

The **EDGE** *of* **SUCCESS**

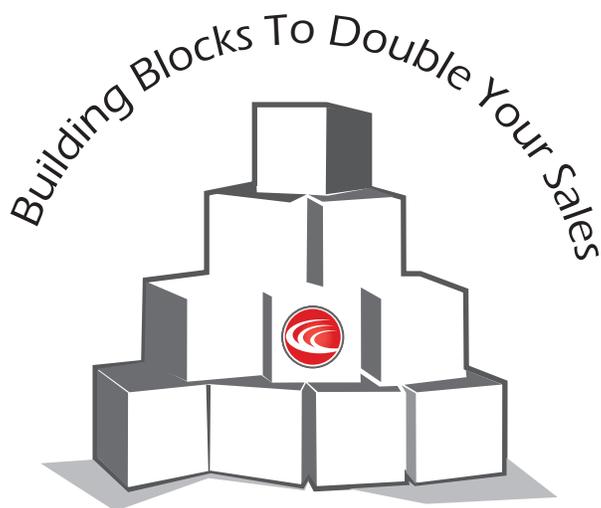


9 Building Blocks to Double YOUR Sales!
By Clate Mask


Automated Follow-up Marketing

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Introduction

Sitting on the Edge of Success

Let me ask you something. Do you ever feel as if you are sitting on the edge of greatness? As if there is something holding you back from being the phenomenal business owner you are capable of being? You read all the books about owning and operating a company. You listen to all the stories about small businesses becoming big businesses. You might know people who are living the life you set out to live yourself, but you just can't quite get there. You feel as if your business is just waiting to explode. If only you could do something to make that leap from being the overwhelmed business owner to the unbelievably successful entrepreneur.

Well, this book will provide you with the knowledge you need to reach new heights. This book is for those small business owners that have been working to grow their companies and feel as if they are sitting on the edge of success. This book is going to give you the strategies you need to double your sales.

But, these strategies have not come easily. The success secrets I'm going to share with you have been the result of years of struggle.



“I Have Pain!” The Infusionsoft Story

One day, my custom software company (eNovasys at the time) received an interesting phone call. It was Friday afternoon and my partners and I were anticipating our weekend break. We'd ordered pizza, and it had just arrived when the phone rang. Well, the last thing we wanted to do was talk to anyone. Nevertheless, I decided to pick up the phone.

No sooner had I rattled off my greeting, than the man on the other end shouted, “**I have PAIN!** Can you help me?” Then he paused.

Well, my mind was reeling with concerns. Was this a prank? Did this guy even know what number he had dialed? What was I supposed to do about someone's pain? Shouldn't he call a doctor?

Eventually, (after a 90-minute conversation) I got to the root of this man's problem. What this man, Reed Hoisington, wanted was a software program that would more effectively manage his

contacts. He was trying to follow up with his prospects and customers, but he was making a lot of mistakes. He was having a heck of a time keeping straight leads, responders, and customers. He couldn't track things properly and the follow-up was hit or miss. In other words, he was mismanaging his business and it was causing him pain.

The irony is, at the time of Reed's phone call, we too had pain! Probably more pain than anyone in my company wants to admit.



Note: As you continue reading this book, the importance of this story will become clear. You will discover how **this story** taught me the **one secret every small business owner must know**, if they are going to achieve unbelievable success. But I'll address that secret later. Right now, I want you to understand why this man's declaration of "I have pain!" struck such a chord with me.

When eNovasys first began, there were four of us (me and the three founders) working out of a small office space in the corner of a strip mall. We provided customized software to small businesses. We built all sorts of custom software applications.

However, like many small businesses starting out, we really had no idea what we wanted to achieve. In actuality, we had no idea whether we were going to be in business from one month to the next. Still, we plugged away with a glimmer of hope that our budding company would become successful.

Business ownership seemed exciting at first. We let ourselves daydream about what our company could become. I was working with close friends; and besides, we weren't being tied down by corporate jobs. But then almost instantly the reality set in. The amount of work required to run a small business forced all of us to reanalyze our situation. We began spending more and more time at the office, sometimes working through the night to get projects done. It didn't take long before our only option was to eat, sleep, and breathe our business.

But worse than the hours put in at the office was the stress and fear that appeared one day and never subsided. We were worried about our product, our clients, and whether or not we'd be paid. And in the back of our minds we were questioning whether or not we could make this business work. We developed small business paranoia. We were constantly expecting something horrible to happen to us.

In fact, one of the founders became so agitated he lost 40 critical pounds in a matter of months. The possibility of missing an important phone call kept most of us from even eating during the day (not that we could afford to eat anyway).

Life had suddenly taken on a whole new meaning. I was propelled into the age-old “fight for survival.” My friends kept asking me where “the old Clate” had gone. I rarely saw my family, and even when I was around, Infusionsoft (we had to change the name because people were calling us eNovices) was on my mind. I had less patience and little devotion to the things that meant so much to me before. My mind was busy, my stress levels were increasing, and I completely forgot what it meant to “live” my life.

Despite the raging personal battles, and almost miraculously, our company progressed and we hired several employees to help us manage the work. But as we expanded, rather than finding more time, additional business, and helpful solutions, we found ourselves wrapped up in more problems!

For one thing, in order to keep the company growing, we needed more money. A lot more money. The two founders and I invested our personal savings into building and growing our company. Multiple mortgages were taken out on homes. We leveraged whatever financial outlets we had, yet we slipped further and further into personal debt. Still it wasn't enough. We were continually panicked about being able to pay the bills.

On a couple of occasions, I had to approach our employees and explain we couldn't make payroll. To their credit, they stuck it out and worked hard to help us get through the tough times. And of course, the founders and I often went months without seeing any money.

But even as we tried to budget and gave up our own income, the money would run out, and the creditors would come calling.

I felt particular embarrassment one night when my son asked, “Dad, why are you so mad?”

“Because a freakin’ creditor called me on a Sunday!” I snapped at him.

The next question was, “What did he want?”

“He wanted to know why I hadn't paid my bills.”

“Well Dad, did you tell him it's because you haven't made enough sales?”

How often had I said that? And how could I explain to my eight-year-old son the depth of the financial situation we were in? What lessons was I teaching him? And how could I bear to watch him go without...because I wasn't succeeding?

I wasn't the only one depending on the next sale. As one of Infusionsoft's founders sat in the hospital with his wife and brand new child, he was on the phone closing a deal. When his irritated wife berated him, he looked down at his brand new baby and said, “You want to be able to afford the hospital bills, right?”

Now don't think we didn't try to find other means of financing our endeavors. All my pride was completely dissolved as I groveled at the feet of bankers. Each time we were rejected. I insisted they could trust me to pay my obligation. But they all shook their heads saying they'd heard that story before. If ever a man felt completely overwhelmed and humbled, I was that man.

I'm trying to present this information as undetached and factual as I can, but its impossible. My entire life was wrapped up in a love/hate relationship with a draining, consuming company.



“Our first office space. We worked so many long, odd hours that the police were alerted to the “suspicious” activities going on in our office space.”

I think the worst part of this struggle was seeing the frustration and fear in my wife's eyes. It was killing to me to know I could be providing my family with a much better life (if I was only willing to give up this crazy dream). Not only was the company struggling to survive, I was struggling to balance my vision with harsh realities. I would stare at the computer screen and try to wish away the debt, the long hours, and the stress. But somehow I pressed on. We pressed on. Of course, I didn't feel like I had much choice.

The truth was, without the business I had no idea what I was going to do. After just a few short months, we'd invested so much time, money, and effort into the company that failure would have been the ultimate devastation. So every day we trudged through one challenge after another, spending long hours at projects that may or may not bring in revenue.

Finally, the clouds started to break, and we knew Infusionsoft was going to be around for a while.

Ultimately, we formed and perfected our business plan as we went along. We took care of problems as they came up because we simply didn't have the time to plan for the future. So, for the first few years of our inception, Infusionsoft was hanging by a very thin thread. Fortunately we moved past the majority of our problems.

What is the price of being an Innovator's spouse?
By Charisse Mask

Article retrieved from bizAZ (May/June 2007)



“What has it been like to be the wife of an entrepreneur? I must say I definitely enjoy life now compared to what it was in the beginning.

My husband, Clate Mask, graduated with a law degree and Master's of Business Administration...I thought for sure that going through school was our hardest obstacle. I thought for sure that my husband would be an attorney and would be able to use his business degree to help him a little.

Well, I was wrong...

Two of my brothers had started a software company that had great potential. It was a business that could work, but it needed a lot of work. It needed leadership, capital, and a whole lot of time. It needed Clate. When he told me he was going to work with this start-up, with no guarantee of pay, I asked if he remembered that we had four children.

He reassured me that it would all work out. I trusted him. Somehow, each time payday rolled around and there wasn't money, it got a little harder to passively wait for things to be OK. It was rough – really, really rough. We couldn't pay all the bills. I remember asking why we had gone to school for this. I remember feeling like I couldn't wait any longer to get paid. It was very draining. I like stability and I was not experiencing any.

On top of not getting paid regularly—and sometimes not at all—it seemed as if Clate spent hours on his laptop doing even more work. Even at family functions, he and my brothers would sit around and talk about new logos, problems with the software, the direction of the company, who they wanted to hire, prospective clients, new office space, and how to make payroll. The list could go on and on.

I also knew that Clate was stressed out. He was constantly worried about so many different things.”

Once we were able to breathe (or do something that resembled breathing) I tried to take my family on a vacation. Unfortunately, the damage of small business ownership had taken its toll. Determined not to work while on vacation, I felt like a walking zombie and returned home almost anxious to get back to my familiar work routine. But I realized at that moment that I couldn't ever let this happen again. To me or to anyone else that I could spare.

As I recount this story, I can smile at the crazy situations we made it through. I can share memories with the loyal employees that stuck with it, and we can laugh together. However, although we are no longer crammed into a tiny, little office space, it doesn't mean we've lost touch with where we came from. Rather, we resolved to ease the pains of small business owners in whatever way we could. And this is where the purpose of this book begins.

The Real Pain of the Small Business Owner

Since creating Infusionsoft, we have heard thousands of painful stories from small business owners trying to manage and grow their companies. We hear about all the blood, sweat, and tears that do nothing more than get a company through to the next week, so the exhausted business owner can do it all again. Some of the stories that have been shared with us make our rough beginning look like a walk in the park.

Besides selling their products or services, managing employees, handling the overhead, and budgeting their expenses, small business owners really have little time for anything else. The sad truth is that few business owners are able to spend any time growing and expanding their business. Their attention is being constantly pulled one direction after another, and by the time they have a moment to themselves, they are too drained to do anything more than run the same old gauntlet.

In many cases, the struggles of small business ownership spread far beyond the walls of their company.

FAMILY

Think of the impact long hours at the office have on family life. The business owner works all day, deals with unpleasant customers, and is constantly putting out one fire after another. By the time they go home, they're tired, frustrated, and short on patience. I'm sure you can guess (if you don't already know) what this end-of-day exhaustion does to marriages, parenthood, and other important relationships.

Online, I attempted to find an exact statistic about the number of business owners that divorce while trying to get their companies up and running. What I discovered was much more interesting. Hundreds of thousands of websites offer advice on what to do when, as a small business owner, you get divorced. No one is offering any suggestions for how to keep a family together and still run a company. They all teach would-be entrepreneurs how to protect their assets from their spouse once they split. In other words, the world seems to have given up on the odds of staying happily married and growing a company.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "The sad truth" with several search results. The results include:

- Divided we stand: when business owners divorce, what happens to...** - U.S. divorce law is based on a concept called "marital property.. order to keep the owners from selling the business... divorce is final... **Could Divorce Force You To Liquidate?** - 34k - findarticle By Evelyn M. Capassakis
- Wheaton Divorce and Business Valuation Law Attorney | Du Page...** - At Anderson & Associates our Wheaton divorce and business valuation lawyers represent professionals and business owners in complex divorce litigation... www.wheatondivorce.com/PracticeAreas/Business-Divorce.asp - 21k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this
- Schaumburg Divorce and Business Valuation Law Attorney | Cook...** - Serving the families of Chicago are business owners and professionals. Our Cook County family law firm concentrates on divorce litigation involving... www.andersonandassociatespc.com/PracticeAreas/Business-Divorce.asp - 20k - Cached - Similar pages - Note this
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- When Business Owners Divorce** - When Business Owners Divorce has tips, ideas and information especially for business partners, who are also business owners, and who are contemplating or... www.smartdivorce.com/reports/business.shtml - 10k - Cached - Similar pages
- How business owners entering into divorce proceedings are...** - How business owners entering into divorce proceedings are financially impacted Publication: Smart Business Miami Date: January 31, 2008...

There are also several callouts and overlays on the page, including:

- A tilted box with the text: "When Business Owners Divorce Marriage partners, who are also business partners, don't have. Not only do they have to dissolve marital debts and make support arrangements, they also have to restructure the ownership structure of their business, the way they handle customer concerns and business planning issues. This Special Report outlines the unique issues..."
- A box with the text: "US DIVORCE LAWS"
- A box with the text: "How business owners entering into divorce proceedings are financially impacted Publication: Smart Business Miami Date: January 31, 2008"

Even if you're able to manage both family and business responsibilities, even if you have a compassionate spouse like mine (who worried about what to feed the kids but still encouraged my efforts), even if you don't have a family waiting at home, there are other factors to consider.

FUNDING

According to famed economics professor Scott A. Shane, approximately 65% of small businesses are founded on the savings and personal debts of the business owner. That is money that has come directly from the owner's pocket. Money that is irreplaceable should the business have a poor month, quarter, or year. The strain of having to repay borrowed money only adds a significant amount of stress to an already taxing situation. I'm sure you've heard the phrase, "lose the shirt off your back." For many small business owners, this is quite literally the case. They've invested every last dollar they can in the hope of creating a better life for themselves. And, should the company go belly up, this person isn't instantly absolved of their obligation.

Two of my employees were recently lamenting about their failed business ventures. The first had taken out a bank loan to finance an invention that never caught on. At the time of the conversation, she was still paying on her outstanding debt of \$15,000. The other heard the story of the first and chuckled. He said, "I wish that was all I had left to pay." This man had borrowed money from friends and family, lost his product due to poor storage, and never quite regained his footing with his company. His debts were so great, he was too embarrassed to relate how much money he'd lost.

