



MARKETING WORKSHOP

By Liz Folger

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Marketing is not an event, but a process . . .
It has a beginning, a middle, but never an end, for it is a process.
You improve it, perfect it, change it, even pause it.
But you never stop it completely.

- Jay Conrad Levinson

Welcome To Liz Folger's Marketing Workshop

I can come up with a couple of good reasons why you would be interested in taking this class. You probably have this amazing home business idea that shows great potential and you are convinced that given the chance you can make this a success. Or perhaps, you already have a running business and are just looking at expanding your business and clientele.

In either case it's great that you are thinking ahead! Success is a lot of hard work and an opportunity not wasted.

Once past the decision making stage, your first thoughts most likely will border on just how you can translate your dreams into reality. In short, what's the next step?

If you thinking on the above terms I would like to assure you that this class can and will help you in achieving your business goals.

Planning

At the lowest rung of the business ladder is Planning; truly planning is the foundation on which you can build your dreams. I love the quote that says, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."

If you are a new entrepreneur or even an established one who has seen relative success, you may not be too convinced about sitting down to chalking a marketing plan. I hate to burst your bubble, however without a dependable marketing plan in place sooner or later your business curve will see a horizontal line eventually kissing the ground!

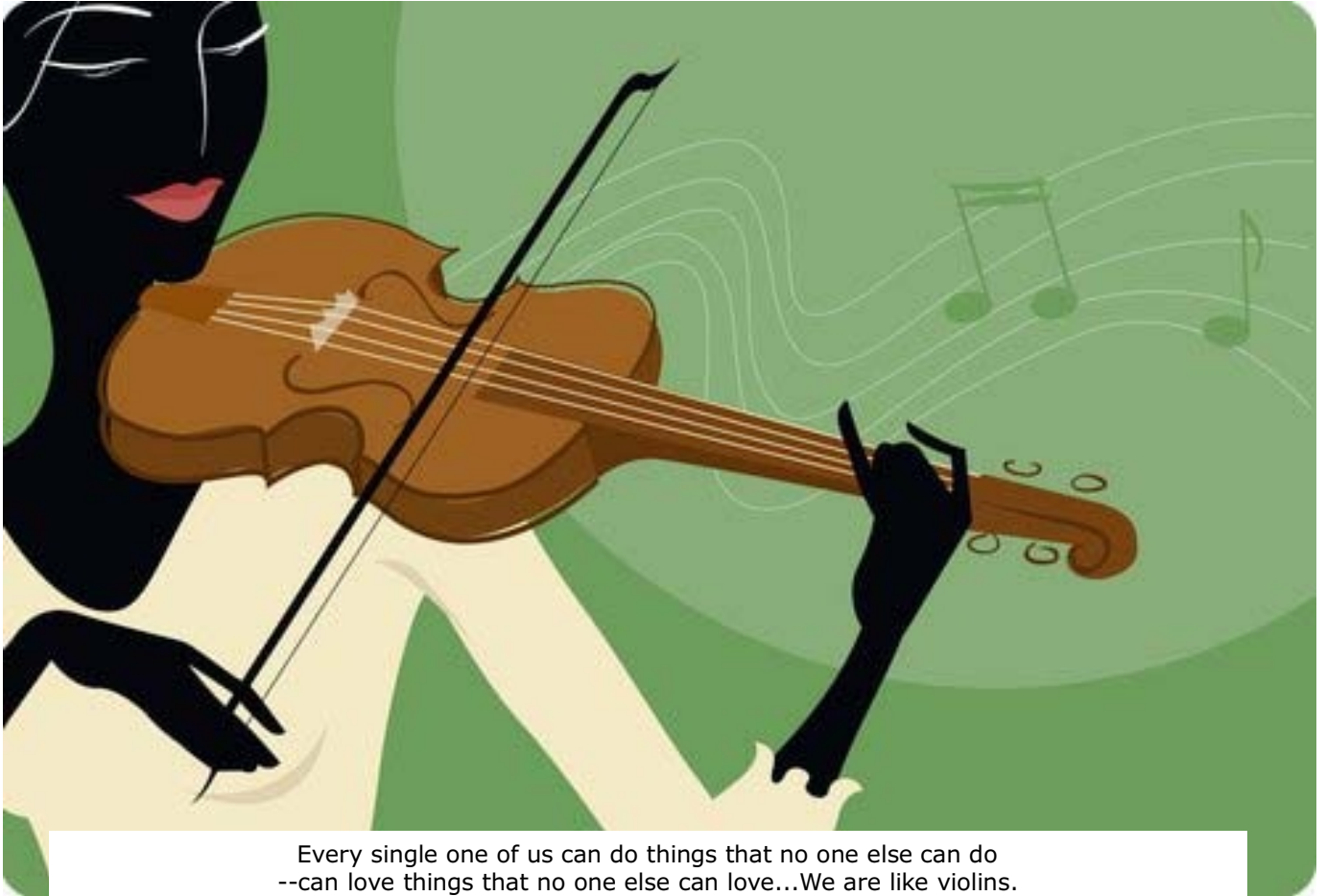
On the other hand, if your reason for doubting a marketing plan is because it sounds a little business heavy and overwhelming, then how about I tell you that creating a marketing plan is actually interesting and fun.

