

The Numerous, Disorganized, Money – Making Marketing Strategies You Can Use Right Now To Grow Your Business!

**Otherwise known as the miscellaneous ramblings of...
Joseph Ratliff**

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All Is Not Fair In Internet Business

All the sales letters out there paint the "rosy" picture of the Internet marketing lifestyle, don't they?

I am sure that most everyone that reads this article has at one point or another "fallen" for the carefully crafted words of an expert copywriter...and bought into the illusion.

This article contains a strong dose of reality people!

If you don't want to see the real truth about Internet business, and want to continue to believe that there is some get rich quick, "make \$23,594 in 60 days" program out there...keep searching. All of the sales letters will point you the way.

It is that very illusion that will keep feeding you the e-books, courses, and memberships that you will continue investing in until you realize there are no shortcuts to business...and eventually you will come back to this article to get your dose of the hard truth.

Onward...

I was recently visiting a forum I frequent and found a post where the founder of the forum expressed his feelings about some whining taking place by some members in one of the sections within the forum.

To sum it all up, people were bitching and moaning about posts getting bumped etc... the details really do not matter at all.

The point is they were investing time bitching about making money with this one idea, instead of just shifting gears and moving on to something else in their business if they were having a problem. The lesson here is "don't put all your eggs in one basket."

And...

Guess what people? Business isn't a fair and fluffy world for everyone! Get over it!

On to another part of this lesson...

One of my coaching students was concerned about traffic to his sites. He was concerned because several of the methods weren't working within the article marketing he was doing. Almost frantic to the point of over-analyzing "why" most of his articles were not producing the traffic he would have liked (clicks to his blog).

But, he did produce at least one article that really rocked! I mean seriously master-piece quality.

This is an asset, or the first thing I look for when I have an issue in my business. I look for use-able assets that I can convert into traffic, cash, whatever I need. Since I am a "massive action taker" when it comes to business, I am always in the process of creating these assets...and do not allow little stuff like why articles are not working get in my way, because they won't if I can just move on to another asset.

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So I told my coaching student to take what he could from the article that worked, or his asset in this case.

Obviously, his readership liked what it found in this long article.

To date...this article has over 373 views on Ezinearticles.com, 8 ratings, all 5 star ratings, and many positive comments in only two weeks.

If you happen to create an asset like this, find out what you did right, and do it again for Pete's sake! *Over and over again.*

Now, don't get me wrong, I am a big proponent of the "fail as fast as you can, so you can succeed even faster" mantra. But you have to decide when enough is enough, learn from your mistakes and move on. Internet Business life isn't fair for everyone, and sometimes you might think you are doing the right thing investing hours and hours into writing articles or what not...

But it doesn't always work that way people! Learn why it didn't work that way and move on as quickly as you can!

Let's move on to a big secret in business, one that will be hard to swallow for most of you, but I am going to reveal it any how right here (I normally charge for this kind of advice).

At first, it won't sound like any big deal, you have probably heard it a thousand times before, but bear with me...

Ready?

Here it is...

About 80% of your revenue comes from about 20% of your total efforts!

On it's face, you have probably heard of [Pareto's Principle](#). You have probably heard it a thousand times...but I bet that most of you have never taken massive action on it before. Honestly, only 20% of the people who read this post ever will take action.

Here is what I mean:

- If you work 40 hours a week on your Internet business...only 8 of those hours of work are producing 80% of your revenue generated. Wouldn't you want to take that piece of advice and give your business an honest check up from the neck up, to see what 8 hours are producing that revenue, and do more of it?
- If you make \$50,000 a year in net profits from your Internet business... \$40,000 of that revenue came from only 20% of all of the efforts you put into generating revenue for that Internet business in that year. Instead of bitching and whining on some forum about why your posts are getting bumped, why not concentrate on finding out more about that 20%, and do more of that instead?

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- Instead of worrying about the 80% of the articles you write that are not generating the traffic you like, find the 20% that are, and copy that structure of article, topic nature, etc...
- If you have 100 customers (for the sake of simple math), and you now know that only 20 of them are making you 80% of your profits, which customers do you want to spend the most of your time with?

And really, that is the big secret here...

You should spend 80% or more of your valuable time with only 20% of your clients, the 20% who have followed your advice in your products, and used your copywriting skills, to make millions of dollars themselves. The same 20% who invest in you again and again without question, who quite frankly feed your family and put a roof over your head. This same 20% doesn't complain about every little thing, because they know that if for some reason things don't go right, you will make sure that they do...

Because you have created the time to do so by focusing 80% of your time and energy to only 20% of your clients.

Does that mean that the other 80% of your clients suffer? Absolutely not. They receive polite and courteous attention, and you produce quality work or products for them, so they can benefit. They get 100% of you, for the entire 20% of your time you devote to them.

This concept might be a little hard to swallow for you.

You might be thinking *"Holy smokes Joe, it sounds like you are asking me to screw over 80% of my clients!"*

But that is far from the truth actually. You see, Pareto's Principle can be expressed for this lesson in this way too:

80% of your clients really only need 20% of your time!

That's right, about 8 out of every 10 of your clients are only going to use your services for one project, one consultation, buy one affiliate product from your recommendation etc... and that is it.

That does not require much time at all.

But 2 out of 10 clients will invest in your product or service for repeatedly, need multiple consultations, will invest in you for the 80% of the time you devote to them.

And those are the clients that keep you in business...Period.

There is a scary revelation that applies here as well...

About 80% of all small businesses fail within 5 years.

Which also means...

