking order in one, it will be easier to uncover the next.
2. The 'gate keeper', the person who answers the phone, has been briefed to screen all calls coming in and may not mean to sound aggressive and unresponsive.
3. Unless you have something specific to say, don't bother to call.
4. Don't be disheartened if you get a negative reaction on the phone. If you work with telesales often, you will need to have a thick skin in order to cope on occasions. Remember, don't take it personally, unless you've gone out of your way to be discourteous, in which case, you deserve it!

If you are having difficulty tracking down the right person to speak to about a particular project, here are a few approaches that have worked for me:

1. As soon as the phone answers, say, "Hi! I have a question about doing business with your company. Can I ask you?" A surprised receptionist almost always agrees. Then say, "I want to send a short letter that introduces my company. Would that be okay?" The receptionist generally says this will be OK. You now have two 'yes' answers! Finally say, "If I explain what we do, would you tell me who to address the letter to?" The

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response is almost always positive and you will get the persons name you need to contact.

2. If you are having difficulty finding out the right person to contact, often the Human Resources Department of major companies will help you out.

3. Another avenue would be to look at the Company's Annual Report which you find on a Google search on the internet. You will find key people listed and by contacting one of them, can usually find the right person.

4. A good way to build your database of important contacts would be through the trade press. Get names of people being interviewed in feature articles and check out who is writing about whom.

5. If you run high quality seminars on subjects of interest to the professionals you would like to work with, 'Continuous Professional Development' events, this is a great way of meeting people and providing them with a service. Kudos for your company and great networking for all involved.

6. If you get to speak to a lower mortal in the organization, mention their name when calling the Big Guns! "I've just been speaking to Chris in your HR department and he said I should talk to you about..."

7. Sometimes talking to the Finance Director of a company and offering to save the company money, can get you a direct link with the top person.

Most importantly, don't give up! If you are polite, but persistent, you can

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normally reach the right person! It is hard work and a little discouraging at times, but once you have cracked it, it's worth it!

Steve Flashman is a Marketing Consultant with a unique edge! He is a public speaker published author, recording artist, media broadcaster and communications expert. Check out Steve's website at www.marketingforconstruction.com

Do You Suffer ‘The Networking Blues’ When Prospecting?

Marlene Oulton

Are you an introvert? Someone who tends to feel absolutely paralyzed at the thought of meeting new people? Do your hands get cold and clammy and your heart race 100 miles an hour at the mere thought of attending a networking event? How can you network successfully to grow your business if you feel faint at the mere thought of having to walk up to a stranger and introduce yourself and state what business you’re in?

When I started my business I was told that most new entrepreneurs have to cultivate their business, and in order to grow their client base they need to “network.” So what exactly is networking and prospecting for new business? How do you acquire the skills to do this effectively? Most people can learn to network better over time with practice and ease so for now let’s just look at a few of the basic “how-to’s” to get started on networking to grow your own confidence AND get your business well known at the same time.

1. **Smile!** No one wants to be greeted by a person whose face gives off the impression that they’ve just lost their favorite pet! A warm, welcoming smile (not those fake or phony grimaces either!), will show the person you are greeting that you are indeed pleased to make their acquaintance. I was once taught in a telephone answering seminar that you should always smile before saying hello when answering calls, as your smile even carries through the earpiece. Being friendly costs nothing and your genuine self will win over any hardened potential customer.
2. **Get your “elevator” speech introduction down pat!** It’s been said that you only have only 15 seconds to introduce yourself and what you do so you had better have a clear, concise opening introduction or else you’ll lose their attention. I’ve had trouble

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with this one in the past because the term ‘virtual assistant’ is a relatively new one for most people and I need to educate them on the “what is” part of my business first. Once I’ve determined that they’re interested in learning more, then I can explain in greater detail what services I have to offer them.

3. **Listen!** I know... this sounds so easy to do, but it’s almost impossible to listen and talk at the same time unless you’re a ventriloquist. In fact, if you aren’t paying attention to both the body language and the words that the other person is saying, you might miss some key points that you can use to determine whether or not this person is actually in need of your services. What questions are they asking you? Is their business one that might require your services? Do they seem open to the possibility of doing business with you? You will know within the first few minutes of conversation whether they’re a “fit” for you or not. Just pay attention and listen to what they have to say and then respond accordingly.
4. **Follow through!** If they ask you for additional information or request that you contact them at a later date, then you’d best follow through. Forgetting to get back to a potential first-time client is a certain kiss of death to that sale. A quick thank you call or follow up email will show them that you are interested in conducting business with them and will make a lasting impression.
5. **Just breathe!** Learning to relax and enjoy the opportunity of meeting new people is crucial to becoming a great networking person. I’ve never heard of anyone being beaten to a pulp at any social networking function I’ve ever attended just because they weren’t adept at speaking. Always be open-minded and maintain a certain curiosity about all the people you meet. After all, they’re attending the same function with most likely the same purpose in

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mind that you have – to find potential new clients and interact with other business people.

Does the proper networking increase your bottom line? Most definitely, but remember you need to be able to give a compelling 30 second ‘elevator’ speech that clearly states what business you’re in. Stumbling and fumbling for words to express what you do certainly doesn’t help your cause when you’re trying to make a positive first impression to a potential client.

If you follow these simple 5 steps, you’ll soon get over your ‘networking blues’ and change your bottom line from ‘red’ to ‘black.’

Marlene Oulton. BulletProofers.com is the brainchild (and joy!) of Marlene Oulton, communicator ad infinitum. Visit www.BulletProofers.com to learn more about the wordsmith services she offers or email her at Marlene@BulletProofers.com with your queries.

