

Strictly **MARKETING** MAGAZINE

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Delegate....

OR stay small
forever

Top 10

Advertising
Myths

Media Spotlight

The Proactive
Employer

Randy Gage

Dishes on Marketing

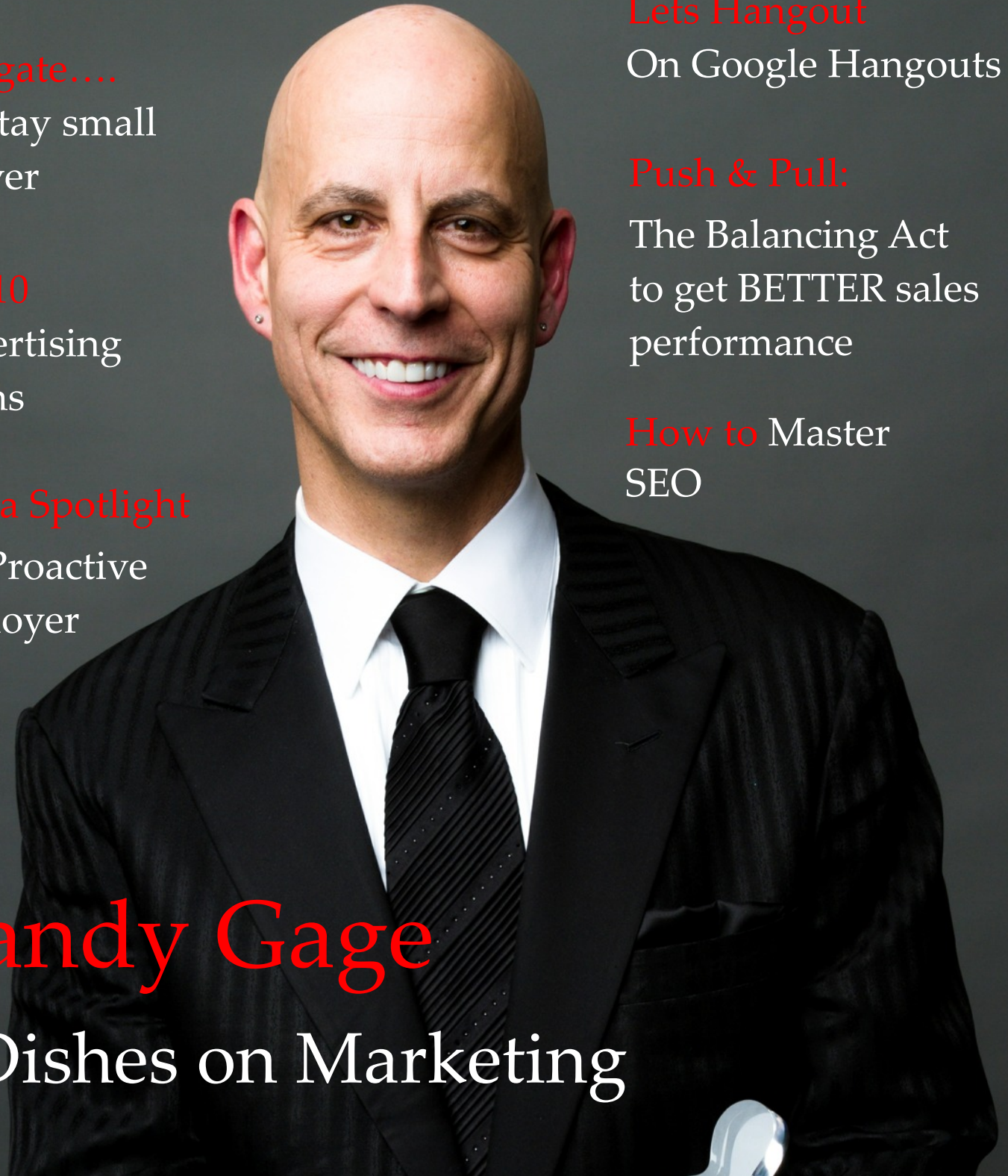
Lets Hangout

On Google Hangouts

Push & Pull:

The Balancing Act
to get BETTER sales
performance

How to Master
SEO



Letter from the Publisher

Our magazine is co-hosting the "Starting Your Business" Expo, a half day event focusing on the needs of new businesses. If you are within your first 5 years of business or you are looking to start your own business, we encourage you to attend this expo. This year, the event will be held in Ft. Walton, Jacksonville and West Palm Beach areas of Florida. If you are able to attend please stop by our booth to receive a complimentary issue of our magazine and to register for a FREE ¼ page ad! Visit the website to learn more about the exp and to register online. You can learn more about the event by visiting <http://www.startingyourbusinessexpo.com>.

In this issue I had the opportunity to interview Prosperity Leader, Randy Gage about Marketing. Randy shared some valuable tips & suggestions to jumpstart your marketing efforts.