I know "marketing plan" suspiciously sounds like complicated business jargon, but really don't let these two words scare you. I say this because I love this part of business start-ups and I know if you are even half as enthusiastic about starting your own business you will get this way too.

Once you are safely involved in this side of your business, your mind will jump with joy at all the endless marketing possibilities that are available to you. And I still haven't touched the best part yet; most of the marketing ideas that you will find in this class are cost effective and relatively cheap. The only thing that you need to spend liberally is your time.

The best way to benefit from this class is by trying to keep an open mind. Don't be too quick to judge and say, "Oh, that won't work for my business." If you do all the assignments in this class, you're going to have ample ideas. The problem you might have at the end of the class is which ones to start with first. But I can help you with that too.

So are you ready for some business changing ideas? Let's get started!!



Every single one of us can do things that no one else can do
--can love things that no one else can love...We are like violins.
We can be used for doorstops, or we can make music. You know what to do.

-Barbara Sher

Marketing Workshop Lesson 1 - Part 1

The Beginning

When I first started out with Bizymoms.com way back in 1997, I had absolutely NO money to market the site. Today however Bizymoms.com has managed to grow from ten pages to over hundreds of pages with millions of page views a month...and oh yes, with very little, if any, money put into marketing. How did I do it? Well honestly all I really had was what I thought was a good idea and I went for it.

I'm sure all of you are wondering how I managed to that and how I marketed the site. It all started with a newsletter via chat that I personally would send out each week. And yes that is how the Bizymoms newsletter came to be. I used to host a chat many years ago on AOL called "About Work." I'd ask my chatters at the end of each chat if they would like a chat reminder for next week; all they needed to do was to email me to receive one.

In each of these chats I'd let everyone know what the chat was about and I would included a small column to go along with it. That very same newsletter today has grown from a few to about 17,000 subscribers!

Today when I look back at how Bizymoms.com has shaped up, the one thing that gives me most pleasure is the fact that it all started from scratch and yet today the only direction it is heading towards is growth. I say this because as a business owner I want you to realize that all it takes is vision and hard work to shape destiny. Don't get discouraged about where you are right now. If you keep pounding at the wood, it will take shape sooner or later. You need to do the same with your business, and soon enough your business well be out there for people to see.

A lifestyle change

If there is one thing that frustrates most business owners is when their business does not see the kind of phenomenal growth that they envisioned at the time of its conception. Going into business for yourself is not a sure shot way of making a cartload of money. I am not saying that as a home or small business owner you will not make good money, all

I'm saying is that you keep your expectations realistic. Don't expect money to pour in immediately. On the contrary, when you first start out, money will most likely trickle in, however the idea is to let that trickle grow into a stream and beyond.

What you need to remember is that a home business is a lifestyle. The lifestyle YOU want to live, the lifestyle you choose to live. That's why you're picking a business you love and NOT a business you feel will make you a ton of money quickly so you can retire in a year and sit on the beach for the remainder of your days.

Assignment # 1: Lesson 1

Write out a detailed and specific description of your business idea or running business in about 5-6 paragraphs. Don't hold back, the only way I will be able to grasp and understand your thinking is if you can tell me everything. I want to know all about it.

Why you want to start it, why you love this business idea so much. Why is this business going to want to make you jump out of your bed in the morning while you shout to the world, "I get to go to work today." I want to hear your passion about this business. Give me details about the product or service you want to sell. Why do you think customers would be interested in buying what you plan on selling? I really want you to convince me that this business is in your blood and just the thought of running it makes you breath easier.



If you're trying to persuade people to do something, or buy something,
It seems to me you should use their language, the language in which they think.

- David Ogilvy

Marketing Workshop Lesson 1 - Part 2

Marketing Ideas

Here is a compilation of 60 great marketing ideas. Once your done going through them you will be in a much better position to understand how marketing works and you might actually surprise yourself with a few of your own