7 Ways to Be a More Confident Networker

Sharon Stiles

Be proud of yourself and what you do. What do you think about people who don't want to talk about their business, who keep saying "we're not really that good"?

Be yourself. If you're not a "traditional" business type then you might feel you don't fit in. But don't try and be someone you're not or you'll come across as uncomfortable and you'll find it difficult to be someone different.

Don't worry if it's all new to you. Seek out people who are good networkers and notice what they do. Ask them for help. Think about the things that you find most difficult and then find people who can help you improve those skills. Everyone was new to it once!

Know what you're going to say. If you get nervous giving presentations then see a hypnotherapist who can help to reduce your nerves and/or a presentation expert who can give you some practical advice about how to construct a speech and how to deliver it.

Arrive in plenty of time. If you're not in a rush you've got time to think about what you're going to do and you know you've got everything you need. Being there at the beginning of an event means you don't have to go straight into a crowded room.

Find out what the format is beforehand. Know what to expect, who you're likely to meet and what you should take with you. You'll also be able to leave plenty of time before any meetings afterwards so that you're not panicking about being late.

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Ask other people what they do. That way you're not stuck for words and it gives you a chance to sum up the person you're talking to so that you can feel more comfortable when they ask you a question.

Sharon Stiles uses hypnotherapy, CBT, NLP and EFT to help people reduce stress and anxiety in their personal and work lives. Find out more about confident networking at

<http://www.sharonstiles.co.uk/confidentnetworker.asp>

The 5 Qualities of a Great Tag Line

Casey Truffo

A catchy tag-line can be a great answer to the question: "So, what do you do for a living?" I call this your "short answer" or your tag line. It is basically two sentences.

"I am a special kind of counselor."

"I teach/help/work with (your target market and the problem that they see themselves as having)"

Below are some proven examples:

"I **teach** couples how to get along better."

"I **work** with women who are tired of trying to be perfect."

"I **help** people who are afraid of going to the dentist."

"I **teach** singles how to find and keep a great partner."

"I **help** frustrated parents and teens."

Here are some best strategies that can help you create a great tag-line, but the first thing I want to suggest is that you get together with people who understand what you do, who will brainstorm together with you and who will give you honest, real-time feedback.

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It starts a conversation.

The key to successfully marketing your practice is having a lot of people know what you do - and remember it when it comes time for a referral. So, when people ask you what you do for a living, it is a marketing opportunity. By sharing a quick few words that invites the other person to ask questions, you are on your way to building a new referral relationship!

It is simple to say.

Some tag lines look great on paper but don't roll off the tongue easily. For example. "I teach women how to be heard by their mates" can sound like "I help women to be hurt by their mates." Now, that can get you some really strange looks!

It uses simple language.

Are you still using "jargony" terms when you describe what you do?

I really notice this when I coach financial planners. When they use technical financial terms, I (as the listener) feel uncomfortable. Instead of increasing my faith in them ("Boy, she knows her stuff"), I feel stupid. This is not how you want someone who could be a referral source to feel.

You need to know what words to use and what words you should absolutely avoid unless you want to drive potential clients away.

It is interesting.

This is tricky. You want to encourage the person to ask you questions and maybe to tell you about their own struggle, but you don't want to be doing therapy on the spot. One therapist who said "I work with women with

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body image issues," found that people would act uncomfortable when she said that. She changed it to "I teach women how to feel better about their bodies" and started attracting crowds and lots of conversation!

You love to say it.

Far more important than the words themselves, I want you to love talking about what you do. I want you to light up when people ask you what you do. Have fun with it! Let your passion out!

People don't care what you do until they know what you care. So, let them see that you love what you do and they'll be more likely to ask you more about it. Far better to get connected with them than simply having a catchy phrase.

So, pick a tag line. Go test it - but test it with therapists and non-therapists and particularly people who don't know you.

Casey Truffo, MFT is an award-winning speaker and coach to therapists on five continents. She is the author of *Be A Wealthy Therapist: Finally, You Can Make a Living While Making a Difference*. Founder of BeAWealthyTherapist.com, her vision is to teach therapists how to ethically and honestly earn a good living. If you have any questions, please contact us at (949) 309.2590 or visit our website at <http://www.beawealthytherapist.com>

New Business Owners - How to Determine Your Unique Selling Point

Susan L. Reid

Are you struggling with finding your unique selling point? That one thing that will make your product or service different and stand out above the rest? One of my clients is struggling, too.

She's not alone. Many new business owners are suffering from the results of not having a unique selling point. They're getting lost in the crowd and dying a slow death because they aren't able to attract enough customers to support their business.

If you're like most new business start-ups, you don't have money to waste on expensive marketing campaigns, trying to capture your market share or customer's attention. You need a unique selling position. And you need it quick!

To determine her USP, these are the steps my client took. It worked for her and will for you, too. Stop getting lost in the crowd. Follow these five steps to determine your unique selling point (proposition).

Step 1: Take out a piece of paper and make a list of the features and benefits that are unique about your product or service. Then compare your features and benefits list with your direct competitors. Draw a circle around the benefits and features that set you apart.

Step 2: Thinking from your customer's perspective, decide what emotional need is being specifically met by your product or service. Add this to your list.

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Step 3: Write down anything about your product or service that your competitors cannot easily imitate. Put a star beside anything that cannot be easily duplicated, reproduced, or copied by your competitors.

Step 4: Combining words from steps 1-3, write down phrases about your unique product or service that are short, clear, and concise. Write them in such a way that they can be easily communicated to and understood by your customers.