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About 20% of all small businesses succeed after 5 years.

Could the 20% who succeed be the same ones that master the art of focusing on their 20%?

Are you going to at least start to think about who your 20% is?

If you don't, call me in 5 years when the money runs out.

Who is your 20%?

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Who Are You Blaming For Your Internet Marketing Success, Or Lack of It?

Note: Before reading...I will preface that I have personally made each of the mistakes identified in this post (and many more). The difference is I learned from them, and quit blaming others for my failures.

Will/Have you, starting right this minute?

Let's get started with your "look in the mirror"...

How many of these statements can you apply, in one form or another, to your Internet business?

* "If Mary would have just gotten me that website in time, this project would have launched better!"

* "That bank should have approved me for that small business loan, then I would be able to get this business going!"

* "I'll just get to that later, after the dust settles on this fire I have to put out."

* "The reason my sales are down is because that guru didn't do a Joint Venture with me."

Etc... Etc...

It's easy to find someone, a set of circumstances, or something to blame for your failures, isn't it? Guess what, there is actually only one person to blame for all of your Internet business failures...

You.

No one else but you.

"If Mary would have just gotten me that website in time, this project would have launched better!"

You are the reason that website didn't get done in time...you could have interviewed the person for the job better, or you could have stopped putting all of your eggs in one basket, or put incentives in place for finishing early. What? Paying more for the right to be a little pickier, and to get your project done on time or ahead of schedule? Making the freelancer feel appreciated and actually creating the atmosphere for them to pay a little more attention to your project? Hmmm.

"That bank should have approved me for that small business loan, then I would be able to get this business going!"

Why didn't the bank approve you for that loan? Your credit? Your crappy business plan and lack of clear direction for your Internet marketing venture? Your lack of ability to sell yourself and your business to the loan officer? Could be a combination of elements...but all of those

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elements point back to one person, you.

"I'll just get to that later, after the dust settles on this fire I have to put out."

Why can't you get to it now? Are you so unfocused in doing 100's of tasks that you are not putting a simple daily/weekly/monthly/yearly plan together and sticking to it? When will "later" arrive if you genuinely can't do it now? You might not have the time right this second...but you can most certainly attach a date and time to complete the task if it is important enough right? If not, the task probably isn't important enough to even consider allowing yourself to think about it, even for a second.

"The reason my sales are down is because that guru didn't do a Joint Venture with me."

That guru (I hate that term) didn't do a Joint Venture with you because of you...and they are not to blame for your success or failure. If this has ever described an actual case in your Internet business, shame on you for blaming someone else for your business failures. There are a number of reasons that guru's will not do Joint Ventures with someone...but I have written on this topic several times...

Now, I have not even scratched the scratch of the scratch of the surface when it comes to the number of different scenarios that exist where it is easy for you to blame others for your failures online.

What I will ask you to do today is make a major change to your mindset:

OWN BOTH YOUR SUCCESS AND YOUR FAILURES.

That's it. Quit whining and wasting valuable time, energy, and trying to find a reason or another person for your Internet business failures. Instead look to what you can do better yourself next time.

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The 4 Reasons Why Your Internet Business Will Fail This Year

Bet you have never had someone tell you that your Internet business will fail this year. Guaranteed.

Here's the top 4 reasons why:

- **The free mindset.** The Internet isn't free unless you don't place value on your time. If you don't value your time, then you will run yourself in circles trying to do all of the things that you shouldn't be doing...and your business will fail.
- **Lack of business knowledge or training.** *That ebook told you that you would make \$23,468 in less than 60 days.* Don't believe it, you won't, unless you have developed and grown a business before...or are extremely gifted or lucky. Those stories you hear of 15 year olds making \$60,000 a week, month, year online are few and far in between. If you are just starting out in business, you will likely make many mistakes starting out, just like everyone else. Fail as fast as you can, so you can succeed. These mistakes can be reduced, and the learning curve shortened severely, with a mentor.
- **Complex thinking, or over-analysis.** There is only one "secret" to marketing, find people that want to buy something, and sell it to them. This is what I call "straight line marketing." You don't need anything else. All you have to do is find markets of hungry buyers, create a solution to a problem for those buyers, and provide that solution. If you over-analyze your business, or keep attempting to search for the "secret answer" to marketing...I hate to disappoint you, but there isn't one.
- **Buying ebook after ebook.** Educating yourself is important, but only to a point. You can easily wrap yourself up in ebooks sitting on your hard drive, and not taking any action that moves your business forward. It's addicting to search for the "magic pill" that drives your online business...but it doesn't exist. Get over it.

There you are, the top 4 reasons your Internet business will fail this year. Avoid them, or change your habits...and please, by all means, prove that you will remain in business at the end of 2008.

I would love to hear success stories. Send me an email any time at joe@josephratliff.name to report yours.

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Do You Have A Can Of Tom Thumb In Your Cupboard?

I do.

What is Tom Thumb? Good thing you asked...because I almost forgot to tell you.

This is a can of pork and beans that I have had for a long time in my soup cupboard. The brand name is a generic one...Tom Thumb.

Alright...so why this post about Tom Thumb?

It is a lesson in humility that we all need from time to time. In my case, there was a time a little over 12 years ago...when life was not this great...definitely not as good as it is now. During that time, myself and my family started to run low on food once.

And out came Tom Thumb.

That can, plus a loaf of bread, was about all we had to eat that night. It was a pretty sad situation. But...that moment made me realize something...

"Holy smokes, I need to go out and do something about this."