Business cards

1. The most important marketing tool you can have is your business card. It doesn't have to cost you a ton of money, but you've got to have them. There are just so many things you can do with a business card. Like...
2. Give your business card out at all networking meetings such as Chamber of Commerce meetings or women in business meetings.
3. Place your card with your paid bills or when you leave a tip.
4. Place your card on community bulletin boards.
5. Write a press release about your business and send it to all local media; TV, newspaper and radio.
6. Give your product or service away to a charity auction
7. Join your local toastmaster club. You're getting a double whammy here. Not only will you be networking with other business owners, you can also brush up on your communication skills. Why do you want to do that you ask?
8. Well because thanks to toastmasters you now have a new boost of confidence and feel quite comfortable talking in front of people. You can now contact community organizations in your area and let them know you're available to give a talk in your area of expertise. Let's say you have own a dog obedience business. You could talk about the importance of dog obedience and give some tricks and techniques on teaching dogs to be well behaved. Don't be surprised when people ask for your Business cards after these talks.
9. You can now also give presentations at conferences that are along the lines of your business.
10. Teach a class at your local adult school. Let's say you're in the business of freelance writing. No doubt you have a lot of knowledge on what it takes to get published. Get paid to teach others how to do the same.
11. Let your local talk radio shows and or cable show know that you're available for interviews. Give them ten questions they can ask you along the lines of your business. Try to think of newsworthy events. Let's say you're a career coach. Have them interview on the importance of finding a job you enjoy. How it can improve your physical and mental health.
12. Let your local cable show know that you're available for interviews. Let's say you're a party planner. Think about the next Holiday and do an entire show around that particular holiday.

13. Give a free workshop in your community. Let's say you're a personal weight management consultant. You could host a one hour weight loss workshop. No doubt after people hear your kind words of encouragement and informative tips they'll want to hire you for additional help.
14. Purchase a magnetic sign for the side of your car or a decal with your business name and contact for the back window of your car. As you drive the kids to school etc, you're working...you're advertising your business.
15. Consider a vanity automobile tag with your company name.
16. With all these technology at our fingertips you can easily create just one or two t-shirts with your business logo and URL printed on them.
17. Wear your new t-shirts at events like runs, parades, fairs...the more people (like family members) wearing your shirt the more you're going to stand out.
18. This could sound a little going overboard...but sponsor a sports team. You'll buy their shirts, but have your business name on the shirts! This is of course if you do have to resources to pursue such an idea.
19. Place your flyers on community boards etc.
20. Contact bingo halls and donate a prize for their games.
21. When you send out an email, make sure you have a signature file that is automatically attached that includes the name of your business, and relevant contact information.
22. Get a website up! It doesn't have to cost a lot and it doesn't have to be fancy or outlandish. Just make sure your URL is listed on all business cards, letterhead, flyers etc. This way people can check you out 24 hours a day.
23. Register your website on every free search engine out there.
24. Get a banner made for your site. There are sites out there where you can create one for free, or you can opt to pay someone to do this.
25. Exchange banners with other websites. (It's a form of networking, like exchanging Business cards).
26. Sign guest books on other sites.
27. Write a regular column for other sites. There's always a need for fresh content. Use your area of expertise and put it to work. Just like the talks, workshops and conferences you speak at, write it down. Contact sites and see if they would like to run your column for free. Just make sure you include a nice byline at the bottom of your column with you business and contact info.
28. Use the same columns above and send to trade publications and magazines that are relevant to your area of expertise.
29. Update your website as much as possible. That keeps people coming back!

30. Write an online newsletter for your website. You can send it out maybe once a month. Include tips and tricks for your industry, maybe mention you're running a special on a certain product or service that month. Send this to current customers, have a sign-up page on your website for this as well
31. You can get a free one line listing in the yellow pages of the phone book.
32. Offer your first time customers a freebie. It doesn't have to be anything big...but who turns down freebie!
33. See if there's a local welcome wagon group in your area. See if you can include a business card, flyer etc. in their packages.
34. You might think about having promotional pens, magnets, calendars or something relevant to your business made up that you can give away.
35. Get a memorable phone number, such as "1-800-PETSITR."
36. Leave a message on your answering machine that includes your business.
37. Don't be afraid to talk about your business. This is not the time to be shy. Be proud of what you do and tell other people about it. Word of mouth is the BEST form of advertising.
38. Does your church, school or local organization hold spring or holiday bazaars? Set up a booth with your business info.
39. Repeat customers are where it's at. Spend a little cash on them. If possible, send them a thank-you card when they purchase something from you. Mail them of upcoming specials or give them a special discount.
40. Give comment cards out so your clients can give you feedback on your product and or service.
41. Return phone calls promptly.
42. Provide Rolodex® cards or phone stickers pre-printed with your business contact information.
43. Ask clients what you can do to help them.
44. Send birthday cards and appropriate seasonal greetings.
45. Photocopy interesting articles and send them to clients and prospects with a hand-written "FYI" note and your business card.
46. Ask your current customers if they have any family or friends that could use your product or service.
47. If you mail out orders, include some type of business literature with it. Order form, catalog, a postcard that gives them a small discount on their next order. SOMETHING!!!!
48. Make a goal of doing at least one thing that has to do with marketing five out of the seven days a week.