Step 5: Construct a memorable USP statement by answering your customer's primary question about your product or service, "What's in it for me?" State it as a benefit to the customer, and make it to the point. Such as:

* Domino's Pizza: We deliver in 30-minutes or you get it free.

* Target: Expect more. Pay less.

* U.S. Peace Corp: The toughest job you'll ever love.

So what's your USP? What's memorable and unique about your company? Don't know? Do what my client did by following these five quick and easy steps and find out. Stop putting your business at risk. Put an end to getting lost in the crowd. Stand out in the mind of your customers and gain the advantage. Discover your unique selling point today. You'll be glad you did!

Dr. Susan L. Reid helps home-based entrepreneurs figure out who their niche market is, where to find them, and how to figure out your unique selling position [www. Alkamae.com](http://www.Alkamae.com) . Get a jump on figuring out what the best product or service is for you to offer to your niche by downloading "Doing What You Love: Multiple Streams of Passion" free PDF at <http://www.SuccessfulSmallBizOwners.com>

Your Elevator Speech - An Important Marketing Tool

Marte Cliff

Do you have an "Elevator speech" memorized and ready to give at the drop of a hat? Or rather, at the drop of that innocent little question: "What do you do?"

You should, and it should be well-considered. In fact, this little 15 to 30 second speech is so important that it might serve you well to consult with a professional when writing it.

Did I say "writing it?" Yep, sure did. If you write it, practice it, and memorize it, you won't be floundering around, stuttering, and falling over your words when the question is asked.

It took me a while to learn that lesson, and I'm embarrassed to recall some of the responses I gave to the question before I saw the light and made myself take a couple of hours to refine and memorize my response. You see, I prefer the written word. It allows me to look at what I said, reconsider, edit, change, add, and delete until I know it says what I mean.

Put me in front of a crowd with no script and I start to flounder. Unfortunately, I did the same when store clerks or people I met by chance asked the "What do you do" question. (I didn't meet anyone in elevators - there are no elevators in this small town.)

Your career choice may be easy for people to understand, so if you say "I'm a Realtor" or "I'm a mechanic" or "I'm a hairdresser," at least they will have some inkling of your general field of expertise. They just won't know why they need to know you.

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When you say "I'm a copywriter" they don't. In fact, most people think that means that you help people gain copy rights to their written or recorded work - or maybe to their inventions. Even many small business people have never heard of a copywriter and have no idea about what we do.

So why is that brief speech so important? Because every casual contact you make is a potential client or customer. Because every contact you make carries the possibility of them telling someone else about your meeting. And you never know when someone will just be **yearning** to know someone like you.

If you don't let them know who you are, and the benefits you offer, you'll miss the opportunity.

So now, take the time to really think about what you do. What is the most important benefit that you give to your customers and clients? My mover friend in San Francisco says his is "Taking the stress out of life's 3rd most stressful event." Of course, when he answers that way, it opens the conversation so he can tell them that moving is said to be life's 3rd most stressful event.

There's something about what you do that is a true benefit to your customers. If you're a hairdresser you might create hairstyles that bring out every woman's beauty. If you're a mechanic you keep people safe and prevent expensive breakdowns. If you're a Realtor you help people achieve their dreams. If you're a tutor you might awaken latent abilities and promote academic and life success.

Whatever it is, you need to phrase it clearly and briefly - because often you have only seconds in which to answer and capture someone's attention - so you can hand them one of the cards that you just happen to have handy there in your pocket. (At least I hope you do!)

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Writing postcard copy is tough because it's brief. Writing your elevator speech is tough too, but just as worthy of your time and thought as the postcard you'll send in the mail.

One last thing - be sure to smile when you deliver that speech. You want everyone to know that you are indeed happy to be providing that wonderful service!

Marte Cliff is a Freelance Copywriter who specializes in making people feel good about buying products or services. She has extensive experience in writing search engine optimized web copy, direct sales letters, postcards, space ad copy, press releases, and more. She is also available for marketing plan creation and editing services. You can visit her at <http://www.marte-cliff.com>

Guerrilla Marketing – Who’s your customer??

Deborah Bifulco,

The fundamental premise of guerrilla marketing is that it requires *time*, *energy* and *imagination*, rather than lots of money and gargantuan budgets. So, you might ask, how is that possible? Simple!

Let’s start at the beginning. Who is your customer? That sounds simple enough, but before you get started, let me stop you for a minute.

Remember the old 80/20 rule? Yep, the one that suggests that 80% of your business will come from 20% of your customers.

Why is that important? Because you are only going to market to that 20%. And, in order to do that, I’m going to ask that you get really specific about who they are and what they like.

Let’s start by taking a look at your existing and past customers. Who is your very best customer and why? As you answer this, think about what makes them a great customer... Is the business they give you particularly profitable? Are they easy to work with? Do they refer other people to you? Do they tell others how happy they are with your service/product? Chances are, if you are like most of us, all of these things contribute to making them a great customer.

Now that we have identified the things that make them an ideal customer, let’s dig a little deeper. Where are they located? How often do they purchase from you? If you run a retail business, ask these additional questions: Where do they live? How much money do they make? Married? Kids? Own or rent? I think you get the idea here.

Once you’ve created a very clear picture of what that perfect customer

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looks like, it is time to start identifying other potential customers who share as many of these same characteristics as possible. Use this information to develop criteria for your mailing lists. Craft your marketing message to talk specifically to this customer; and don't waste your time trying to talk to everyone else. Focus on the people who will be your best customer. Spend 80% of your time and money on that 20% of the market, and you will get big rewards!