We always enjoy hearing from readers; you can contact us at info@strictlymarketingmagazine.com.

Wishing you continued success,

Kerry Heaps

Publisher, Strictly Marketing Magazine a division of Kerry's Network, Inc.

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Top 5 Do's & Don'ts on **SEO**



Here are the top five Do's and Don'ts to help you navigate your SEO efforts.

DO:

Survey your customers: When optimizing your site for SEO, understand how your customers are going to use your site from a variety of different devices. For example, a line worker using a tablet on the factory floor light log on to send their manager a picture of the product they need from your site to repair broken machinery along the production line. A sales rep out in the field, on the other hand, might log on via mobile device to download a white paper or other piece of marketing content.

Focus on quality content: Search engines like Google and Yahoo! Are learning more and more about our individual search histories because we as users are increasingly relying on the same search engine and computer/browser to find the answers we need. This means search engines are learning more about what we're looking for and why, what we're purchasing and when. Marketers need to better understand and speak to those user needs through quality SEO content. There, for example, is a big difference between a customer's content needs (shipping info, product specs) and an industry enthusiast's content needs (blog posts, research and reports, etc.).

Measure results wisely: The way you measure how effective your SEO program is will depend on the type of content you deploy. For PDFs, it might be the number of downloads. For paywall content it might be the number of requests and from an e-commerce perspective it might be total sales. Search engines are much stricter on up-and-coming sites or less established domains when determining rankings, so focus on understanding your customer and developing superior content first. Measurement will come with time.

DON'T:

Put quantity over quality: As search engines continue to shift away from off-site links as a primary authority driver within search results, we're going to continue to see a shift away from quantity of links and a shift toward quality of links. Effective SEO is less about the number of links and more about where those links are coming from.

Stop improving: In my 15 years of experience in SEO, one mistake I consistently see organizations make is the belief that SEO is a one-time thing people need to do to their website. The truth is SEO is an ongoing process that never stops. The moment you stop improving our website is the moment you've decided to let it die, and it is very difficult and expensive to catch up once you've been left behind. SEO is a long-term investment and should be treated as such.

Rich Missey, North American SEO manager for Newark element14 <http://www.newark.com>

Let's Hangout on Hangouts! Ideas for Using Google Hangouts for Growing, Connecting and Marketing Your Business (Part One)



Do you often feel that running your business, organization, department or program simply means you spend lots of time in meetings? When someone asks me what I do, I often reply with chagrin that my job is going to meetings. I now live in Las Cruces, New Mexico, but while living just outside of Washington, DC a few short months ago I learned that there is no such thing as a 30 minute coffee meeting or even a one-hour meeting. Due to traffic, distance and travel time in such a large metropolitan area you could expect an hour of travel time prior to and following the meeting. That does not even take into consideration the cost of parking which was usually around \$20 in DC, if I was lucky!

Now don't get me wrong, I love meeting people and getting to know them, hear their story, learn about what makes them tick and explore the possibility of working together in some capacity. What frustrated me was the non-productive time driving around the beltway and the time spent in regaining focus when returning to the office. When Google+ launched the Google+ Hangout platform I instantly knew that this was something that could change my life and meeting conundrums.

So what is a Google+ Hangout?

Webopedia says that Google+ Hangouts is a free video chat service from Google that enables

both one-on-one chats and group chats with up to ten people at a time. While somewhat similar to Skype, FaceTime and Facebook Video Chat, Google Hangouts focuses more on "face-to-face-to-face" group interaction as opposed to one-on-one video chats, and utilizes sophisticated technology to seamlessly switch the focus to the person currently chatting.

Google Hangouts can be accessed via laptop and desktop computers as well as with Android mobile devices (Android "Gingerbread" v2.3 and later) and, in the near future, iOS-powered mobile devices. In addition to video chatting, Google Hangouts users can share documents, scratch pads, images and YouTube videos with other users. Google+ Hangouts also offers a "Hangouts on Air" feature for broadcasting live video conversations that are accessible to anyone with a web browser.

By downloading Google Hangouts at <http://www.google.com/hangouts/> you can Hangout with anyone, anytime, anywhere!

Google Hangout's On Air made it possible for us to not only host a face-to-face meetings with up to 10 participants, it also made it possible to stream our meetings live with the potential to reach 1000s of viewers, while at the same time recording the meeting for future use. And don't forget that because Google owns YouTube streaming and recording your Hangout's plays a major role in search engine optimization (SEO) by making it easier for marketers to show up in search results.

Hopefully you are now imagining your own uses of Google+ Hangout's and Hangout's On Air for your own business.