49. Start making a file of marketing ideas that you can refer to.]
50. Stay alert to trends that can affect your target market. You can use this information in your press releases, newsletters and mailings.
51. Read market research studies about your profession, industry, product, target market groups, etc.
52. Study your competition on a regular basis. How are they advertising? Are they raising or lowering their prices etc.
53. Keep your eyes open for marketing/sales conferences in your area.
54. Make a goal to read a certain amount of marketing/sales books a year.
55. Get together with other business owners once a week or once a month to brainstorm new marketing ideas for each others business.
56. If you do decide to pay for classified ads, Code your ads and keep records of results.
57. Sponsor an "Adopt-a-Road" area in your community to keep roads litter-free. People that pass by the area will see your name on the sign announcing your sponsorship.
58. Produce and distribute an educational CD-ROM, audio or video tape.
59. Write a book on the topic of your expertise.
60. Put on a family/friend potluck. During the event tell everyone about the business you started and ask them for their help and support. Give them business cards so they can help spread the word about your business.

Assignment # 2: Lesson 1

Choose three ideas from those listed above that you think would be your Top Three choices to make your business grow and thrive. Write a 350 word game plan on each one and explain how you plan to proceed with each business.



Customers buy for their reasons, not yours.

- Orvel Ray Wilson

Marketing Workshop Lesson 1 Part 3

Your competition!

Come on, this has probably been on your mind all along. If wishes were horses you'd drive them all away! Well you can't so the next best thing is to face it head on. Take a serious look at your competition while you're working on your marketing plan. Your competition can actually help you. Study your competition, see what's working and not working for them. If you want to out beat your competition then do this assignment.

Assignment #3: Lesson 1

Who's your competition? Visit your competition. Get their flyers, business cards, buy from them! See what you're up against.

Assignment #3: Pick your Top Two competitors and use the information below to find out as much as you can about them. Send me all the pertinent information regarding both, according to the list below. Compare any areas not covered above between each competitor and what you plan to offer. I'll comment on your business' strengths and potential weaknesses, as well as those points for your competition.

- Name of Business:
- What do they offer that's similar to you? How can you improve it?
- What do they offer that you don't?
- What will you offer that they don't?
- What do you like about their business?
- How's their customer service?
- What's their price like?
- How's the quality of their product or service.
- Why will customers want to buy from you rather than this particular competitor?

Marketing Workshop Lesson 1 - Part 4

Advertising Your Business

One of the quickest ways of losing a lot of money and fast is by placing ads indiscriminately in the hope of generating wider client bases. Big mistake! Why waste good money when there are perfectly good and cheaper ways of getting the word out to all of your potential clients...without spending anything more than your time...I can't seem to say enough about that. Free advertising for your business...read on....

Place a 500+ Word Ad for FREE?

Do your eyes cross at words and phrases like, "CPM", "65 characters per line", "\$7 for one line, \$3 for two lines, \$1 for each additional line, or "That ad comes to -- \$34.28 for 1 ½ placements in our newsletter." That may be exaggerating just a bit, but it can get a little confusing and expensive when it comes to placing an ad on a site or in an e-publication.

What if I told you that you could write an ad - as long as you'd like -for free? That got your attention, didn't it? But you say, "Liz, that sounds too good to be true, and we all know what you say when something sounds too good to be true." Well, first I'd like to say how proud I am of you for actually listening to what I have to say. And second, yeah, I might be making this sound a bit better than it really is. But it is possible; all it will cost you is time.

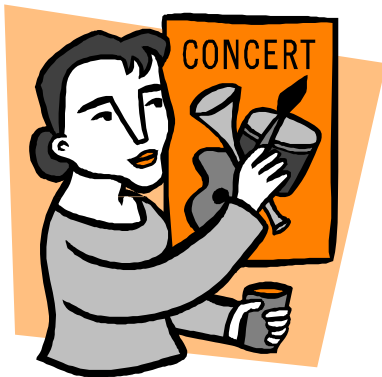
No doubt, if you're selling a product or service, you have become an expert on what you sell. You know why someone should go with your business and how it will make them a smarter, prettier, or a more confident individual.

This is where your FREE 500+ word ad comes in to play. Web sites and e-zines are popping up everywhere. They are all looking for fresh material. They need new ideas to share with their readers. Think of it this way, they want YOU to write an article about your area of expertise and share it with their subscriber base that may be anywhere from 100 people to hundreds of thousands of people. I'm not exaggerating here.

Marnie Pehrson, owner of Ideamarketers <http://www.ideamarketers.com>, a site that actively seeks articles to offer online publishers, talked to me about how to get your article published. Here's what she had to say.