These are my employees, my friends, individuals I personally care about, and by the time I heard their stories there was nothing I could do for them. There was nothing, in fact, that anybody could do for them short of paying their financial obligations.

SATISFACTION

Another concern of the small business owner is the simple issue of happiness. You see, the vast majority of entrepreneurs start their own businesses to avoid working for someone else. And to find happiness doing something they love. But, although business owners may start their companies with high hopes and ambition, inevitably, the business becomes the master..and the business owner, a slave to his/her own creation. The excitement and passion they once felt for their company gets buried under a mountain of invoices and paperwork.

Like I said before, we hear all kinds of heart-wrenching stories when small businesses turn to Infusionsoft for help. Many small business owners are in search of that one last miracle-solution before they give up altogether. Even then, they're often so overwhelmed they don't really have a desire to make their companies work. It's simply a matter of going through the motions before accepting what they're already anticipating. It's as if they are saying to themselves, "Well, I should have known better than to try."

This is where the purpose of the book comes in. You see, in all the time I was worrying and struggling to get Infusionsoft off the ground, I was learning. The more I heard from other small business owners about **what they wanted**,

what they needed, and **what they were suffering**, the more **in tune** I became. I dreamed of *ways to liberate and empower small business owners and their employees so they could enjoy doing business again*. I envisioned ways of helping them wow their customers, and grow their companies quickly and profitably. I wanted small business owners to feel the same passion and excitement for their companies they started out with, and to make the world a better place because they were able to serve not only their customers, but their families and communities as well.

What I Learned About Managing and Growing Small Businesses

Years of interacting with small business owners brought me to some simple but significant conclusions. I watched the same mistakes being made over and over again. I saw seemingly popular companies close their doors for the last time. And I observed other companies skyrocket for no apparent reason.

What I learned...is that the strategies for success were not unique to one industry, company, or business owner. Success was determined by the use of predictable, repeatable, simple actions. But not just any actions--the right actions.

The great news, and the reason I felt it necessary to complete this book is that once small business owners learned what they could do with their companies, they began writing a completely different story for themselves. Gone was the **"pain"** of small business ownership, and in its place was the **"pleasure."** No longer was it a question of **"will I succeed?"** but **"how much success will I have?"** I've watched desperate business owners turn back into excited entrepreneurs when they found out what their small business could easily and repeatedly accomplish.

Ultimately, these strategies morphed into the focal point for our company. They were the driving force, the culmination of everything I had dreamed of doing for the small business owner and their employees. For years I've developed and refined these strategies so they would provide the most and best value for the small business owner.

The InfusionSoft
Purpose.

Liberate and empower small businesses and their employees so they can enjoy doing business, wow their customers and better serve their families and communities

And after all the refinement, I am finally able to introduce:

The Nine Building Blocks to Doubling Your Sales ...Plus One Incredible Secret!

I can't even begin to express my excitement at finally being able to reveal the building blocks. With the release of these strategies, my goal, my drive, my need to provide small business owners with valuable, life-changing information has been realized.

Chapter 1-The Building Blocks



Before I get any further, I'd like to introduce the nine building blocks. An adequate description of each building block will be provided in individual chapters. However, as you'll want to think about how they relate to each other, here they are:











9

Building Blocks

Supercharge Your Website

Fill Your Funnel

Convert Your Funnel

Win Lifelong Customers

Sell Stuff Online

Flip Your Funnel

Collect the Cash

Grow Through Partners

Measure and Tweak

The building blocks are interrelated strategies which, when collectively implemented, produce phenomenal results.

Understand that the building blocks do not follow a particular order. One does not necessarily build upon the other. And, although the building blocks tend to be closely related, by the end of each chapter, I feel certain you will understand the singular importance of each one.

But Why Should I Follow These Nine Building Blocks?

In actuality, I could have picked a different number, 8 or 10. It really came down to a matter of choice. However, the number 9 along with "one secret" (which I will reveal in a moment) happily encompasses the most important techniques, or secrets to doubling sales. With 9 building blocks, I am able to clearly define the pains small businesses are struggling through and clearly identify specific, changeable behaviors that increase revenue, liberate the small business owner, and lead to unbelievable success.

The more building blocks a small business owner chooses to incorporate, the more growth they will witness. That being said, simply having this knowledge is not going to propel your company forward. After reading this book, it is up to you to decide whether or not you'll benefit from it.

It's amazing to me how many small business owners, imprisoned in their own offices, refuse to do anything about it. They become so bogged down with their daily dance to stay alive that they become short-sighted and are unwilling to look beyond the day-to-day grind.

True, this short-sightedness might never hinder a company--just as long as the business owner never gets sick, or the economy doesn't dip. **But "the only predictable thing in life is that life is unpredictable."**

One of our sales guys received a call from a mortgage broker several months ago. The broker was living the high life. He'd made extraordinary amounts of money when the housing market boomed. But, as the market slowed, his business naturally began to taper off. He was curious about Infusionsoft and what we could do to help grow his business. However, he wasn't really motivated to do anything...yet. He'd saved up enough money from the housing explosion to keep him flying high for a while. This man hung up the phone promising to think about the things he'd been told, but he felt confident the market would stabilize and his business would continue to prosper on its own.

Well, a recent follow-up call with this same mortgage broker didn't end on such a happy note. The money was gone. The company had accrued massive debts. And the man was willing to try ANYTHING to keep his business alive. He'd already given himself a three month timeline before he lost it all.

Now, not every small business is bordering on the edge of complete devastation. But the picture being painted is not uncommon. Nearly all of today's small businesses will come across a moment when they wish they could do things differently. And when they hit that moment, they might throw more money, time, and effort into their company in the desperate hope that things will improve.

That is why I'm revealing the power of these 9 building blocks to you. So the next "moment" you have is a moment of regret that you weren't able to implement these ideas sooner. So that you can quickly achieve the type of success you always dreamed of.

Is Doubling Your Sales the Best Goal to Achieve?

I've had a lot of people come to me and say, "Clate, the information you're providing small businesses is priceless. But why would you want to make 'doubling your sales' the goal for small businesses following your building blocks?"

There's three parts to that answer. **First**, in all honesty, who doesn't want to double their sales? If one dollar is good, isn't two better? Would it be more pleasing to grow by the same base amount every year, or to increase your sales exponentially?

Secondly, study the growth rates of major corporations, and a typical pattern occurs. Small business do not evolve from “doing okay” one day, to making millions the next. It comes a piece at a time. If a company repeatedly doubles their sales in the first few years of development, they will be mimicking the results of large, profitable companies. I would love to see everyone that uses the building blocks turn their small businesses into big businesses.

Finally, you’ve got to start somewhere. Doubling your sales is not only possible, it’s measurable. Two is an easy number to measure.

What Does Doubling Your Sales Have to do with Small Business Pains?

Perhaps you’re thinking, “Clate, I would really like to double my sales, but I’m too tired and too stressed to think about that right now.” Good point. Let me put it this way, the same strategies you will use to double your sales--automatically ease the typical small business pains: lack of time, lack of energy, financial obligations, and the inability to break free from the chains of small business ownership.

I know, it might sound too good to be true. These building blocks are going to double your sales and make small business ownership easier? Yes. Without beating around the bush, that’s exactly what I’m saying. You can **accomplish more in less time and with less effort**. I’m sure you’ve heard the phrase “Work Smarter, Not Harder.” It’s a great phrase, but now it’s time to put that phrase into action!

I’m going to show you how. But first let me demonstrate how quickly incorporating these building blocks can make a difference.

A Few Short Months to Success *Chet Womach - birdtricks.com*



A couple years ago, Infusionsoft received a call from a man who taught parrots how to be properly behaved. This man, like many others, was frustrated with his small business and was searching for solutions. He had a great, unique company. However, managing his overhead was too much. He failed to fulfill orders on time, had no way of following up with his customers and contacts, and was otherwise buried in his business. Sounds like a common story.

What we gave him is the basis of the same nine building blocks I am offering you. Within two months, the man doubled his sales and turned his company around. Now, his business is thriving and he couldn’t be happier.

I had another customer call up and say, “My dream is to run my business while sitting on the beach in front of my home.” One of our salespeople, Larry, chatted with this gentleman for a while and discovered...he didn’t own a home on a beach. **He does now!**

The 9 building blocks may not work in exactly the same way for every company, but they do work. I’m going to show you how. But first, let me tell you the must know secret to success.



Chapter 2- The “Secret” to Small Business Success

Generally, when people write a book like this one, they save the “secret” for the last chapter. In an attempt to get you to read the entire book, they’ll share their strategies (in my case building blocks) with you and leave you on a high note with some amazing secret. I’m not going to do that.

You see, this book is **so full of information** that I have no doubt you will want to read every single chapter. But, more than that, the 9 building blocks do not hold their value nearly as well if you don’t know and adopt the power of the **“secret.”**

How the “I Have Pain” Story Taught Me the Secret of Small Business Success

I need to readdress the story at the beginning of this book. You see, the story didn’t end with the phone call. Quite the contrary! It was only that moment when I realized how we were going to pull out of our stressful situation and start profitably growing our company. But I’m getting ahead of myself. Let me explain.

After our “pain” conversation, Reed Hoisington ended up hiring us to write a software program that would help him automatically follow up with prospects and customers, track communications, organize prospects and customers into groups, and run the whole “follow-up” function of his business. Reed was thrilled with what we created for him and he went away very happy.

But then he came back. Turns out, he had a bunch of mortgage broker clients who realized what his software was doing for his business...and they wanted it for their businesses. So we “productized” the software program and provided it to a few dozen mortgage brokers, who began to rave about the product.

Things were going so well with our mortgage broker clients that we moved away from the custom software business and began selling our “follow-up machine” exclusively to mortgage brokers. I was doing the selling, talking to prospects, following up with leads, educating people on the benefits of our software...

...and then something amazing happened!

We began to use the follow-up features of the software in our own sales and marketing efforts. Suddenly, prospects I had never talked to were calling me up saying they were ready to buy. I was having conversations with people who had heard from me several months earlier and had been receiving my follow-ups.

Streams of prospects were literally coming out of the wood work, calling me, emailing me. They were hot and ready to buy.

And our business has never been the same since. Today, thousands of people use our software every day to follow up, educate their prospects and customers, cultivate lasting relationships and maximize the value of their prospect and customer lists.

What I want to share with you is not just my personal experience. Although my own experience with follow-up techniques has been life-changing, I have seen this secret work for thousands of entrepreneurs who have found a better way to sell and market their products and services.

I promise you that when you put this secret into play, it will change the way you do business. It will increase your marketing and sales in ways you never believed possible.

So now that you know where I'm coming from, I want to tell you the secret. The same secret that energizes the building blocks, helps you double your sales, and propels you toward success. The secret is:

**YOU MUST BECOME THE
MASTER OF THE MOMENT**

What Does Master of the Moment Mean?

This idea came from one basic marketing principle: **People buy when THEY are ready to buy, not when you are ready to sell.**

No matter how great your product or service is, some people are simply not ready for it. Even if they've purchased from you before, they may not be ready to do so again. They might not be in a financial position to buy. Perhaps they don't realize how wonderful your product or service is. Or, maybe they have too many other things on their mind to pay attention to you. Whatever the reason, a large portion of your target market isn't going to purchase from you right now.

That doesn't mean, however, that they won't buy (or buy again) eventually. Most of them will. And your job as the "master of the moment" is to be standing there when they do!

Consumers act according to their own, incalculable reasoning. For example, Dave, our Vice President of Marketing received a call from a guy that was recovering in the hospital from serious abdominal surgery. The man said he appreciated all our follow-up work and the information we had sent him over the past year. He was now ready to buy. After checking to make sure the man wasn't heavily medicated, Dave went ahead and told him he'd need a credit card to place his order. The man had to get out of bed to reach his wallet. A few moans and grunts later, he was reading off his billing information and we had a new customer!



Timing is everything... Once again, you never know when a prospect or customer is going to

be ready to buy! If you're not following up with your prospects and customers on a regular basis, someone else is going to land that business. And guess what? That "someone else" who lands the business will be your competitor, who either:

- 1) Followed up relentlessly; or (more likely)**
- 2) Got lucky enough to cross paths with your prospects and customers at the right time.**

You don't want to leave new or repeat business up to chance, not unless you like being poor or losing to your competitor. No one does! But staying in front of your contacts is probably the single greatest challenge in your business.

And that is why you must learn to **"master the moment."** You need to be standing there for **every** possible selling opportunity.

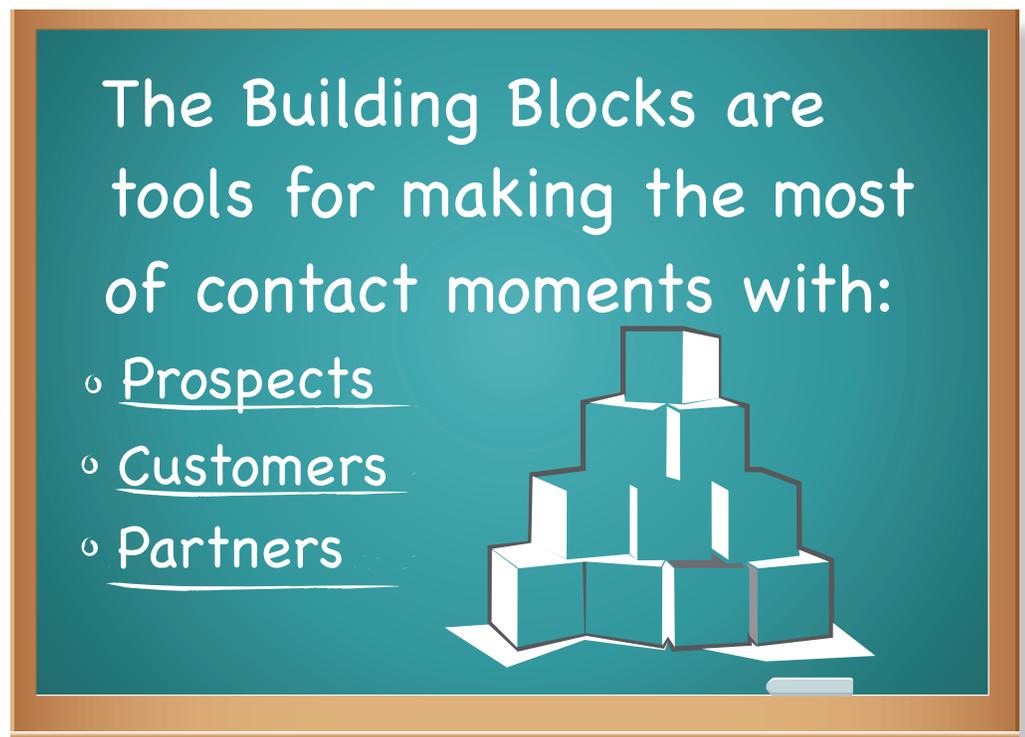
You need to be there when your prospects decide to give your product a try. But you also need to be there when your customers make a second or third purchase. You should be there to promote up-sells and cross-sells. You should be providing your customers and prospects with continual opportunities to build a relationship with you.