Deborah Bifulco, Certified Guerrilla Marketing Coach & President of Bifulco Business Solutions – <http://www.bifulco.com> email: dbifulco@bifulco.com

What is Your USP?

Jody Gabourie

USP stands for Unique Selling Point or Unique Selling Proposition. It's a term used in marketing that is supposed to tell prospects and customers what it is about your product or service that is unique, valuable and relevant to them.

A great USP makes it clear why your business stands out in a crowd of competitors. It helps your potential customers understand how you are different and why this difference is an advantage or benefit to them. Your Unique Selling Point answers the question why people should work with you rather than your competitors.

Your USP has to be right for you, your business, your clients and your prospects and it relates to some aspect of your business such as:

The way in which you provide your services, your personality or style, a specific system you've created, speed of service, a solid guarantee, your problem and solution in itself, your business or marketing approach, delivery mechanism of your services or product.

It's important to figure out your USP as there are likely a variety of other businesses, individuals, products or services that can potentially provide a solution to your prospects' problems. This is why it's important that you figure out what your unique position is. Your USP is what makes your product or service different and more valuable to potential clients, and it is the main reason they will choose you over your competitors.

How do you determine your USP?

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To find your USP you have to figure out what about your business is fascinating, helpful, unique or different. You are looking for some factor that sets you apart from everyone else.

To come up with your unique selling point, it's helpful to look at it in a few different ways:

1. point of view of prospects and clients
2. relevant personal and professional experience
3. comparison of competition

Point of view of prospects and clients

It's important to fully understand what your prospective and current customers feel is valuable with regards to your services and products. Your difference must be of perceived value to them - they must care about your unique difference because it helps them in some way.

Pretend that you are a potential client from your target audience or niche market with the problems you've defined in the previous section. Think about what results you are looking for and what would make you sit up and take notice of a business that solves your problems. What would make you choose one service or product over another one?

Ask your current clients directly. Take a few to lunch or have a phone conversation with them and ask what they feel sets you apart - makes you unique and makes them want to do business with you.

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Relevant personal and professional experience

Think about your personal and professional experiences and identify anything that you feel provides extra value to your clients.

If you are a weight-loss coach and you have overcome weight issues yourself, then that experience will probably result in a more beneficial coaching experience for your clients.

Another example is you may have many years of experience working in a certain industry. Your experience is a plus for your clients because you can demonstrate that you understand their "world", because you used to be part of it (or still are).

Comparison of competition

You can also do a competitor analysis to determine why someone would choose your product or service over the competition.

Pick your key competitors and think about if you were a prospective client and were considering purchasing from all of these companies. Then ask yourself, what would make you choose your product or service over all the others?

An important point to keep in mind is that your clients must value your USP, and it must be relevant to your product or service. If it is not, it won't do you much good as a Unique Selling Proposition.

If you do not find or create a difference, potential clients will find no compelling reason to purchase your products or services over your competitors' products or services.

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So take the time today to sit down and clarify exactly what it is that makes you and your company unique. I guarantee there is something!

Jody Gabourie, The Small Business Marketing Coach, teaches simple, innovative and powerful marketing strategies to help business owners find and keep their most profitable clients. To learn more about how she can help you take your business to the next level, and to sign up for her FREE special report, ezine and articles, visit her site at <http://www.JodyGabourieMarketingCoach.com>

Persevere Where Others Have Failed

Heather Nelson

The business world has always had its ups and downs and it always will. The things that make a good company, a good product, a good investment are simple: Personality, Truth and Elbow grease. This is true no matter what business you're in. Don't think because you don't literally get your hands dirty that Elbow Grease doesn't exist for you. Even Bill Gates and Donald Trump used a bit of elbow grease to get where they are.

Elbow grease is just another term for hard work and research. The more you know the better off you'll be no matter what happens outside your windows. Do your homework! Know your products inside and out, but also know your competition, your customers, your objectives. If you don't know who to market too, why bother marketing? If you don't know what your competition is charging, how do you know you're giving your customers a good value?

George Ross said it best, "Spend time and effort to achieve good results." Without spending time to know what's going on around you, you have no hope of success. People are fairly easy to understand, unless you're a psychologist. If you build their trust, are easy to deal with, and make them feel special they will come flocking. So, how do you get them to flock? There are several ways, not all of which will work in all situations. The best way to get a flock is to network. Word of mouth is the cheapest, easiest, and most effective form of marketing available and it always has been. Keep it simple and truthful.

Another way to gain a flock is to give them at least a taste of what they are after. The idea of giving something away for free can be scary, unless remove your emotions from the equation. You know your goal. You can see your goal because it's a measurable goal. Now figure that everyone

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who gets a taste of your product will want more. Not only that, but they bring their friends, their co-workers, their neighbors. By keeping your goal in mind as you create this free item, you will be sure to draw your flock and their flock to you like a magnet.

As you can see, word of mouth affects every aspect of your business. Even when you give something away, people are talking. If you want to persevere where others have failed, just keep them talking. Know your products, competition, and customers so you can be sure to give them exactly what they need and want. Use the power of elbow grease to move your business to the next level.

Heather Nelson is owner of the professional services business Champion Assistants. Heather focuses on helping small business owners achieve their goals by implementing strategic sales and marketing plans. Champion Assistants is a team of professional virtual assistants who specialize in online shopping carts, sales, marketing, web design, graphic design and translations. For more information, please e-mail info@championassistants.com or visit <http://www.championassistants.com>

Creating Business in a Quantum World

Louise LeBrun

We live in a world and at a time that envelopes us in unprecedented change. In all areas of life - economic, social, spiritual, emotional, etc. - we are finding ourselves profoundly pressed to reconsider our reality and restructure our willingness and ability not just to engage our world but to redesign it. Not only are we faced with the speed and intensity of change that is the boon/curse of the internet, we are becoming (sometimes frighteningly!) mindful that 'what was' no longer 'is' and in truth, will not likely ever be again.