Tips for getting your articles published:

- Study the e-zines for which you would like to write. What types of articles do they print? Submit accordingly.
- Don't mass broadcast the same article to a hundred e-zines. Hand-select your articles to match the e-zine. Do your research and address your article to the editor personally.
- Write about something unique. Sure, Internet marketing is popular right now -- probably too popular. Unless you've got a fresh inventive angle, your article will have too much competition to stand out from the crowd.
- Save your bio/contact area to "sell yourself." Don't try to do it in the body of the article."
- In this lesson start thinking about the endless possibilities of writing a few articles every month. Make them a great read and you'll start getting e-mails like, "Hey, I read your informative article on such-and-such a site and I'd like to know if I could post your article on my site." Now that's what I call exciting and profitable marketing.

Fun & Effective Presentations

You answer the phone and the friend on the other end basically says...."Want some free advertising to say 25 - 50 people?" "Free?" you say. Sounds good, but then this person, who all of a sudden may be your worst enemy, says, "Yeah, we need someone to give a speech at our club meeting. You have such a unique home business that we'd love you to share how and why you started it and how it's helping our local community."

Bad thoughts flash through your mind. Your hands get cold and clammy, you start to stammer and say..."Uh.....when...when...is this talk...uh...um...scheduled." This friend (with friends like this, who needs enemies) on the other line gives you the time and date and says, "GREAT, I'll schedule you in."

Your thinking, great! Not only is this your worst nightmare come true, but you actually agreed to it. What was I even thinking!! Agreed public speaking is not everyone's cuppa tea, but don't let this be a reason for NOT undertaking such a project.

Below are 5 ways to make your next presentation fun and successful.

USE PROPS

No one wants to listen to a speech or a lecture. Don't hide behind the podium, read your speech and then sit down. Boring!!!! Get up and move around. Wear a funny hat, throw things around, make some noise. Get these people's attention. And get it quickly. It's a fact that you have 90 seconds to convince the audience that you're worth listening to or not.

TELL STORIES

Facts and figures are nice, but they aren't something that should rule your presentation. I start, end and sprinkle throughout my talks -- stories. People can always relate to a good story.

Take the Bible for example. I use this book because it's a best seller. People usually have one or more copies of the Bible in their homes at any given time. Find one of those copies and you'll see LOTS of stories sprinkled with guidelines.

You might say, "But I don't know any stories." Oh please, how long have you been living? It doesn't have to be a life changing story, just one people can relate to. If you are looking for a life changing story, look to the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books --lots of great stories there!

LOOK IN THEIR EYES

The best way to gauge the attention levels of your audience is by making eye contact. When you talk and can maintain eye contact, it's an indication of your professionalism and seriousness. I know a lot of you might shrink away at the thought of making eye contact, but with practice you can get better. When you talk, look into your audience's eyes. Hold that contact until you get some sort of response like a nod, a smile or something.

END EARLY

Don't ramble on. You know the saying, "Keep it short, stupid!" Well, that might not be exactly the way that goes, but you get the point here. When you see people start to walk out, look at their watches, drift off to dreamland...your talk has either been a bore from the start or has gone on way too long. You want to end so that people are still interested in what you have to say and wouldn't mind if you kept talking a bit longer. I always pretend the guy in the front row is about to boo me off, and so keeping that in mind it gets easier to keep to my 90 seconds of spotlight.

HAVE A Q&A TIME

After you end -- a little early, ask if anyone has any questions. Because no matter how prepared you are or how smart you are, you still didn't answer all their questions. This is also a great way to shorten your talk a little. Say you are slated for a 30-minute talk. You can present for 15 minutes and have 15 minutes of discussions. People are going to ask questions you never thought about adding to your speech. This will make your talk very well rounded.

When using the above 5 ideas make sure your speech is fun -- fun for you to give and fun to listen to. People will remember your talk (and your business) much better if it was a never-to-forget presentation!

*** BONUS TIP ***

I know I said I'd only give you 5 tips, but I'm in a great mood and thought I'd share one more way to make your presentation even more fun for you. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!! Find a family member who will listen to you and can give you some much needed feedback. The more comfortable you are with your presentation, the less fear you'll have. Promise!

Don't Forget To Write a Press Release

Let me ask you a question; which of these makes more business sense to you - spending hundreds of dollars on a small one inch by one inch ad in a publication OR spending nothing on an article which focuses on your business that could cover half a page or more?

I don't know about you, but being a work-at-home mom I do not have the same marketing budget as IBM or Pepsi. So I try to be as creative as possible when it comes to marketing by home business. One of the best ways I've found to do this is by writing a press release.

You have probably read many press releases in your lifetime in magazines, newspapers, and seen them on TV news reports and probably didn't even know it. You just may have thought some lucky business was profiled in the news that day. Actually what might have happened is that a business owner spent some time writing up a press release and then he/she just sent it over to several media channels. The result, extensive coverage at low costs.