Basically, it all boils down to this: as a small business owner, it is your responsibility to create moments of interaction with your prospects and customers. But you must also learn to maximize those moments in order to close more sales, gain more customers, and grow your business.

Which is exactly where the building blocks come in.

They are the tools for creating and making the most of your contact moments with your prospects and customers.

"Mastering the moment" is your ultimate key to crossing the edge into unbelievable small business success and quickly doubling your sales!





Chapter 3- Supercharge Your Website

Because you're an entrepreneur, I'd be willing to bet you already have a website up and running. And that's great. But have you taken that website to the next level? I speak with far too many companies that throw a couple webpages together, put them online and call it good.

What is a random visitor supposed to do with a website like that? Most viewers will give you about 10 seconds to decide if your site is worth viewing. If you have really interesting content, they might give you 30 seconds. If you haven't used your space on the Internet to capture and retain their attention, the next thing you know, the person is gone.

Now, call me old fashioned, but I believe that when I invest my own time, or pay for someone to create something for me, it should do what I need it to do. In the case of small businesses, they need customers. So this chapter discusses the need to get your website working for you.

Your website should attract viewers, provide an interactive experience for them, and ultimately, provide you with additional leads. But too many websites fail to do all three (or even just one) of these things.

Harness the Power of the Internet

The average adult spends up to 3 hours a day more on the Internet than they spend watching television. About 70% of the U.S. population regularly use the Internet. Over 1 billion people in the world are online. And this is a vast chunk of your market! These are your customers! But only if you have a website that draws them in.

Unfortunately, not everyone understands the power of the Internet. In fact, an Arthur Anderson study (Survey of Small and Mid-Sized Businesses: Trends for 2000) showed that 16% of small business owners viewed the Internet as a threat. I sincerely hope that 8 years later, that number has decreased to 0% percent. The Internet is not a hindrance or a threat to small businesses. In actuality, not using the Internet, or not maximizing your web presence can have devastating consequences.



It's as if some unspoken fear of the Internet keeps small businesses from capitalizing on Internet possibilities. They have a website because they were told to get one. But, they don't truly understand that their web presence might mean the difference between a small market, and an enormous market.

Drowning in the Sea of Similarity...and Boredom

There are over 400 million active websites on the Internet right now. That's 400 million chances Internet viewers are overlooking you for someone else. For the small business owner, the odds don't seem to be in your favor. In the minds of many small business owners, making your site stand out is about as realistic as winning the lottery.

Actually, lottery odds are slightly better. Unless you have the knowledge of how to make your website work for you.

Think back to the days before the Internet. (Don't worry. We'll only reminisce about the dark ages for a moment.) When consumers needed a product or service, they picked up the phone book. Then, they'd spend an hour on the phone looking for the cheapest, most convenient business to meet their needs. With a static website, you are offering the consumer little more value than an ad in the yellow pages. You're still forcing them to resort to time consuming, out-dated practices.

Now, let's slip back into the present. Guess what? Most people are unwilling to exert the energy of calling business after business to get the information they need. Today's consumers, especially those using the Internet, are searching for a whole lot more. If you've got a static site, what sort of value are you offering your prospects? I guarantee the vast majority of consumers are going to go looking for something a little more updated.

So now the question is...what should your website look like? And what should your website be able to do for you?

wikipedia definition of web 2.0:

"Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the Internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform."

Supercharge to be a Superstar!

Whatever your negative opinion of the Internet might be, I want you to suspend it and view the Internet as a small business owner's best friend. With this positive frame of mind, let's dig into the benefits of using the Internet...and not just using it, but supercharging your website to maximize its value.

Personally, I love Web 2.0. Infusionsoft has a great time posting blogs, creating and posting videos, and hosting user communities. If I could, I would bring every customer into our office to experience the enthusiasm and high energy of our work environment. The Internet is our second best choice for displaying our "passion" for helping small businesses.



Now let me take a minute to expose my own embarrassment. Do you remember how I said Infusionsoft also struggled when we were first getting started? Our original website was as inadequate as the static sites I'm harping about. Our first few concepts were not the powerhouse tool we've made them. In the first few years of Infusionsoft, our website generated little interest and few customers. Within the last year alone, our website has generated interest at an exponential rate. (And brought in packs of new customers.)

Now, I'm not saying that a supercharged website requires videos, user communities, and every other form of social networking interaction. I'm just pointing out that they work, they're effective, and they're drawing the attention of millions of viewers a day. The more involved you are in providing your viewers with Web 2.0 technology, the more likely **you** are to grab and keep their attention.

There's some tough competition out there. I'm certain you haven't forgotten about the 400 million websites you'll be fighting against. But what a great competition! And what an unbelievable opportunity to demonstrate why you are a true entrepreneur!

Turning your Website into a Lead Capturing, Lead Converting Machine

Everybody knows one sided relationships (no matter what type of relationship it is) never work. The same is true with websites. The website that is focused entirely upon the customer is the one that will shine through the millions of others.

Visitors want to do something

Put a little kid in any room, and just wait. Within minutes they will be running around, examining the furniture, picking things off the floor, getting into everything. It would be nice to say we grow out of this. However, have you ever watched a father on Christmas morning? Once the kids have lost interest in their new toys, dad is going to try out all the buttons.

Think about the marketing genius of "thebestwebsiteever.com." First of all, what a great domain name. Secondly, they're incredible. The home page allows customers to vote on their favorite products: food, television shows, magazines, actors. An icon for each of the choices comes on the screen, and the visitor "votes"

for the best choice in each category. However, clicking on the icon takes the voter straight to the icons home page. This website certainly understands that website visitors want to do something.

How does that help the small business owner? You too can have the visitor doing something. Give them something free to download. Offer a free report or whitepaper. Ask for their opinion on a blog entry. Do something, anything, and once the visitor responds, you "require" the following information: name, address, phone number, and email. Or any combination of these. Guess what you just got? A qualified lead. Qualified because they stayed on your site long enough to take action.



Introducing your Internet viewers

- 1) People are egocentric. Subconsciously, they're viewing your webpage and thinking, "There are tons of companies just like you. What are you going to do for me?"
- 2) People love being entertained. If they believe your website is providing interesting information, you'll have them hooked.
- 3) People want their opinions valued. This is why most companies have incorporated a blog or forums--so that their customers can put in their two cents.
- 4) And...this is the ticket to creating value for YOUR business... visitors want to do something.

A few more suggestions of possible website content that makes your site more customer-centric, and effective:

- Pictures and descriptions of your product
- Benefits of your product (directly related to your buyer)
- Interesting facts, statistics,
- High interest stories
- Customer testimonials or responses
- Forums



Whatever you choose to include on your website, remember two important rules;

1) Make sure it's interesting. Don't bore your visitors and give them a reason to leave. Engage their attention for as long as you can.

2) Capture your visitor's information. Either through free downloads, exclusive information, contests they have to sign up for, or some other method, you must acquire the contact information for your leads.

Otherwise, you're back to square one.

What Will You Do With This?

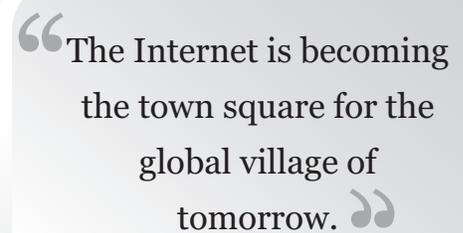
There has never been a more accessible market in any other decade. Using the Internet correctly can popularize your name and produce more customers than was ever possible before. That means, potentially, there is more money available to you than ever before. Business owners are done sitting around and hoping local customers patronize their stores. Geography can no longer limit the number of sales a small business owner can accrue.

But, like I said, you have to use the Internet correctly. Just having a website is not sufficient. You have to make the website work for you!

What is amazing to me is even with all this information, small businesses will choose to have a static website, or no website at all. Whether or not you choose to use the Internet as a tool, you can guarantee your competition is...or will. Your supercharged website is your gateway to a larger audience. You need this market, you want this market, and if your website is set up properly, these consumers will be falling directly into your hands.

Marketing coach Larry Chase said, "Like China, the Internet is a huge new market. It's up to you to figure out what to do with it. Use it as a prospecting tool, make connections with people, add value for your existing customers."

The Internet is the Tupperware party for the twenty-first century. It's the new source for selling. And guess what? If you don't get in on it, you'll be left sitting on the porch with your product.



“The Internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow.”

- Bill Gates



Chapter 4-Fill the Funnel

In this chapter, I am going to introduce you to the funnel. The funnel will be used for several of the building blocks, because it is imperative to small business improvement. So, before I explain what I mean by "Fill the Funnel," take a look at the graphic below.

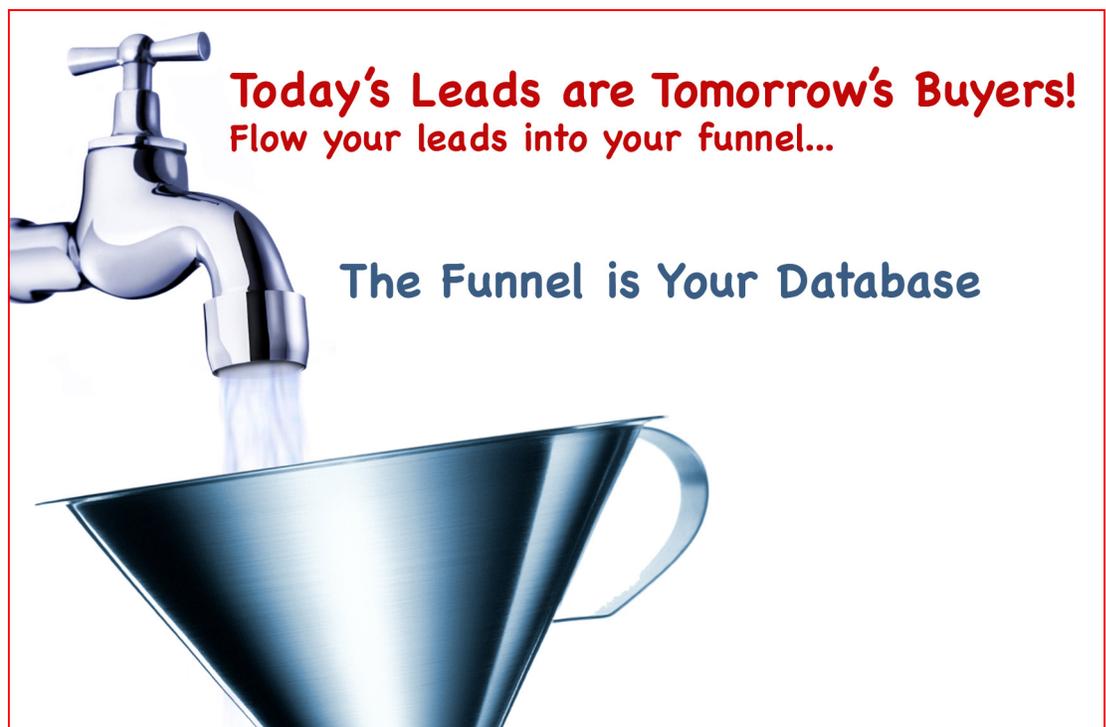
Let me ask you a question. What do you do with your leads once you have them? "Fill your Funnel" is about gathering, sorting, and using lead information to begin creating moments of interaction with your prospects.

You see, leads are a powerful resource to have. Today's leads are tomorrow's buyers, or next month's, or next year's. So you need to understand the importance of your leads. The entire basis of this chapter is to encourage small business owners to create a workable, prospect database that they can market to later.

By putting those leads in your database, you are securing a lucrative future for your company. The more leads you have in your funnel, the more buyers you're going to have down the road. (Because you're going to be constantly standing in front of them.)

Where, Oh Where Has That Little Lead Gone?

What happens when leads are not put into the funnel? Where do they go? Let's say you or your salesperson went through the entire list of leads and found the ones that were ready to buy now. What did you do with the rest of them? My guess, they're gone for good. It may not be intentional, but because of the overwhelming nature of running a small business, those other leads are usually lost, or wind up in the trash.



A struggling loan officer decided to quit his job. He had tried the mortgage business for six months and only closed two small loans. At the mortgage broker's request, the loan officer decided to give the mortgage business one more month.

"Great," the broker said, "Go back to your leads."

"What leads?" came the response.

"You pre-approved seven people in your first month. What happened to them?"

The loan officer shrugged his shoulders. "One hadn't found a house yet. Two had some credit issues. One was waiting for her husband to get back from Iraq. And I never heard from the other three."

The mortgage broker said, "Well, it's a good start. Give them a call today."

The loan officer stared in horror at his boss and confessed, "I threw their stuff away. I didn't think I would need it."

Granted this story shows the employee's ignorance in not filling the funnel, but it's a good illustration of the pain losing or discarding leads can cause.

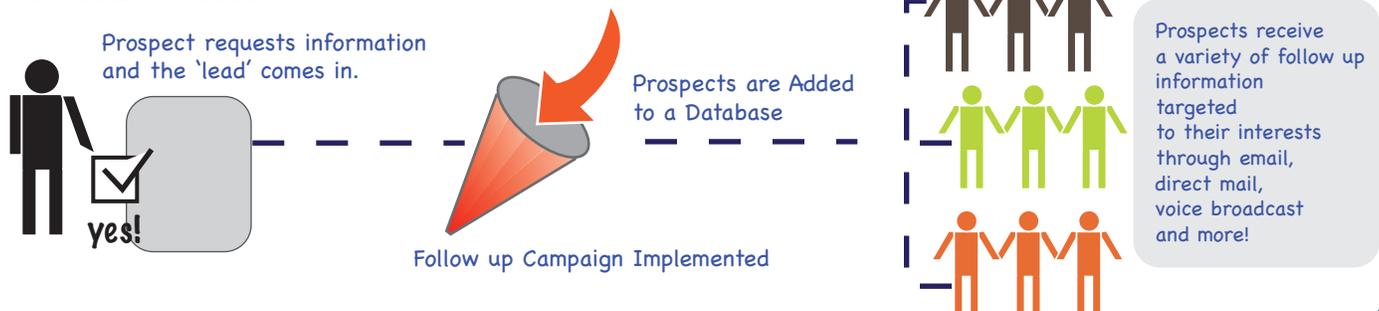
The Price of Lost Leads

What is the ultimate result of lost or discarded leads? Well, really there is only one answer to that question. You'll have to seek out more leads. And thus the process begins again. You'll pour more money into lead generation or purchase, make the quick sales, lose or discard the rest, and have to find more leads again.

