

create the dream!™

THE MAGAZINE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES THAT LIKE TO DREAM BIG!

JANUARY 2008

IN THIS ISSUE:

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS

- And Now A Word From Our Sponsor
- Law of Attraction In Action
- A "Brand" New You in 2008
- Logo or No Go?
- Setting Up Shop

MARKETING & PROMOTION

- Do Your Potential Customers Forget You?
- Fusion Marketing
- Testing & Tracking Your Marketing

THE VIEW FROM HOME

- The Tricks of the eBay Powersellers
- Operation Dropship
- Healthy, Happy & Deductible?

SIDEBAR

- Online Banking
- New & Improved Ask.com
- Voicemail Without the Voice?
- The Hipster PDA

NEWS & REVIEWS

- Review: Riches In Niches
- Review: Masters of Sales

COLUMNISTS:

- Barbara Brabec
- James Dillehay
- Dennis Gaskill
- Srirupa Dasgupta



Seeing With Fresh Eyes

What you see as our cover photo for this issue relies greatly upon what type of person you are. Some may see nothing more than an imprint in the snow. Others may see infinite possibility.

The new year is the perfect time to start fresh. We endeavor to lose pounds, get organized, work less, and cherish our family more. But in our haste to create lists, join gyms and compartmentalize, we often lose sight of the incredible gift a new year gives us.

The new year is your blank canvas upon which you can create your masterpiece. The new year is your mulligan -- it's the closest thing we adults will ever get to a "do-over." The new year is that sparkling white back yard, full of freshly fallen snow, just begging for us to come outside and make snow angels, snowmen, or start a rousing snowball fight.

The new year is your chance to set aside your preconceived ideas, your doubts, and your past mistakes. It is a time to look ahead with hope, renewed focus, resolve and excitement. It is a time to grab your coat and gloves, and head outside to make your mark in the snow.

Take a moment for yourself as we begin this new year. Before you break out the pen and paper, prior to putting those Rubbermaid tubs in the attic, before you lace up your running shoes...take a moment and drink it all in. Give yourself one last holiday gift -- a fresh, new outlook -- and the optimism of a child.

Even if it is just for an hour, or a day.

Time is a commodity that no man should take for granted. We'll never get this day, or this moment, back again. It will be a long time until the snow flies again next December. So, make it count.

Oh, and the last one outside is a rotten egg.

- Happy New Year from Create the Dream!™

And Now...A Word from Our Sponsor

Getting the Most for Your Ad Dollar

Many of the same "print" principles which apply to newspaper advertising also apply to magazine advertising. The biggest differences are:

- Magazines are usually weekly or monthly publications instead of daily.
- Advertising messages are more image-oriented and less price-oriented.
- The quality of the pictures and paper are superior to newsprint.
- Advertisements involve color more often.

The general rule that you can run the same ad 3-5 times within a campaign period before its appeal lessens applies to magazine advertising as well, even with a monthly publication. So it makes sense to spend extra time and money to prepare a worthwhile ad that can be successfully repeated. Over long terms such as these, however, be aware that the client (you) often tires of the ad before the audience does.

Because ads in magazines are not immediate, they take more planning. Often, an ad for a monthly magazine must be prepared between one to three months in advance of publication, so ads detailing prices and items must be carefully crafted to ensure accuracy.

Since the quality of the magazines are superior, the advertising that you generate must be superior as well. All publications have different specifications as to the file types they accept – but the most widely accepted include: EPS, PSD, TIFF, and PDF. Consider obtaining assistance from

a graphic artist or an advertising agency if this is not an area you feel comfortable with.

There are two categories of magazines: trade magazines and consumer magazines.

Trade magazines are publications that go to certain types of businesses, services, and industries.

Consumer magazines are generally the kind you find on the average newsstand. Investigate which type would do your business the most good.

Working With Agencies

An agency can also purchase the magazine space for you, often at rates that are better than what you could obtain on your own. If you would prefer to purchase space yourself, contact the magazine's advertising department, and request their Media Kit. The kit will include a folder that includes demographic information, reach information, a current rate card, and a sample of the publication. Sites like Media Bids have recently emerged – and offer small business owners an unprecedented opportunity to obtain space in national, mainstream magazines at a significant savings.

Save Money With Discounted Space

Although most magazines are national in nature, many have regional

advertising sections that allow your business to focus on a smaller target area, at a discounted price. This is particularly useful for companies that target specific regional areas that would not benefit those outside the target region. Each magazine does this differently, so contact the one(s) you are interested in and ask them about their geographic editions. Some sophisticated magazines even have demographic editions available, which might also be advantageous.

A little known fact is that all magazine advertising rates are negotiable. This

tends to work better if you are using an agency to broker space for you – but, if you are a savvy negotiator, you can certainly do this on your own. Inquire as to special pricing for multiple insertions, advertorial considerations with paid display ads, and remnant space. Remnant space is unsold advertising space that the magazine has leftover as they

approach deadline. In many cases, this space can be purchased at a significant discount, and it offers a great way to test the waters with a new publication.

Be a Savvy Negotiator

If you are considering signing an annual contract for display advertising in a magazine, don't be afraid to ask your representative to "sweeten the deal" for you. You will automatically get a better deal when you contract for multiple issues – but it never hurts to try to parlay that into a short advertorial as well.



create the dream!™

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS - TRACI HAYNER VANOVER

Take a look at their Editorial Calendar, and see where you might have an "in" based on the content that will appear in future issues. If you have a great product or service that fits the subject matter in a particular issue, pitch them your idea. You may even want to consider suggesting that if they agree to feature a product or service in an advertorial, you would be willing to give the magazine's readers a special price on that item for a limited time only. This creates a win-win situation – the magazine looks good for securing a special product discount, and you get added visibility. Give it a try – you may just be surprised with the results.

Other Things To Negotiate For:

- **Reader Response Cards**
– Readers fill out a small survey card in the back of the magazine to obtain more information from advertisers. These leads are typically delivered via email in an Excel or CSV file. If you get these, make sure you follow up with the leads right away.
- **Special Placement** – With a multiple insertion order, you may be able to wrangle special placement out of the publication. Remember that prime advertising like covers won't be an option, but requesting options such as the front 1/3, right or left side of page, upgrade from black and white to spot color, placement near a specific feature article, or the top of a page may be something you can secure.

Excerpted from **"And Now, a Word From Our Sponsor,"** a new ebook from Traci Hayner Vanover. This 71-page guide offers comprehensive tips, strategies and resources for any small business in need of advertising help. Order your copy by visiting <http://www.AndNowAWordFromOurSponsor.com>.

Rave Reviews for "And Now A Word From Our Sponsor":

"The first time I learned of Traci was visiting several of her many websites. I was blown away with how her pages grabbed and held my attention. Design is only one of her many talents, as I discovered. She is also an Internet-savvy, first-class marketer, magazine publisher, trade association founder and much more. We've coordinated projects together and I am very pleased with her professional attention to details and deadlines. I highly recommend her for your next project!"

- **James Dillehay, co-author/publisher "Guerrilla Multilevel Marketing"**
<http://www.gmmlm.com>

"Being in the SEO field.. I rate this ebook as a very comprehensive advertising resource every small business owner should have to be successful with their product.. I give my thumbs up to Traci...Good work.."

- **Bhavesh R is Director of Search Marketing Experts,**
<http://www.micromann.com>

"... This book gave me some great ideas and suggestions on some advertising best practices. From advertising on the internet, TV, radio, or print, this book covered many aspects of each one. ... This could easily be a great handbook for an advertising agency or your marketing department with it's comprehensive list of advertising mediums and the resources to help you get bargain prices for the majority of them. Thanks for the great information!"

- **David G. is President of <http://www.HouseOption.com>.**

Sign Of the Times

To meet the ever increasing challenge of getting people to visit your store, buy your products or attend your event, traditional signs have become more like works of art, and business owners and every-day consumers are taking advantage of new and exciting signage.

The hottest new trend is a form of mobile advertising called the vehicle wrap. Often mistaken for a custom paint job, it is a digitally printed graphic that is literally "shrink wrapped" around the entire body of a car, truck, boat, bus, train or even a jumbo jet.

Also gaining in popularity, banners that can be printed inexpensively on virtually any kind of material (vinyl, canvas, foam core) using graphics limited only by the imagination, as well as custom wall and floor graphics printed on a wide-format digital printer and installed in a home or business to create a very unique and

custom environment.

To find a sign company that can make vehicle wraps, banners, wall and floor graphics or any other sign type, the place to go is <http://www.signsearch.com>. The search engine has a network of over 30,000 sign companies in the U.S. and Canada. Search by city or zip code and select a sign type.



Create the Dream!™ is published by:

The Creative Concept, Inc.
PO Box 8326 Fort Wayne, IN 46898
Tel: 260.489.3633 Fax: 260.489.3803
Web: <http://www.CreateTheDream.com>

John V. Vanover - President
Traci Hayner Vanover - Publisher

Barbara Brabec - Editorial Consultant
Sri Dasgupta - Contributing Writer, Networking
Dennis Gaskill - Contributing Writer, Web & Graphic Design
James Dillehay - Contributing Writer, Marketing

ISSN# 1932-3875 - Copyright 2005 - 2008
All Rights Reserved.

Inquiries:
Advertising: 260.489.3633

Submissions: Visit our Website:
<http://www.CreateTheDream.com>

JANUARY 2008

the law of attraction

IN ACTION

Many people have heard of the Law of Attraction but only some have received the vast benefits that it can bestow. Why is this? Are you one of the fortunate few who have learned to utilize this all powerful law? Or are you one of the unfortunate ones who visualize their dreams daily yet receives little or no results? Find out the cause and the cure!

Since the early part of the twentieth century pioneers in the business world have been trying to teach us how to create our lives to order. Men like Napoleon Hill, Charles Haanel, Wallace Wattles etc., wrote books and courses designed to awaken humanity to its own power. We now have films and documentaries that outline ways to change your life and delve into quantum physics and metaphysics. All these approaches are based on one law - the Law of Attraction. But have you been able to use the Law of Attraction to create the life you want yet?

The law states that things, situations, circumstances and even people are drawn into your life because you attract them. They are attracted by your thoughts and your feelings. The thoughts you hold and the emotions connected to them are what is referred to as your "consciousness." It is your consciousness about any situation that activates the Law of Attraction.



The Law of Attraction is becoming almost a household term. There are few people who have not tried to gain benefit from using it and fewer still who have not heard of it. But there are only a small number of people experiencing the huge rewards they desire from its use. Why is this? Are you one of the fortunate few who have learned to utilize this all powerful law? Or are you one of the unfortunate ones who visualize their dreams daily yet receives little or no results?

If you are the latter then take heart because you are reading the very article that can help you to unleash the power of the Law of Attraction to create miracles in your life.

To be a winner in life - one of those individuals who succeeds and reaches their goals - it is essential you look

closely at your belief system. Your beliefs determine where your thoughts are directed and your thoughts determine your emotions. It is this combination of thought and emotion which activates the great Law of Attraction.

Do you have problems in your life? Is your life filled with money problems, destructive relationships, bad health etc? Are there other areas that are working well, just alright or even really well? Most of us have a mixture of the two. Some areas in our life are working and some are not. If your life is not how you want it to be and you have more problems than you care to handle take heart there is a solution. However, before I divulge the remedy for these problems let us look more closely at an area of your life that is working well.

Look at one such area and ask yourself how you feel about this. Try to identify what feelings come up as you do this. You will find that your thoughts and feelings are very positive around this subject area. Now, it's easy to believe that your thoughts and feelings are positive because the situation is positive but just for a moment imagine that the opposite is true. What if the situation is only positive because your thoughts and feelings are positive? "Impossible!" you may say. Maybe, maybe not!

Now, look at an area where you have problems. I bet when you think of it you get a feeling in your stomach or tightness in your chest and immediately your mind goes into a downward spiral thinking of all the things that could get worse in the situation. Now do you feel like that because the situation is bad,

create the dream!™

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS - THE LAW OF ATTRACTION IN ACTION

or is the situation bad because you feel like that?