As an entrepreneur and independent businesswoman coming up on 20 years, I am mindful of having determined long ago that the success of my business would be directly tied to my ability to commit to my own evolution, with my business a reflection of that growth and expansion. Little did I know in 1990 how important that would become not only to the survival of my business but quite likely, to my survival as a human being.

It is no longer sufficient to look outside ourselves and ask: what do *they* want? What hunger or desire can I identify; what need has become evident that I might anticipate and gratify through the service or product that will fill it? We must look beyond 'what is' and become the creators of what might become if we are to be a valuable, timeless and resilient contributor to the culture that is shaped by our every individual and collective choice.

We live in a quantum world... a world that tells us that we manifest our outcomes and create our own realities. The physical world we see - the outcome of our creations that are measured in the clients we attract and

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how much revenue doing so generates - are the byproduct of a framework of thought that is of our own design. In this world, what we think becomes the life we live.

Were I to identify the three most important things to pay attention to, they would be:

- * Do what you love. Only do what calls to you and awakens your passion for expression. That includes what you do, where you do it, how you express it and who you express it with. Allow notions of obligation, logic and reason to slowly fall away as you focus all of your attention on doing what lights you up! Trust your internal compass to be your guide in shaping a future you delight in.
- * Be yourself. All of your Self... in all places, at all times, with all people. Let the essence of who you are trickle in to what you do; and allow that which is meaningful and authentic to you and for you guide and shape your reality.
- * Decloak! Open, honest, clear and direct communication will accelerate manifesting what you want in your world. Allow managing/handling/manipulating to fall by the wayside, leaving in its place a capacity to see and be seen. People are drawn to those who are living expressions of what they know themselves to be capable of becoming... and have no idea how to get there! When you decloak, the people who are desperately looking for you can find you - and lives change.

In a quantum world, the limitations of a Newtonian, allopathic world - the limitations of a world only of matter and stuff and things - will become the walls of our own prisons. In order to free ourselves from this incremental way of living, we must first free our minds of the past and historical ways of being and doing. It makes good business sense to discover - now! -

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what will soon become essential to moving through a world of upheaval and rapid change.

Louise LeBrun - Founder of the WEL-Systems Institute and creator of the WEL-Systems body of knowledge, including Quantum TLC(TM), The CODE Model(TM) and CODE Model Coaching. You can reach Louise at Louise@WEL-Systems.com; or visit her website at www.WEL-Systems.com .

Do You Get Attention With Your 30-Second Introduction?

Kevin P. Dervin

I went to a networking event the other day where the meeting leader said, “We’re going to skip doing the 30-second introductions today because mine’s so bad and it doesn’t work that it nauseates me.” I thought to myself, WOW! I’d skip the next networking meeting until I’d worked out a new introduction.

Do you get attention with your introduction? Are you prepared to introduce yourself at your next networking event or for when someone ask, “What do you do?” Consider these tips for developing an attention getting introduction.

1. Start With The First 10 Seconds. What if 10 seconds is all you get? Does your first sentence tell your listener enough so they understand what you do and inspire them to want to know more? Here’s the simple, but effective approach. “I work with [type of clients] who have [these types of problems, issues or challenges].” That’s it. Don’t try to sugar it up or make it real catchy.

2. Avoid the What You Are Approach. “I’m an accountant” or “I’m a marketing consultant” or “I’m a financial planner” or “I’m a growth coach”. You’ve heard them time and again. You’ve probably even done it yourself. The problem is your listener(s) may not understand what the title means or even worse they may fill in an incorrect definition.

3. Avoid the What You Do Approach. “I do small business accounting including sales tax and payroll” or “I provide business owners with mentoring and training in comprehensive strategies to improve bottom line results...” Tends to be boring and doesn’t help the listener(s) understand what they get as a result.

4. Say How You Solved a Problem or Served a Client. Reinforce your first 10 second sentence with a second sentence that shows how you solved a problem or overcame a particular issue or challenge. "I help mid-sized accounting firms plan big conferences on a small budget. I just recently lined up free live entertainment for a firm that hosted 500 people in town last week."

5. Tell Them Why You Are Unique. What makes you stand out from the crowd? Maybe it's a unique model or approach for better results, focus on a specific niche, a guarantee, or extras that others don't provide. There are many ways to define your uniqueness that will help gain attention and make you memorable.

Make your introduction an attention getter. Start with the first 10 seconds. You can always build from there once it starts getting attention. Actually write it down and practice out loud several times until you can just say it naturally.

Kevin Dervin is focused on helping small businesses that are ready to grow, but struggle with how to consistently attract more great clients. Visit <http://www.clientfastpath.com> to see how you can put your business on the Get More Clients Fast Path."

Connecting VS Prospecting

Barbilee Hemmings.

One thing I teach my new business partners is the Power of Connecting. Many people call it prospecting, I prefer the term connecting. You see, to me, prospecting is about getting a credit card number, connecting is about reaching out and touching someone. Connecting is what I do when I care about someone. Connecting is the thing that will let the other person know that I hear them and I am here for them. Connecting is about people. So how do I connect?