You probably are debating the idea of using a press release for your own business now. Can this press release idea work for you business? Absolutely...and oh it's free. The only thing it's going to cost is your time. And that isn't the only good news; a press release isn't a one time thing. You can send them out when you start your business, when you add new products, host a charity event, your business in some way relates to the top news happenings...And the list goes on and on.

So how do these press releases work you might ask? First of all you need to look at your target market. Are you trying to reach just your local area? Then you need to target local media. If your customers are all over the nation, then you need to look at the larger press markets such as Good Morning America, The New York Times or a specific trade publication.

Whether you're dealing with nationwide or local markets the following is extremely important to keeping your press release from being thrown in the trash.

- Read and become familiar with the publications you send your press release too. Ask yourself again and again if this publication is the correct one for your release and how much do you think will it help in targeting your niche market. Make sure your press release is sent to a specific editor. No, Dear Editor, letters. Find out if your press release would make more sense in the Business section or the Home & Family section. Then find the editor in that section who might be interested in your story. I'll be honest, hundreds of thousands of press releases are sent out all the time. You need to make yours stand out. By stand out I don't mean bright pink paper or a musical card attached. Your story needs to have a human angle to it. Does your story relate to a media event happening right now? Can your story save lives, money...? Can it promote happiness, longevity...? When you write your press release don't talk about how great your business is, talk about what your business can do for your customers.

- How, What, When, Where, Why! Answer these questions in your press release. And make sure all your important information is in the first paragraph. Be sure your information is clear, concise and to the point.
- Don't forget to include your contact name and number. So many times press releases are dumped because the editor cannot follow up or ask questions because the sender hasn't included a number or name.
- Follow-up is a must. But, I don't know how many times my press releases have become stories because I called the specific editor I sent my story to and asked if they had received it and if they had any questions. Make your calls quick and to the point!! Don't hound them.
- A good length for a press release is one page, two at the most. Short and sweet does it all the time.

Warning: If you are fortunate enough to get your press release in your local paper sometimes wire services will pick up your story and it can go nationwide. This has happened to me. Sometimes when only looking for local coverage, you can get national coverage without even trying.

The following was written by an editor who has dealt with press releases on a regular basis. This is what he had to say:

Most of the press kits we receive that I don't immediately place in the "circular file" have the following:

- Name and hometown
- Business/occupation and related (or unrelated) education/experience
- Awards received
- Why the info is being distributed about you -- are you going to be making appearances at speaking engagements or on TV, radio?
- A short anecdote about your experiences in your field (emotional hook - can be funny or poignant)
- What someone else has to say about you: a colleague, mentor, supportive family members, quotes from any prior media exposure. Let someone else toot your horn, in other words.
- End with a motto, credo, and wise words to live by.

Press Release Template

You're Logo Here

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (date) Put the date that you want the information released

"Title Here" (Example: New Service Makes It Possible For Toddlers To Communicate With Their Parents)

CITY, STATE (Example: San Francisco, CA) This is the opening paragraph, and it should be really brief but explain all important points. This paragraph should be anywhere from 3 to 5 sentences. It should include the event that's going on, the date, time and important people.

The next paragraph goes into more detail. For example, this section could explain the importance of the event and why it's taking place. This is a good place to mention that the service offered reduces frustration between parents and babies and can make a families life easier. In general, remember that most important information should be placed at the beginning of the article - information at the end is less likely to be read.

Another section could talk about the need for your particular classes. This is where you'll go in detail about how it got started and what services you offer. Once again, you should keep paragraphs at about 3 to 5 sentences in length.

The very last paragraph is called the "boilerplate." It is usually no more than 2 to 3 sentences.

Contact Information:

Name:

Company :

Telephone:

Fax :

Email Address:

Here are some online sites to help you write that press release that can become news.

Lifetips

<http://pressrelease.lifetips.com/> - this has some great basic advice and tips for sending your press release.

Dr. Randall Hansen's Guide to Writing Successful Press Releases

<http://www.stetson.edu/~rhansen/prguide.html> - this is a great site. You'll find two great examples of press releases, tips to make sure your press release makes the news and a whole lot more.

Express Press

<http://www.xpresspress.com/PRnotes.html> -this site tells you what to do when emailing your press release.

Assignment #4: Lesson 1

Did you notice the very last paragraph in this handout beginning with "Liz Folger..."? That's what's known as a bio blurb and the information contained therein is what often leaves your reader with a lasting impression. For your final assignment for this Lesson, I'd like you to write your own bio blurb. It should be no less than 25 words, but no more than 100 words.



Competition brings out the best in products and the worst in people.

- **David Sarnoff**

Marketing Workshop Lesson 2 - Part 1

You're Niche

Last lesson you had the opportunity to check out your competition. I hope that was a helpful lesson. Let us now see how creating niche markets or client bases can further your business. A lot of people are apprehensive about discovering their niche potential. The fear that they might discover they are wrong is always present besides the fact that they feel by doing this they're missing out on bigger and better potential clients.