Are you willing to try an experiment? It takes courage. Are you sure you're up to the challenge? If you feel you are courageous enough and have the inner fortitude and open-mindedness to conduct this experiment then let us begin!

The Law of Attraction can be summed up in one short sentence - you get more of what you focus on! As an experiment we are going to take an area of your life that is working wonderfully and we are going to focus on as many things as we can that are WRONG with it for 7 days straight!

As the Law of Attraction brings back to you more of what you focus on then things in this situation should start to get worse - a lot worse. Look for small things to focus your attention on. Let's create an example but you should choose an area that is working well for you! Ok, so you love your job but that guy across from you who keeps picking his nose is really annoying. The 30 minute lunch break is nowhere nearly enough time to get something substantial to eat and let it digest; your workload is unreasonable etc.

Now, if the Law of Attraction really exists you should have a very clear sign of it through this little experiment. If you redirect your focus toward the negative people out there that have to work at jobs they hate etc.

diligently for seven days you will find little problems creeping in, probably from the first day. You will find that Mr. Annoying Guy's habits get even more annoying, your lunch break will be taken up by unexpected events and your workload will be increased. This is not just selective attention; you will find that these things actually happen!

If you have the courage to perform this experiment you will have very clear evidence that the Law of Attraction is very real indeed. Before you have finished this experiment you should be already fed-up with the results. So, once you have satisfied yourself that the Law of Attraction really does exist it is time to put things back to normal. Begin to focus once again on the positive aspects of your job. Ok Mr Annoying Guy does get on your nerves but he does have many endearing qualities. Your lunch break may not be as long as a rival company's but most of the people working there are miserable and at least you are doing something you enjoy. After all there are

The missing puzzle piece to the "Think and Grow Rich formula..."

Easily manifest more money, more freedom, new ideas or anything else you desire!

The **Secret** of Deliberate Creation
by Dr. Robert Anthony

CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE!

You will find that things quickly return to normal. But don't stop there. Look for other positive things to focus on. Look for things in your life that you want to expand. Focus on those things and you will get more of them. If you want something that doesn't exist yet then visualize it, feel gratitude that you already have it even if it isn't there it. Look for things that affirm that it is on its way. Take pleasure in seeing others with the thing you have and feel the joy of knowing that it will soon be yours.

Soon you will find that the Law of Attraction can be your greatest friend or your worst enemy. Try this little experiment and then decide which type of acquaintance you want the Law of Attraction to be in your life.

About the Author:

Michael McGrath provides free reviews of Law of Attraction resources. We tested the best law of attraction products available today and posted the review for free. Find out what really works. Read the entire free review of the best Law of Attraction course we tested. This course is a powerful tool for turning you into a deliberate creator. We find out what works so you don't have to! Visit Michael's website at: <http://www.personal-development.info/law-of-attraction.html>

Do You Have a Newsworthy Item to Share? Submit it to us!

<http://www.createthedream.com/for-submissions.htm>

JANUARY 2008

Do Your Potential Customers Forget About You?

Your web business probably gets product inquiries from potential customers around the globe. Inquiries come via e-mail and your web site, and you try to send information to each hot prospect as quickly as you can. You know that you can drastically increase the likelihood of making a sale by satisfying each person's need for information quickly!

But, after you've delivered that first bit of information to your prospect, do you send him any further information?

If you are like most Internet marketers, you don't.

When you don't follow that initial message with additional information later on, you let a valuable prospect slip from your grasp! This is a potential customer who may have been very interested in your products, but who lost your contact information, or was too busy to make a purchase when your first message reached him. Often, a prospect will purposely put off making a purchase, to see if you find him important enough to follow up with later. When he doesn't receive a follow up message from you, he will take his business elsewhere.

Are you losing profits due to inconsistent and ineffective follow up?

Following up with leads is more than just a process - it's an art. In order to be effective, you need to design a follow up system, and stick to it, EVERY DAY!



After you've delivered that first bit of information to your prospect, do you send him any further information?

If you are like most Internet marketers, you don't.

By Tom Kulver, President of AWeber.com

If you don't follow up with your prospects consistently, INDIVIDUALLY, and in a timely fashion,

then you might as well forget the whole follow up process.

Consistent follow up gets results!

When I first started marketing and following up with prospects, I used a follow up method that I now call the "List Technique." I had a large database containing the names and e-mail addresses of people who had specifically requested information about my products and services. These prospects had already received my first letter by the time they requested more information, so I used the company's latest news as a follow up piece. I would write follow up newsletters every now and then, and send them, in one mass mailing, to everyone who had previously requested information from me. While this probably did help me win a few additional orders, it wasn't a very good follow up method. Why isn't the "List Technique" very effective?

- The List Technique isn't consistent. Proponents of the List Technique tend to only send out follow up messages when their companies have "big news".
- List Technique messages don't give the potential customer any additional information about the product or service in question. He can't make a more informed buying decision after receiving

a newsletter! If someone is wondering whether your company sells the best knick-knacks, what does he care that you've just moved your headquarters?

- List Technique messages convey a "big list" mentality to your potential customers. When I used to write follow up messages using the List Technique, I was writing news bulletins to everyone I knew! I should have been sending a personal message to each individual who wanted to know more about my products.

What follow up method really works?

Following up with each lead individually, multiple times, but at set intervals, and with pre-written messages, will dramatically increase sales! Others who use this same technique confirm that they have all at least doubled the sales of various products! In order to set this system up, though, you need to do some planning.

First, you'll need to develop your follow up messages. If you've been marketing on the Internet for any length of time, then you should already have a first informative letter. Your second letter marks the beginning of the follow up process, and should go into more detail than the first letter. Fill this letter with details that you didn't have the space to add to the first letter. Stress the BENEFITS of your products or services!

Your next 2-3 follow up messages should be rather short. Include lists of

create the dream!™

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS - DO YOUR POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS FORGET ABOUT YOU?

of the benefits and potential uses of your products and services. Write each letter so that your prospects can skim the contents, and still see the full force of your message.

The next couple of follow up messages should create a sense of urgency in your prospect's mind. Make a special offer, giving him a reason to order NOW instead of waiting any longer. After reading these follow up messages, your prospect should want to order immediately!

Phrase each of your final 1 or 2 follow up messages in the form of a question. Ask your prospect why he hasn't yet placed an order? Try to get him to actually respond. Ask if the price is too high, the product isn't the right color or doesn't have the right features, or if he is looking for something else entirely. (By this time, it's unlikely that this person will order from you. However, his feedback can help you modify your follow up letters or products, so that other prospects will order from you.)

The timing of your follow up letters is just as important as their content. You don't want one prospect to receive a follow up the day after he gets your initial informative letter, while another prospect waits weeks for a follow up!

Always send an initial, informative letter as soon as it is requested, and send the first follow up 24 hours afterwards. You want your hot prospects to have information quickly, so that they can make informed buying decisions!

Send the next 2-3 follow up messages between 1 and 3 days apart. Your



prospect is still hot, and is probably still shopping around! Tell him about the benefits of your products and services, as opposed to your competitors'. You will make the sale!

Send the final follow up messages later on. You certainly don't want to annoy your prospect! Make sure that these last letters are at least 4 days apart.

Following up effectively seems complicated, but it doesn't have to be! So many potential customers are lost because of poor follow up - don't you want to be one of the few to get it right?

About the Author:

Tom Kulzer, CEO and Founder of Newtown, PA based AWeber Communications, Inc. an opt-in email service provider. With 7 years managing opt-in follow up and newsletters for small businesses, email deliverability is an integral part of day to day operations. Learn more: <http://www.AWeber.com> and <http://www.DeliveryMonitor.com>

What do industry giants like Disney, Microsoft, Intel, and American Express have in common?

They've all sought out the expertise of the "master of targeted opt-in e-mail," Jonathan Mizel. Now, thanks to a special offer from AWeber, you can, too!

Hardcore businesses pay thousands of dollars to hear Jonathan speak, but you don't have to. Through an exclusive offer with **AWeber Communications, Inc.**, you can hear directly from Jonathan - for FREE!

Right now, the TWO-PART video of Jonathan's sequential autoresponder seminar in London, England is in the AWeber control panel. In this amazing hour, Jonathan reveals:

- * Totally unique ways to use AWeber autoresponders
- * TWO case studies of DOUBLED, even TRIPLED profits
- * Secrets of super-marketers like MARLON SANDERS
- * Jonathan's own secrets, a peek inside his organization!

This video puts thousands of dollars worth of intellectual material at your fingertips.

About this seminar, Jonathan Says:

"These are totally unique methods. I have not seen people reveal how to do this anywhere else. They have doubled and tripled our response. They squeeze more money out of these prospects."

Jonathan calls AWeber:

"A systematic process that sucks the maximum amount of cash out of each prospect."

You'll receive access to the genius of Johnathan when you order an Unlimited Follow up Autoresponder from AWeber. Visit this link for more details.

AWeber Special Offer for CTD Readers

See Your Message Here! We Offer Affordable Ad Rates
Contact Us for Details --> <http://www.CreateTheDream.com>

JANUARY 2008

Fusion Marketing:

Grow Your Mailing List by Partnering With Others

One of the best ways to compile a bigger mailing list is to partner with other businesses and professionals who serve the same audiences you wish to reach.

Every established business and profession has a network of clients. Many of these businesses offer services and products to the same customers who fit your target audience. You can speed the process of growing your list by partnering with others who are already building trust with a pool of loyal clients and customers.

Through fusion marketing—promoting to other people’s customer lists for mutual advantage—Guerrilla networkers leverage their list-building hundreds or thousands of times over.

Partnering with Businesses and Professionals

When you partner with other businesses, your message gets credibility by being seen alongside a trusted merchant or professional. Fusion marketing arrangements usually cost less than promotions you finance on your own. More reasons to seek out business partners include:

- You save time by leveraging your efforts to reach other lists.
- You can test more audiences with special offers.
- If you produce a newsletter, you’ll grow your subscriptions.
- You will learn more about prospective audiences in the process of working with fusion marketing partners.
- You will gain more happy customers, some of whom will become distributors.

- You can attract more fusion marketing partners, because your business partner may refer you to his associates.

- You gain free access to qualified lists of prospects. The list gives you further opportunities to communicate marketing messages for related products.

By their nature, business owners are usually open to joint ventures, provided they are approached in the right way. They are already in business and selling something, so their thoughts revolve around adding potential profit streams.

Choosing the Right Fusion Marketing Partners

Begin your search for marketing partners the same way you would create a list of prospects for your product. Review your marketing plan and your list of product benefits and note which audiences are most likely to gain. Now, ask yourself what kind of businesses and professionals already serve those audiences?

A gas mileage-enhancing product is a good match for car washes, auto mechanics, tire stores, and auto supply stores. Aromatherapy oils will complement products available at a beauty salon, spa, massage clinic, and health food store. A legal service will tie



in with insurance, real estate, and all kinds of small businesses.

Identifying potential partners is as easy as flipping through the Yellow Pages. Or use the Internet to research prospective partners. Types in keywords related to your topic, and then visit the websites. To find local businesses, include your city when searching.

Newsletter and ezine directory sites can also be helpful for locating experts in fields complementing yours who would be open to your offer. Find close to 3,000 online newsletters on many different topics at <http://www.ezine-dir.com>. Ezine and newsletter publishers are sometimes open to joint venture opportunities as long as a proposal shows genuine income potential and pertains to their readers’ interests.

When reviewing prospective partners, look for reputable businesses and organizations. These are your best potential allies because they are most likely to have gained the confidence and trust of the people you want to reach.

create the dream!™

MARKETING & PROMOTION - FUSION MARKETING WITH JAMES DILLEHAY

Fusion Marketing Examples

Host a seminar with a practitioner or related business on a topic your product provides a solution for.

Partner with a local radio by providing the producer with a list of frequently asked questions or top ten tips about a specific health, wealth or relationship problem your product alleviates. Send the questions along with a brief bio and they may interview you or mention your website as a resource.

Create a contest with a prize related to your product. Send an announcement to the list members of your fusion marketing partners.