Why was I in this situation? Well, a couple of months prior to that moment, I had gotten laid off from a car dealership where I worked the parts counter. We had some savings to get by, but at this moment, we were way past draining them. We were literally moments away from having to get on the food line.

But this was my first lesson in success as well. I felt this gnawing feeling in the pit of my stomach, a pulling feeling in my chest, and I just couldn't take it anymore. I couldn't look my family in the face and say:

"We are going hungry tonight."

So I didn't let that happen. I had, up until that moment, had some set backs in getting another job to support my family. But staring Tom Thumb in the face made me reach deep down and "suck it up." The feeling I had inside of me now was one of invincibility...I could not be stopped...

I got a job the next morning...walked in the office...sat down for an interview...and did not leave until we were filling out new hire paperwork.

From that moment on, we have never faced that type of adversity in our lives again. As a matter of fact, life is filled with a richness I cannot describe, only feel.

It is the end of 2007 now, and since that moment we are completely humble and Tom Thumb still resides in our cupboard (we had to eat the original Tom Thumb, so we bought another).

Tom Thumb is still in our cupboard to remind us of that humbling moment...and I vowed to never allow him to the front of our cupboard again.

To this day, he is still hiding there in the back...reminding me that there was a time when it wasn't this good... *Which motivates me to help others reach their goals...and along the way I will reach mine too.* **It has worked for me, to a very successful degree, so far.**

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Make Tons Of Money Online In 24 Hours Or Less - And Other Myths In Creating A Business Dispelled

If the truth hurts, or you are easily offended by "in your face" styles of writing, stop reading this.

You've heard all the lines...right?

"Make \$1000 in four days using this proven business system."

"All you have to do is participate in paid surveys, and you can make \$500 a week quickly."

Well...it's time to "lay it on the line" as they say...

While it is not impossible to make a little bit of money in a quick fashion, using a combination of methods...it does not create a real, sustainable business that you will be able to depend on for future income. You will consistently have to rely on desperation attempts to make little bits of cash here and there and POOF!...

You're out of business. Period.

So, if you find a good, solid business opportunity, and decide to pursue it...don't do so if you are expecting to make some quick income, or get rich quick. There is no such thing. It is virtually impossible to build the type of business that will sustain your income requirements under duress, or financial stress, because your mentality changes when you are in those types of situations.

You need to have a "clear head" when building a business, online or offline, and you cannot do that when the first thing you think about is the money you need to make. You would do yourself a better favor to get a job to clear out any debt you have, and build a reserve of at least 90 days of income so you can focus on your business.

You first need to think about the relationships and joint venture opportunities you need to create in order to build the momentum necessary to carry your business forward. If you cannot focus on these critical ideas, your business will eventually follow that focus into the toilet, period.

There is no magical home study course that will save you, no business system that will generate income for you overnight etc...

They simply don't exist.

When you decide to build a sustainable business, there are three secrets that will help you build momentum the fastest:

1. **Joint Venture Alliances.** You must form alliances with other marketers that have resources you don't. Share profits, resources, and make your relationship with those other marketers mutually beneficial. You will grow faster than you thought possible.
2. **Mentality.** If you don't believe that your business provides the world's best service, sells the best product in its industry, **is absolutely the best thing and everyone needs it...** then don't start a business and re-evaluate opportunities until you find the

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one that all of these ideas fit. *Period.*

3. **Centralization.** All of the tools, resources, and other necessary items to run your business need to be located in as few places, or access points, as possible. You need to have, for example, your hosting, autoresponder, products, and payment management systems accessible from one place. This one place also needs to contain your support, coaching, any forums, and other necessary functions in the same place (see resource box below).

Following these three ideas as a start will help you generate enough momentum to build a real business, not one of the 80% of all small businesses that **fail** in two years or less.

IMPORTANT: If you would like to take an inside look at an online membership where you can centralize your Internet business...and whose members actually support you every step of the way...while providing every single tool and the products necessary to build a sustainable business online...

Visit <http://www.buildinginternetwealth.org> and receive 21 free Internet business marketing gems plus an 81 page book of Internet marketing secrets just for taking a look (no investment or purchase necessary).

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The One Statement You Can Make That Will Change Your Life When It Comes To Outsourcing

Imagine with me for a moment please.

You come to your office for the first time this month. You don't even hand out paychecks any more. You sit down in your chair, check a few emails, make a phone call then...

POOF!

You are out the door faster than it took you to park your car. Off to the golf course to improve your 36 handicap. How is this possible?

Outsourcing. If for some reason you cannot see yourself in this scenario, and want to move closer to this exact level of freedom, read the rest of this post.

If you are like many entrepreneurs, there is a hidden fear with outsourcing work that you could "do much better" yourself.

Yet, you wonder how the "big boys" that are working very little and seem to be playing all the time are doing this.

Let's run through a quick scenario and reveal the secret statement that is part of any successful outsourcing campaign, shall we?

- 1) You identify some task in your business that you would like to "hand off" to a responsible individual so you can focus on more important parts of your business.
- 2) So, you place an ad or use some other recruiting method to attract someone suited for the task (keep in mind, you are not hiring an employee, simply a person that can take this one task off of your plate).
- 3) You have a number of responses to that recruitment method, and you do your best to sift through them using the criteria you have set for yourself...pulling out the few "top responses."

NOTE: This is actually a mistake, but that is for another post. This is just usually the way it gets handled from my observations.

- 4) Out of the few "top dogs" from your selections, you schedule interviews. And here is where you can save a bunch of grief...
- 5) Let's say you have three candidates. Your task involves a necessary knowledge of a specific software, so you ask the one question that anyone would ask when interviewing these "prime" candidates:

"Do you have experience/knowledge with XYZ software?"