And in this process, not only are you spending more money in marketing efforts and in purchasing leads, but you're leaving thousands of dollars just sitting on the table.

I want to do a quick calculation. Let's say your company spends \$2,000 on marketing materials and is able to generate 100 leads. Of those leads, 5 people instantly become customers and spend about \$300 a month. Over the next 12 months, your company brings in \$18,000. That's a

The Lead Process:



decent return on your investment.

Now, what if 20 of those leads will eventually become customers but weren't ready yet? However, you followed up with them until they were. To make this easy, we'll say all 20 warm leads sign up after one year. From your \$2,000 marketing effort, you brought in \$18,000 the first year AND \$72,000 later on down the road.

Had you thrown away the leads, that additional income would be lost. That's certainly not something you can afford when you're trying to double your sales.



You Don't Have to Be the Pushy Sales Guy

When you start to understand the importance of EVERY lead, you'll notice your sales tactics change. Think of the way you, other small business owners, and salespeople attempt to make a sale. What tactics do you use? And what do you do when you realize a sale is just not going to happen?

A young couple I know were down on their luck. They'd bought and lived in a new house, paying all kinds of new bills for one year. Then without warning, the husband lost his job. One day, a pest control salesman stopped by to see if he could sign the couple up for quarterly treatments. The wife tried to politely decline, but the salesman kept pushing. After three attempts to get rid of the man, the wife explained that her husband was currently unemployed. The salesman's response was a disappointed, "Oh." Then he left. After all, he wasn't getting a commission from that house. Why should he bother to be polite?

That young couple soon got back on their feet, and when they started spotting Black Widows around their yard, they wanted to call a pest control company. Guess who they didn't even consider?

Imagine how this story could have been different if the salesman had simply said, "I understand you may not be ready for pest control now. May I come by later in the year?" What if he had filled his funnel with a future customer?

Becoming a Better Salesperson

I'm going to admit something that may sound a little arrogant. I have tens of thousands of customers. They just might not be buying from me right now. Have you ever noticed what an impact perspective has on our actions? Whenever I'm talking to any small business owner, I am thinking, "This is one of my customers." I don't even have a chance to tell them what Infusionsoft does before I have categorized them as "Customer" in my head.

Many times, it is due to my perceived value of this person that small business owners want to

learn more about Infusionsoft. It's because I treat them differently. Unlike the story about the pest control salesman, my initial conversation gives me a chance to begin a relationship with this person. And I take advantage of that moment. Whether they buy today, or go in my funnel, I treat every small business owner I talk to in exactly the same way. Because you never know what is keeping this person from buying your phenomenal product or service.

And then, as I pointed out before, some people just aren't ready to buy yet. But with a prospect database you're saying, "You know what? Whether you buy from me today or not, you're important to me. I am going to keep your information." The prospect may not have a clue that you have a database waiting in the wings. But they're going to feel it. Because they can sense the importance you attribute to them.

Capture Your Leads to Capture More Dollars

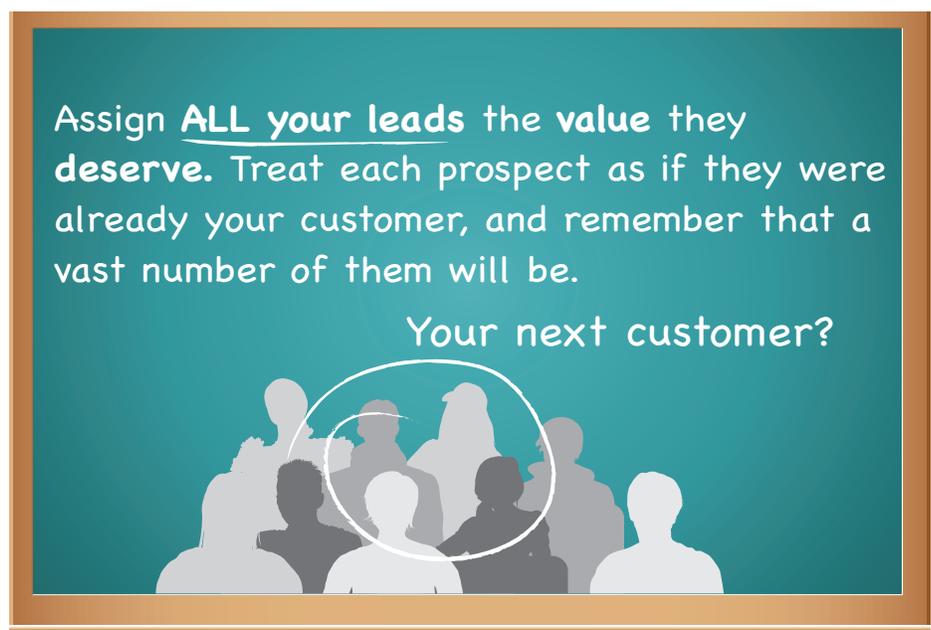
No matter where your leads are generated from, you are not the only person trying to sell to the "hot" lead. I'm aware of several lead generating agencies that farm identical leads out to several small business owners. And they still charge an arm and a leg for the leads. I'm not telling you to ignore the "hot" leads. Quite the contrary. Get the sales you can now, just don't ignore the value of your other leads.

Here is the strategy I hope you carry away from this building block. Assign ALL your leads the value they deserve. Treat each prospect as if they were already your customer, and remember that a vast number of them will be. There is no way to gage right now what a lead will be worth in the future. Why take risks with potential dollars?

For small businesses to reach those daunting financial goals, they must generate and "keep" their lead information. Leads are only worth the sales that come from them. But you never know when the sale will occur. Remember, consumers are working on their schedule, not yours.

So, the next natural question is: I've got my leads, where do I go from here?

I'm so glad you asked.





Chapter 5- Convert Your Funnel

By this time, you should be thinking about how you are going to fill your funnel. You should also realize that you need a follow-up system in place in order stay in front of the leads you generate. Now this chapter relies heavily on our secret of mastering the moment. **In fact, the process of turning prospects to customers depends on your ability to execute the secret faithfully.**

When you choose to interact with your prospects through follow-up, the messages you send need to have a purpose, or some value attached in order to be effective. That is precisely what "Convert Your Funnel" refers to. It addresses the type of messages and sales tactics that you use to move prospects down the funnel and finally convert them into customers.

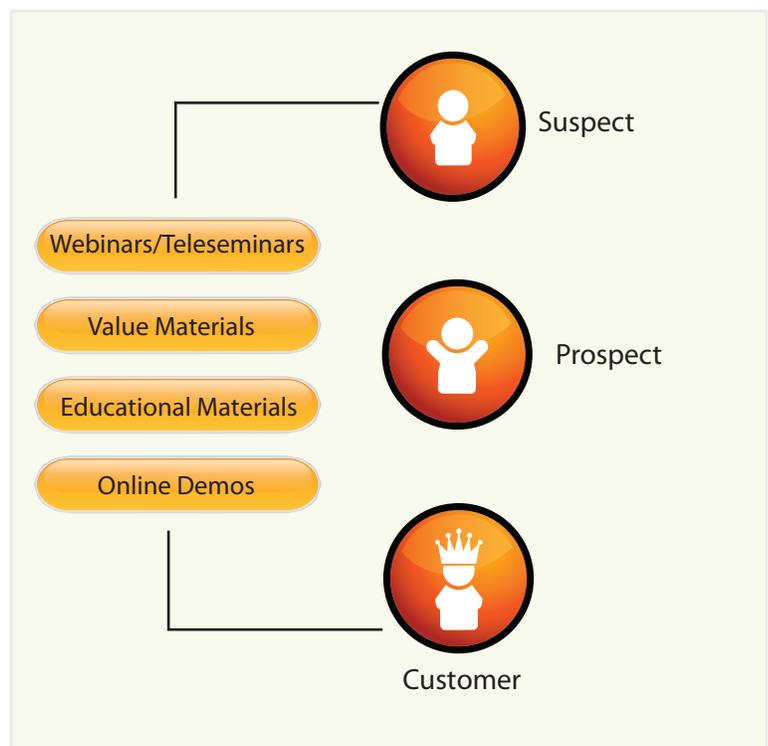
This process is often referred to as sales force automation. It includes everything in the sales process, such as, keeping and updating prospect information, a contact tracking system, and the valuable information you provide your prospects. In other words, it's every effort you make to turn prospects into buyers. (That includes providing a lot of "moments" to master.)

Never Trust a Man Who Says, "Trust Me!"

You can no longer place a product on the market, give it a price tag, tell your customers it's a great deal, and have them make a purchase. If you've been in business very long, you know the whole "trust me" tactic doesn't work. The more you say trust me, the more that little warning voice is going off in the heads of your prospects and customers.

So don't expect your prospects to immediately see the value of your product. Show them the value. If you can think back to your high school and college English classes, you probably remember hearing the phrase "show don't tell." The same thing holds true for marketing. To convert your customers, they need to know exactly what they will be receiving, and exactly how it is going to have an impact on their lives.

You can have the greatest product in the world, at the best price you've ever seen, be following up continuously, and still not see the results you want. If that happens, it's because you have failed to convert. Do your prospects understand the benefits of your product? Did the information you gave them make them want to buy? Do they trust you?



Remember, if you fail to move your prospect through the funnel, you're not making money.

Valueless Messages

Companies continuously try to "force" people into buying their products. They don't know how to do anything else. They've got a product, they need it sold, so they're going to take the most direct approach and keep trying until they find someone who agrees to buy. But is it a matter of sell at all costs? Selling shouldn't be painful.

Most marketing messages out there don't grab our attention, because we train ourselves to ignore or instantly refuse the hard sell tactics.



In order to make the sale, small businesses must answer the question: why you? Why should your prospect choose you as the company to do business with? What have you offered them that others can't?

Usually, the answer is "nothing". Whatever you are willing to give, another person is willing to match.

For example, if one dentist gives away a free toothbrush with every visit, another dentist gives a toothbrush and toothpaste. Still another hands out a toothbrush, toothpaste, and a two-minute egg timer. And so it continues, because none of the dentists are differentiating themselves or offering what other dentists are not. None of them are really offering anything of value. They are not giving their prospective patient the "why me" answer they so desperately want. "Choose me, because I'll give you a free toothbrush" is not an adequate reason for picking a dentist.

Prospects are searching for value. Value they usually don't find in typical marketing messages. Value that small business owners are neglecting to include and therefore failing to differentiate themselves.

When it comes to spending money, if you don't stand out, if you don't give the prospect a real reason to buy, they won't. Despite the money Americans are willing to spend, you, as the small business owner, must draw them in and convince them that your business is the place to spend it.

The following three sections provide you with three conversion techniques that do precisely that.

Add Value & Add Revenue

I want you to keep one thing in mind. **Content rich materials.** Obviously not all of your follow-up material is going to be centered in valuable information. Sometimes you just need to inform your prospects you have a sale coming up or that the offer you presented before is going to expire. However, a good portion of your follow-up materials should be valuable to your customers.

Let me clarify what I mean by valuable. Value does not include discounting your prices or offering free bonuses. Those tactics certainly work. But any company can do that. The value I am

talking about is any knowledge you impart to your prospect that they will appreciate.

Let me give you a few examples. If you run a sporting goods store, you might choose to send an email letting your customers know the dates for the upcoming X-games. You're following up with your prospect. But in this case, there is no sale. (At least not an apparent one. You are always selling.)

What if you are a mortgage company? Rather than start tooting the "we have the lowest rates" horn, perhaps you could send a report that explains the differences between adjustable and fixed rates. Think of all the individuals who have recently lost their homes because they got loans they were unable to pay. What if you were the one company that took the time to educate your prospects? It would certainly set you apart.

Quick word of warning: valuable follow-up messages should be interesting or informative. Determine beforehand what information your prospects could benefit from and send that.

Adding value assists you in creating more customers in three ways:

1) You're keeping your name in front of the prospect. Converting your funnel can only be done if you are following up. (Didn't I tell you the building blocks and "secret" needed to be implemented together?)

2) Your prospect will think of your consideration the next time they buy products like yours and a sense of obligation will encourage them to visit your store.

3) You're building trust. The strong relationship you build with your prospects will carry on once they are your customers.

The value technique allows you to give your prospect something without adding the fear of the "hard sell." Get them used to reading your emails or direct mail pieces without attaching it to the reflexive "No!" Because in this case, there is nothing to say no to. Let them grow comfortable with the information you're "handing out," and then drive them to the sell later.

Content Rich Materials Add Value AND Add Revenue

FREE REPORT! 7 Secrets to Effective Follow-up Marketing | page 1

7 Secrets to Effective Follow-up Marketing

1. Send The Right Message To The Right Market... At The Right Time
2. Overcome The Chief Problem And The Chief Objection
3. Know This - That's The Thing
4. Transform Your Sales Lead Into A Customer
5. Maintain A Living, Customer Database
6. Use Education, Variety In Your Follow-up
7. Flood your current customers with genuineness, and marketing!

Apply these seven secrets and you will get a number of leads from that's an outrageous amount for the effort you don't need a army or a team of slick salesmen.

Through effective, multi-channel marketing you can quickly and profitably increase your sales and your profit margins. You'll be selling your products from a position of respect.

So before you start actually going into sales, make sure you are actually getting a lead.

What is your buying power?