Offer a free trial to software related to your product or service. To find free programs, go to <http://www.download.com> and search for your product-related keywords. Contact appropriate marketing partners to offer the software to their lists. When prospects download or receive the software by mail, they also get your marketing message.

Contact your community's home owner's association to learn if they provide welcome packages to new folks moving in. See if you can add a free product sample and your business card or brochure. If your neighborhood

doesn't offer a welcome package, consider starting one.

Create an ebook with tips on solving a specific problem related to the audience's interest. Partner with a business that already reaches that audience to distribute the ebook as a customer service. Make sure your ebook provides real value and includes a link to your website for more information.

Place free take-one boxes at retail locations. Offer a free gift in return for dropping in a business card or filled-in contact form.

Adapted from *Guerrilla Multilevel Marketing* by Jay Conrad Levinson, James Dillehay & Marcella Vonn Harting. © 2008, 2007 by Warm Snow Publishers LLC. For more information on fusion marketing, including details on how to make a joint marketing proposal, see Chapter 9 of the book.

The Insider - Email Supplement

Are you receiving the Insider emails?

Sign up to receive our FREE supplemental emails with exclusive content not included in the magazine. You'll enjoy special offers, helpful tips, informative articles, and must-have resources. Sign up on our home page.

<http://www.CreateTheDream.com>

Create Your Own Website

in 5 easy steps:



Select a template



Add pages



Choose your colors



Enter information



Insert content

start creating now!

Add New Items to Your Line Without The Hassle of Inventory!

Operation DropShip is a secure online provider of drop ship and wholesale sources, allowing online sellers to access thousands of wholesale products for resale in online auctions, websites, and brick and mortar stores.

Key Operation DropShip Features Include:

- 150,000+ Wholesale Products
- Quicklist on eBay wizard with over 200 templates
- Quick watch board allowing you to search products, watch supplier inventory, and order & track product delivery
- And Much More!



Click. Click. Drop\$hip!

Operation Dropship has 150,000+ products you can sell online TODAY!

[Click Here](#)
To Learn More

Do You Have a Newsworthy Item to Share? Submit it to us!

<http://www.createthedream.com/for-submissions.htm>

JANUARY 2008



**Ever wonder
how those
eBay®
PowerSellers
got to be so
successful?
Wonder no
more.**

Tricks of the eBay Masters is full of advice and over 600 tricks from expert eBay users. They learned by doing and are now going to pass on their wisdom to you. You'll learn how to jazz up your auction listings with HTML, how to increase buyer traffic through key words and how to use photos to increase your selling potential. You'll even get tips on where to find items to sell, how to pack your items better and how to ship cheaply. Also find out what not to do as the experts give you examples of mistakes they made early in their eBay careers and how not to repeat them. Increase your auction income and successful bidding through **Tricks of the eBay Masters**.

The book is authored by eBay guru Michael Miller, a top eBay seller who has penned a number of eBay and online auction books including **Complete Idiot's Guide to Online Auctions, Making a Living from Your eBay Business, Absolute Beginner's Guide to eBay and Tricks of the eBay Masters**. Below are a few tips from the book:

For Managing Your Ebay Business: Create a Business Plan – and Stick to It – It's easy to stumble into short-

term success on eBay, but it's much harder to make it a long-term thing. When writing it, consider why you're in business, what you sell, to whom you want to sell it, how much you sell it for, what you'll have to pay for it, where you'll get them, how many you expect to sell, how much money you expect to make, and how you expect the business to grow.

For Deciding What to Sell:

Sell What You Know – Why? First, you'll enjoy it more. Second you'll be better at it – when you know a category, you're better able to pick up on trends and know what's really going on. Third, you'll know the lingo. Fourth, it's easier to find inventory because you know who the players are in the industry, and you may even already have your starting inventory in hand.

For Purchasing & Managing Your Inventory:

Leverage payment terms to improve your cash flow. Cash flow — how much money you have to spend now to pay for your inventory — is a big factor to consider. As your business grows and gains a more legitimate appearance, you'll find that more payment options become available when purchasing

from suppliers. Obviously, the larger the payment terms, the better for you. If you can stretch the payment terms long enough, you essentially let your supplier finance your eBay purchases. Net 10 is good, but net 20 and net 30 are better. The longer your terms, the more leverage you have with your funds.

For Creating More Effective Listings:

Offer the Buy It Now Option – Inpatient buyers see something they want and they want it now. This is why savvy sellers, when they can, offer the Buy It Now (BIN) option in their auctions. With BIN, you name a fixed price for your item. If a user wants the item immediately, they click the Buy It Now button and pay the fixed BIN price; the auction is automatically closed and that user is the winning bidder. Using this option is especially popular for commodity products where the price is pretty much dictated up front by the market. You might also want to consider this option around the Christmas holidays when buyers don't always

create the dream!™

MARKETING & PROMOTION - THE TRICKS OF THE EBAY® MASTERS

want to wait to see whether they win an item; desperate holiday shoppers will sometimes pay a premium to get something now.

For Setting Prices & Handling Payments:

Price Below the Breaks – Whatever pricing strategy you embrace, keep in mind how much you're paying for each item you list because eBay charges a listing or insertion fee based on the starting (or reserve) price of the item. What you don't want to do is spend more than you have to in listing fees. To be smart about how you price your items, you have to know the breaks in eBay's fee structure – and then price your items just below the breaks.

For Packing & Shipping:

Print Prepaid Postage Labels – One of the biggest time-savers offered by eBay is the capability to print prepaid shipping labels (with prepaid postage). You can do this directly from eBay via PayPal, for both U.S. Postal Service and UPS shipping. When you print prepaid labels on your own printer, you can arrange for your postal carrier or UPS to pick up the packages from your front door or you can drop them off at any shipping location. You can access eBay's label-printing function from your Closed Auction page.

For Promoting Your Ebay® Business:

Create an Email Mailing List -- Savvy sellers keep good records of all their past auctions and past buyers. Then you can create a list of buyers who want to be contacted when you have similar merchandise for sale. The easiest way to create an email mailing list is through eBay. If you run an eBay Store, eBay offers free email marketing. You can even use eBay's email marketing tools to measure the success of your email newsletters, which makes it easier to fine-tune your promotions in the future. All eBay Store owners can send a total of 5,000 free emails a month to subscribers.

For Running A Successful Trading Assistant Business:

Offer a Pickup Service – If you're

running your business out of your home, or if you have a drop-off retail location, your clients can drop off their merchandise at your location. However, you can set yourself apart from your franchise competition by also offering a pickup service. This is a great time-saver for your clients, and justifies any higher fees you may charge. Alternatively, you can charge a separate fee for the pickup service.

For Cutting Costs & Increasing Profits:

Purchase Now, Sell Later – Buy merchandise when it's available at a lower price, then hold onto it and offer it for sale at a later date when the prices are back up. Perhaps the best example of this is to purchase items during the off season, and then sell it during the hot season, such as swimwear or winter sporting goods. Also take advantage of sales and promotions, or purchase discontinued products that you know will remain in demand.

For Expanding Your Business:

Expand Your Merchandise line and offer more and different products for sale to increase your number of listings. First, make sure that you've completely filled out the offerings in your current product category. If you sell women's shoes for example, are there additional brands or styles you could offer? Next consider expanding into related categories. Building on the women's shoes example, perhaps you could expand into men's or children's shoes – or into other women's clothing. What goes best with shoes? Maybe hosiery, purses or accessory items. Think of other items that your current customers are likely to purchase; these items are good candidates for expansion. Also, don't rule out selling in a completely different product category. I know of many sellers who do two things and do them both well.

Technology & You: Microblogging



What are you doing right now? If a group of people want to know the answer to that question, you should have a mini-blog at twitter.com or jaiku.com.

The free, short messages can be received easily via phone, or another mobile device, or by email and Web.

It's an idea that works great for the Los Angeles Fire Department (**twitter.com/LAFD**). If you are a firefighter fan, you can link up to the LA fire twitter and see all the info about the latest call. Twitter makes Los Angeles a small town where everyone can know where a fire truck is going.

Twitter accounts can also link spouses and friends when you planning to meet, for example. A quick twitter will tell them you are on your way.

Twitter, the first microblogging service, says the messages are "ambient information." Jaiku, a new entrant, says they allow users to have "social peripheral vision."

For more information on Twitter's services, visit their website at: <http://www.Twitter.com>.

See Your Message Here! We Offer Affordable Ad Rates
Contact Us for Details --> <http://www.CreateTheDream.com>

JANUARY 2008

Healthy, Happy & Deductible?

Deduct 100 Percent of Your Whole Family's Medical Expenses

Many accountants as well as insurance professionals across the country recommend this plan as a way to help keep the ever-escalating costs of medical care and insurance down.

As a self-employed individual for more than twenty years, I have always been amazed at the way small business has been discriminated against by the IRS when it comes to the deductibility of medical expenses. After all, large business can deduct these expenses. It was even more frustrating to me as a health insurance professional who daily watched clients increase their deductible to try to keep a handle on premiums while increasing their own personal liability with no tax benefit. I then stumbled onto Agriplan/Bizplan and found that we were not discriminated against, just un-educated in section 105 of the IRS tax code.

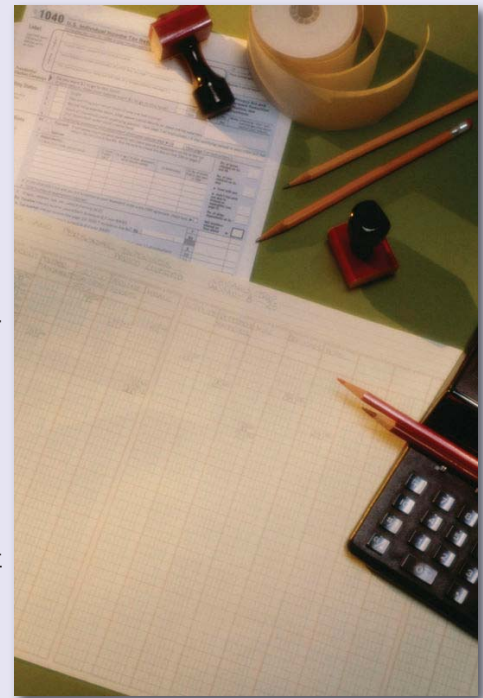
Agriplan/Bizplan uses section 105 of the tax code to allow a small business owner to hire his or her spouse and then provide to that employee (the spouse) all of that employee's and the employee's family's insurance premiums and out-of-pocket medical expenses as an employee benefit. These expenses include premiums, all expenses not covered by insurance, dental, vision, chiropractic and over-the-counter expenses. This is 100 percent deductible off of the schedule C or F as an employee benefit, thus decreasing the adjusted gross income (AGI) of the business.

Although many may not believe that this is possible, Agriplan/Bizplan has been helping sole proprietors, LLC's, and small corporations take advantage of this tax law for over thirty years. Many accountants, as well as insurance

professionals across the country, recommend this plan as a way to attempt to keep the ever-escalating cost of medical care and insurance down. These are, however, non-discriminatory plans in that if they are offered to the spouse, any other employees must be offered the same benefit. That being said, the plan works most effectively when the spouse is the only employee. For groups with more employees, there are other options we can cover at a later date.

I personally have used a Bizplan for more than five years, and have found it to be of huge benefit. Although I have an extremely rich health insurance plan (as the parent of a child with autism), I have found that many of his medical treatments and tests are not covered by my insurance. By formally hiring my spouse—who has always helped with my business—and having her perform duties for my company, and by putting a Bizplan in place, I have been able to take all of my son's uncovered expenses and run them through as an employee benefit. Even though I am still incurring a huge expense, it makes it more tolerable knowing I am saving thousands of dollars in taxes annually. (Note that these savings are for all taxes—self employment, Federal and State).

For more information on Agriplan/Bizplan, visit Eric's website at <http://www.agriplan-bizplan.com>, or contact him by phone at 888-533-7928.