Surprisingly enough, each of the three candidates replies with a resounding yes. So you have three to choose from right?

Wrong.

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After asking the question above...and hearing the answer that *every human being would give* that is wanting the job you offer...you have one statement to make, the one statement that "turns the tables" and finds your ONE candidate for the position:

"Tell me a little more about that."

That's it. Seems simple huh? The answer that each of your three candidates gives will lead to a natural "give me specifics" type of follow up conversation.

And when your candidate cannot answer you specifically...you are done with that interview. Move on to someone who can provide specifics, and is really qualified for what you want to accomplish.

Now, you can relax, and start planning how to fix your slice on the golf course.

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How The Worst Case Scenario Can Help You Create A Profit Machine

Have you ever been afraid to do something? I have. Plenty of times.

So, how do you get over that fear to actually do what it is you want to do?

Use this secret, and at the right time in your life, it could help you make millions. We have all heard the saying:

"You are the closest to success when you feel like giving up."

Or something like that. Anyway...

To sum this up with an example we will use a fictitious character named Joe. Joe is still "working for the man" and has been for about 10 years. He gets up each morning, takes a shower, kisses the wife goodbye, and goes off to his seemingly dead end job.

At the seemingly dead end job, Joe keeps thinking of what life could be like if he started his own home business. For the last two years, something inside of Joe has been gnawing at his gut.

"What if I just turned in my notice right now and started a home business?"

In the case if Joe was already an entrepreneur...he could be saying...

"What if I took that risk/bought another business etc...?"

The point remains the same...there is fear in either case. Fear of the unknown, fear things could go terrible, fear everything could go wrong.

And that fear is what brings me to the lesson in this post...

Let's continue with Joe as an employed individual, then as an entrepreneur.

Joe started to think *"What is the worst that could happen? I could give up my job, start this business...get kicked out of my apartment and on to the street. I might have a hard time looking my wife in the face from falling flat on my face."*

Then Joe felt that feeling of his subconscious trying to tell him something...but this time he listened to it.

Joe's subconscious said *"Is that the worst it can get? Life is short...you can get another apartment, another job if you need to, in a pretty short amount of time."*

Think about that for a second. Really let that thought sink in. Have you ever wanted to take that risk, start a business, etc... and never did it...

All because of the *worst case scenario?*

If you really think about it, is the worst case scenario worse than staying at your job and dealing with the stress or that "dead end" feeling that you carry home to your loved ones every single day?

Does this imply that you should just take stupid risks? Nope.

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But it *does* imply that you should think twice before giving up on your dream of starting a business, expanding your current business, trying a new method of marketing etc...

We are on this planet for too short of a time to put off working outside of our comfort zone.

And here is the real kicker (and a secret)... most of the time, because our body is preparing for "the worst case scenario" when actually stepping outside of our comfort zone and taking a new risk...

The worst case scenario NEVER happens.

Then you can look back and say "Ha! I overcame that obstacle." And an even better thing happens...

You look at the next risk a *whole new way*.

Then, you can unleash the profit machine we all have inside of us.

So, go unleash your inner profit machine, and I hope that after reading this, you will look at risk in a whole new light.

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How To Give Away The House And Make A Mansion With Your Business

I know, I know...huh?

"Joe, I am not going to give away my house to start all over again trying to make a mansion."

I don't expect you to literally give away your house.

But if it was guaranteed to make you 100 million dollars you would do it, wouldn't you? That is what we are talking about here, a concept known as...

The Lifetime Value of the Customer.

This concept is so critical to the future success of businesses everywhere, yet even some Fortune 500 companies are missing the boat big time. That is what I hate about lists like the 500...they mean absolutely nothing in the big scheme of things. Any one of those companies, under the right circumstances...

Can fold up like a tent, and get packed away in a suitcase.

But this post is not a rip on the big 500 companies in the world...because some of them do "get it." They understand the lifetime value of the customers they serve. So why put your business at risk? You probably don't have the resources that the big guys do to stay in business even when times are tough, do you?

So, here is the concept in a nutshell...

Every customer of your business runs through a certain buying cycle...or lifetime. This is the cycle where a customer considers your offerings, responds to your follow up marketing attempts, and purchases or invests in all of the possible offerings you have that fits their needs. When this cycle finishes, the customer no longer needs what you have to offer, and does not purchase from you again. In some cases, this cycle does not end until the customer's life actually ends (real estate for example, if the agent does his/her job).

During this lifetime...there is a certain number of dollars purchased. Figure out what this dollar amount is, on the average, and you have the key in your hand to business success.

Let's create an example.

Two general automotive repair shops, in the same city, have the following similar stats:

1000 customers in their database, averaging \$300.00 per each transaction.

The top 20% of each automotive shops customers average 3 visits a year. That is 200 customers visiting three times each, or 600 visits from the best customers.

So, at an average transaction of \$300.00 each visit, that is \$180,000 annually from the top 20% of the automotive business.

The average length of time each customer in the top 20% stays is 10 years. Then, the customer either moves from the area, gets another car and switches to the dealership etc...

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The lifetime of the customer ends at 10 years.

So...each customer in the top 20% spends an average of \$900.00 in three visits per year. At the end of the lifetime of the customer...these customers spend \$9,000 each.

And that is important.

Knowing that information, that a customer in the top 20% of your business spends \$9,000 with you by the end of 10 years...