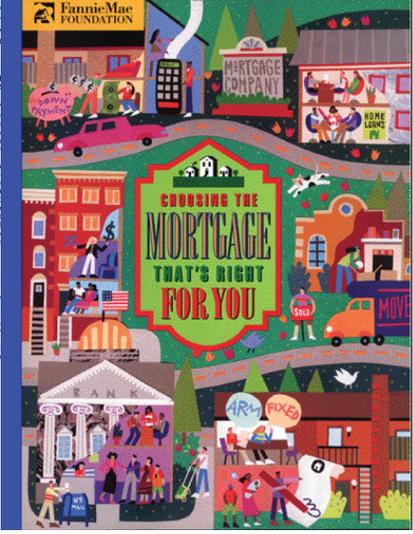
O ne easy way to prequalify a buyer is to ask: "What is your buying power?" At the prequalification stage, the lender is not only "ballparking" the lender to approve you, but also to see if you are the best fit for you. This is why you may have been for a down payment also, but that's not the case. You may have a household income made for taxes, etc. with a combined net worth of up to \$1 million.

Like other rules of thumb, this one can be off. But, to account for many other factors, whether you'll feel comfortable with it or not.

So before you start actually going into sales, make sure you are actually getting a lead.

How Can I...

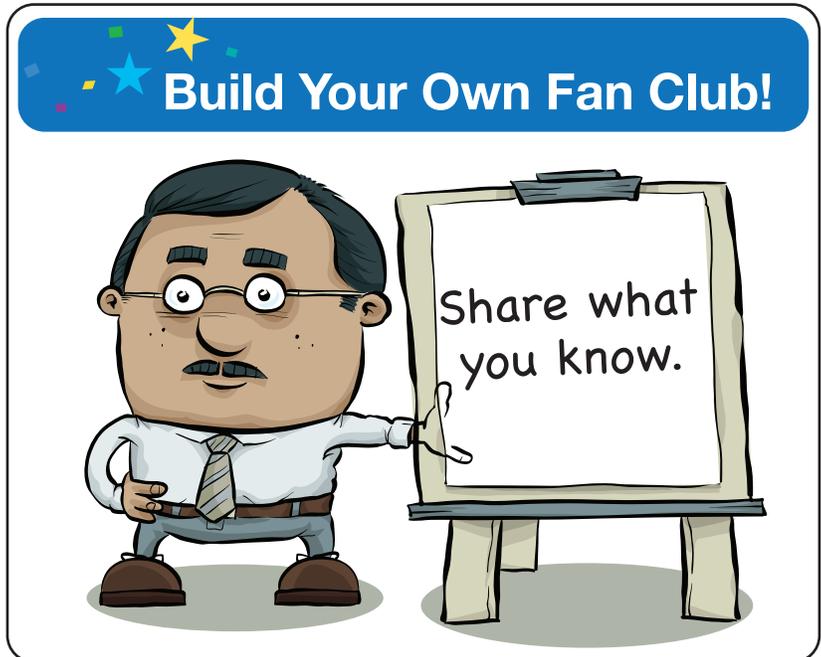
Because each borrower is different, it's not possible to quantify a score. No one can tell you if a delinquent account can do to improve your credit score. Making Timely Payments is a key factor in...



Your first step is simply to become the welcomed guest. Think of that guy you invite to all your parties because he always has such interesting stories to share. This could be you--the person everyone wants to be around. Because you have so much to offer.

Creating valuable content doesn't have to be complicated either. You know more about your product than anybody else. Share what you know. Throw in those fun facts, and interesting stories, and you'll quickly build a fan club. There is a world of possibilities when it comes to sending valuable follow-up marketing materials. **Such as:**

- **Free Reports**
- **Free Whitepapers**
- **Downloads**
- **Emails with tips, tricks, and stories**
- **Links to news articles**
- **Newsletters**
- **And just about anything else!**



With valuable content, you have your foot in the door. You're coming in as the welcomed guest, rather than the unwanted pest. Now, let's do what you're really there to do...**build the relationship and make the sale!**

Get Personal or Why People Love Snakes

Another tactic for selling to your customers is to offer more of yourself. If you want phenomenal results you need to give your prospects what they want. And what they want is you. They want your personality. They want you to be real with them. They want you to be straight up, helpful, and sincere. They don't want the slick salesperson. They want your spin, your angle, your advice, your perspective. What they don't want is corporate dribble or pushy salesmen.

It's kind of funny. All those clichés about being yourself and finding your groove and letting your light shine are all at the heart of "Convert your Funnel."

Think of the way Steve Erwin managed to get thousands, even millions of people to love snakes. I'm not saying that watching his nature show made me want to jump out and hold one. All I am saying is that by sharing his love of snakes and other reptiles with the world and by being himself, the Crocodile Hunter in effect made reptiles appealing. Or at least appealing to watch. If you can put that much of yourself into your products and sales, you will draw all kinds of interest.

Reveal Your Personality

- Use conversational language.
- Laugh at yourself and your mistakes.
- Don't compartmentalize your business and personal lives--discuss the "stuff" of your personal life with your prospects and customers.
- Talk about what you like, what interests you, what annoys you.
- View prospects and customers as friends.



Show, Don't Tell

I've saved the best conversion technique to the end, because I am so excited to talk about it. At the risk of overloading you with suggestions, the one final method for converting your prospects and moving them through the sale is: **Show, Don't Tell.** Wouldn't it be nice if you had the time to approach each one of your prospects in person? Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could sit in front of your prospects and share your product with them?

Imagine being able to sell face-to-face without having to work yourself half to death. With webinars and demos, your prospects can be part of your direct sales pitch from the comfort and privacy of their own home or office. With webinars and online demos, they're just a few mouse clicks away from lis-

tening to all the information you're "willing" to impart.

Our most successful method for getting people to purchase Infusionsoft is by "showing" them what Infusionsoft can do. When we send campaigns, our goal is to get the prospect to an online demo first. After that, selling becomes a whole lot easier.

You Got the Prospect to Buy-Now What?

To turn your prospect into a customer, keep it simple, keep it short, and keep it interesting. Make your message the one that stands out and answers the question: **why you?** If you can follow these techniques, you will have more customers than you know what to do with. And, with that many more customers, how much money will you be pulling in?

I'm sure you're tallying the extra cash in your head right now. But I'm not finished. I'm not even close to being finished. You can still do more. There are still additional ways to pull in more income.

In the next chapter, I am going to teach you how you can win lifelong customers--and further increase your revenue.

An online demo of Infusionsoft is demonstrated through the use of a live website and the software.



Chapter 6- Win Lifelong Customers

Having a person buy from you once does not necessarily make them your customer. I'm sure you're thinking, "What does it make them?" Well, quite simply, it makes them a person who bought from you once. A person that buys from you on a regular basis--that's a customer. The next building block is all about customers and how to turn the people that bought from you once into lifelong customers.

Winning lifelong customers requires the ability to not only get a prospect to buy again and again, but to do so happily.

This chapter is about giving customers the experience they deserve and creating a relationship of loyalty and trust between the small business owner and the customer...through consistent follow-up.

Is it Too Hard to Build Customer Loyalty?

"Customer loyalty is dead." I've heard this statement repeated several times by opponents of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, and business owners that don't truly understand how to build customer loyalty.

And, it's no wonder they feel that way. Think about the number of stores you've personally visited, never to return to again. If a person does not return to a store or business, there is usually a good reason for it. They might include:



- 1) Having a bad experience
- 2) Not feeling special
- 3) Not being encouraged to return

BAD EXPERIENCES

Everybody has a bad experience they like to share. And, more often than not, when I hear these stories my heart goes out to the business owner rather than the customer. It seems as if the country is obsessed with attacking supervisors and business owners for any reason. The service is too slow, the food is cold, the employees didn't talk kindly, I had to wait, and so on and so forth. Meanwhile, the business owner is running around trying to make everybody happy.

Without knowing the secrets to winning lifelong customers, mistakes will inevitably be made. But if you know the secrets, even mistakes can turn out in your favor.

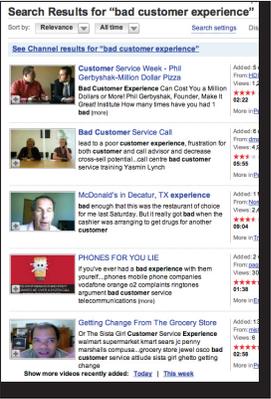
THEY DON'T FEEL SPECIAL

There is a hobby shop in Mesa, Arizona notorious for its arrogance. When I say arrogance, I mean that the owner and employees have such an elevated opinion of themselves (and their expertise in model cars and airplanes) that customers literally feel an energy drain when they step foot inside the hobby shop doors.



Broadcast Yourself™

There are 2,400 listings on You-Tube that relate to customer service. How many of them do you think are positive experiences?



Such actions may be the very reason a buyer never returns. You see, on top of everything else the small business owner must do, they must also make the buyer feel special. This all relates back to the idea of building the relationship with your customer.

No one wants to be just another customer. We want to be the “special” customer. We want to feel that our decision to buy meant more to the business owner than just another sale. But

sometimes businesses get caught up in speedy transactions, and swift customer turnarounds, and forget to consider their most valuable asset...the customers. But the result is your customer will walk out the door and never come back.

Make your customer feel special.

NO ENCOURAGEMENT TO RETURN

How many people view “the sale” as the end-all moment to customer interaction? “The customer purchased, my job is done.” This is a mentality that absolutely terrifies me because it means the small business owner has given up on future “mastering moments.” Nevertheless, it’s common among small businesses. The customer gets their product, packs it up, and as they’re heading out the door, the employee or owner shouts, “Thank you. Come again.”

THANK YOU
Come Again!

And that’s supposed to entice the customer to return? More than likely they’re thinking, “Mmm-hmm. Whatever.” They look at the “come again” comment as a knee-jerk reaction, not a sincere request for repeat business.

I feel absolutely exhausted as I’m talking about this. How difficult was it to get the person through the door, on the phone, or online buying your product or service? And now you’re just going to let them go? What about all the work you did to make them buy from you in the first place? What about all the money you spent? Learn the techniques for winning lifelong customers.

Keep a Database

If you want your customers to know you truly care and appreciate them, you have to keep a customer database. Maybe you can’t be the business owner that remembers everyone’s name, but who needs to know that?

Picture this: a customer calls you up and says, “Hi, I recently bought product X. I really like it. I was wondering if you have any more.”

This is wonderful! Of her own choice the buyer has returned to you. Now it’s time to capitalize on the situation. You ask for the customer’s name and plug it into your database. Luckily, not only does your customer’s name show up, but you know the day she last came in, exactly what prod-

uct she bought, and you've made a note that she had three kids in tow when she came in before.

Rather than answering your customer with a dull, "Yeah. We have more," you say:

"You know, Nancy, I remember when you were in here last. You had your kids with you. How are they doing?"

A stunned Nancy says, "They're doing well. Thank you." She's too stunned to say anything more, so you say, "We certainly have product X in stock. Will you be in to pick that up today? I know it's tough to get around with three small children."

You just gained a loyal customer. Of course, the best part of doing business with Nancy was being able to wow her. You remembered who she was (or at least she thinks you did). All of a sudden, instead of feeling like just another woman dragging three kids around, she's the woman with three kids that you remembered. You've just offered her special treatment. You rolled out the red carpet. And the added bonus is the increase in sales. Truth is: you'll REALLY remember her next time.

“ If you work just for money, you'll never make it, but if you love what you're doing and always put the customer first, success will be yours.”

- Ray Kroc
McDonald's Founder

3 Reasons Your Customer Database is Going to Improve Your Follow-up

- You know what they want
- You know their price range
- They know you

Target Your Follow-up Campaigns

Databases are great because of the valuable information they hold. And, with that kind of information, the marketing campaign you'll be sending out to your customers is going to be magical.

Your customer follow-up should constantly be giving your customers a reason to return. The same materials you sent to convert them, are going to keep them coming back. But now you're much more

likely to get them to work with you again. First, they've purchased a product from you, so you know what items they like. Second, you know the price range they choose to stay in and you won't be pushing a mother on a tight budget to buy an elaborate spa package. (Even if she could probably use one.) Third, they bought from you once. And, assuming there were no disasters, you've gained more of their trust.

Deliver as Promised

When would you go to Kentucky Fried Chicken? When you felt like eating some chicken, right?

Customers are coming to you because they need or want the product or service you offer. That places a heavy responsibility on your shoulders. Why? Because you need to deliver as promised. If you claim to be a fast food restaurant, then you better get that food out fast. If you're a bookstore, you better offer a wide variety of books.

As humans, we want things to be predictable. Even someone who likes surprises doesn't like surprises where their money is concerned. (Not unless they're getting more of it.) It is when you can offer a valuable, predictable service that you will have customers happily returning to do business with you.

When I have a craving for great Mexican food, I go to Gecko Grill. If my car is dirty, I swing by Full Circle Auto Wash. But why do I head to those places? Because I know I will get what I am paying for...every single time. And, when I don't, I switch!

It's the Simple Things that Make a Difference

Lifelong customers come from following a few basic ideas: keep a database, make your customer feel special, understand the value of your customers, and deliver your product or service as promised. By following these simple tips, you'll minimize customer dissatisfaction and build wealth through a large customer loyalty base.

But don't make it complicated. And don't be extravagant. Simple solutions are best.

An employee of mine went to the Apple store to find a power cord for his computer. He was informed by the salesperson that his computer was an older model and cables for such computers were no longer manufactured. Rather than miss an opportunity, the saleswoman GAVE my employee an old cord that the store had been using for demos and no longer had a use for. You can bet that my employee will remain loyal to Apple for a long time to come.

You've got to give yourself the edge. Customer loyalty is not dead. People still feel a sense of obligation. You have the ability to create that loyalty through the relationship you build with your customer. On the other hand, if you're not putting some real effort into customer loyalty, eventually, your customer will head somewhere else.

Let me relate one more story. A friend of mine was torn when her brother-in-law became an insurance salesman. This friend had used the same insurance salesman for years, but felt her loyalty now lay with her family. It was after realizing that her original salesman had **never made an effort** to retain her as a customer that she easily cancelled her policy and went with her family obligations.

The world is full of better offers. You're never going to be able to give your customers the best deal. (Most of the time it's because you aren't even aware of what the best deal is.) But, by treating your customers the way they deserve, you will be creating customers for life. And a lifelong customer adds all kinds of revenue to your bottom line.