About the Author:

Eric Herrmann is a provider of Agriplan/Bizplan who works with accountants across the country in helping set up accounts for their clients. He is the President of Protective Financial Solutions LLC and Protective Business Solutions Inc., which are employee benefit and insurance consultants operating in seven states. He works with employer groups in all fifty states with reference to Agriplan/Bizplan, as well as FSA's (Section 125's).

create the dream!™

MARKETING & PROMOTION - A "BRAND" NEW YOU IN 2008

A "Brand" New You in 2008 Business and marketing experts urge small business owners to "brand" their businesses. Find out why this is so important.

- By Erin Ferree of elf design

Business and marketing experts urge small business owners to "brand" their businesses with a logo and a set of consistent marketing materials — a brand identity system. But they rarely explain the reasons behind this advice. A logo and consistent marketing materials can increase your sales and revenue, because they convey the following impressions:

To convey that you are established. A logo and professionally-printed materials show that you are committed to both your business and your clients. It also makes you look like you've been around for some time, and that you're stable.

To attract more clients. Some clients look for a well-defined company, and "look and feel" may be one of their criteria in making a purchasing decision.

Others are "wowed" by professional-looking materials, and your logo may impress them into buying.

To increase your credibility. A logo makes you look experienced and professional, and can go a long way towards making your business appear credible. And, if you'd like to be known as an expert in your field, this type of

credibility is the first thing you have to establish.

To be more memorable. Forty percent of people better remember what they see than what they hear or read. So having graphics associated with your business and having consistent graphics on your business materials make you more likely to come to the forefront of potential clients' minds when they have a need for your goods or services.

To stand out in your field. A well-designed logo and an identity system can put you far above the competition, especially if they are paired with a strong marketing program.

To look "bigger." Home-printed business cards with perforated edges or cards printed with standard designs available through Microsoft software or online business card vendors scream "small-time vendor" to your potential clients — and that is how they will want to compensate you.

To improve your chance of getting venture capital or selling a business. If you present a well-rounded business package, including marketing materials and graphics, your business will look more complete.

To brand yourself. Especially if you are a consultant, you need a logo in order to build an image and a brand that is bigger than your individual identity. If you're running a larger business, the logo will begin to create a "brand" or "face" for your business, and to personalize the larger business entity.

To give clients a sense of stability. You may not have been in business "since 1908," but if you have invested in an identity, you are much less likely to fold in the eyes of your customers. It goes a long way toward building that all-important "trust."

To explain your company name. If your company name contains a little-known word or an acronym, the logo can give visual clues to its meaning. To endear your company name to your

clients. A difficult-to-pronounce or hard-to-remember company name may make it challenging for your clients to hire you. When potential clients have the need for your services, they might not recall who you are. But if you reinforce the name with interesting, compelling graphics, they are more likely to remember you, pick up the phone, and hire you.

To describe an unusual line of business. If your business is nontraditional or in a hard-to-explain industry, a logo can help to explain exactly what it is that you do by offering a visual reference.

To show what practices differentiate you from your competition. A well-designed logo can have many subtle meanings and can begin to tell the story of how you do business, including the special practices that make you stand apart from the competition.

To comply with expectations. In some industries, a logo is just expected. In the creative services industry especially, having a logo is an industry standard. To show your commitment and for the sense of personal pride it will add to your practice. In other words, do it for yourself. A logo will increase your confidence, and that will show through in all of your business interactions and practices. These benefits will boost your business and your confidence, so start thinking about developing a logo and identity as soon as possible.

About the Author:

Erin Ferree is a brand identity designer who creates big visibility for small businesses. As the owner of elf design, Erin is passionate about helping her clients stand out in front of their competition and attract more clients. Her "**Define Your Difference Branding Workbook**" will help you with your brand definition - the most important step in the brand identity design process. <http://www.elf-design.com/products-define.html>

Do You Have a Newsworthy Item to Share? Submit it to us!

<http://www.createthedream.com/for-submissions.htm>

JANUARY 2008

Logo Or No Go? **Logos are the building blocks of a company or product identity. Be sure you choose one that is more than just a graphic.**

- By Sharon Housley of Feed for All

What is a logo?

A logo is a design, graphical representation, image or symbol that represents a business or organization. Logos were initially used to distinguish and differentiate products -- they assisted purchasers in finding the product they prefer or have come to trust (or not trust). When product selections were limited and items were marked with a logo which a consumer was familiar they would naturally assume a certain level of quality or value, even if they had not previously used that specific product from that vendor. Now many companies not only have a corporate logo, but they have a logo to represent each of their products or product lines.

The company or product logo typically appears on all printed media or websites that are associated with the company or product. The logo appears in all marketing material and media.

A logo is really more than just a graphic, a logo design is part of a larger marketing concept. Marketers take specific care when selecting a logo, and they give a lot of thought about what they want their customers to identify with the company or product logo.

Some logos are designed around color. Studies have been conducted about the psychology of color and how different colors evoke different emotions.

Green is used to imply wealth or expense, a marketer might use a green logo to imply an increase in perceived value. Blue on the other hand has a

calming and soothing effect. Multiple colors can be used to accent and highlight specific parts of the logo. Accented and highlighted colors should be contrasting and complimentary.

Regardless of what colors you select, be sure that you use standard pantone colors and websafe colors. Also make sure these colors can be easily reproduced in print mediums.

Logos should be simple, and not overly elaborate or complex. Newer businesses and technology companies should have modern logos, while long standing businesses may want to use a logo that emphasizes their business experience. That does not mean that an older business cannot freshen or enhance an older logo, they may just want to retain certain qualities so their logo is still recognizable. Rarely do business depart drastically from an established logo. For this reason businesses should select a logo that has longevity. Once you establish and build a strong corporate image, you will want to retain it.

Logos should be designed so that they scale easily and can be used in a variety of mediums: letterhead, t-shirts, and more. Always keep in mind that logos are part of a larger marketing concept. Promotional materials will require consistency to reinforce the company or product image.

Taglines incorporated into the logo help reinforce the underlying message in a logo and can be an easy addition. Countless memorable marketing campaigns over the years have

associated slogans with a logo to hit a message home.

While logos sound complex, in truth it has never been easier to locate a logo. Professional graphic artists are abundant on the web, and can be contracted to create a custom logo, or business owners can scroll through thousands of logos in logo directories.

Logo Directories:

Logo Search
<http://www.logo-search.com/>

Logo Maid
<http://www.logomaid.com/>

LogoWorks
<http://www.logoworks.com/>

Logos are the building blocks of a company or product identity. Be sure to take the time to find a logo that reflects the values that you, as a business owner, want associated with your business. Find a logo that is more than just a graphic.

About the Author:

Sharon Housley manages marketing for FeedForAll **<http://www.feedforall.com>** software for creating, editing, publishing RSS feeds and podcasts. In addition Sharon manages marketing for RecordForAll **<http://www.recordforall.com>** audio recording and editing software.

Get up to **stamps.com**

\$25

FREE Postage

Postage you print with your PC

Try it now!

create the dream!™

SIDEBAR: ONLINE CHECKING, NEW CAMERAS, & ASK.COM

Online Checking - Get the Facts

Online banks are offering higher checking-account interest rates to attract new money.

INGdirect.com has an electronic-only checking account that pays 4 percent. Everbank.com is paying 6 percent on checking balances to new customers.

Before setting up an account with an online bank, check to make sure it's covered at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., http://www2.fdic.gov/idasp/main_bankfind.asp. Also check whether it will refund fees for withdrawals.

At <http://bankdeals.blogspot.com> you can check for other deals.

New Cameras: Point, Shoot & Send

The new Fujifilm FinePix digital cameras bring new meaning to "point and shoot." They feature a new-generation image recorder called "ten-face recognition technology," which can zero in on 10 separate faces in a group of people. It adjusts exposure to individual faces for maximum picture quality.

It also offers a dual exposure, which analyzes the lighting in a particular setting and adds just the right amount of fill to counteract shadows. It produces two separate photos which are stored for your choice on playback.

This line of cameras (\$199 for FinePix 6.3) affords easy-to-use menus and stabilization control to steady shaky shooting in less-than-great conditions.

They have large LCD viewers which are visible in bright sunlight; alternate use of newer XD memory cards as well as older SD memory cards; high ISO settings for greater capture of ambient light in nighttime photos; and real glass optics for sharpness and clarity.

Nikon, Eastman Kodak, and Sony now offer digital cameras that can email photos without the use of a computer. The new wireless devices send photos



to cellphones and other devices, photo-sharing Web sites, and email addresses.

Kodak's EasyShare-one (\$199) emails pictures and uploads and views pictures on Kodak's photo-sharing Web site. Its EasyShare v610 (\$350) wirelessly sends pictures to Bluetooth-enabled devices such as printers, BlackBerries, and cellphones.

Nikon's Coolpix S50c (\$350) wirelessly emails pictures and uploads pictures to Flickr and to Nikon's storage site.

Sony's DSC-61 (\$600) can wirelessly send pictures to other Sony wireless cameras and to PCs.

New & Improved Ask.com

Google revolutionized Web searching in the 1990s with its famous search engine model and simple, elegant search page. Since then, Google's successful format hasn't changed much.

Ask.com, formerly Askjeeves.com, hasn't been as popular for Web searches, in part because its old presentation was cluttered and the top entries were almost always ads.

Now Ask.com has simplified and organized its results and search pages into an elegant, useful interface. The new ask.com divides each page into three columns with expected search results in the middle column, along with some sponsored links. The first result is a factual biography or definition.

To the left of the top listings is a small binocular icon that presents a thumbnail image of the page when you move the cursor over it. The right-hand column offers the opportunity to "narrow your search," which can be very helpful. You can also click on "expand your search."

Unlike Google, ask.com presents image results on the same page as search results (in the right hand column), a very handy feature if you are searching for a name. If you are searching for a certain place, it will bring up a map, news stories, and Wikipedia information.



Several Sprint wireless handsets take advantage of another ask.com service. Ask Mobile GPS offers turn-by-turn navigation. It costs \$10 a month after a two-week trial, according to Business Week expert Stephen Wildstrom.

He recommends that regular users of the better-known search sites give <http://www.Ask.com> a try.

Launching New Software, a Book or eBook? Let us know!

We may feature it in an upcoming issue of Create the Dream!™

JANUARY 2008

Voicemail Without the Voice?

Listening to voice mails on a hand-held device is inconvenient. In a restaurant, it can be rude.

Several new voice-recognition services can solve the problem. They transcribe recorded messages into text, which then is sent as email to email-equipped devices such as personal digital assistants and BlackBerrys, or as a short text message to phones that don't have the email function.

If you aren't sure the voice-recognition function has given the message accurately, you can click on the attached audio files or dial in to hear the original voice mail.

Recommended services include SimulScribe out of New York and SpinVox, an Atlanta-based subsidiary of SpinVox Ltd. of the U.K.

Technology tester Sarmad Ali reports that both services work well and are easy to use. He was able to read transcribed text much faster than dialing in to hear them. He could also go through the messages to see the ones he wanted to check without having to listen to each in the order it was received.

Another advantage, you don't have to jot down names, numbers, or addresses while listening. And the text message comes through even in some areas where you can't receive cell phone signals.

Simulscribe costs \$9.95 a month for up to 40 messages and 25 cents for each additional message. Messages left in one of several foreign languages were automatically translated into English. Some names and numbers are followed by a question mark in the text to remind you to check them. The service also reminds message senders that voice-recognition is being used so they will speak clearly.

U.S. customers can get a free one-year trial for SpinVox by sending an email to gamma@spinbox.com. The company will soon offer the service through

Cincinnati Bell and later through other carriers.

The "Hipster PDA" By Merlin Mann

It's revolutionary in its simplicity. Shares Founder and Editor of 43Folders.com Merlin Mann, "Recently, I got sick of lugging my Palm V around, so I developed a vastly superior, greatly simplified device for capturing and sharing information. I call it 'The Hipster PDA'."

Little did he know how popular his idea would become.

Hipster PDA - The Parts You'll Need

The Hipster PDA (Parietal Disgorgement Aid) is a fully extensible system for coordinating incoming and outgoing data for any aspect of your life and work. It scales brilliantly, degrades gracefully, supports optional categories and "beaming," and is configurable to an unlimited number of options. Best of all, the Hipster PDA fits into your hip pocket and costs practically nothing to purchase and maintain.