You have to do whatever it takes to acquire and keep customers initially to ensure you get your \$9,000! What are you doing in your business to acquire customers? Is it the same "ho-hum" stuff that everyone else in your industry does, or do you have the "stuff" in you to separate your business from the pack?

Let's return to our example, and make a comparison.

Automotive Repair Shop A takes this information and does what everyone else does with it...keeps doing what they are doing. They are out of business in 10 years or less, period.

Let me repeat that, they aren't just growing slowly, they are out of business in 10 years or less. In this hyper-competitive business world, where more than 80% of small businesses FAIL in less than two years...it is an absolute.

And the really scary thing is...90% of the business owners who read this post will do nothing with this information, absolutely nothing.

But what about Automotive Repair Shop B?

Automotive Repair Shop B sends out a regular mailing to keep in touch with its customers. They do an important bit of math though, that separates them from the rest of the pack...

They figure how much they want to invest in every customer of their top 20% to get their \$9,000.

This is critical. So what does Shop B actually do that keeps them separated once they have figured out what they want to invest?

To acquire customers, shop B sends out a new customer mailer that offers 4 FREE oil changes. Total cost (remember, this is cost, not retail) = \$60.00 per customer.

To double the effectiveness of that mailing, if the customer refers one more customer to take advantage of the same 4 FREE oil change offer...the original customer gets an additional FREE oil change...for a total of 5 FREE oil changes. Total cost now = \$75.00 to acquire two customers plus another \$60.00 for the second customer's four oil changes.

Total cost for two, \$9,000 customers = \$135.00

So...how many times do you want to trade \$135.00 for \$18,000 over 10 years?

"But Joe, you moron...now I have to keep a customer for 10 years to gain that serious advantage!"

To which I respond:

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"Uhhh, yeah. You didn't get into business to lose customers, did you? You do know that is much less expensive to keep customers, than it is to acquire them, right?"

Which brings me to the last part of this lesson.

Keeping customers for life. We started out in Automotive Shop B's example only investing \$135.00 for TWO customers, that will average \$18,000 over 10 years.

What on earth makes you want to stop there?

Do you want to ensure you get that \$18,000 over 10 years to keep two customers? Keep in mind these are the top 20% of your customers, so they are the good ones to begin with.

You have to do better than \$135.00 in this day and age. Sorry for the good news.

So, here is the kicker...what if, over the entire 10 years you invested a total of \$1350.00 in exchange for \$18,000?

Automotive Shop B gets this important piece of the puzzle...

For \$19.95 a year, each customer can get FREE OIL CHANGES FOR THE LIFE OF THEIR CAR!

What a deal, huh? Every 3,000 miles or three months they can get another complimentary oil change! No ordinary oil change either, one complete with vacuuming out the car, washing windows, topping off fluids etc...because Automotive Shop B understands that each opportunity for an oil change is an opportunity for an inspection, which results in additional revenue.

What a deal. So your questions and challenge for the day is...

What is your oil change? What is the lifetime value of your customers?

What house are you going to give away to build your mansion?

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A 2000 Page Marketing Lesson - Part 1

I am just sitting here tonight, getting ready to "close up shop."

BLAM! I had an idea for another post...

A marketing lesson that few mention, tell anybody about, or probably even use for that matter. Guess what? There is a 2,000 page marketing lesson right in your house. It sits there every day, just waiting for someone to unlock the information within. What I am speaking of?

The Yellow Pages in the phone book! I know, I know... huh? Do this for me tonight...it won't take but 10 minutes of your time. 1) Pull out the phone book. 2) Open it, and skim the yellow pages...notice I said *skim*. *I don't want you to read every ad...* But pay careful attention to the ones that do get your attention.

Ask yourself this important question:

Why did that Yellow Pages ad get my attention?

Well...why did it? That is the marketing lesson for tonight...why do certain ads grab your attention?

What style are they written in? What about them gets you to read and possibly take action? What separates them from the crowd of other businesses that are waiting for their responses?

Does yours do the same thing in your section of the Yellow Pages?

Stay tuned tomorrow...and I will tell you how to make it stand out in part 2. :)

For now...just skim those ads, and feel free to leave comments on this article as to what your finding when you compare those ads (go to <http://josephratliff.name> and do a search for this article's title, I know, I am making you work :)).

Don't leave anything out, everyone has an opportunity to learn here.

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A 2000 Page Marketing Lesson, Part 2

Well, here it is, as promised.

Yesterday...I promised that I would tell you *why* good Yellow Pages Advertisements separate themselves from the rest of the very large pack.

Two primary reasons:

1) Use a Benefit - laden headline instead of the boring "Dr. John's Chiropractic Clinic, Open 7,000 hours" headline you see. Get to the benefits, what does your product or service give me?

That should be the first thing I see as a consumer, not the name of your business and phone number. I am looking through the phone book...I will find the phone number on my own thank you. :)

You can also take a "news story" approach to the headline...which leads to the number two separator from other ads...

2) Editorial - style advertising. Come on now, we have all caught ourselves reading the "article" that is actually an advertisement in the newspaper, haven't we? Well...same applies to the Yellow Pages. Actually putting a tidbit of useful information leading to the only next conclusion being to call you is an excellent way to increase response and catch the attention of those looking for that solution (here is where you get to put the phone number and name of the business...at the END of the advertorial).

Tell me if you can think of other ways that Yellow Page advertising "catches" your eye.

Feel free to comment.

And, quit using cookie cutter style advertising in the Yellow Pages. Right now. :)

Get creative, or hire someone else to get creative (like [me](#)).