CAPI

Common Ground

Affirm

Permission

Information

CAPI CAPI CAPI

COMMON GROUND

To have a great connecting experience, establishing common ground is crucial to success. Look for something in common, and talk about that.

AFFIRM

Once your new friend engages in conversation, affirming where they are at is important. Acknowledge their thoughts or their actions.

PERMISSION

Wait until permission has been received to share your business/idea. If the following words are not spoken, permission has not been given:

Wow, tell me more.

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How do you do that?

What is that about?

Etc.

INFORMATION

Once permission is given, information can be shared. Now BEWARE of verbal vomit! You know, when you “spew” your business idea/opportunity etc. kind of like a seedy salesman. There is a great analogy, be the cat not the dog. A cat waits to be petted, a dog jumps on you, sticks out his tongue and drools. Be the cat.

CAPI CAPI CAPI

Did I tell you how important that was?

CAPI CAPI CAPI

Here is a conversation that I often have in a book store in the personal growth section

Oh, I have been thinking about getting that book, (COMMON GROUND) has someone told you good things about it?

A colleague recommended it to me.

Oh, what was the recommendation? (This opens up their WHY)

Well I was looking for a book to help me focus on my goals.

I hear you, (AFFIRM) - then share a quick personal point - I know that before I (business opportunity) my focus on my goals was a bit weak. But now, wow, I am laser focused.

How did you do that? (PERMISSION)

Thank you for asking, however I only have a few minutes today and I would really like to give you the attention that you deserve. Would it be

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alright for me to get your business card and set up a time later today to connect with you?

Sure. Here's my card.

Great, I will send you an email with a quick synopsis of my business. Now, is 5:30 or 7:30 better for you this evening?

5:30 is better I will still be in the office and in front of my computer.

Perfect. So here is my card, I will send you an email with a link and it will only take you 11 mins to view. I look forward to connecting with you at 5:30. Oh by the way, My name is Barbilee.

Thank you. I'll talk to you then.

CAPI CAPI CAPI

I never think of anyone as my “cold market”.

I never need to “prospect”.

I will never again say, “I don't know anyone”

The only thing I will do each and every day, 10 times a day, is make new friends.

And...who doesn't want more friends?

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Eight Habits That Boost Marketing Results and Stretch Your Budget

Joan Marcus

Regardless of the size of your marketing budget, you can make every dollar count by cultivating these savvy habits. The main investment is your time.

1. **Be consistent.** Every organization should have a strong, succinct mission statement -- 25 words or less -- that clearly indicates the need your agency addresses and the solutions you provide. Use this message or "elevator pitch" consistently in your marketing tools as well as during presentations and when you are networking. Everyone associated with your organization -- staff, board and volunteers -- should know your mission statement and use it as well.
2. **Be succinct.** Keep your message short and to the point.
3. **Be persistent.** Marketing is not a once and done event. It is a cultivation process through which you build relationships by staying in touch, addressing needs and anticipating future ones. Plan to contact target audiences on a regular basis. The number of times per year will vary depending on your organization but should be no fewer than six times per year.
4. **Listen.** If you want to know what donors and volunteers want, listen to what they have to say. Give them an opportunity to speak, whether it's through surveys, focus groups or one-on-one meetings.
5. **Personalize your approach.** Everyone likes to feel important and in marketing, the personal approach is your opportunity to create that feeling. Know your audience so you can communicate targeted messages. On an individual level, send handwritten notes for birthdays or special achievements. Email articles that might be of

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6. interest. These are all important ways of staying in touch with minimal time and resources needed on your part.
7. **Get organized.** If you want to make the most of every opportunity, get organized. Use -- don't lose -- that stack of business cards you have collected. Capture contact information in a database and keep it up to date. Create a system to ensure that you or someone in your organization follow up with donor and volunteer prospects who want to be contacted at a future date.
8. **Diversify.** While this may sound more like financial advice, it is important to effective marketing as well. There are many different ways to get your message to your audiences and the more channels you use, the more people you will reach. The key to diversification is to know your audience and how they like to receive information.
9. **Believe in what you do.** If you want people to believe in your organization, you must believe in it as well and be passionate about the work you do.

Joan B. Marcus, president of Joan B. Marcus Communications LLC, helps small businesses and nonprofit organizations achieve their goals by developing and delivering their marketing message with impact. Joan is a pro in all forms of writing -- from website copy to grant proposals, brochures to electronic newsletters. Contact Joan Marcus at <http://joanbmarcuscommunications.com/> to discuss how she can help you.

Top Ten Tips to Make Article Marketing Work For You

Nikki Pilkington

One of the most effective ways to build your credibility, attain search presence and create quality backlinks to your website is through 'Article Marketing'. Article marketing involves writing a series of well crafted, knowledgeable articles within your area of business expertise and publishing them not only on your own website but also in various high profile places across the Internet, in order to establish credibility, "Become The Expert" and help to increase your search engine positions.

However, there is a certain set of rules to help you to use Article Marketing to promote your services, products and website, so here are my Top 10 Tips on Writing and Publishing your own Marketing Articles:

TIP ONE: Don't Sell - Give It Away - This type of article is not sales copy. The aim is not to sell your goods or services, but to give away your knowledge for free. Sounds crazy, but the more you give away, the more potential business you'll receive back. Demonstrate your range of knowledge and you'll see your online credibility building.

The more free knowledge you give away, the more people will see you as the expert in the field. When those people need what you're selling, they're much more likely to come directly to you.

TIP TWO: Tailor your Title - Make your title alluring and attractive. Questions such as 'How to...' and 'Why' are good for attracting the reader's curiosity. Top Tens and Top Fives work well too. Try to place a keyphrase within your title for maximum SEO opportunity.