Building Your First Hipster PDA

1. Get a bunch of 3"x5" file cards
2. Clip together with a binder clip
3. There is no step 3

Assembling your Hipster PDA

For the hotrods who like to tweak their equipment, Merlin offers a few mods you might make to the basic configuration.

Consider picking up some different kinds of cards—different colors, lined and unlined.

Merlin recommends the really small binder clips and a stack of 12 or fewer

cards; but suggests that you experiment for the combination that suits you. Try using a single different-colored card as a visual separator between used and fresh cards in your stack (helps you from accidentally giving someone an old, written-on note)

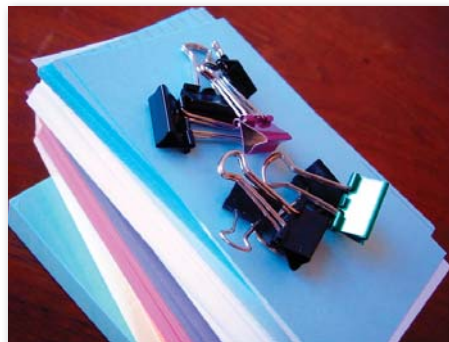
Other recommendations include a Fisher Space Pen — the Bullet model is tiny, sturdy, and surprisingly comfortable to use. And, thanks to its famous nitrogen-forced ink well technology, the Space Pen writes upside down, an even under water. It's the perfect stylus for your new Hipster PDA.

"Getting Things Done" With Your Hipster PDA

Try using a separate index card for each potential inbox item you want to track. This requires carrying a few more spare cards around, but it helps ensure you "close the loop" as soon as the thought occurs to you.

When you get back to the office or home (wherever your physical inbox resides), you can toss all your new notes into the pile and process them like you would any other incoming items. Alternatively, you can base a whole system around index cards, sorting them into piles for "Next Actions," "Waiting," "Sometime," and so on. Whatever works for you.

Merlin Mann is the editor and founder of <http://www.43Folders.com>. He lives in the western third of San Francisco with a Mac and a cute, pregnant lady.



create the dream!™

SIDEBAR: THE "HIPSTER" PDA & AMAZON'S KINDLE READER

Hackers Now Targeting Macs

Macintosh computer users have enjoyed relative freedom from hacker attacks. Because there were far more PC users, criminals went after them instead.

Researchers at Symantec Corp. say criminals are now going after both Mac and PCs. Online porn hunters are the latest target. Visitors to certain Web sites are led to believe they can download a free video player when in fact they are installing malicious code onto their Macs.

Once the user authorizes the transaction, says Jordan Robertson of the Associated Press, the fraudsters can redirect future browsing to fraudulent Web sites and possibly steal the user's information or passwords.

Sometimes they simply send ads for other pornographic Web sites. This results in thousands of dollars in income for the criminals.

The attack does not target a vulnerability in the Mac operating system. Instead it requires a user to approve the download, then enter his computer password to continue.

Brain Training Goes Online

Handheld brain games have had a lot of success so it shouldn't be a surprise that brain training is now online.

The idea behind brain training is that playing certain puzzle games can increase your attention span, improve short-term memory, and speed up your cognitive functions.

To that end, brain training Web sites allow you to daily play and track your performance on a variety of brain games.

Lumosity.com offers a 14-day free trial of their brain games, complete with a history tracker so you can see your performance over time.

<http://www.Mybraintrainer.com> offers 3-months of training for about \$10.

Amazon's 'Kindle' "Best Reader Yet"

Up until now, gadget makers have failed to bring e-books to the general public. Amazon's new Kindle could change that.

Though it resembles the \$300 Sony Reader (both use the same six-inch Electronic display from E Ink), it functions completely independent of a computer. It is simple to set up.

When you buy a Kindle with your Amazon account information already entered, a radio built into the device gets you up and running on Sprint Nextel's data network with no activation and no subscription required.

Business Week's Stephen Wildstrom says you can take it out of the box and go straight to Amazon's online Kindle store and make your selections. They download in seconds.

Amazon offers 90,000 titles, and the number is growing. They include most current-sellers. Books cost \$10, which is less than a trade paperback or a hardcover edition. You can also subscribe to electronic editions of 11 newspapers for \$6 to \$15 a month. They are delivered to Kindle as the papers come out.

Kindle's wireless connection and the quality of the Amazon store make this reader an exciting new entry into e-books, says Wildstrom. He hopes Amazon will sell enough Kindles to bring the \$399 price down.

RevolutionCard Doesn't Show Name Or Account Number

If your purse is snatched or your wallet is lost, at least you won't have to worry about a unauthorized charges with a RevolutionCard.

This new credit card doesn't show your name or account number. Transactions are processed by using the PIN number you have selected.

The card features a line of credit, the ability to store up to \$15,000 from the account holder's bank account, free online payments to companies or individuals, identity theft protection, and interest rates pegged to the card holder's credit rating.

Steve Case, former chairman of AOL, is the current chairman of Revolution. He says the new card aims to be what a credit card should be in an Internet-driven world.

The card will have lower fees for both consumers and merchants. It plans to charge merchants just 0.5 percent of the sale price per transaction, much

lower than the average transaction price of 1.9 percent that credit card companies impose. Ultimately that 1.9 percent charge is passed on to consumers.

The RevolutionCard will charge interest on unpaid balances

each month, but the rate will vary based on the user's current credit rating.

The card is now accepted by about 100,000 merchants and can be used at ATMs. Revolution says it will take a year to set up a million merchants and three years to reach 7 million, which will put it on a competitive footing with MasterCard and Visa.

The company is growing fast, but it will take time for it to be seen as a general-purpose credit card.

For information, call 1-800-956-9540 or visit <http://www.revolutionmoney.com>



See Your Message Here! We Offer Affordable Ad Rates
Contact Us for Details --> <http://www.CreateTheDream.com>

JANUARY 2008

Thanks for the Memory: Getting the Most Out of Technology Toys

One out of every four gifts purchased this year will be an electronic item, according to the Consumer Electronics Association. With all those tech toys flying off the shelves as Valentine's Day approaches, consumers will need all the help they can to get the most out of their technology.

"Whether you are just getting familiar with your new digital gadgets or dusting off old ones, choosing the right memory card or other upgrade option is one of the most important considerations to ensure the best performance," says Tony Gomez of PNY Technologies.

Here are some tips to help you get the most out of your tech toy, be it a digital camera, cell phone or other device:

Digital Picture Frames – Digital picture frames make a great solution for sharing and displaying your favorite holiday, vacation, family or other photos.

However, most frames have little or no internal memory, so you can only view your pictures from an SD memory card (or other compatible media), otherwise you're stuck staring at a blank screen. With an extra SD Memory Card, you can keep one in your camera to take more great photos and leave one in the frame so your favorites are always there for your viewing pleasure.

Cell or Smart Phone – Today's cell phones are more advanced than ever, and now let you capture, store and play pictures, video, music, games and more. By adding a MicroSD memory card, you can store more information, and with the proper adapters can use that same storage card in other SD-compatible devices, or even on your USB-port equipped PC.

"A 2GB, 4-In-1 Mobile Media Kit from PNY is an excellent upgrade option that

allows you to capture and transport your favorite content on multiple devices using the same memory card," Gomez adds. With the kit, you can choose a single memory device to work with virtually all digital cameras, mobile phones, PDAs, MP3 players, laptops, smart phones or any device that supports an SD card or USB drive. The 4-In-1 Mobile Media Kit contains a MicroSD card and three adapters, converting the MicroSD to a MiniSD card, standard SD card, or a USB drive.

Point and Shoot Digital Camera

– Even many of today's basic digital cameras shoot high-resolution photos at 10 mega pixels and beyond, and also can take video at up to 30 frames per second. The result is great-looking images and videos you can treasure for years to come. These picture and movie files can get quite large, however, and quickly fill-up older, lower-density memory cards. A Secure Digital High Capacity (SDHC) Memory Card provides photo enthusiasts and other mobile device users the speed and capacity needed to capture the high volume of files to store and share.

Laptop Computer – While notebook PCs have become more affordable than ever, entry-level models often have small storage capacities or slow performance. Add some memory and a new USB Flash Drive to complement your new laptop. Flash drives are portable, reusable storage devices make a great solution to transport and share digital pictures, music, documents, and more. A USB flash drive provides the ultimate mobile storage solution for anyone on the go. It can be carried in a pocket, a backpack or briefcase. To access files, simply plug the USB drive into virtually any PC or



MAC without the need for bulky cables or adapters. The drive performs in a variety of climates, weather conditions and temperature extremes. Plus, some drives are even enhanced for Windows ReadyBoost to boost system performance if you're running Windows Vista.

Desktop Computer – If your old PC is due for a tune-up, or perhaps your new PC does not have the capacity to take advantage of the latest features in Windows Vista Home Premium, a simple memory upgrade can improve overall system performance. If you would like to have a better overall visual experience, view and edit photos, appreciate the features of Vista Aero, or perhaps play the latest DirectX 10 games, consider upgrading your graphics card.

Digital SLR Camera – Digital SLR cameras are now available to aspiring and professional photographers alike. However, with their often-higher resolutions and ability to shoot multiple frames per second, these cameras put higher demands on the memory cards that store your photos. A 4GB CompactFlash card is a high-performance, flash memory card that improves click-to-click speed and write time, so you never miss out on the action.

For more tech tips or to purchase the right memory solution for your hardware, please visit <http://www.pny.com>.

create the dream!™

THE VIEW FROM HOME - BARBARA BRABEC

Small Business Collection Strategies That Work

- By Barbara Brabec

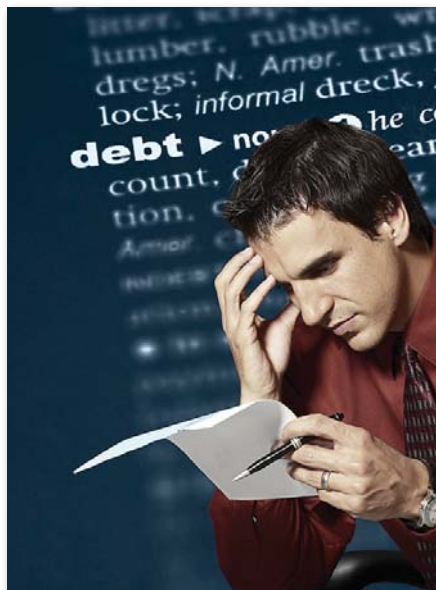
Coping with ever-increasing costs is one thing—making sure you get all the money that's due you from customers or clients is another. We've all been stiffed somewhere along the line, and when it's money we've really been counting on, it's hard to accept the financial loss. Here's how some business owners in my network deal with this problem.

Set Established Payment

Guidelines. To avoid problems in the first place, establish ground rules for how payment must be made and stick to them. On your order form, brochure or website, clearly spell out your terms of sale and payment options. Also have set guidelines for how you will handle checks and credit cards. Make it a point to obtain authorization on credit card purchases before delivering products. Handle bank paperwork on such charges within a day of the transaction.

Get It in Writing. "Be sure your agreement/contract or memo of understanding states what the payment expectations are and the consequences for non-payment," advises website designer Donna Snow. "When you go over the contract with your client, be sure they initial the payment policy section. This way they can't say, 'you didn't tell me' or 'I didn't understand,' and this can be used later if the event escalates to small claims."

"I limit amounts due to me from new accounts by requiring monthly (or phased) payments for my contracted and writing services," says Martha Oskvig. "Even if a project is on-going, this is prearranged as part of the



contract agreement. It is part of my professionalism: if (after their legal counsel says the agreement is fine) they won't sign it, I don't work for them. I submit itemized bills on the month's work (or regarding completion of the phase of a project). If payment is not received within seven days, I do no more work for them. To make this work, I must create phases of the work with an accountability aspect to which both of us can agree before the project is done. I specifically chart my time and progress on a daily basis for the grant-proposal writing and consultant work I do for different clients. Each billing includes a brief progress report, projections and recommendations."