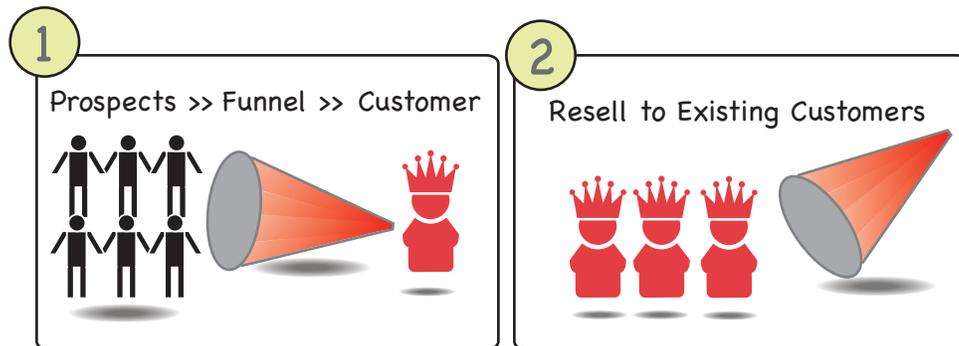
There is one more aspect of creating lifelong customers. This might sound contradictory, but you need to capitalize on their patronage...but that's for the next chapter to address.



Chapter 7- Flip Your Funnel

To explain what I mean by “Flip Your Funnel” I need to review the funnel diagram. We’ve worked our way down the funnel from prospect to that magical moment when the prospect becomes a buyer. When your customer reaches that point, you give them a great buying experience, follow-up and otherwise build that lifelong relationship with them. “Flip Your Funnel” refers to your ability to upsell, cross sell, and otherwise sell to your customers so that you are getting the most value from and giving value to each of your customers in return.

Look at the two funnel diagrams below. In the first, we guide our prospects through the funnel to the selling point. It is at this point that your customer database begins to settle on the bottom. In the second diagram, the small business owner flips the funnel upside down and begins reselling to existing customers. It doesn’t stop after that initial sale!! There is still money to be made, and moments to master.



Think of it this way...any relationship worth having is worth continually working on.

The sales process requires the continuous courting of your customer.

Flipping your funnel is going to create the “super-customer.” One who spends significant amounts of money in your business, loves you, and brings in dozens of referrals.

And, once again, customer follow-up (or mastering your moments) is a key principle for winning life-long customers AND flipping the funnel. However, with “Win Lifelong Customers” we are more interested in building the customer database and providing that predictable experience. When we “Flip the Funnel,” we’re focusing on what we can do with the database to make more money, and convince our customers to talk about us.

You’re in Business to Make Money--So Make it!

Who is the easiest person in the world to sell to? That’s an easy one, right? It’s a happy customer. For one thing, they already know and trust you. Secondly, they know what they can expect from your company. And third, they obviously have a need or a want for your product. Selling to this customer is a piece of cake. So why don’t more small business owners take advantage of it?

Complacency is the worst habit of small business

owners. The customer buys. The business owner is pleased with the sale. End of story. Why is it always the end of the story? For me, this is akin to small business owners sitting in front of a gold mine and not making the extra effort to actually walk inside.

Let's do another quick calculation. What if, instead of being satisfied with a customer's purchase, you made the effort to up-sell to every customer who bought from you? For the sake of simplicity, I'm going to make up some numbers.

Your product costs \$100. The upgraded version of your product is just \$10 more. Of 100 customers, 10% will upgrade their product. Let's run the numbers.



10% of 100 customers =
10 Customers that upgrade.

10 Customers x \$10 = \$100

You could have made an extra \$100 if you had taken the time to ask for it. Now what if that product had been worth thousands of dollars, and the upgrade a couple hundred? Can you see the amount of money that was lost because the small business owner stopped selling once his customer said "Okay?"

Guess what? Your customer may actually want more. They might be thinking, "You provide me with an incredible buying experience, ask me for it, and I'll give you more money." But most small business owners say,

"Thank you," and leave it at that. Well, at least they're being polite.

Cross Selling Simplicity

Chances are good that you have more than one product or service. Those that are wise, take the time to promote their other products. In "Win Lifelong Customers" we talked about sending out targeted marketing campaigns. What if in that campaign you said something along these lines:

Dear Customer,
Recently you purchased product X. Product X is a phenomenal product. But you know, it's not the only thing that can fill your needs and wants. I think product Y is a good match for you, also.

If you've ever been a Netflix customer, you've seen this idea in action. When browsing through the selection of movies, there is a sidebar that says, "Customers who choose this movie also enjoyed..." Bam! Suddenly there are a dozen more movies for the customer to consider. The consumer adds one or two movies to their wish list until, in an effort to get to them all, they choose to have three movies sent at one time instead of two.

This same technique is used on Amazon, Columbia House, and a million other places. But it's not just online where this technique is successfully employed. Cross selling can be done by anyone in any situation.

By keeping a customer database, as discussed in previous chapters, you will be able to simply, and effectively cross sell to your customers. Because you know what they'll buy. You know what interests them, and you know what they won't be able to resist. Dangle M&M's in the face of a chocolate lover, and they'll respond. Offer them carrots, and they may not even turn their heads. But they will thank you profusely for giving them the chance to eat M&M's.

Are you the type of company that thanks customers for their purchase, crosses your fingers, and hope they'll come back again? Small businesses do not have the luxury of hoping. If you've built a relationship with a customer, they'll want to buy from you again. All you need to do is give them a push in the right direction.

The Subliminal Logic of the Up-Sell

It's impossible to go to a fast food restaurant without having someone ask you if you would like to "Supersize That." Once that happens, it's like an invisible force is speaking to the irrational side of our brains. We have a brief moment of logic as we figure out--59 cents more, for double the food, is a great value. But that is the full extent of our logical power. Afterwards, irrationality steps in and rather than consider if we can even eat double the food, we pat ourselves on the back for being a smart consumer.

This is the very purpose behind coupon distribution. If you are standing in front of the canned beans in a grocery store, and there is a coupon attached to each can, how many cans of beans are you going to buy? You only needed one. But there's that consumer logic at work again. "30 cents off is a great bargain! I'm buying five cans!" And you go home with more beans than you could possibly need, but a receipt that shows your "savings." What a deal!



Too many times small business owners tell me they don't up-sell because they don't want to anger their customers. I cringe when I hear that. You always have to put yourself in the consumer's shoes. If, after buying a product, someone suggests you upgrade, do you get angry? No. Now, if you pester the person until they run away from you screaming, then you have a problem. But if you ask and cater to that "bargain" mentality, they'll either tell you no or they'll upgrade and thank you for such a wonderful deal.

Think of how many places you see the up-sell attempt. Fast food restaurants want you to super-size. Retailers want you to purchase extended warranty protection. Car rental companies give you your choice of a dozen upgraded insurance options. And no one gets mad.

The Rewards of Recurring Revenue

Here's another idea for you to consider. If you truly want a customer for life, you need to "sign them up" for life. Create a monthly subscription, membership, club, or any number of other possible revenue sources. Once you have a "monthly product"...sell your customers on the idea.

If you've successfully converted your customers into raving fans, they'll jump at the chance to

be one of your exclusive customers. They'll gladly agree to pay for future products or services. Because they know you'll deliver! And you'll get a regular payment. So, why not do the job of selling once, and reap the benefits of consistent, repeated income?

With recurring revenue opportunities--you are on the right side of human behavior. After all, no matter how much your customers love you, no one wants to be sold to. And, by providing a recurring revenue possibility, the selling is done. They said yes once, but that "yes" is going to pay you over and over again. And, you don't have to be constantly asking for another sale.

At this point, you're probably thinking, "Well that's a great plan for magazines and utility companies. But, I own a Laundromat. How can I generate recurring revenue?"

There is always a way to set up a routine service or product. If you're a Laundromat, begin offering weekly, or biweekly pick-up services (that your customers pay for-even on weeks they have nothing to give you.)

Sell your newsletter. Start a "members-only" blog or forum. Put together a value-embedded DVD or CD each month. (You've heard of the "Fruit of the Month" club, right?) Just don't miss your chance to build your bank account on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis.

WOW! Them with Relationship Selling

Adding an instantaneous up-sell is an easy process. The cross sell is as simple as knowing what your customers want. And recurring revenue continues to provide you with more income without having to continuously sell and resell. But there is one more aspect of "Flip Your Funnel" that we must consider to maximize the value of this building block.

You must always be giving your customer a reason WHY they should be buying from you. And why they need to keep buying from you. This is where you employ the targeted, marketing campaigns again.

Robert Allen, famed real estate investor said, "No matter what your product is, you are ultimately in the education business. Your customers need to be constantly educated about the many advantages of doing business with you, trained to use your products more effectively, and taught how to make never ending improvements in their lives."

Let's wrap it up!

Selling should continue indefinitely. View every selling situation with a goal to maximize the results. Zig Ziglar said, "Timid salespeople have skinny children." Be bold. The worst outcome is your customers saying no.

When you flip your funnel, you're flipping the cash machine. You have an entire funnel of people that are waiting for you to make them a cherished customer so they can give you their hard earned money.

And I am going to show you more ways to get that money in the next chapter!



Chapter 8- Sell Stuff Online

I could go into some lengthy explanation about what I mean with "Sell Stuff Online" but the truth of the matter is, it's as simple as it sounds. Doesn't it make sense that if the goal of the building blocks is to double your sales then I would encourage you to find as many ways as possible to make those sales? Of course it does.

I am going to get into a few details, though. Selling stuff online can be as easy or complex as you want to make it. For the sake of doubling your sales, we're going to focus on the complex methods. However...and this is really important...complex does not mean confusing or difficult. It simply means that there are several aspects of online sales, and I want you to incorporate as many of them as you can.

Everybody's Buying! But Nobody's Selling

Look, if you are in the business to make money, you need to make it. Online sales are a great source of capital. There is money sitting out there, waiting to be made...on the Internet.

In 2006 alone, over \$100 billion worth of e-commerce sales took place. That is an outrageous amount of money. But maybe it doesn't sound so outrageous once you discover that over 50 million consumers shop online. That's 50 million people waiting for the opportunity to spend their money through the Internet. Consider how much range that gives you.

Since 2006 online shopping has increased by 50 %!



Some studies show that online shopping has increased by as much as 50% over the last year. The growth is phenomenal, and the reach of customers is absolutely amazing. Every day there are millions of consumers on the Internet ready to make a purchase if they find something worthwhile. So, what is the small business owner doing? Sitting on their mainstream sales tactics apparently.

Despite the possibilities for online sales, **only 3% of small businesses are currently selling their products and services online.** 3 percent! Where is your competition? What are they doing? If they're selling online, they're laughing at you for not selling online. If they're not, they're providing you with the best opportunity for sales domination that you have ever been handed in your life!

It's a nice thought, isn't it? Nice to think that you might be the only one branching out and capitalizing on the online consumer community. That is why you need to get in and get selling online--right now!

Currently, you are ahead of the competition. The same study that determined only 3% of small businesses sell online, also determined that 42% of small businesses believe e-commerce would have no impact on their business. Advantages don't get any more clear than that. This is one of the few areas you can stop asking, "What is my competition doing?" and start reacting because you KNOW your competitors are not selling online.

Because of the simplicity and convenience of the Internet, the online consumer community is expected to increase--perhaps until everything is done online.



Consumers want convenience. They want speed. That's why they are going to shop online. They want to search for, price out, and compare products through the Internet. Which works very well to your advantage. If there is nothing else for them to compare to, you are the default product. Congratulations to you for learning to use the Internet as a small business tool.

The Phobia

Many of the entrepreneurs I work with have a slight phobia of the computer. Though they can get online to search for what they need, they are at a loss when it comes to manipulating the computer to their own advantage. If I start throwing around words like shopping cart, e-commerce, and online merchant accounts, a few people might even go into convulsions.

Because of fear, or a lack of know-how, many small business owners sit back and use traditional methods of selling. And then you miss out on a wonderful opportunity to master the moment. After all, someone online has decided to buy and you're not standing in front of them.

This is not to say selling online is simple, or that some consumers don't have their own reservations about buying online. It's not and they do. (Did you follow that?) There are legitimate concerns associated with online selling.

SECURE INFORMATION

It's one thing to set up a website. It's quite another to give that website online selling capabilities. And, quite a third to provide the necessary security you need to be able to guarantee your customers information remains safe.

A lot of consumers that don't purchase products on the Internet explain that security issues are one of the factors holding them back. But this is an objection that is easily overcome.

Increased Internet Security

True, no one's personal information is going to be safe 100% of the time. There are just too many predators out there. That being said, many businesses have gone to lengthy efforts to pro-

vide companies with secure selling options. E-commerce companies give vendors a secure solution to online sales.

Consider the fact that Paypal sends \$1,000 through their financial engine every second. It's available in at least 100 countries and can transact 17 different currencies. And that's just Paypal. Companies are not going to offer such elaborate online financial solutions without knowing that they are well protected.

Dozens of e-commerce sites are available to assist small business owners with the successful transactions of online sales. Each of these sites acts as a host for your webpage. This is important because the host system provides multiple security measures so that your customer's online sale is safe, easy, and (what they want the most) convenient.

Get a Simple System

Software management tools have made online sales processes a snap. No longer do business owners have to slave away on the initial creation of e-commerce sites. Furthermore, systems can be consolidated so that they are able to track sales, organize them, and even activate fulfillment requests.

ebay® Odd things sold!

- Man's forehead for advertising space (January 2005) - \$37,375
- "Real" civil war dirt sold for \$2.50
- A Texas snowball sold for \$92*
- Oldest known pair of Levi's (May 2001) - \$46,432

*First time snow had fallen in Texas in 109 years.

During 2007, Amazon turned over \$7 billion in sales!

Chris's Amazon.com™ > Recommended for You

(If you're not Chris, click here.)

SEARCH INSIDE!™

STAYING CONNECTED TO YOUR TEENAGER

amazon.com homepage

You don't have to sit at your computer making sure every single transaction is completed. Let the system do that for you! We live in a world of automation, and if you're not realizing the advantages, you are spending far too much time doing unnecessary, manual work.

Expand Your Reach-Make Big Bucks!

Rather than say once again, "Hey, sell online and you can make a lot of money," I want to quickly recap the stories of a few of the most profitable e-commerce sites ever. The first is Amazon.com.

When Amazon.com was originally founded, online selling was not quite as prevalent as it is now. Founded in 1995 it was one of the first major Internet selling companies. Amazon.com

steadily lost money every year until 2003. Nevertheless, they saw the potential of "Selling Stuff Online." During 2007, Amazon turned over \$7 billion in sales. During their most profitable day (December 10, 2007), Amazon sold 5.4 million items.

But Amazon isn't the only company to find e-commerce success. E-bay also generates astonishing profits with their auction site. iTunes has created a revolution of selling and downloading music from the Internet.