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The Top Secret - Leave Your Competition In The Dust Techniques To Market Your Online Business

We live in a world of borders, don't we?

There is a border between the USA and Canada...between the USA and Mexico...and so forth. Yet we continue as a society to visit both of those countries all the time.

So let's apply this to today's lesson...

There is a border between an online business and an offline business. This exists because of a variety of factors like the types of products sold, the people who sell them, and other factors. But should there be a border at all?

Let's share an example...

An online membership site sells its memberships on the typical "Free, upgrade to silver or platinum membership" model. Upfront, this membership offers a free 50 page report on a niche industry to generate leads through an opt - in page. This membership site offers this report plus the "free" membership with limited benefits.

Then it sells it's upgraded memberships with all the bells and whistles like business packages specific to the niche industry, audio's that give the "golden nuggets" of info, and maybe even video to "take you by the hand" and walk you through business improvement techniques.

To market this...the membership site owner might use article marketing, Pay Per Click, forum marketing, etc... All the online marketing techniques we are familiar with. But there is a better way, and I suggest you add this methodology to your online marketing model today. Notice I did not say to stop marketing online at all, as all of the aforementioned techniques work great when done correctly.

But the most productive way to market your online business is... offline! That's right, offline marketing. Direct mail, newspaper editorial - style advertisements, word of mouth offline, face to face networking, public speaking, print newsletters, etc...

I cannot go into detail about how to use each one of these techniques in this one article...but look for future articles to cover these topics. But one question that is probably rattling inside your head is... **"Why do these techniques work better than online marketing?"**

Well...that answer is multi - part to which I will present three ideas here:

1. Typically, online business owners view the Internet as the end - all of marketing their online business...and it simply isn't. It is only one media used to market a business.
2. Audience. One example...the majority that read the newspaper do so with a different mindset. They are not the typical freebie - seeking, distracted, multi - tasking (when surfing the 'net), individual that is using the Internet. Instead, they are more focused on what is in front of them.
3. Distraction. I mentioned this in part 2 of my answer, but in detail...there are a number of distractions that present themselves on the Internet that simply are not present when someone is reading the mail, the newspaper, attending a face to face conference

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(congrats to those online marketers that figured that one out) etc...

Is Your Email Marketing Missing Th.....?

Nope, that is not a typo, so don't go emailing me or anything...

This represents the appearance of the typical subject line in many email marketing campaigns. Too many characters!

Good thing I incorporated enough interest - gaining copy in the first few words, or you wouldn't be reading this post right now. Not a good thing. The full title to this post is actually "Your Email Marketing is Missing This Critical Piece...So it isn't Even Being Read!"

Too long for an email subject line, which is the critical element in your email marketing that will determine whether or not your message is even opened. Most email programs can get 6 - 8 average length words in... before they use an ellipse to cut off the subject line, which allows this line to fit in the inbox.

So, when you are preparing an autoresponder message to blast out to your list of hungry customers waiting to buy be sure to keep the subject line short. Try to think of fewer words to get the same message across. For example...

My "subject line" could be reduced to "Your emails are not being read!"

That delivers a high impact message which will compel the recipient to open and find out why their emails are not being read. This is the only purpose of the subject line in an email. Then, your message can carry it from their with high - impact, compelling copy.

That is all for this little lesson in email marketing...use it to your profitable advantage.

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Should You Sell Your Product or Service on Your Home Page?

Of course you should!

But how should you?

And you should ask yourself one question before you even worry about how you are selling your product or service on your website period. One step at a time now...

Am I confusing visitors arriving at my site?

The navigation of your site needs to be clean and easy. By clean and easy I mean you have to present any options to your visitors in an organized fashion. Most of the websites I visit have about 2 million things to do right at the home page, including buy the product or service. Navigation is on both sides of the page, links to other sites and pictures and graphics and this and that. If I have to sort through that many things to do on top of you asking me to buy too early in the "process", I am only coming to one conclusion...

CLICK!

Off to the next site. You lost me as a visitor. You do not need to "vomit" a bunch of information and sales tools onto your visitors first thing on your home page. So, clean this up NOW! Then, you can approach how to sell your product or service on the first page your visitor sees when clicking in. Do you have a sales letter with a simple call to action at the bottom? Do you introduce your company slowly to your visitors by offering a free bonus for signing up for your newsletter?

Do you have a Unique Selling Proposition to convey to your visitors?

There are many questions to ask and approaches you can take when constructing your main sales page, or home page, of your website. Bottom line, navigation and ease of use has to be cleared up first.

Take a look at <http://buildinginternetwealth.net>

You will notice that I ask you to do ONE thing at the bottom of the home page, not five hundred. The navigation is easy, you have very few choices in the ONE navigation bar I have placed there. Any of the other options you choose leads to contact with me. But, one key difference to most other sites, is I offer value for contacting me upfront. No investment required. I also offer information...in my sales letter on the home page, along with all of my valuable gifts I offer on the site. This is what Internet users are looking for, information. Then, after building a relationship, which all sales require, I can ask you to buy from me.

Keep that key in mind...you MUST build a relationship with your viewers BEFORE asking them to buy. This can be simple or complex depending on the product or service you offer to the visitor. But you MUST build that relationship FIRST.

Review your website, and clean it up. Make it as easy as possible to use for the visitor. Remember, you can lose an easy 50% of your sales online just on this fact alone.

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Should You Just Throw Away Your Direct Mail Campaign?

Well, should you?

Do you get the feeling that is where all of your postcard or envelope style mailings are going anyway?