TIP THREE: Paragraph - Make your paragraphs short and to the point. Try to avoid paragraphs larger than five lines if you can help it. Think

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about writing for Internet readers who like to scan for the best bits, so make it easy for them to read.

TIP FOUR: Keywords - You should carefully and strategically plant your best SEO keywords or keyphrases throughout your articles, but it's vital that they do not obscure the meaning of the sentences or make the article less enjoyable to read. Don't make the article just about the keywords; just naturally allow the keywords or keyphrases to be used throughout the article. Use a keyword tool to find the most relevant keywords or phrases to suit your needs.

TIP FIVE: Publish - Internet publishing isn't like the restricted environment of printed media publishing. The Internet is a great democratic space that allows anyone to get published. When thinking about where you want to publish your articles on the Internet, start with your own website(s).

Next, stake out a few Article Directories such as EzineArticles.com and take a look at their article submission policies. Work out the FIVE or so article directories where you might put your work and make that part of your publishing process. Finally, look at the social networking or business forum sites and consider publishing your articles if their terms and conditions allow.

TIP SIX: Link - At the very bottom of your article, you should add a backlink to your website. You can add something like 'For More Articles - visit XXXX or email name@company.com. Some sites do not allow this, so read the submission rules very carefully. Don't fill your article with links; the focus is the content, nothing else.

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TIP SEVEN: Tasters/Hooks - Some of the article directories allow you to put a short taster paragraph as part of the submission. This is great, but it's better to use that same taster idea elsewhere. Post a 'hook' or 'taster' paragraph up on a forum with a link to the article on your own website. Make the taster drive the reader to your site where they can become a potential client or customer.

Doing this will create a backlink that will improve your SEO and since the forum will probably be optimised too, your article hook will come up on the Search Engines too. Writing a good taster means giving just enough information to tempt the reader into wanting to finish reading the article. So when writing an article 'hook' it's a balance between giving too much or too little information away.

TIP EIGHT: Word Count - Articles between around 300 and 1000 words are a good length for Article Marketing purposes. Too little and you can't communicate enough to build credibility. Too much, and the average reader will get bored and stop reading before the end. This will prevent them from seeing the link to your website. Don't waffle on; the length of the article need only be enough words to make your point.

TIP NINE: - Topic - Choose the kind of topics that people are likely to search for. Imagine that all people using a Search Engine are looking for a solution to a particular problem. Consider how you provide a range of solutions to potential customer problems. Write your article questions or Top 10s around those problems and solutions. When someone uses a Search Engine to find a solution, they should find your article as a potential answer to their problem. Topic choice should be driven by this philosophy.

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TIP TEN: Outsource - Consider employing an article writer to produce the high quality content you need. This can often save you time and money and keeps the flow of articles coming for as long as you have the budget to pay for the service. Not everyone has the confidence or ability to write articles, don't miss out on the value of article marketing just because you lack time, confidence or aptitude. When choosing to outsource your articles to a professional content writer, make sure that they demonstrate to you the ability to write on your topic area and always, ALWAYS choose someone whose English is better than yours. Writing and publishing your own articles online will provide you with some very valuable exposure across the Internet. The more high quality articles that you write, the more potential traffic you could receive and the stronger your credibility will be.

Nikki Pilkington. For further information on how to use article marketing to boost the number of visitors that your website receives and increases your profile and credibility, speak to Nikki by emailing Nikki@NikkiPilkington.com or visit <http://www.nikipilkington.com>

Increase Your Sales - Stop Selling to Your Customers

Kym Kranen

I love to buy... Fun things, things that will benefit me, improve my lifestyle (or so I think).

"People don't like to be sold to, but they love to buy"

- Jeffrey Gitomer

Never a truer word has been written! As I just revealed, I love to buy, but I really dislike being sold to. Could this be one the reasons most of us are shopping on line more & more. Could it be, we just don't want a pushy sales person, who couldn't care less about us or what we really want, coming anywhere near our personal space, let alone speaking to us? The number one way to get more people spending more money within your business is to stop selling to them - because they are not loving it!

Selling today is different to how it used to be ten or fifteen years ago, especially if you are trading outside a metropolitan area. One of the biggest changes is the increase in the number of places to buy. I'm careful not to say shops, because we don't just buy from shops anymore. The level competition is fierce! And it's for this very reason that we need to offer our customers much more than just a good product. We really need to be building relationships with our clients, because this is what they want. And if they don't get what they want, there are thousands of other businesses selling exactly what you are selling & they know that.

Here are some statistics on why customers change their buying habits (leave a business);

For convenience - 12% will leave.

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Relationship i.e. friend/relative opens new business - 5% will leave.

Price/product/time - 15% will leave.

Perceived Indifference - 68% will leave!

That's right, 68% will leave you if they feel you have lost interest in them, if they feel they are not important to you or your business any more. When the relationship turns sour they will leave.

Strangely enough, the stats on marriage break down are similar. Married people, take note!

I love to do business with friends, with people I like. Don't you? It seems we all do!

The moral of the story...

Stop selling to your customers & start making friends with them. Start caring for them like you care for your friends & family.

Your life will be happier & so will your bottom line!

Kym Kranen is a Business Advisor, Workshop Presenter, Success Coach & Networker, based in Northern NSW, Australia. Log onto <http://solutions4success.biz> to subscribe to a free newsletter, giving you practical solutions to make a real difference to both your business & your life.

Marketing - 7 Ways to Increase Your Leads, Customers and Sales

Michele Pariza Wacek

One common mistake I see small business owners and entrepreneurs make time after time is this -- relying on one source for leads.