Actually the more you niche, the easier it is to market your business. You know exactly who you need to target and where to reach them. Specialists always have greater income potential than generalists.

Let me give you a few examples:

Let's say you want to be a personal trainer...

Okay, so you target anyone who wants to get in shape and stay there. Let's see how we can niche that further -

Women Only...

- 18 to 29
- 30 to 45
- Active Career
- Career/Homemaker
- Full-Time Homemaker etc.

Men Only...

- By Age
- By Profession
- By Personality (Type A, Laid Back, etc.) Etc.

Pregnant women...

- Normal pregnancies
- Difficult pregnancies
- Twins or more
- Working outside the home while pregnant etc.

Individuals with disabilities...

- Emotional
- Physical
- Mental
- Severe
- Mild
- Impairs work/Doesn't impair work
- Can drive/Can't drive etc.

Senior citizens...

- Low income
- Medium income
- Well off
- Can drive/Relies on public transportation or family
- In own home/Lives in apt/Lives with family/Lives in resident or nursing home
- Active/In-between/Sedentary

Runners...

- Professional/Semi-Pro/Amateur
- Life-Long/Started between 5-10 years before/Just Begun
- etc.

Those on a low carb diet...

- Need to lose over 100 lbs/50-99/25-49/10-24/under 10
- Those who cheat on their diet/those who sometimes cheat/those who never cheat
- etc.

Or maybe you want to be a freelance writer. Sounds good, but what's your area of expertise. Write about what you love. The sky's the limit here. What do you know a lot about?

- Parenting
- Motorcycles
- Gardening

See where I'm going here? You could even niche each of those topics. Also don't limit yourself to just writing about what you know. Sometimes the road less traveled is the road to self discovery.

Parenting

- Infants
- Infertility
- The teenage years
- Empty nest syndrome
- Divorce

Motorcycles

- Cruisers
- Harley Davidson
- Sport Bikes
- Sport Touring
- Dirt Bikes
- Racing

Gardening

- Fruit Trees
- Herb gardens
- Rock gardens
- Vegetable
- Flower

When you niche yourself, you're finding what it is you enjoy and know the most about, which in turn, enhances your reputation for knowing what you're talking about and getting the job at hand done correctly.

Assignment # 1: Lesson 2

For this assignment I want you to write your business idea down and then think of all the ways you can niche your idea. Give me at least three major niches and at least three subsets in each niche that relates to your proposed business idea.



People don't want to be "marketed TO"; they want to be "communicated WITH."

- Flint McGlaughlin

Marketing Workshop Lesson 2 - Part 2

You're Business Idea

Now let's do an assessment of your business idea. Remember detailed and specific assessment is necessary if you don't want any unwelcome surprises to spring up. I personally love this part. It's like "My Business Discovery 101" I use the word discovery because that's exactly what you're about to do.

Assignment # 2: Lesson 2

My Business is: (One or two work description: Word processing, consulting, tutor etc.)
Who is going to need my product or service? Who is my target market? Try to list as many as you possibly can. Let's say you want to start a janitor business. Here's where you want to probably niche yourself a bit. Do you want to do private homes, businesses, apartments?

Profile your target market. What's your average customer like? Remember, break this information down as specifically as possible, e.g. "Female, 25-45, Career Oriented, College Educated." One aside here: Don't be intimidated if you, yourself, have less formal education than your clients. Remember, if they NEED your service and you're competent in your business, formal education becomes a moot point.

What are the marketing goals you want to convey? What is your business going to do for your potential customer? How is it going to help them? Try to list as many as possible here. Let's say you're a resume writer. You're going to be helping your clients get jobs, or a better paying position.

List all the ways the above can be conveyed. (Press releases, website, ads, newsletters, radio interviews... Let's say you're a jewelry maker? What are some of the ways you can let people know about your jewelry? Simple ideas like, wearing your jewelry and having friends and family wear it as well. I've heard more than once of jewelry makers wearing their own goods, being complemented on it and making a sell right there.

What are your key selling points? (Overnight service, your expertise in the field, reasonable prices?)

List all ways you can network? Let's say you're in the business of making cakes. And your specialty is wedding cakes. You'd want to network with photographers, caterers, wedding consultants, hotels, bridal shops etc. Then on this list you'll want to be very specific. Get the phone book out and start listing other businesses. Get their names, addresses and phone numbers.

How much time a week do you plan to spend networking? Don't forget about looking into women's small business organizations that might meet once a month for breakfast or lunch. In this assignment I want you to look into networking meetings that are offered in your area. A good place to start is your local Chamber of Commerce.

Your marketing budget: The thought of you placing an ad... makes me nervous. I really want you to think of free or almost free ways to market your business. I know that the thought of placing an ad seems like the right thing to do. But let's look at all the free ways first. Remember a potential client needs to see your ad about six times before they contact you. Do you have the kind of money needed to keep these ads out there?