The enthusiasm for e-commerce is not going to slow down. Online sales provide more unique and profitable opportunities for small business owners every day. More people are becoming Internet shoppers. The revenue small businesses can generate from selling online is increasing. So, once again...why aren't small businesses using e-commerce as a tool to grow their businesses?

Sell More By Selling Online

By dismissing the Internet, companies are dismissing millions of dollars of potential profit. Profit that someone else is going to snatch up if they don't.

Billionaire Mark Cuban gave a sage piece of advice for business owners. He said, "Make your product easier to buy than your competition, or you will find your customers buying from them, not you." He may not have been talking about the Internet directly, but this concept is true whether your business is housed in a basic storefront, done from home, or working out of a major retail store outfit.

Internet possibilities are endless and not taking advantage of those possibilities is...quite frankly...foolish.

No matter what reasons a small business has for not wanting to sell online, the bottom line is: if you "Sell Stuff Online," you're going to dramatically increase your profits, and collect more cash.

“Make your product easier to buy than your competition, or you will find your customers buying from them, not you.”

- Billionaire Mark Cuban



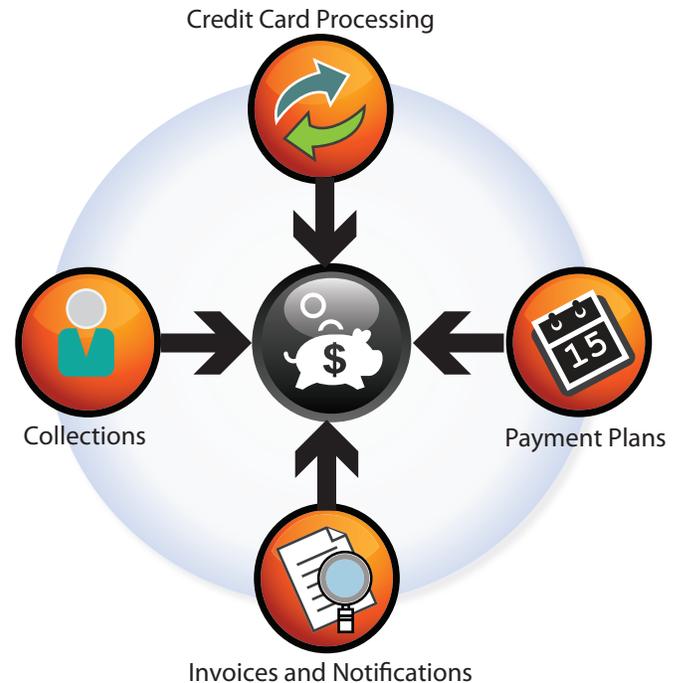
Chapter 9- Collect the Cash

Wouldn't it be nice if every time you sold a product or service, you instantly received the money from that sale? It would be nice if money came in and money went out in a regular, predictable pattern. But that's not how it works. When running a business, the financial overhead alone is enough to make you throw your hands up in the air and quit. But you don't, so that's why our next building block is all about money.

When I say "Collect the Cash," I'm not just referring to the sell. Like everything else in your small business, it's a little more complicated than that. Sure, it still encompasses the ability to collect on sales. But in addition to collecting money, this building block discusses credit card processing capabilities, collections, payment plans, invoices and notifications, and other money matters.

Many marketing experts tend to skip this strategy in their books, or at their conferences. Because everybody understands it is money that makes the business world go round. It all seems self explanatory. Right?

Well, if collecting the cash is such a simple step, why do so many small business owners wind up losing everything they've got and then some?



Collections is a Full Time Job

When was the last time you "loaned" somebody money? Whether it was last week or last year, have you gotten the money back yet? (If you did, pretend you didn't so that you don't ruin my object lesson.) So you haven't gotten the money back? I'm not surprised. You see, it's not human nature to part with money...even when it's not yours to begin with.

If you've ever read anything by Robert Kiosawki (Rich Dad, Poor Dad), you will quickly be cured of any urge to lend people money. And the same reason you shouldn't lend money is the same reason small business owners struggle with their finances...because few consumers have any sense of financial responsibility. Most people would like to have everything, NOW, without working or paying for it. They're getting more and more in debt, and less and less able to pay their bills.

And when it's your small business that winds up unpaid, you're forced to track down your customers in an attempt to get your money. Or at least part of it. In the meantime, hundreds of dollars are being bypassed, because you have to stop growing your business to collect on late payments or bad checks. You start with phone calls, then letters, then, if you still want the

Consumers are in a juggling act!



money, you are forced to contact a collections agency (and in doing so, drum up additional fees).

Unpaid finances can take months to collect on. Months when you are struggling to keep your head above water. Months when you have a million other things you should be managing. Small business owners can get so caught up in being paid that they aren't making any money at all.

When The Cash Isn't Coming In...

Often, the small business owner compensates the lack of funds by using their own bank account to pay the additional (and completely unanticipated) expenses. When that runs out, you, like the consumer who doesn't pay, start wondering how long it's going to be before the companies you've purchased from come after you.

Bonnie Thayer, president and CEO of the National Association for the Self Employed, said, "We're becoming

a nation of late payers as heavy debts force businesses to pay some bills one month while others are held over to the next."

Quite simply, the major reason for business failure is bankruptcy. Or, if it doesn't get that far, small business owners wind up with unpaid financial obligations they wonder how they're going to repay. Without enough capital, a company cannot make their product. If they can't make their product, they can't sell. If they can't sell, they're not making any money. End of a sad story.

The Overhead Management Nightmare

Now, not all financial problems are because the consumer doesn't pay. The money side of business can be a hairy task to undertake. If you only have one or two customers, managing your finances will be easy. It's when you start tackling hundreds of accounts that money management becomes overwhelming.

In addition to budgeting, taxes, and creating invoices, small business owners have to keep accurate records of incoming funds and their own expenses. And, with so much accounting work to do already, who wants to mess around with payment plans, credit card transactions, and other payment methods? Even if it means missing out on opportunities to make more money.

And let me throw one more pain in there. (Then I promise I'll stop.) What happens when someone wants a refund? Does your financial system come tumbling down?

“We're becoming a nation of late payers as heavy debts force businesses to pay some bills one month while others are held over to the next.”

- Bonnie Thayer

Most small business owners use QuickBooks or some other “accounting” software to manage their finances. Unfortunately, the majority of these programs require small business owners to dedicate unavailable hours to manually input and calculate transactions. Eventually, small business are going to make mistakes.

Ironically, the more you sell, the more financial management you’re dealing with, and the less time you have. So, I’m going to scream this as loud as I can until it reaches the ears of every small business owner:

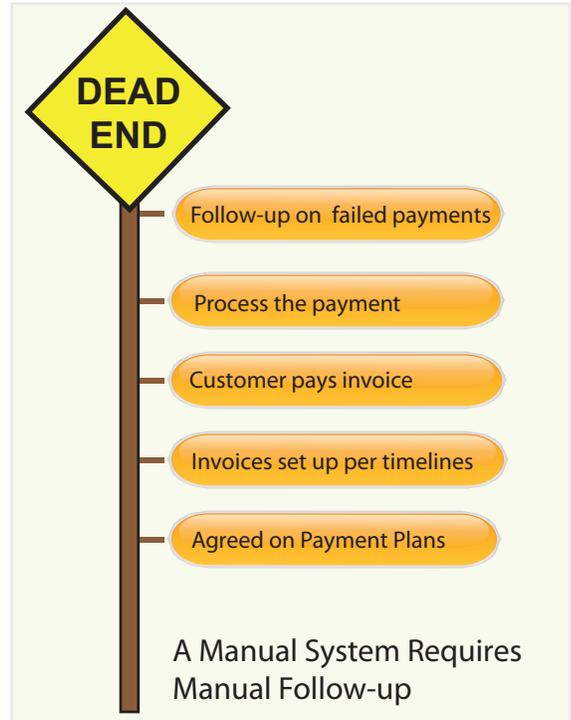
Manual Systems Don’t Work! You must get a better system in place!

Put Your Finances on Autopilot

Small businesses must put manageable, workable systems in place. I want you to fully embrace the benefits of technology. Technology can turn the financial nightmare into simple, predictable processes...that will work every time!

There are a few financial rules that small businesses, serious about growth, need to follow.

- 1. Payment expectations should be consistent and clear to customers**
- 2. When possible have a no payment-no product policy**
- 3. Have a systemized collections process**



Automate the Collections Process

When you use technology to track payments, or missed payments, the effort to collect on past due payments is removed from your shoulders. Let your system work for you, sending out late notices, second notices, and final notices automatically. A good system can even send automated notices to a collections agency should you choose to use one.

*Note: When you also incorporate a method for credit card processing, the collections issue will be minimized. Credit cards guarantee an instant payment. You don’t have to worry that you’ve received a worthless check, or that you’ll never be paid.

A frustrated woman called our office a couple of weeks ago. She taught music lessons for a living. After receiving piles of bounced checks, she decided to implement Infusionsoft. Now, all of her clients have their credit card information on file with her. The credit cards are automatically scheduled to be charged once a month, and the small business owner always gets her money.

One more word of advice, if you are using credit cards for recurring payment needs, be sure your system can notify you of failed card charges.

Automate Your Financial Tasks

Okay, here is another reason I love technology! I see so many people trying to create their own invoices and send them out. Each time that happens, I shake my head at the tediousness of it all. Some people refuse to use new technology. However, those small business owners that understand how liberating software automation can be are the ones who will significantly increase their revenue.

With the right type of system, small business owners can not only create invoices, they can track payment histories and manage any number of payment plans. Small business owners can be alerted of upcoming or past due payments.

Furthermore, your system should be able to instantly produce reports for you. Learn which products are selling best. Discover what your sales totals have been for a particular month. In other words, the system can do it all for you, whether you're an accounting genius or not.

Get Paid and Get Growing

Your budget should not be dependent on whether or not people pay, but how many products you sell or how many customers use your services. It shouldn't be a competition of who can hold out longer, but who can fill the needs of their customers.

The proficiency of technological systems has eased financial burdens from the shoulders of small business owners. Too many small business owners want to fight against the system with manual efforts, when the solution is just a computer system away.

If you're going to double your sales, you need the money to run and grow your company.





Chapter 10- Grow Through Partners

One of the great traits of entrepreneurs is that they feel like they can do it all. Obviously you have to have some degree of that feeling, otherwise no one would take on the challenge of having their own business. So, although it's admirable to want to work and (in the case of most small business owners) devote your life to your business, sometimes you need a little extra help.

Let's face it. You are just one person. And, no matter how great you are, there are not enough hours in the day to get through everything you need to accomplish. Nevertheless, that mentality doesn't stop many people from trying. Rather than hire more employees or find alternative means of growing their business, small business owners allow their companies to hit a peak and maintain that peak forever.

This chapter encompasses the use of partners to help grow your business. When I say "Grow Through Partners" I am talking about giving your business additional reach. You don't want to have partners just for the sake of having partners. The purpose needs to be clear. They need to be individuals that will significantly add to the success your small business is already experiencing.

What Do They Add?

You can't be the perfect entrepreneur. You can try, and maybe get close, but at some point in time everybody needs additional skills, markets, and time they don't possess.

One of my favorite learning moments was when someone taught me about synergy. The example they used was two horses pulling a cart. Each horse can pull approximately 500 lbs (I'm making that up, because I don't remember the actual numbers). A basic understanding of math would logically determine that strapping the two horses together, they could pull 1,000 lbs. In reality, two horses working together can pull three times the amount they could on their own-- not double.

These are the same advantages partnerships provide. Partners are skilled individuals using their time and skills to not only assist you, but help you do more than either of you can do on your own. The benefits become absolutely magical.

The Fight For Referrals

The fastest and easiest way to grow your business is from your customers spreading the word about you.





MOST REFERRAL PROGRAMS DON'T WORK!

However, standard referral programs just don't work. You see, customers just aren't thinking about you. Most people are egocentric and are usually thinking about themselves and their families. This is not a bad thing. If we didn't care for our own needs, we'd all be in a constant daze. But we are wrapped up in our own lives, and it doesn't occur to most folks that the small business owner, who dedicated so much time to helping them, would really like a referral.

Furthermore, the concerted efforts to create a referral program are often more of a headache than they are worth. I have seen several "referral programs" in action that really have no hope of succeeding. In fact, most don't. So, rather than create programs, many people rely on the good old request. "Please, send me referrals." But, unless you are asking on a regular basis, your customer's going to forget again.

No Growth

I want to move away from the referral program issue and discuss the lack of growth that companies without partners tend to experience. Once you have reached out to your entire customer base and all your leads, where do you go from there? In the networking game, you're stuck.

So your next option is to rely heavily on your marketing capabilities. Marketing is an unbelievably powerful tool--if you've adopted the other building blocks. Nevertheless, this book is designed to help you double, if not triple your sales, so we need to squeeze as much value out of every business venture that we can. Therefore, small businesses need to extend their reach as quickly, easily, and inexpensively as possible.

Another reason growing on your own is difficult, is the time it takes. As much as you might like to, you don't have the luxury of simply promoting your product and watching the cash come rolling in. You've got other things to manage... like your company.

How Do You Manage Them All?

Alright. So you're convinced that you need partners and affiliates. But managing those relationships can be daunting on its own. The last chapter reviewed the pains of financial overhead. Now we are going to address the complexity of trying to manage affiliates, vendors, and partners.

3 Challenges of Managing Referrals:

How are payment agreements managed?

How do you track affiliate payment?

What if the affiliate doesn't do anything?

First, how is payment determined? The value of each of your affiliates or partners is going to vary. Partnering with a slightly larger vendor down the street is beneficial. However, that partnership is not as likely to bring in the large quantity of buyers that a guru in your industry can produce. That being the case, the guru deserves more from you because they are offering you significantly more business.



**Increase
Your Business
with an
Affiliate
Referral
System...**

Secondly, how do you know if the affiliate is truly increasing your business? At Infusionsoft, we grapple with this issue on occasion. Someone partners with us, anticipating the affiliate check they will be receiving for their referrals. However, several months may pass by where their “partnership” appears to have failed. If I have offered them a free copy of the software, expecting them to spread the word, their lack of production is actually hurting my business. But, if you have no way of tracking that information, it might be some time before you are made any wiser.

Finally, how do you track the payment of your affiliates? As I mentioned a time or two before, manual systems don’t work! Faulty financial management can cause unpleasant situations to arise. The partnerships you build can be easily destroyed if you are unprepared for the management of such partnerships.