How do you relieve this "pain" in your marketing? Take two of these and call me in the morning...message and market!

Message

What does your message sound like? That's right...I said sound like. When you read your message on your direct mail pieces out loud to yourself, do you cringe with boredom? Is there anything on those pieces where it absolutely makes sense for your reader to "contact me", "take advantage of this free offer", or "get your free book for calling"? Is the information even valuable enough to get from you in the first place?

Remember, in the last post I wrote about your Unique Selling Proposition. Does your mailer even have that on it? If you have not read the post on USP, please do so now and develop one. Your message must compel the reader to take action, without forcing them to. Your USP combined with an effective headline, offer, and contact info will enhance your direct response results dramatically.

More importantly, you have just a little bit of time to catch the reader's attention (less than 7 seconds) in your direct mailed material. The client has other things on their mind, and "interruption marketing" is not one of them. If you fail to overcome this obstacle, your mailer ends up in the trash almost immediately, without being read at all.

A high quality message must be delivered...but what if you are not targeting the right readers in the first place?

Market

That's right, your message cannot just be randomly mailed to everyone in the phone book and expect good results without a lucky streak. I don't know about you, but I am not a gambler. Do you want to gamble with your marketing results? Didn't think so. You must research your market thoroughly, and send your message to those potential customers most likely to invest in your service or product. You wouldn't fish for fresh water fish in salt water would you? You need to get the fish that are hungry for the bait you are casting.

Go to your public library, and look in the reference section. There are tons of resources available to research your local market there. Very best part? They are all free! Who is most likely to buy from you?

For example, a mortgage company would not want to hunt for new business by mailing to home owners who just signed up a new mortgage less than 90 days ago. But maybe home owners who have had their mortgage over 1 year, or even two years? If the mortgage company does refinances, which most of them do, this is an ample, targeted market.

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List companies can help here as well, doing the sorting for you, for a fee of course. What you get is a pre - sorted list of potential business to mail. Once the responses start coming in, those that provide you information can be followed up via telephone call or another mail piece to start a relationship.

Message to market. The right message to the right market. The key to direct mail success. Don't throw away your Direct Mail Campaign just yet, because you have a world of profits coming your way!

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Does a Successful Mindset Help Market Your Business?

As a matter of fact, if there was one thing that could destroy a business or build it faster than a McDonalds...this is it. A successful mindset is the foundation from which all of your business marketing, and the results you track, springs forth. As business owners, we tend to have "bad days," where everything seems to go wrong. But let's analyze that for a second...

Are things going wrong today because they genuinely are? Or, did you create your bad day because one thing went slightly amiss and everything from that point on "seemed to go bad." Think about that for a second...

Someone with a successful mindset tackles obstacles (the things you thought went wrong) and overcomes them. The typical person... lacking this mindset will react as I pointed out...everything else spiraling downhill and the day goes to the outhouse.

What the heck does this have to do with marketing?

Quite a bit actually...please allow me to paint two similar business scenarios. Business Owner **A** has the typical approach. Business Owner **B** has the successful mindset. You can decide which business owner you want to be. I am keeping the scenario pretty simple and crude, so please don't pick it apart.

Scenario:

An automotive shop needs to develop and mail a simple 4 x 6 mailer to 1000 people that are "new movers" and have never heard of the business before. The owner is going to prepare copy for this mailer, deliver it to his/her graphic designer, and have a mailing house with the list of "new movers" address, post, and mail the mailers. The owner will also be tracking the results, and be the person at the counter when any responses come in to carry out the transaction. On the day that all of this is to take place, the first two customers have complaints...

Owner A - Being the typical Business Owner, the first two customers having complaints threw the whole day off. He grudgingly takes care of these two customers...but it has left him in a dour mood. As he prepares the copy for the mailer, his mood translates into the "message" he places on the mailer. Then, he is late delivering the copy to his graphic designer because he took so long arguing and "taking care" of his first two customers. This puts pressure on the design house, and since our Owner is in a dour mood...the personal transaction between him and the Graphic Designer does not go all that well. Now the mailing house. The list gets put together, the mailer goes out, and results start happening over the next couple of days...but not as quick. Remember, the copy wasn't all that great...

Also, let's not forget the typical transaction at the counter with the customers. No referrals gathered, more complaints, business is not good...do I have to say more?

Owner B - Well she sees the first two complaining customers as an opportunity to improve her business. She immediately sends them to a restaurant of their choice, gives them a complete refund, and completes a short survey with them to find out how she could have

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done better in the first place. This cuts the time dealing with them in half, and in the end she actually gets a referral. With plenty of time to spare, she uses the information from the surveys, and prepares "knock it out of the park" copy for the mailer. Sends it to the graphic designer on time, gets a referral from them. Successful mindsets spawn more success, get it?

The mailer goes out, more responses than necessary come back...and she feeds another shop in town with the overflow. In turn, that shop does the same for her down the road. Also, with the positive customer interactions...

Need I say any more?

In conclusion...here is what I want you to do today, your homework for reading this post.

- 1) Take a Sharpie and an 8.5 x 11 inch piece of paper.
- 2) In BIG LETTERS, enough to fill the paper write the following statement...

I AM NOT SELF LIMITING

- 3) Tack this to a cork board in your office, tape it to a bathroom door, wherever you can view it often daily. Read it, absorb it.

Over time, you will develop a non limiting mindset, and that is only step 1 of many to developing a successful one. I have reviewed a book by Anthony Robbins, titled "Awaken The Giant Within". It is an old book, but one worth reading again and again. I recommend those of you who have Owner A in you to read it as well...and I know that you are out there. It is crucial to have a successful mindset in all that you do.