Each business is different though. If you think that a paid ad for your biz is a good thing, plan it out. Calculate a monthly cost. Create a marketing budget for the next six months. Don't forget to calculate all your misc. expenses how ever big or small. A couple of dollars here and there can mean a lot in the final figures.

My Business Is:

- Who is going to need your product or service? Which is your target market?
- What is your business going to do for a potential customer?
- List all the ways the above can be conveyed.
- What are your key selling points?
- List all ways you can network?
- How much time a week do you plan to spend networking?
- Your marketing budget

Marketing Workshop Lesson 2 - Part 3

Marketing Tips That Bring You Business

Would you deliberately sabotage your newborn business? I mean completely destroy it, so that there is no way you can continue? Of course not, you would say? However, it happen and most of those times, you wouldn't even be aware it happened! You may think you have a great product or service, however with the wrong marketing plan or ideas you may end up doing more damage than any good.

For example there are so many business owners who spend hundreds of dollars on ads and then expect miracles to happen overnight. Still others think acquiring a business license is all the marketing that their business needs. Unfortunately for them, the truth reveals itself in the form of business failure and not to mention money and time wasted.

Customers are not going to just happen; you have to make them happen.

Below you will find three women who have made their marketing blunders and are willing to share with you what they did wrong. Plus they have some tips they'd like to pass on to you. Among the three of them they offer 38 years of home business marketing experience.

As Marian Hays says "What me? Blunders? I wish it weren't so! They are such good teachers...but it's so much wiser to learn from others and save the grief."

Can you share some of your marketing blunders you've made in the past with your home business? What were the results of these mistakes?

"In the beginning most of my business came from referrals, and I assumed it would continue. However, when my clients' businesses were slow, so were the referrals. Occasionally (especially if I was very busy at the time) I didn't follow up properly with referrals. This damaged the future value of the contact. When things are slow, it's too late to begin the follow up process." - Marian Hays, LifeSkills U,

"Not having a marketing plan in the beginning. Results: Lost precious time, money, and effort, plus delayed the progress of my company for 6 months. - Kate Purcell, RN, National NurseSearch

"I applied for some so called telecommuting positions when I was starting out, they were either scams or MLM plans. I tried running classified ads for my services; both resulted in no leads, no business and a loss of time and money." - Ronni Rachelle Smith, Just Call Ronni

Their Marketing Tips That Work

- Networking can throw up a plethora of opportunities and doors. And you never know where a lead will come from.
- Join as many business organizations you can.
- Understand your market. You have a unique style, but so do your customers. Believe in yourself and the value of what you are doing! Mould your marketing around what people want and not what they need.
- Be patient, persistent and consistent.
- Keep brochures, business cards, etc in your, handbags, car at all times, you never know who you might meet.
- You should be passionate about the product or service you are selling and believe in what you are doing.
- To practice your marketing pitch and body language, stand in front of the mirror and try selling your product or service to your self. If you can do a good job on your self, then you can sell to anyone.
- Set aside some funds for marketing.
- Targeting your market. Time and money is wasted if you just blindly send out brochures, flyers to a market that does not use or need your service.
- Make sure your brochures, business cards, letterhead look professional and attractive. If you can't do it, then hire someone to give your company a professional face lift. Make sure your first appearance makes a good impression. When it comes to marketing your business, unfortunately the first impression can mean the last impression too!

Assignment # 3: Lesson 2

Assignment # 3 Write up a mock-up of your business card and letterhead.



What we call results are beginnings.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Marketing Workshop Lesson 2 - Part 4

Conclusion

So how has it been so far? What do you think? These past two weeks you have gone through several marketing assignments and have been exposed to a range of marketing ideas and options. This marketing class was aimed at enriching you with a multitude of marketing information.

You now know more about your business and future customers. That has to be a good feeling and surely must have left you confident about the direction of your business.

Assignment #4: Lesson 2

So what have you learned so far? Anything shocking? Something you weren't expecting? Do you have any questions about where to start...and how you're going to proceed?

A marketing plan for your business is just what you need to help you focus on where you need to go from here with your home business. So what are you waiting for?

Remember, if you have a goal and a plan you can do anything you set your mind to!!!

Final Assignment: Find one small business website in any area. Critique the website in fewer than 250 words. Was it effective? Did it make you want to buy the product or service? Why or why not? Was the site visually appealing and easy to navigate? Presuming you were a bona fide customer, would you return to the site? Finally, what have you learned from this site--either positive or negative--that will help you in your advertising efforts.



Authentic marketing is not the art of selling what you make but knowing what to make.
It is the art of identifying and understanding customer needs
and creating solutions that deliver satisfaction to the customers,
profits to the producers and benefits for the stakeholders.

- Philip Kotler