Affiliates Provide the Referrals

All day long, I listen to small business owners complain about apathetic employees. Though the employees do their job as far as their job description is concerned, they don’t usually take the initiative or go the extra mile.

Employees will never care about your business like you do.

When someone becomes an affiliate, suddenly there is an interest by both parties to ensure the small business succeeds. It becomes a mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship. The affiliates send in the referrals, in return they are paid for their efforts. Since they profit when you profit, you can bet that they are going to be doing everything in their power to help you out.

Extended Reach

I’ve tried to give you many ways to expand your reach, supercharging your website, selling stuff online, but now I want to concentrate on how partners can stretch your market just a little bit further.

Consider the value of having another “salesman” reaching out to your customers. At Infusionsoft, we work closely with several marketing and business gurus (like Michael Gerber, Dan Kennedy, and Rich Schefren). When one of these gurus takes a few moments to promote our product, people listen and come running in our direction to see what we have to offer. Time wise, it took perhaps two minutes for the guru to promote our product. But that two minutes just saved

us from having to implement the whole sales process in order to obtain this same customer.

The more affiliates and partners you have, the less time it takes you to reach a larger audience. All in all, it's quite the simplest way to drive qualified leads to your small business so that you have time for more mastery moments.

Technology to the Partnership Rescue

I don't think I can state nearly enough times how much I love technology.

Managing your partnerships does not need to be tricky. Sure, you need a way to track your affiliate referrals, whether or not they've even sent any and then get checks to your affiliates on time. But, as is true with financial overhead, software programs can make affiliate management a snap.

Commissions can be determined on an individual basis. Multi-tiered structures can be set up to manage individual affiliate agreements. Communication lines can be open and freely reviewed by ALL parties. And, best yet, your relationships will be strong and valuable.

Don't Fight It

There are still going to be those that disagree with any sort of partnership. It's their choice, but let me add a few parting thoughts.

Michael Gerber, small business guru, suggested that it is the inability to expand and grow that causes small businesses to fail. When you create lasting partnerships, your business is going to grow automatically, just from the leverage you gave it. If you're happy in a stagnant company, fine. But if you want to grow, if you want to double your sales, one of the surest ways to quickly grow is to bring others in to help you. It's a win-win situation for everybody.

**Get a software system
in place!**

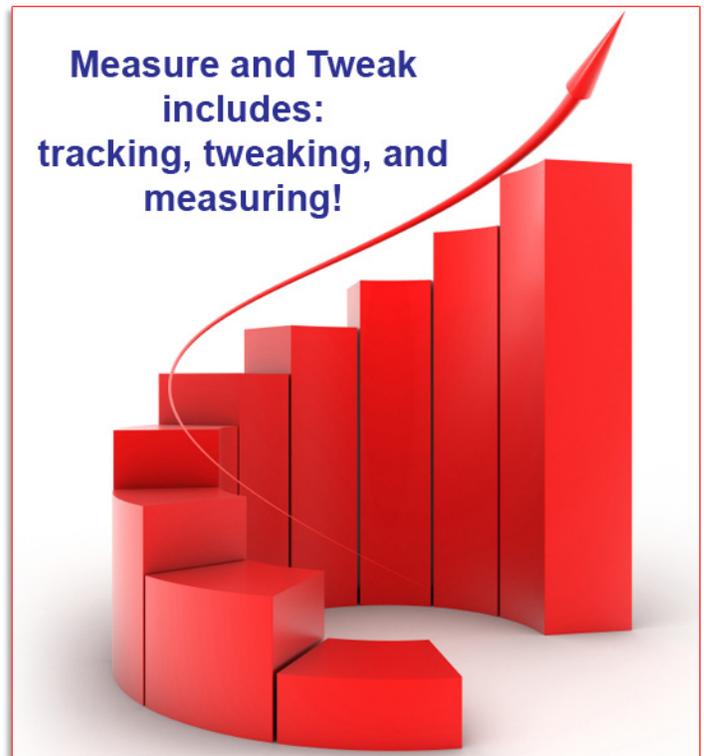


Chapter 11- Measure and Tweak

We've come to the last building block. As I mentioned earlier, none of the building blocks are in order. You may be thinking, Why is "Measure and Tweak" all the way at the end? It wasn't some organizational mismanagement. The blocks are just all reliant upon one another for helping small business owners double their sales and achieve success.

But this block, like all the others is critical to success. It holds as much importance as each of the previous chapters. So, what do I mean by "Measure and Tweak?" Like several of the other titles, it would seem like a self-explanatory phrase. Once again, though, there are a lot of aspects of measuring and tweaking that are included in this description.

The first thing I am referring to is the ability to accurately track marketing efforts. Marketing, when done right, is an exceptionally powerful tool. But, when you start throwing money at marketing efforts, you better be able to view your successes or failures. Otherwise, you're efforts could be useless, ineffective, and in some instances working against you.



Next, this building block is going to cover the "tweaking" aspect of marketing campaigns. Once you are aware of your marketing successes and failures, changing your marketing tactics is practically effortless.

Finally, this building block must include the power of analysis. "Measuring" of course denotes an ability to scale. In this case, I want to focus on producing a marketing ROI. When you are able to pull reports, showing the number of leads and sales from your marketing efforts, you're in a position of strength. You have control over your target audience, and not the other way around.

Double Your Sales with a Doubled Marketing Effort

Marketing is a fast, efficient way of pushing the message from your head and implanting it in the hearts of your consumers. If you choose to be the door-to-door salesman fine. But I do want

you to understand the ease and speed with which the “right” marketing message can reach your potential customers.

When you take the time to measure your marketing efforts and then make the appropriate changes, you are going to see the results in the increased number of sales. Sales are your best indication that your message is being heard loud and clear. But even with a stellar marketing campaign, there is always room for improvement. Measuring your results gives you the chance to keep getting better, and bringing in more and more sales.

A Shot in the Dark

I’m going to be a little audacious and say the vast majority of small business marketing dollars are wasted. Some of the reasons include those in previous chapters: follow-up is inconsistent and business owners don’t know what type of message to send. But most or all of those problems can be solved if the business owner is able to see one little thing...what is working and what is not.



More and more companies are shying away from radio, television, and billboard ads. There are two reasons for this action. One, these advertising methods are not targeted. And two, there is no way to know if it’s working. When a multi-million dollar ad runs on television, millions of viewers are watching it. If sales go up for a company, it would logically be explained by the television ad. However, that isn’t necessarily true. There could be dozens of other factors that affect consumer choices.

Have you ever seen an online survey site? These sites provide some sort of compensation for twenty minutes of your time. During that twenty minutes, you might answer as many as fifty questions, and the vast majority of them are related to marketing efforts. You get questions like, “Of the following popcorn brands, which ones have you heard about?” And, from there, the questions get even more specific.

Why are businesses willing to pay consumers as much as \$5 a piece to get their opinion? Because they need to know what marketing messages have an impact, and which are a waste of their money.

When uncertainty rules, marketing campaigns are nothing more than a shot in the dark.

Simple changes can make a world of difference, but without a way of measuring, businesses don’t know what that change is. At Infusionsoft, we sent out an email blast that produced a poor response. The blast just didn’t work. Without the tools to measure the response, we may have

Infusionsoft Landing Page Examples:
We can measure the success of all our landing pages in our system.

The page on the far left did not have as many opt-ins as the page to the left.

We made a few tweaks and instantly saw results.

Almost 30% opt-in rate for this Free Report.

paid for that email to go out again and again. This was not a cheap email. We paid a significant amount of money to be able to blast a particular website's contacts. Can you imagine the waste of repetitively sending the same "wrong" message?

As it was, we tweaked our email and landing page. Gave it a new message and new graphics. When we sent it out again, the response improved dramatically.

Get a System

With simple, easy to use systems, measuring results is a piece of cake. (Once again, you have to love technology.) When you measure your marketing efforts, you're going to start benefiting from your marketing faster and with greater results than you ever imagined.

When you are measuring your data, you are going to have the edge on marketing techniques. Think for a minute about what instantaneous access to customer responses are going to do for your marketing campaigns. If you were to set up an entire campaign around a particular theme, and the first two steps of the campaign produced no interest in your products or services, would you continue with the other steps--just because you had already planned to send them? No. That would be wasteful. Being able to measure results is going to save you time and money by preventing repeated mistakes.

When you have a system that permits instant feedback, you won't have to rely on random surveys, or wait for your customers to let you know what's working. You get the knowledge instantly and with each marketing piece

you release, your message becomes more powerful. If it doesn't, it's time to step back and try again.

Move Forward with Confidence

When small business owners are in control, when they have the power of measurement, their campaigns become more specific, targeted, and by extension more effective. You cannot guess 100% of the time what words, phrases, offers, or bonuses a consumer is going to respond to. However, at least with certain information under your belt, you have the ability to act with confidence.

When you track and measure your marketing messages, your ability to communicate better with your customer or prospect improves. Your messages are more specific and targeted, and you can begin budgeting for the right type of marketing, rather than throwing your money out the window on something that may or may not work.

Do I know my clients? Absolutely. I can tell you right now that graphically, they don't care for the cartoon looks. In the copy, they want cold, hard facts. In the product, they want something to make running a small business easier and more effective. As a result, our marketing tends to be no nonsense, straight to the point messages that logically and emotionally appeal to the customers. Our marketing isn't always perfect. We've thrown out entire campaigns. However, within the last few years our marketing has become more specific, targeted and less expensive. Our ROI on our marketing pieces has significantly increased as we tweak and improve our messages.

Test and Test Again

If you want to get the best results in the shortest time possible, test and test again. Those who have been in business for a while have a fairly good understanding of their customers. However, if you're just starting out, you don't have the luxury of getting to know anybody. You need to sell, and you need to sell now. So you need to know what messages are going to work.

In actuality, whether you have been in business for a while or not, this is a good idea. When you test and measure, you're bringing marketing to a scientific level. You don't have to rely on instinct or hope. You have the proof in your hand of whether or not this campaign is going to work. You know the anticipated success rate of getting an email dropped in the inbox.

In other words, testing allows you to speed up the "Measure and Tweak" process. And this helps you achieve better than just "good" results.

Think about the difference a single word might make. Think about the time, effort, and testing that goes into major corporation slogans. I'm sure Nike didn't present their "Just Do It" motto to



**Get Better
Than Just
Good Results**

the world before they tried it out. And would the motto have gained as much popularity as it did had the phrase actually been, “Just go ahead and do it.?”

Let me give you another example. “Got Milk?” What a marketing phenomenon. If you drive down the street for any more than five minutes, you will see a twist on this marketing message. Around the area I live, I’ve seen: got sand, got plumbers, got dirt, got real estate, and even got marketing. Releasing that message onto the consumer market was no accident. I’m sure a test group told milk to go ahead and run that campaign.



And that is what testing the marketing message can do for small business owners. It measures your marketing before you spend extra time and money on sending it out.

Got questions?

The pattern is simple. Put together a marketing campaign. Try it out. Measure the results. If you don't get a good response, tweak the message, and try again.

If you want to double your sales, you have to send the message that gets people to buy. If your message isn't quite good enough yet, keep trying. You'll get there. But, you won't get there until you know what works and what doesn't. Knowledge is the key to not only “good” but great results!

Conclusion: Time to Get Started!

Many of the most fascinating people I have ever met are small business owners. They are those individuals that decided they want to do something more with their lives. They want to share their talents, skills, and interests with the world. I admire them. Many of these entrepreneurs are my closest friends. I listen to their stories, I see their strength, and I can't help but feel more ambitious myself because of what I see resonating from them.

Business ownership is not simple, but I and my entire company are on a mission to make it more so. That is why we've done thousands of hours of study. We've read the books by all the experts, heard the complaints of small business owners, tested different techniques on our own company, and resolved that the 9 building blocks and our powerful secret I shared with you are the most significant in boosting sales.

Now that the knowledge of the 9 building blocks is in your hands, I hope that you'll do more than just think, "Hmm. That's interesting. I think he had a few good points." My hope is that you will go on from this day, finding easier, faster, more effective ways to generate leads, turn prospects to customers, turn customers into raving fans, and sell more than you've ever sold before.

Take the time. Reread this book if you need to, but ingrain these concepts in your head, and you will soon be seeing massive improvements to your small business ownership. Take this knowledge and stretch as far as you can reach.

Goals are the limits we set ourselves. Why not shoot for the impossible? You have courage, strength, and enviable skills. Take what you have, take what I have offered you and run with it.

At first I had intended to throw in another story or two. Stories that would inspire you. I could tell you one success story after another. I could relate all the details of small businesses that made a big impact or became corporate giants. But I don't want to do that. I don't want you to rely on the confidence or success of others. I would rather not hear small business owners say, "That person did it, I can do it, too." What I want to hear is the small business owner that says, "I am doing what I love and I will succeed because I can! Because I have the tools to do so."

What I want to hear, following the reading of this book, is small business owners saying, "I did it. I finally made it out of my office. I doubled my sales. I found the passion I once had for my company. And I gained the success that was so elusive for so long."

Now, whether or not you do that is up to you. What you do with the information I handed you in this book is your decision. I can't change your company for you. But I sincerely hope you do something with this. If you can only change a single aspect of your company, do it. Nobody should experience the "pains" of small business ownership that I, and so many like me had to.

If you will take the time to work on and improve the "secret" and 9 building blocks, you can avoid so many of the horrible circumstances my company went through. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, you are well on your way to doubling your sales and making your company better than it has ever been! You will experience true small business success!

Note: One last thing. Several times throughout this book, I mentioned the use of technology to automate business management processes. The software we provided to the man with "pain" eventually evolved into our signature product...Infusionsoft. This man wanted the building blocks I've provided for you. But he wanted each step to be automated. That is what Infusionsoft does for the small business owner. It liberates and empowers small business owners by putting their sales, marketing, and management systems on autopilot.

Hundreds of our customers have doubled their sales with Infusionsoft. In fact we offer a Double Your Sales Guarantee:

When you use Infusionsoft to fix your follow-up with prospects and customers, you will double your sales. If after 12 months you have not doubled your sales and you're not confident with the progress you're making, you can cancel the software and we'll refund half of your first year's subscription fees.

If you are interested in finding out how to automate your own business, please visit www.infusionsoft.com/demo

Infusionsoft is the most incredible tool on the market for simplifying and improving small businesses... and significantly increasing revenue.