Thank you for reading this article, I know it was a bit longer than usual...I just feel this is such important stuff.

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You Want to Market Your Business, But Do You Have The Time?

I am going to give you golden nuggets of time management wisdom that I personally use in my direct response copywriting business. To qualify that these actually work...I utilize all of these methods personally, and I "work" no more than 4 hours a day! Use them in your business today!

- 1) The foundation is your desk. How clean and organized is your desk? Do you adopt the principle of "use it, file it, or throw it away" with every single item that comes across your desk? You either use information (paper, email, whatever), file information (only if you have TIME STAMPED when you are going to use it), or throw it away completely! Some items are just not important enough to waste valuable time on.
- 2) Magazines, do you read them? Really, do you? Or, like I used to, do you let them stack up in a pile...hoping to get to them someday. When you finally do, they are outdated...or you manage to read a small part of a magazine, then throw it back on the pile you created. Here is the secret: Use the table of contents! Find those articles you like right away, and rip or cut them out of the magazine! Then, read now, or file the article in a folder for that magazine subject or title. It is much easier to read the articles you are interested in only...and it makes sense.
- 3) Do you find yourself listening to audio recordings? If so, a real time saver is to listen to the recording at double speed (2x). In 99% of the cases, you can still understand what is being said, and it doubles your efficiency in getting information. This cuts your listening time in half!
- 4) How organized is your office? No really, I mean it. Is your office chair in easy reach of filing cabinets, supplies, and other necessary items without having to get up? Getting up and down for a few seconds each time adds up quickly...this technique alone can save you an hour a day! What can you do with an extra 60 minutes? Perhaps take lunch?
- 5) How do you process "interruptions?" Do you end up checking a blank email box 20 times a day, or check it three times at specific times of the day? Do you schedule phone calls, or do you pick up the phone and answer it every time Aunt Mable calls? How you handle your incoming activities (phone, email, people visiting etc...) can seriously take away from your valuable time! Remember one idea here...NOBODY AND NOTHING controls your time except YOU! It is a conscious decision that you make to take a phone call or send another email...attend a meeting...or any other time suckers.

Please don't take it out on other people when "you don't have enough time." It is YOU that made that decision in the first place.

That is all for this month's lesson. If you want to take the marketing of your business completely off of your plate, visit my site here....

<http://josephratliff.name/contact-joseph-ratliff>

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Are You Leaving Your Yellow Pages Advertising Results To Chance?

So do me a favor right now...

Pull out your copy of the Yellow Pages and look up Auto Repair. What do you see? That is right, almost all of the ads are the same! Why is this I wonder? What would differentiate your business from the other businesses in your particular section of the Yellow Pages?

The reason that almost all ads are the same within a particular section of the Yellow Pages is that they are designed by the Yellow Pages company that produces the book or sells the advertising! There is no opportunity for market differentiation with the "cookie cutter" approach that most Yellow Pages advertising companies (the ones that sell the space) use in their approach when they position and place the ad...and speaking of positioning...could you be in a better spot so your ad stands out?

What about trust and credibility? Does your Yellow Pages advertising separate itself from the competition in these KEY areas?

And...editorial style ads win every time over the flashy, phone number at the top ad.

Can you really say that your ad "separates" itself from the crowd? Is the ad written in more of an editorial style rather than as an ad? If the answer is no...then you need to rethink your marketing through the Yellow Pages, and quit wondering why you fork out \$300 or more a month and get no results!

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When The Going Gets Tough, Can You Afford To Market?

I already know the answer to the questions above, so don't worry about emailing me or anything. It is during the tough times that I can almost assure you most other businesses have also cut their marketing budgets, among other expenses like training, supplies, and other necessities to run a business. The fear of becoming unprofitable is overwhelming isn't it?

I am writing this article to tell you that because most of your competitors and other businesses are not devoting as many resources to marketing during the tough times...That you are in prime position to take advantage of the situation! Get out there and market your business! The "marketing traffic" is down, so your message will be more clearly received when not combined with as many other messages during these times. Some quick ideas (and inexpensive ideas) to take advantage of:

- Speak in front of groups of people at your location or at a hotel with useful information related to your industry. For example, an automotive business owner may have a "clinic" on a topic pertaining to vehicle maintenance. This event at his/her shop would include beverages and hot dogs or other refreshments. Advertise in the local paper and throw away papers three weeks before, then two weeks before, then the week of the event you are going to hold.
- At the event, you make contact with the buying public interested in what you have to say! How wonderful is that? Distribute your promotional materials freely, complete with incentives for the new clients to do business with you. While you may not sell anything depending on the type of business you operate, you have made contact and put your name in front of the buying public.
- Offer a irresistible discount or free service or items as a means of drawing people to your business. Advertise something that the buying public just cannot resist, even if you "cringe" at the thought of giving something away. Remember, these are tough times, and you are going to be doing what other businesses will not to continue to drive customers through your doors! Remember to advertise this discounted "loss leader" through a newspaper, magazine, or by just going out to a public place and handing out flyer's! Also, make sure that you have other items or services to sell when the customer traffic is flowing.

How about 100 more tips for marketing your business?

<http://www.sba.gov/managing/marketing/100ideas.html>

Use these tips to your advantage!

Did you enjoy this assorted bunch of articles and the information within? Did you hate it?

If you liked it...Send this document to a friend...and please send an email to me at joe@josephratliff.name with your feedback.

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