

# BUSINESS SUCCESS IN A BOX

MARKETING YOUR BUSINESS FOR  
HIGH INCOME AND GROWTH

AWAI

AMERICAN WRITERS & ARTISTS INC.



# **Marketing Your Business for High Income and Growth**

**Business Success in a Box  
American Writers & Artists Inc.**

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# Marketing Your Business for High Income and Growth

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# Chapter 1

## The First Thing

When you set out to establish your new business, your first and biggest concern is getting clients. To do that, you have to market yourself. That's obvious, but it's something that a lot of people approach with reluctance... and that some people never approach at all.

Don't feel bad if that describes you. It's common to be nervous about marketing yourself, especially when you're new to an industry. There's always a little bit of trepidation about what will happen if no one responds to you. Or what to do if someone does respond, for that matter.

Don't worry about it; almost everybody has the jitters at first. Once you've absorbed the material in this program, you'll be prepared to handle everything from rejection to a flood of customers.

When you are new to a field, and even when you're well established, the only way to get new clients is to make sure they know about you. And the only way to make sure they know about you is to market yourself. Marketing is vital to the success of your business.

You have something — a product or service — that people want. But unless people know about it, you won't earn much revenue. Much of marketing is about connecting with people. If you approach it with an open mind, you'll not only grow your business, but you'll also meet a lot of nice people along the way.

### The Main Thing

If there is one trait that an independent businessperson can't do without... if there is one thing that sets those who succeed apart from those who stop before they succeed... it's persistence.

Marketing is a never-ending process. Which is okay, because, when you get the hang of it, it's fun. Really. But early on, chances are you'll hear the word "no" more often than you'd like.

In the face of rejection, there might be moments when you entertain the thought of giving up your independence and returning to the world of nine-to-five, steady work. This is when you'll need a well-developed sense of persistence to keep you going.

A few lucky people are born persistent. As kids, their parents called them stubborn, obstinate, and difficult. But as adults, they can count their many blessings, because they have a priceless advantage when it comes to building a business.

If you fall into that category, go ahead and count your blessings.

For the rest of us, however, we need to learn persistence. So keep your chin up. Here are a few tips for cultivating your own sense of persistence...

- 1. Create positive habits:** Developing good habits can lay a foundation to help keep you moving forward even when faced with difficult circumstances. A good approach to creating a habit is to focus on adding one thing to your routine each month. For instance, one habit that helps many copywriters immensely is reading a quality piece of copy every day; it's the same concept as financial experts reading *The Wall Street Journal* every day. Now, it'll take about a month of keeping a new routine on your to-do list before it becomes habit. But then it will be something you won't need to remind yourself to do... you'll always remember.
- 2. Find someone to hold you accountable:** Having someone to hold you accountable can be immensely helpful. It gives you an added motivation to accomplish the goals you set for yourself. It gives you extra support in your decision to become an independent businessperson. And if times get tough, it will help you keep things in perspective. The key here is finding someone who supports your goals and will hold you to them.
- 3. Take just one more step:** Persistence doesn't come into play only in the tough times — it has a

daily impact on how you market your business. One good way to build your persistence is to take just one more step beyond where you want to stop. For example, if you've been writing a piece to market your business and feel as though you'd like to stop, write for just 10 more minutes. Or if you've been calling prospects and you're ready to call it quits for the day, make just one more call.

- 4. Start each day new:** There's no question that building your business can be hard work. It's easy to wake up thinking about all the things you didn't get done yesterday, or about that call with a new client that didn't go as well as you wanted. Persistence requires energy... so take a moment each morning to start the day fresh. There may be things you need to attend to left over from the previous day, but try to release the emotions that you tied to them the day before. That way, you can tackle them in a fresh, positive way.

## Coping with Setbacks

Sooner or later, you'll encounter a setback.

For instance, a writer I know once landed a telecommuting job. He felt that, between the time he would save commuting and the freedom to set his own hours, it would be a wonderful opportunity to begin building his freelance career in earnest.

Two months later, he was laid off. He was heartbroken. It would have been easy for him to give up his dream of a freelance career right then and there, resigning himself instead to life in an office.

But with the help of his family (who were very supportive), he was able to see that although losing the job was a big setback, it wasn't the end of his dreams. Instead, he took a part-time job and worked twice as hard to get his business off the ground. And in the end, he was successful.

What he learned from the experience is that setbacks — no matter how big — are only as permanent as you make them. If you make up your mind to view each setback as temporary and, more importantly, promise yourself that when you're faced with a setback you'll look for the hidden opportunities it presents, you'll be well on your way to building a successful business.

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## Chapter 2

# Managing Your Time

Part of success in marketing yourself or your business is taking regular action with your marketing plan. But to do that, you need at least some plan for time management.

How much time?

When you don't have any business, figuring out how much to dedicate to your marketing efforts is simple: as much as possible.

But when you do have business coming in, it's all too easy to stop marketing altogether. Then, sooner or later, you'll find you've taken care of everything you had in hand... and you don't have anything new coming in.