In fact, I can't tell you how many times I tell someone I'm in marketing and what they say to me is "oh, the only thing I do for marketing is word of mouth." (I'm going to write an entire article about word of mouth marketing, maybe two, because that is hands down the most misunderstood marketing strategy.)

Anyway, if you rely on only one marketing source, like word of mouth, I can nearly guarantee what your business looks like. Feast or famine. Either you're buried in work, stressed to the max as you spend all of your time and energy frantically fulfilling the work pouring in, or you're starving. Nothing is coming in and you spend your days worrying about how you're going to pay next month's bills.

So how do you avoid that situation? By not relying on one lead source but instead diversifying and having leads come in from multiple sources.

When this happens, you start to create a much more stable business environment for yourself, plus you have the added bonus that if a lead source dries up, you're not out of business.

Let's look at some lead sources other than word of mouth:

1. Speaking. This is a great one as it also positions you as an expert. You can speak at live events or you can speak on your phone for teleclasses or

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you can do both. I personally do both and have found they work very well together.

2. Web site. People are constantly searching the Internet looking for products and services you're already selling. Why not cash in on this by turning your Web site into a lead generating machine?

3. Networking. Both online (also called social networking and includes sites such as MySpace, Facebook and LinkedIn) and offline (includes networking events and live seminars filled with your target market) are good ways to find leads and clients.

4. Advertising. Not my favorite but it definitely has its place. And there are times where this is the absolute best way to pick up new leads.

5. Existing/past clients. You can pick up quite a bit of work both by upselling your existing clients or by reconnecting with past clients and seeing if their needs have changed.

6. Media. Getting articles placed or being interviewed on radio or television can also increase your bottom line.

7. Strategic partners or affiliates. This is where other people promote you to their customer base for most likely a percentage of the sale. The difference between strategic partners and affiliates is strategic partners tend to have a more long-term relationship with you and affiliates can be a one-off or short term (for instance, they promote a sale you have going on).

There are other lead sources, but these ideas will get you started. Best yet, all these sources will work together for you and feed off each other (and even increase your overall referrals). For instance, someone might hear you speak, then meet you at an event, then check out your web site and

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finally hire you. Or they might first meet you on Facebook, then head on to your web site, then hear you speak and finally buy a product.

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The Power of 2,000

Rory Sheehan, B.A., B.Ed., M.B.A.

Family and friends often have the best of intentions with the advice they give, but sometimes it is way off the mark. How many times have you heard a family member or a friend say that it takes at least two years to start making money in your own business? How many times have you heard a family member or a friend say that you have to spend a lot of money to make a little money? Let me assure you that this is not reality. These are myths, and it myths like these that keep many high potential people away from self employment.

When you start your own business, or when you want to make your business grow, there are three keys to your success: Key number one is sales, key number two is sales, and key number three is sales. Remember, nothing happens in a business until something is sold.

The reality of self employment is that you can be the best in the world with your technical skills, but if you can not sell those skills, you will end up working for someone with less technical skills, who happens to be able to sell. Who do you think will make more money, the person with the technical skills or the person who can sell? The person who can sell will always make more money than the person with the technical skills. That is why your focus should always be on developing your selling skills.

Regardless of whether you are new to self employment, or you want to grow your business, you have to get out there and talk to people in your target market. The more people you talk to in your target market, the more sales you will make, and the more sales you make, the more money you make.

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My general rule is that you will start making money s after you talk to 2,000 people in your direct target market. This means direct, face-to-face, communication. It does not mean sending out 2,000 fliers or 2,000 emails and waiting to see what happens. You have to make the effort to get out there and talk to your target market.

The power of 2,000 gives you total control over how long it will take you to start making money. You can make a minimal effort and talk to one person in your direct target market each day, and it will take you 2,000 days to start making money. However, if you choose to make a serious effort and talk to 50 people in your direct target market each day, you can start making money in 40 days. The amount of effort put forward, and the amount of money you make are under your direct control. You just have to get out there and do it.

The other nice thing about the power of 2,000 is that it is free. You do not have to spend any money as you build your contact base, all you have to do is get out there and meet with people in your direct target market.

So how long do you want it to take before you start making money? If you said 2,000 days, good luck with that. However, if you said 40 days, then get out there and start meeting new people in your direct target market.

If now is the time to start taking control of your business and your income, then make a commitment to talk to 50 people in your target market each day for the next 40 days. Watch the impact this commitment will have on your business and on your income. The best part of the power of 2,000 is that it is also a lot of fun to be out there meeting new people. So go out there and start having fun today.

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Farhan Ishaq (aka Fuzz Ishaq) specializes in teaching people how to rapidly improve their results in marketing their product or service. Fuzz Ishaq has a degree in business and has written over 6,000 sales messages for 153 different industries since 1996. To get instant access to marketing reports, products and LIVE training, visit:

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Discover all kinds of powerful resources, free for the taking, at

<http://www.success-stream.com>

Jerry Kennedy has combined his field experience as a sales rep with his personal development philosophy to produce sales and customer service training programs that get back to the basics and focus on building lasting relationships with customers. If you have comments, questions or would like Jerry to speak at your next sales meeting, feel free to contact him today! For more information, visit www.inside-out-solutions.com or Jerry's blog at www.dropdeadsales.com.

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If you are an entrepreneur, please keep in touch with the person who gave you this book so you will be the first to know when a new book becomes available.

On behalf of everyone involved with this book I want to wish you the best of success in your sales and marketing efforts.

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