Send a Series of Reminders. "What has worked for me so far is just being

nice, polite and persistent—calling on a regular basis and always asking nicely," says consultant Judy Schramm. "Only customers you trust should have more than one outstanding invoice at a time," adds designer Terrie Kralik. "And don't tell them until after they've paid that they've now become a COD or credit card-only customer."

When book publisher Leila Peltosaari needs to collect overdue accounts, she lets her husband make the call. "That is his strength," she says, adding that she's too sweet. However, with a large company like Baker & Taylor, who would pay eventually but might take months to do it, Leila found that sweetness worked just fine. "I called and explained that I was just a little guy trying to survive, so could they please help me by paying their bills on time. The woman who answered the phone said she would put a note in my file, and since then I have been paid promptly."

Evaluate the Situation, Present Options.

"My strategy for deadbeats is to first evaluate the integrity of the client," says copywriter Gary L. Maxwell. "This is not always easy to do but experience says to give the client the benefit of the doubt. If the client is overdue by a small margin (say a week) give them some time (again, the benefit of the doubt). But as the days turn into weeks and then months, I suggest starting with a friendly phone call or e-mail to follow up and let them know that payment is overdue. Next, I would send a registered letter. This has the effect of getting your point across in a weighty manner without your having to confront them verbally or in person. After all else fails, let them know that all other avenues have been exhausted and that you are either (1) turning the matter over to your lawyer or a collection agency, or (2) taking them to small claims court. Keep in mind that if you ever want to work with this client again in the future, you will use these collection methods wisely."

Be Persistent in Trying to Collect.

"The hard part is sticking to your guns and demanding payment," says Donna Snow. "Hard luck stories and our natural tendency to rescue others puts

Do You Have a Newsworthy Item to Share? Submit it to us!

<http://www.createthedream.com/for-submissions.htm>

JANUARY 2008

us in a quandary as to how to deal with non-payment. When selling a service, we tend to do the work first and bill later, which often leads to problems collecting. It's hard for clients who don't pay to conceptualize what it is you as a service provider are losing when they do not follow through with their end of the deal."

Be Willing to Sue. "You have to be willing to sue, or even threaten suit, to show that you mean business," says author and consultant Jeff Zbar. "Often, as small business owners, we're perceived as weak-willed and unwilling to go to the mat for what's ours. Until we demand professional attention—whether that's getting paid on time or being given a chance to compete with larger organizations—we're always going to be relegated to second-class status. Sometimes a few well-chosen words in the business community can let others know the potential downside of working with a slow-paying customer. If they value their reputation, they may pay up to get you to shut up. For those who refuse to pay, keeping an attorney on hand to write the occasional letter can help."

Know When to Quit. "If you can't collect, don't let it get to you," advises Bernard Kamoroff, author of *Small Time Operator*. "Try to collect if you have the time and ambition to do so, but if not, just write it off to experience. Forget the money—it's not worth the aggravation."

About the Author:

An excerpt from **HOMEMADE MONEY: Bringing in the Bucks!—A Business Management and Marketing Bible for Home-Business Owners, Self-Employed Individuals, and Web Entrepreneurs Working from Home Base.** © 2003 by Barbara Brabec. Visit Barbara Brabec's World for more information, plus a wealth of articles and resources for home-business owners, craft businesses, writers, self-publishers, and computer users. Visit Barbara online at <http://www.BarbaraBrabec.com>.

Setting Up Shop

Coldwell Banker Commercial Offers Some Helpful Tips on Selecting The Perfect Retail Space

Whether you are negotiating a deal to launch a 50,000-square-foot "big box" outlet or opening a corner deli, there are several items to consider when selecting your retail space.

That's the advice from Rick Davidson, president and COO of one of the largest commercial real estate companies in the world and a leading specialist in commercial retail leasing. Davidson says factors including lease rates, value and location affect all retail businesses, regardless of size.

Davidson's company, Coldwell Banker Commercial, offers the following tips on selecting the right space:

Consider Amenities:

Look for key amenities inside the facility and in surrounding areas that offer convenience and enticement to shoppers. Things to consider include plazas, seating areas and rest rooms.

Physical Location:

Things to look for - and that affect rental charges - include: Bay Depth: the distance from the front of the store to the rear wall.

Floor Area: total square footage.

Signage: generally, the more prominent the signage, the more landlords will ask for in rent.



"Shell" and "Skin":

The shell refers to the foundation, structural support and the roof. The skin is the outer surfacing of the shell. Skin options include brick, glass or synthetic stucco. Other factors include windows, parking, security/safety features and

HVAC.

Leases:

Consider which lease type is best for you. In a gross lease, the landlord provides all services and the tenant is responsible for rent only. In a net lease, the tenant pays most of the expenses. In a percentage lease, lease costs are based on a percentage of the sales/success of the site. Finally, in a ground lease, the tenant pays for "bare ground" location and is responsible for its own improvements.

Know Your Market:

Learn about an area's current market conditions for retail, population levels, income and employment levels, anticipated local growth and traffic patterns, among other things. Also, make sure your business is compatible with the needs and desires of the local area and that there are not too many other stores offering the same goods and services that you do.

create the dream!™

WEB & GRAPHIC DESIGN - DENNIS GASKILL

Secrets to Good Copywriting For Those Who Hate It

- By Dennis Gaskill of BoogieJack.com

- The product or service has to be priced right.
- The product should be easy to purchase on impulse.
- The product needs a unique selling position.

Successful copywriting comes down to just one thing: salesmanship.

Salespersonship? Naw, let's not go there.

Those who dislike copywriting have many different reasons for their fear and loathing, but I'm here to tell you that it really isn't the oppressive beast many believe.

You see, I'm one of those people who wasn't comfortable trying to convince others to buy my products. Because I didn't care to "sell" people, I broke all the traditional rules of copywriting. But it has worked well enough for me that, in 1999, I "retired" from the rat race and made my online hobby my full-time job.

In case you didn't realize it . . . when you own a successful business you're still part of the rat race, but you get to be the top rat. (Cheese, anyone?)

Ahem . . . to be a successful copywriter you don't have to follow the latest "secret" formula, use deceptive tactics, over-hype your products or service, or be anyone other than your own good self. All you really need is a little understanding of basic sales principles.

Before getting into the basics of copywriting, however, let me address one other issue first—attitude. Look, you choose your attitude every single day, about every single thing that comes up. If you start writing sales copy with the attitude that it's no fun, that it's a chore, that you're not good at it . . . guess what? You won't enjoy it and you won't be good at it. So choose the right attitude to begin with.



As stated above, I write sales copy in ways that I'm comfortable with. I don't mind breaking the rules because it works for me. While I have read much about copywriting and marketing, I do it to get ideas, not to have a formula to follow. No matter what marketing advice you read or hear, remember that it is, at best, a rudimentary guidance system based on someone else's experience and someone else's products. The marketing path that led to a pot of gold yesterday may lead to an overmined pit today.

Those most likely to succeed will be those who are innovative and original, not those who follow along playing me-too. Of course, there are some things common to all sales success:

- You need a quality product or service that you believe in.
- There has to be a need for the product or service.
- The sales message must reach the right target group.

Without all that, the chances of success grow more difficult. Since the focus of this article is copywriting, I'll only mention that if you don't believe your product or service is worth every penny you're trying to sell it for, you probably won't enjoy writing copy to sell it. I think it's hard for most people to write convincing copy about products or services they don't truly believe in.

The following are my keys to copywriting success for anyone that doesn't enjoy it. Some of these items

may go against conventional thinking, but they do work for me, and may work for you as well.

Study First, Write Later

One reason people have trouble writing copy is because they simply aren't familiar enough with their product or service. They only think they are—so they don't know what to write. If you can't name the top five benefits of your product or service in the next minute you may not know it as well as you think you do.

Study your product or service from every angle you can. Find every possible selling point and make a list of each benefit you find. Don't count on just your own brain power, though; ask your family, friends, customers, and anyone else willing to review your product or service. Others may point out things you didn't think of, and you may well find more selling points.

You're still not ready to write! Study your competitors and competing products and services. If your competitors

See Your Message Here! We Offer Affordable Ad Rates
Contact Us for Details --> <http://www.CreateTheDream.com>

JANUARY 2008

advertise a similar product or service, also study their advertisements. Glean any selling points you can and add them to your list if they apply to your situation. This may also help you to make your product or service better.

When you've finished, review your list. That may give you more ideas. Once you've reviewed it, take your rough outline of selling points and rewrite them, listing the most important benefits first and removing any redundancies. This outline will be the basis of a hefty part of your sales copy that you'll refer to as you write.

Know Your Market

Yep, sorry, you're still not ready to write your sales copy.

Who will this product be marketed to? What are their demographics? Your target market determines the style you'll need to use to write effective sales copy.

The average person makes buying decisions based on emotional appeal and justifies it with their reason. As the copywriter, it's your job to supply the emotional appeal while giving them good reasons to justify a purchase with their rationale.

On the other hand, if you've developed a new product and are looking for distributors, emotional appeal isn't what drives their purchase decisions. They'll want to know product specifications, what research went into determining the market size for your product, how your product stacks up against competing products, etc. You'll need to use the language of that industry rather than the language of emotion.

Knowing your target market is the only way to write the kind of copy that will appeal to your market. Since my products are designed for the general public, this article focuses on writing copy for products with broad appeal.

From Me, to You

One common mistake in copywriting is made before the fingers hit the keyboard. The copywriter, hoping for

a sales avalanche, imagines all the thousands of people that will buy his or her product, and then writes as if he or she is addressing this vast audience.

Nope. Only one person at a time will be reading your copy, so write as if you're talking to just one person, not everyone at once. Furthermore, if you think of the person you're writing to as a prospect, you'll write like a sales person. No one I know likes to be sold; they like to feel in control rather than manipulated. If you write your sales copy as you would write to a friend, you will write from a more genuine perspective. Genuineness sells better.

Be Conversational, Not Stodgy

Don't try to be a writer, just be yourself. You'll come across best if you don't try to pretend to be something you're not used to being. You have had a lifetime of being you though, and that's good enough.

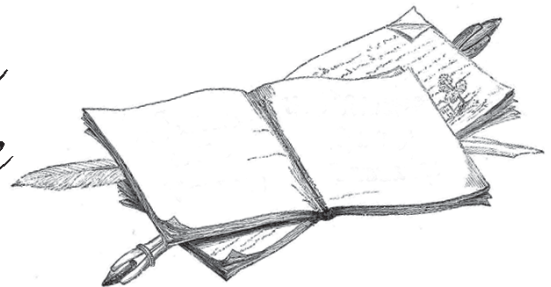
Don't be afraid to use the word "I" in your sales copy. Conventional wisdom says the word "you" is the most important word after "free" when it comes to sales copy. While its importance cannot be denied, I believe the word "I" is equally as important. It personalizes the copy by giving the reader the sense of being engaged with a real person rather than a sales machine or faceless web site.

Don't touch that dial! Um . . . I mean, due to space considerations, this article will be continued in the next issue.

About the Author:

© Copyright 2007 by Dennis Gaskill. Dennis is the author of **Web Design Made Easy** (3rd Edition). As a lifelong learner, however, his expertise goes well beyond this topic. His "Almost a Newsletter" was named the Best Ezine of the Year by an independent review service, and was also named as one of the top three ezines on the Internet. Visit <http://www.BoogieJack.com> today for web design tutorials, graphics, and inspirational and enlightening writings about life.

*Barbara
Brabec*



Home Business Author • Speaker • Consultant
Book Manuscript Editing & Critiquing

www.BarbaraBrabec.com

Phone: (630) 717-4188

Barbara@BarbaraBrabec.com

create the dream!™

EFFORTLESS NETWORKING WITH SRI DASGUPTA

No Time to Network?

- By Srirupa Dasgupta, Author of *Effortless Networking*

"No time to network!" Is this something you grapple with?

I can certainly relate to not having enough time in the day to do everything I want to. With a toddler and an infant, ALL my time is spoken for – for now, at least. Yet I continue to network (successfully, I might add).