That's why, even when you're busy, it's important to spend time each day, or at least each week, to market yourself and your services.

Everyone's a little different. For some, it's most productive to spend the same part of every day on marketing. For others, it may be better to dedicate an entire day of the week to marketing. The important thing is to take regular, frequent, and planned action toward your marketing goals.

And a good rule of thumb is to spend 20% of your working hours on marketing — even when you have projects going. (That's only a guideline, though. You may find you need more time or less. It will vary with your goals.)

## Pursue Your Goals

We've used that word many times. So how exactly *do* you set and pursue goals in such a way that you can achieve them?

First, your goals should be focused. So get out a pen and

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paper and write down everything you'd like to achieve in your business over the next year. Be realistic, but also aim high. A goal isn't really meaningful if you don't have to work hard to achieve it.

Now take a long, hard look at what you wrote down and determine which goals are the most important. Which will do the most to move your business forward in the coming year? Circle those goals. Those will be your focus for the year. They might be anything from making a specific number of new sales in the upcoming year... to earning a certain dollar figure more than you did last year.

Write each of those goals on a separate sheet of paper — and think about what steps you need to take to reach that goal. For example, to land 12 new customers in a year, you'll want to average 1 new customer per month. Sending out 100 sales letters each month, and then following up on each letter with a phone call, is a sound plan for achieving that goal.

To do that, you'll need to have a very good sales letter for your business... you'll need to be comfortable talking to prospects on the phone... you may need samples or other sales materials... and you'll need to brush up on your sales skills.

Now you have a list of smaller goals. And you should break those into even smaller steps. For your sales letter, you'll need to work with a writer to come up with your unique selling proposition, outline the benefits you bring to your customers, craft a great headline, and then put together the body copy. You can also write this letter yourself if you have the skills. You should also decide on what action you want the reader of the letter to take. And once you've done all that, ask a trusted friend or colleague to review the letter to see where it can be made stronger.

Take similar steps with each of your main goals — break them into smaller objectives, and then break those objectives into tasks.

At the beginning of each month, review your goals and the objectives you need to accomplish to reach them. Next, determine what tasks you need to complete that month. Use that list of tasks as a guide when planning each week... and then use your weekly plan to plan each day.

If you stick to this method of goal setting, you should

begin to see yourself making immediate and steady progress toward each of your goals.

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## **Doing What's Important First**

The other key to achieving goals and to managing your days is to look at the tasks you set for yourself in terms of urgency and importance. The most critical tasks that will move you toward your goals are usually important but not urgent.

That means they have a tendency to get lost among the emergencies, both large and small, that often invade the day.

Recognizing this, and committing to completing an important-but-not-urgent marketing task first thing each day, is a sound way to keep your forward momentum.

## **Knowing When to Stop**

When it comes to marketing, another critical component to progress is knowing when to stop. It's very, very tempting to keep working on a marketing project until it's perfect. But the problem with this is that all the time you spend making that sales letter or brochure or case study perfect, it isn't out there marketing you.

At some point, every marketing piece is good enough to send out. When you reach that point, send it out, even if you know it could be better. Then you can continue to work on it and improve it as you go.

Also, don't forget to test your own marketing pieces against each other. Continuous improvement and consistent testing, even while a piece is working for you, will strengthen your marketing efforts and help accelerate you toward success.



## Chapter 3

# Self-Promotion

When you're an independent businessperson, promoting yourself is a never-ending job. Every point of contact with a customer or prospect is part of your marketing — whether you intend it to be or not.

So how you carry yourself, how you interact with people, how well you deliver on your promises, your level of commitment to excellence... all of these things become part of your self-promotion. They can be positive or negative, but — luckily — they're all entirely within your control.

## Branding

Creating a brand for your business is the process of creating a consistent image that you present to your prospects and customers. Branding is immensely helpful for several reasons:

- 1. It helps with the never-ending self-promotion that we just talked about.** Having a consistent tone and feel, along with a consistent message, means always being prepared. In all of your client and prospect interactions, your brand becomes a wonderful habit. Besides giving you more confidence, it will also build confidence *in you* on the part of your prospects and customers. And it will smooth those interactions so that what you want to come through will come through.
- 2. Branding builds reputation.** When you've taken the time to brand yourself, clients and prospects more easily remember you. They come to associate you with outstanding results... or attention to deadlines... or a business that's easy to work with. When that's something they value, they'll think of you first when making decisions or referrals.

**3. Branding adds professionalism.** A branded business is a polished business. You'll come across as together, organized, and prepared. A well-thought-out brand silently overcomes many objections.

## So What Goes Into Creating a Brand?

When your business name, the look and feel of your material, your USP (Unique Selling Proposition), and the tone that you deliver it in all work together to create a consistent image, you are on the way to branding yourself.

When you successfully brand yourself, the marketing materials that represent you and your core message will draw an immediate association with you in the mind of your customers and your prospects.

The key to branding is consistency. If your USP is providing quality widgets at a reasonable price and with quick delivery, then a name like Elegant Widgets won't suit your business concept. But Quick Widgets Cheap might.