How do I manage?

Before I answer the question, let me ask you this: do you consider "networking" to be a distinct and separate activity (like an item on your "to do" list)?

That could be part of the problem.

Well, here are two ways you can network, even when you "don't have time."

Integrate "networking" in your normal day.

People "network" all the time. You too. Except, you may not think of what you're doing as "networking". Here is an example of what I mean:

Let's say you're looking for a landscape maintenance company, that will take care of your yard year round. Mowing the grass in the summer, raking the leaves in the fall, clearing the snow in the winter. But perhaps you're new to the area, or maybe you know the area but are a new homeowner, and you don't know how best to find someone who is reliable, affordable and does good work.

So what do you do? Chances are, you probably ask people you know who are homeowners, for information, recommendations and references.

This is networking.

And as I said, you probably do this kind of thing without thinking.



Now, if you consciously applied the same concept to your business needs, you wouldn't need to carve out extra time for "networking". It would become integrated into your normal day and how you did business.

Leverage technology whenever you can.

In this day and age, it's possible to get to know and work with someone without ever meeting them in person. In my previous career, I successfully built and led a team, whose members were located in 4 different continents.

How did we work successfully without ever meeting each other? We simply used technology (nothing fancy – common stuff like phone and email) to get to know each other, keep in touch and coordinate our work.

You can do the same in networking. Here are a couple of examples of how you can use technology to your advantage when networking:

A client of mine asked me once if I could recommend some Executive recruiters to him. I didn't have this information. However, I did belong to several online groups that had people who could provide me with this information.

So I posted a question on a few of

these lists, describing exactly what I was looking for. Within a couple of days I got a list of Executive recruiters from people I trusted. And I passed this information on to my client.

Note a couple of things here though. First, this information came from "people I trusted". Even though I'd never met many of them in person, I knew them (or got to know them) through email and/or phone conversations. Second, I posted my question on *some* lists – I chose only those lists whose members I thought would be best able to help me find this information.

In terms of generating referrals for my own business, here is one way I leverage technology to help me with this:

I regularly ask my customers and subscribers, especially those who find my articles and products useful, to refer people to me.

Specifically, I ask them to tell their friends and associates about these resources, and provide an online form to help facilitate this. I ask for referrals (and present this form) during key interactions, such as when someone requests the free self-paced program, or buys one of my products.

My point is, even when I'm unable to ask for referrals in person, using technology I am still able to ask.

About the Author:

(c) Copyright 2006, Srirupa Dasgupta. Srirupa Dasgupta is a Certified Integral Coach, and author of **Effortless Networking: Everyday Wisdom to Transform Your Business and Life**. Prior to starting her coaching business practice, Sri worked in the software industry for 14 years, in various leadership and management positions, such as Technical Manager of Global Knowledge Management, Director of Customer Support, Director of Technical Development. To learn more about Sri's books and coaching services, visit her website: <http://www.srirupadasgupta.com>.

Do You Have a Newsworthy Item to Share? Submit it to us!

<http://www.createthedream.com/for-submissions.htm>

JANUARY 2008

ACT! CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF KEEPING CUSTOMERS AT CENTER OF BUSINESS

"It's all about the customer." Every small-business owner has heard this phrase time and time again. Bringing the customer to the center of your operations requires that every interaction - not just the initial sale - be of the highest quality and level of personalization. Meeting this goal requires significant work.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Have you ever wanted to organize all of your business data about a customer but couldn't figure out how to neatly compile it from multiple places and applications?
- Have you ever wasted time searching for a key piece of customer information?
- Have you ever wished you had a personal assistant who kept you informed of appointments, important dates and tasks?
- Have you ever wanted an automated way to create and deliver professional-looking customer communications?
- Have you ever wanted to make an application work the way you want it to work, or wished multiple applications would work together?



Contact and customer management software, such as ACT! by Sage, allows users to manage all the tasks and information related to developing and maintaining relationships with customers.

Now in its 20th year, the pioneering business software tool has helped over 2.7 million customers as well as an additional 41,000 corporate account customers worldwide.

Unlike a Rolodex or a simple electronic organizer, contact and customer management software is built on the foundation of a contact-centered database, intuitively designed for quickly accessing related customer information and sales opportunities from virtually any location using desktop or Web-based applications, or handheld devices.

The software can help you:

- Centralize critical contact and customer information and stay organized
- Manage and grow business relationships through personalized communications
- Prioritize work
- Forecast and track sales opportunities
- Access and report on information quickly
- Integrate with applications you use every day, such as Microsoft Office and Lotus Notes, and accounting applications such as QuickBooks and Peachtree by Sage
- Take customer information on the go using BlackBerry, Pocket PC and Palm OS devices.

To learn more, visit **<http://www.act.com>**.

create the dream!™

NEWS & REVIEWS - JANUARY BOOK REVIEWS

worth a look

BOOK REVIEWS

"Riches in Niches: How To Make It BIG In A Small Market"

When it comes to succeeding in today's business world, it's not how much you know, it's how much you know ABOUT YOUR NICHE. In her newly launched book, **"Riches In Niches: How to Make It BIG in a Small Market,"** veteran business expert Susan Friedmann teaches entrepreneurs and business owners that transforming from being a generalist to a specialist can mean the difference between business success & business struggle.

This 298-page advice-laden **"Riches In Niches"** is a quick, informational read that provides hands-on, practical tips to getting rich from your niche. In researching the book, Friedmann conducted extensive interviews with some of the most successful nichepreneurs in the world. Each chapter begins with a brief profile and advice from a successful nichepreneur and each chapter concludes with Susan's Speedy Summary to highlight how new nichepreneurs can benefit most from the information.

Along the way readers will also learn:

- The benefits of being a nichepreneur include greater profitability, an ability to offer better quality service more efficiently, and the chance to pursue those topics that really spark an individual's passion.
- The GEL Formula: Friedmann's proven technique that shows entrepreneurs how to find the professional niche that makes the best use of their skills while yielding maximum profit.

- The Seven Secret Success Strategies nichepreneurs need to know to create, claim, and benefit from their Expert Identity.

The book retails for \$21.99 and is available at: <http://www.RichesInNiches.com> or on <http://www.Amazon.com>

Riches in Niches: How to Make it Big in a Small Market By Susan Friedmann Career Press May 2007 \$21.99 ISBN 978-1-56414-930-5

About the Author:

Susan Friedmann, CSP (Certified Speaking Professional), is a veteran business and marketing expert who has carved her niche by helping companies worldwide get the most out of attending tradeshows and industry events. Her client list includes some of the most recognizable names in the world: Siemens, Kimberly-Clark, IBM, American Express, and many more. She is the author of numerous books, including **"Meeting and Event Planning for Dummies"** She is also a national board director of the National Speakers Association (NSA).



Interested in Having Your Book or Ebook Reviewed In a Future Issue? Contact Publisher Traci Hayner Vanover for submission details.

JANUARY 2008

"Masters of Sales: Secrets From Top Sales Professionals That Will Transform You Into A World Class Salesman"

Anyone who's ever wondered why getting to "yes" comes so easily to some people and not to others may be able to learn a lot about sales success from a group of successful salespeople.

Sales experts from a variety of industries have contributed to a new book on topics from finding prospects and keeping the pipeline of referrals flowing to the all-important close. These sales gurus reveal the secrets that took them from green to gold.

For example:

- Zig Ziglar, an icon of sales training, offers this tip for sales success: "The more salespeople know about their prospects' needs, the better position they are in to meet those needs. Not only that, the trust factor goes up when the prospects see salespeople intensely listening."
- Domestic diva Martha Stewart says it's important to understand "the social dynamics that have created the opportunity for your business. Women looking to learn how to run their homes efficiently was what helped her succeed."
- Sales trainer and business consultant Harvey MacKay recommends asking the prospect: "Do you have exactly two minutes to discuss a product that can save you money and boost your productivity?"
- And Brian Tracy, author of 42 books on human potential, sales and business, offers this wisdom: "Whenever you start setting clear, specific goals for every part of your sales life, you will be amazed at the results."

That's the kind of advice you can find in **"Masters of Sales: Secrets From Top Sales Professionals That Will Transform You Into A World Class Salesman"** (Entrepreneur Press), the newest title in Entrepreneur's best-selling Masters Series.

More than 50 sales specialists (including Jack Canfield, Tony Robbins, Jay Conrad Levinson and more) cover topics including building client value, technology, communication, attitude, goals, getting clients, handling objections and more. The book retails for \$19.95, and examines different aspects of the sales process. In addition, there are helpful "how-to" sections that people from every sales sector can apply to both career and daily life.

For more information, visit <http://www.MastersBooks.com>.

Special Note From Author Dr. Ivan Misner:

"Finally, there's a week to recognize one of the most important ways that people can build their business — networking! International Networking Week is right around the corner. Last year, thousands of people from around the world recognized the week and even more are expected to recognize it this year.

International Networking Week is about celebrating the key role that



networking plays in the development and success of business around the world. It is about creating an awareness relating to the process of networking. Not just any kind of networking, but what I call, "relationship networking" an approach to doing business based on building long-term successful relationships with people through the networking process. International Networking Week has now been acknowledged by several governmental organizations (including a joint resolution of the California State Assembly and Senate). Start the new year out with more business! If you belong to any networking groups, make sure to tell them that **International Networking Week - 2008 is February 4th - 8th.**

Go to <http://www.InternationalNetworkingWeek.com> for more information!

create the dream!™

MARKETING & PROMOTION - TESTING & TRACKING MARKETING STRATEGIES

Testing & Tracking Your Marketing Strategies

Developing and implementing a strategic marketing plan is an essential part of your success. However, unless you're testing and tracking your strategies, you may be losing a great deal of time and money.

You can dramatically increase your sales simply by taking the time to test and track your results. Not only will it help you to determine what's working and what's not, but it will also enable you to focus your efforts on the strategies that produce results.

When testing your marketing strategies, keep in mind, a strategy that produces results for one person may not produce results for you. There is no 'set in stone' strategy that works for everyone. You must develop your own style and technique and test your results to determine what works for you. Below are some ad tracking resources to assist you in your testing and tracking endeavors.

Ad Tracking CGI Scripts

LnkinLite

<http://www.dtp-aus.com/cgiscript/lnkinlite.shtml>

If you're looking for a simple way to track clickthroughs, then LnkinLite may be your answer. This free script will enable you to easily keep track of the number of clicks a specific link receives. Instead of using your standard link within your advertising, you can use a link created by this script. It will track the number of clickthroughs and instantly redirect your visitors to your URL.



Willmaster's ProLinkz

<http://www.prolinkz.com/>

This powerful script is a link creator, tracker, disguiser and manager all in one. It will enable you to create uniquely coded links that redirect to any URL you specify and count all hits and referrers.

Cost - \$45.00

AdTrackZ

<http://www.adtrackz.com/>

This script will enable you to set up an entire ad tracking campaign including statistical reports for referring URLs, what browsers your visitors have installed, what operating systems your

visitors are using and much more.

Cost - \$47.00

Ad Tracking Services

LinkCounter

<http://www.linkcounter.com>

A free service that tracks the clickthrough rates of your links. In addition to tracking your links, LinkCounter hides the URL of the link destination. This will prevent users from removing or changing your affiliate ID when visiting an affiliate site through your link.

HyperTracker

<http://www.hypertracker.com>

The PRO version of HyperTracker contains a number of advanced features including: unlimited advertising campaigns, tracking of sales and actions, special scripts that let you promote your own website address in your campaigns and much more.

Cost - Starting at \$10.95 mo. They also offer a free version.

Adminder

<http://www.adminder.com>

An online tracking system that will enable you to track an entire advertising campaign. It will enable you to see how many visitors were generated by each of your ads, keep track of sales that were generated by each ad and calculates the cost-per-click, cost-per-sale, and click-to-sale ratios for each ad.

Cost - \$19.95 mo. (for a limited time)

Statcruncher

<http://www.Statcruncher.com>

Statcruncher tracks and reports exactly which ads, banners and links are producing results. They provide you with

Do You Have a Newsworthy Item to Share? Submit it to us!

<http://www.createthedream.com/for-submissions.htm>

JANUARY 2008

access to their powerful web-tracking system that will enable you to track your ad campaigns 24 hours a day in real time.

Cost - \$49.00 yr.

If you'd rather not use any of the products and services listed above, you can use some alternative methods. Below are some example tracking methods you can use to track your response rates:

URL

You can track your ads simply by adding some special coding to your URL. To code your URL, add a question mark followed by a special tracking code to the end of your web address. Your coded link will still open your web page. Your code should look something like this:

<http://www.yourdomain.com/?ad1>

The text after the question mark should identify a specific ad. You can code it however you'd like. To view your results, you'll need to look at your log files. Your code will be displayed within your log files beside your URL.

Email

You can track your email responses to specific ads by using the email subject. Select a specific word to be placed within the email subject for each ad. Although you can request that a certain word be placed within the email subject, many times it won't be supplied. To avoid this problem, you can create a special email link that will automatically fill in the subject when clicked on. Your link should look something like this:

<mailto:you@yourdomain.com?subject=ad1>

Testing and tracking your strategies is an essential part of doing business. By concentrating your efforts on strategies that produce results, you can not only increase your sales, but you'll also save yourself a great deal of time and money.

About the Author:

Copyright © Shelley Lowery

Shelley Lowery is the author of the acclaimed web design course, Web Design Mastery. **<http://www.webdesignmastery.com>** And, Ebook Starter - Give Your Ebooks the look and feel of a REAL book. **<http://www.ebookstarter.com>** Visit Web-Source.net to sign up for a complimentary subscription to Etips and receive a copy of the acclaimed ebook, "Killer Internet Marketing Strategies." **<http://www.web-source.net>**

Bringing the pieces together

**Design :: Marketing :: Hosting
Promotion :: Media & Publicity
Search Engine Services**

The Creative Concept

www.TheCreativeConcept.com

create the dream!™

THE VIEW FROM HOME - BARBARA BRABEC

How Mistakes Prompt Profitable Changes

by Barbara Brabec

What do you wish you had known when you first started your business that took you too long to learn? If you were starting all over again, knowing everything you know now, what would you do differently?

In writing the book, *Make it Profitable*, I asked these questions as I interviewed several business owners in my network. Their replies helped me identify three of the most common mistakes made not only by beginners, but by seasoned pros (myself included). In each example below, the lessons were learned the hard way, through trial-and-error experience. Once recognized, each mistake prompted some kind of change in the owner's business. Whether you're a business newbie or long-time pro, the following may give you helpful perspective on your current business situation.

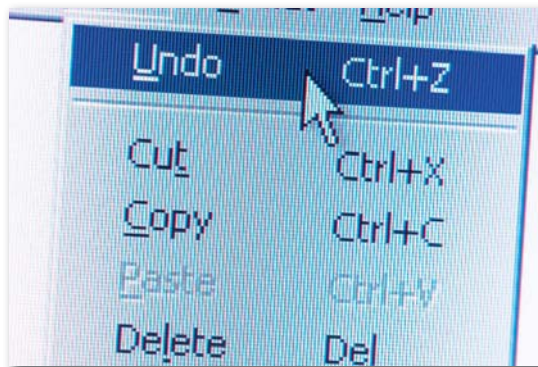
Mistake: Starting Unprepared

Too many new business owners begin before doing their home-business homework. They decide to sell a product or service and just jump into the marketplace without any real sense of business basics or marketing skills. "If starting over again," says printmaker Chris Noah, "I would have taken some courses in business and marketing and some further art studies. Then I would have gone into my business feeling stronger and more prepared."

"I cannot stress too strongly the importance of reading," adds songwriter and author Kathy Cisneros. "The old adage still holds true: The fool keeps making the same mistake over and over again and never learns. The smart man makes a mistake and learns from it, but the wise man learns from other people's mistakes. Read, read, read! A dear friend once told me that nothing is difficult when you want to learn, and she was right. Attitude is everything."

Mistake: Spreading Yourself Too Thin

As I and many other business owners have learned, some of our worst (and often most costly) mistakes will be made at times when we are overly tired or stressed, are trying to learn too many new things at once, or simply venturing down too many business roads at the same time; in short, pushing ourselves



way beyond normal limits.

Marsha Reed, long-time publisher of *Craftmaster News*, has run into her share of roadblocks over the years. "The biggest mistake we made was spreading ourselves too thin, trying to take on too many projects at one time without ample resources. At one point when we had only three employees, we were publishing our monthly magazine, two smaller newsletters, hosting dozens of crafter conferences, and promoting one of the largest shows in Southern California. Oh, yes . . . we were also trying to raise a family and have a personal life, too. You get the picture.

"By spreading ourselves too thin, we weren't able to provide the same high quality service we had offered in the past. The bottom line was that our customer service level wasn't where it should have been. And although we

realized we were busy, we didn't immediately realize how much this was affecting our customer service. Our solution was to redefine what our business scope was. We took a break, rewrote our business plan, and axed whatever additional projects we had that we simply couldn't get to. It was extremely difficult to drop something from our agenda, especially after having put so much hard-earned time, effort, and heart into it.

But we realized that things just couldn't continue the way they were. We learned how to focus, and we got back down to the bottom line of providing the best services possible for our customers. Now we feel we've learned from our mistakes. Before committing our precious time and effort to additional projects, we make sure we have the available resources and we analyze the project intensely to make sure that what we plan to do is really worth doing, and that it will bring in bottom-line profits."

Mistake: Being Too Cautious

Failure to look ahead and prepare ourselves for what might happen next if we take this or that step can be costly in terms of lost sales or marketing momentum. "When I began, I was too timid, too cautious, and almost prided myself in taking things one step at a time," a new wholesaler reported.

See Your Message Here! We Offer Affordable Ad Rates
Contact Us for Details --> <http://www.CreateTheDream.com>

JANUARY 2008

RESELLER WEB HOSTING Host Unlimited Sites
HOST GATOR Private Name Servers **\$24/month** Become a Web Host Now

"When I decided to exhibit in my first major trade show, I was simply bowled over at the response to my product, with lines forming to get to my booth. I was not prepared for the people who wanted to be distributors, nor the shops who wanted models and trunk shows right away. As a result, I lost some of the momentum that normally accompanies the introduction of a new product at a trade show."

Mistakes are always uncomfortable, sometimes embarrassing, and usually costly in one way or another. But they are also beneficial in that we learn from them just as we learn from failure. In fact, most business mistakes wake us up to things we need to learn next if we're going to succeed in a chosen endeavor. Mistakes literally force us to acquire knowledge or experience we didn't even know we needed before.

When asked by a marketing VP what mistakes he had made lately, calligrapher and web designer Michael Noyes suggested one or two, but was told that wasn't enough. "If you're not making mistakes, you're not experimenting enough with new ideas," he was told. That made sense to Michael, who later thought of several more mistakes he had made. Maybe he was on track after all, he decided.

So . . . how many mistakes have you made lately, and what have you learned from them that has prompted profitable changes in your business? I'd love to hear about them. You can connect with me through my website at the link below.

About the Author:

© 2007 by Barbara Brabec. Barbara is the author of several books for home-business owners, all of which are detailed on her website. Visit Barbara Brabec's World to also find a wealth of articles and resources for home-business owners, writers, self-publishers, and computer users. Visit Barbara's website at <http://www.BarbaraBrabec.com>.

What's New @ CTD:

- **Mentorship Program - Deadline is January 20th for Free Month Offer**
- **eWriterPro software offer - \$7.95**
- **Welcome New Writers Dennis Gaskill and Srirupa Dasgupta**

YOU'VE JUST MISSED ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO BE SEEN BY CREATE THE DREAM'S™ READERS!

=====

**GOT A BUSINESS PRODUCT OR SERVICE?
CONTACT US FOR AD RATES!
CALL TRACI @ 260.489.3633**

DRAMATICALLY INCREASE YOUR CRAFTS SALES

Craft Business Success Package
5 volumes, 775 pages



+ 24 FREE Bonus Gifts!



Find out how to forecast trends and stay in front of the competition by offering items consumers are driven to buy.

Discover how to price crafts to sell and earn maximum profits. Follow the pricing strategies of the experts who generate sales that make competitors cry.

WWW.CRAFTMARKETER.COM

create the dream!™

NEWS & REVIEWS: FALLING DOLLAR MAY BE GOOD NEWS FOR PRIVATE US COMPANIES

Falling Dollar May Be Good News for Private US Companies

Predicting the future of the dollar is about as reliable as forecasting the weather by licking your index finger and holding it up to the wind. There's no disputing that the dollar's devaluation abroad will have far-reaching impact here at home. But will all the news be bad?

Not necessarily, says financial expert Stephen H. Watkins.

Watkins is the chief executive officer of Entrex, whose Private Company Index tracks the performance of privately held American companies. While the dollar has lost about 60 percent of its value since 2001, the PCI private companies have experienced near 50 percent growth in each of last two years, he points out. And the dollar's dropping value could actually bode even more positive for these private American companies.

"The math is very simple," Watkins says. As the dollar continues to lose value, products imported into America from overseas will cost more than products made domestically. As the cost of imported goods



continues to rise, so will consumer demand for lower-priced American-made products, he says. Likewise, demand will grow abroad for American-made products which will be perceived as cheaper by foreign markets.

"That means American companies will need to hire more workers to keep pace with growing consumer demand from both here and abroad," Watkins points out. And job growth equates to economic growth.

"All of which, in the end, brings

equilibrium over time," he says. "It's a function of developing nations versus developed, and it is all cyclical."

Meanwhile, private companies are growing and hiring. The Private Company Index grew 10.5 percent overall in October, while last quarter these companies grew on average by 9 full time employees - a 33 percent increase from the second quarter. More than 24 million private companies operate in the United States, ranging in size from micro and local businesses to expanding regional or national operations.

"Domestic, private companies will be hiring to fill demand," Watkins predicts. "Public companies are simply not that reactive to such swings. Private companies will build and create around opportunities that are short term, meaning three to 10 years."

Ultimately, Watkins says, the falling dollar will give new life to the concept of "buy American." "It's a patriotic concept that also benefits the economy."

- Courtesy ARA

MOO MiniCards
Half the size,
but twice as cool!



moo.com

**Choose From Stock
Designs, or Upload
Your Own!**
GREAT CONVERSATION STARTER!

Do You Have a Newsworthy Item to Share? Submit it to us!

<http://www.createthedream.com/for-submissions.htm>

JANUARY 2008

Help Spread the Word! **Create the Dream!™ has gone** **digital -- and we're better than ever!**

We're very excited about our change in format - so excited, in fact, that we want the whole world to know about it.

And for that, we're asking for your help.

We've extended all existing subscriptions by one (1) issue.

So essentially, you are receiving this issue FREE. It's our way of saying "thanks" for helping us spread the word.

We'd like for you to share this issue with anyone, and **EVERYONE** you know. We know that our readers are among the most web-savvy surfers around -- if anyone can give CTD the ole' "web 2.0" treatment, it's you.

We're even going to sweeten the deal for you. Below you will find a link to a "super secret" page of our website, where you'll find a veritable treasure trove of discounts and special offers on small business tools, books, ebooks, software and resources. This link is **ONLY** being divulged through this issue of Create the Dream!™ -- it will **NOT** be announced publicly.

To visit our "super secret" thank you page, click on the graphic below:



And what if you're one of the lucky folks whose friend forwarded this issue to you? **We haven't forgotten about you!** Of course, you are welcome to visit the link above as well. But, more importantly -- we don't want you to miss a single issue of Create the Dream!™

Create the Dream!™ is published (6) times per year, and is available only by subscription. You can claim your own subscription for just **\$24.00** when you click on the graphic below. You'll be taken directly to our website, where you can check out using our secure shopping cart.

So, to recap, you can grab your own subscription to CTD -- with a single issue cost that averages less than the cost of most of those fancy coffee house beverages!

To reserve your subscription, simply click on the graphic below:



SiteSell.com

**E-business
Success.**

Simple.

Real.

*click to
learn more*