You also need to consider the appearance of your materials. Will a flashy style suit your business concept better or will subdued professionalism on high-quality paper stock better make your statement? Consider your tone. When you deliver your message, do you want to be conversational and personable... or would a little more expert detachment work better?

These are, of course, just a couple of examples of different ways you can go when creating your brand. The one definite thing about your brand is that it should be uniquely suited to your business.

### Branding Check List

- Define the vision of your brand. (Think about what you want to accomplish for your clients with your services.)
- Define your company values. (Consider your beliefs about service, pricing, details, and commitment. Think about the promises you want to make to your clients.)

- Determine what you want to improve. (Think about aspects of your services/company that could be better. How will they fit with your brand?)
- Determine what you are most satisfied with regarding your company and services. (How will these aspects work into your brand?)
- Define the emotional response you want your prospects to have toward your company. (How will the features/benefits of your services/company serve to create that response?)
- Define the emotional reasons why customers might buy your services.
- Define the rational and emotional personality characteristics of your brand. (Are you fun to work with or are you serious and professional? How can you make these traits work for you?)
- Determine how to give life to your brand's personality characteristics.
- Determine how you will use your brand's personality to attract and retain more customers.
- Establish how you will deliver on the promise of your brand.
- Establish how you will use your brand to generate more trust in your customer relationships.
- Define your competition and determine how well your brand is positioned against them. Also determine how you can improve the positioning of your brand.
- Pick a well-known personality that your brand would represent well. (e.g., Ronald Reagan, Denzel Washington, Queen Elizabeth, Madonna). Use what you know about that celebrity personality to further refine your brand.
- Examine your brand for consistency.
- Set a timeline to give your branding efforts ongoing attention.

## **Adding Value**

Creating a brand for yourself is one important factor in self promotion.

A second is the philosophy of adding value. Because each interaction that you have with a client or a prospect is an act of self-promotion — either positive or negative — you want to be certain that your clients always come away with a positive feeling.

One way to ensure that happens is to look at each phone call, each meeting, each mailing as a chance to provide value. Always think in terms of, “What more can I give in this situation?” You shouldn’t give away the farm, but you should constantly be on the alert for ways to add value for your customers.

Added value comes in many different forms.

Paying attention to your customers’ interests and then sending along information you’ve found on the topic is one very personal way to add value to your products or services.

Using valuable marketing tools is another technique. Reports, white papers, case studies, articles, e-books, newsletters, or booklets are all pieces that you may be able to provide to your customers and prospects to add value.

Packaging is also a good method for adding value. Think about the products or services that people may want to purchase in combination and try to package them in way that will add value to the total purchase. For instance, a copywriter could offer to redo someone’s web copy at half price when a client commissions a four page sales letter. Or a woman’s makeup supplier could offer a small sample face cream when hand cream is purchased. Or a business could offer an overall discount when a customer buys a complete set of products as opposed to individual purchases.

For those businesspeople going into the service industry, the following article from Bob Bly gives you a great plan for selling yourself. And if you’re going to be selling products, you can still take away some valuable tips.

## **A Five-Step Process for Selling Services**

(from Bob Bly’s *Selling Your Services*)

In his book, *Selling Your Services*, Bob Bly tells us that there is a five-step process to selling services, and this process underscores that, as an independent businessperson, you never stop promoting yourself, even to established clients.

**“Step 1:****Generate initial interest in your services.”**

The first step in Bob’s process is to get prospects to express interest in your services. Two major ways to generate interest are to use direct-marketing techniques and to become well-known in your field or in your local business community.

Once a prospect expresses interest, sending the prospect a well-crafted brochure or package of sales materials helps to further their interest.

**“Step 2:****Follow up the initial interest to get an appointment or generate a meaningful discussion about your services and how you can help the prospect achieve his or her goals.”**

In this step, which is crucial, you follow up with the interested prospect. You try to determine if the prospect is a qualified buyer or not really a serious prospect. You’ll want to politely part ways with anyone who is too difficult, cannot afford what you’re selling, or will be better served by a different company.

When you find qualified prospects, arrange a meeting or a telephone interview to discuss their needs and how your services can help to solve their problem.

**“Step 3:****The initial meeting or discussion.”**

The purpose of this meeting or phone call is to convince the prospect to hire you.

Because the information that you relay in this meeting may be of great value, some independent professionals charge a consulting fee. If you do not charge a consulting fee, position that fact as an added value and emphasize it in your sales literature.

Your goal for this meeting is a tentative agreement between you and the prospect (now client) to retain your services.

**“Step 4:****Getting the assignment or project.”**

Even after a tentative agreement is made, you must finalize the details in the form of a contract,

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purchase order, or letter of agreement. You may also arrange to receive a deposit at this time — usually a percentage of your total fee.

Once that is done, you have truly made the sale, but you still must continue to sell your services.

**“Step 5:**

**Keeping the client ‘sold’ after the sale is made.”**

Even after you’ve closed a sale, the client may still cancel the service before the project is complete.

The final step to selling your services is to complete the project to the customer’s satisfaction.