Here are a few ideas to get you started using Google+ Hangout's for your business:

- The next time someone wants to meet you for coffee let them know you would love to have coffee together over a Google Hangout. You can quickly meet face-to-face or schedule it on your calendar for a future date and time.
- Because Google Hangout's offers a load of additional features you can readily share document creation and whiteboard collaboration. Just imagine that if you are coaching or consulting how useful this can be.
- If you provide computer technical support, like my husband, hangouts allow you to troubleshoot computer problems quickly while screen sharing.
- Use Hangouts for on-the-spot customer support and empower your employees to quickly respond to customer needs.
- Do you have big news to share, especially with your important clients, friends, colleagues. Use Hangouts to share current news and updates.
- Host weekly Q & A sessions with potential new clients. This provides the ideal platform for showcasing your expertise and helping solve problems that makes you invaluable to current and perspective clients.
- Are you scratching your head wondering what to talk about? Why not dig out old content and make it new again by featuring it on Hangouts.
- If you are a virtual assistant or work with a virtual assistant why not use Hangouts for your weekly meetings. You can readily share draft versions of projects and keep the workflow progressing.
- Bring in the expert from out-of-town who can enlighten your perspective and current clients about business trends that could impact their business now and in the future.
- Use Hangouts to share good news and give shout-outs to your customers, staff and colleagues.
- If you send out online weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual newsletters insert a recorded Hangout! It can be a message from you, a recorded interview or anything else that may be of interest to your audience. Just remember, Hangout's don't need to be long to have impact!
- Use Hangouts for adding video content to your blog.
- Are you heading to conference? What not do short Hangouts with interesting attendees, sponsors, vendors or speakers and presenters? All you need is your laptop, phone or iPad and you are ready to roll. Just be sure you have downloaded the Google Hangout App first.
- Use Hangouts to host webinars, demonstrate and educate
- Are you an Artist? Why not use a Hangout to showcase your work and projects.
- Use Hangouts for creating video as content and or research to use in your blog, book, online products and more!

Cynthia de Lorenzi is an International Motivational and



TEDx Women Speaker, Google+ and Social Media Consultant, Futurist, Artist, Photographer, CEO and Chief Instigator [Success in the City](#), Success in the City TV.

RANDY GAGE

Dishes on Marketing

Strictly Marketing Magazine had the opportunity to speak with Prosperity Leader, Randy Gage about Marketing. Randy shared some valuable tips on marketing your business.

SMM: Could you share with our readers how you started your business?

RG: I fell into it, which is probably not the answer everybody's looking for, but I'm an information entrepreneur. If you would have asked me when I was 10, 15, or 20, what I wanted to be when I grew up, I would've never told you information entrepreneur because I didn't know such a thing existed. I was in network marketing, I was doing some training for my team every month, which I found wasn't really congruent with the company I was working with and I thought if I could train my team, I could train other teams. I started speaking, people wanted prospecting tools and I created some training materials but that's not my real passion. My real passion is teaching about the principles of prosperity as opposed to just network marketing. I reinvented myself and became an information entrepreneur on the subject of prosperity. The timeless principles of how to create wealth. That's what I love to do and I have a lot of passion for that, so it was my destiny, I just didn't know it.



SMM: What are some marketing activities that have proved effective with your business?

RG: Almost everything, if you do good marketing, whether it's direct mail, or radio commercials or magazine ads, it can help your business. I have to say what drives the bus today is the internet. So it's online marketing, it's the vast majority of what I do. I still do direct mail for my seminars, and we get great response from direct mail, because of course, no one is doing it anymore. Everybody's patting themselves on the back and so proud of how much money they're saving

because they don't have to pay for printing and postage. So a lot of people aren't doing it in my industry because I do it, and I'm the only one doing it, it's really effective. However, most of what I'm doing marketing-wise today is through the internet, one way or another.

SMM: Social media has such a big impact on marketing, could you share a few tips for business owners that are struggling with how to utilize it?

RG: Prioritize your platform. You can't be on everything and one of the traps to fall into as a marketer is you're going to say, "I need that Facebook page and that Twitter account and a YouTube channel, and an Instagram account," you will just make yourself crazy. So you have to really look at a couple of things. One is you have to look at where are your clients, where are your prospects, where are your customers? If you're in the corporate world, there's a good chance they're on LinkedIn. If you're in something else, the big platform for you might be Twitter or some other occupation, maybe Facebook and Twitter. So don't try to do them all. I reserve my name on every major platform, and I dabble with it. I started with Twitter and I learned what Twitter was and how it worked and how people communicated on Twitter and I got good at it. Once I was done with Twitter, then I looked at Facebook then I put up a Facebook fan page and developed that and worked it into my routine. Everything is going to video today, anybody under 35, written information is not really the way to reach them. So then I got serious about my YouTube channel and just last week we broke 1.5 million show views on the channel, so I'm really excited about that, because it shows I did a good job with that. I can't be on every platform, and nobody reading this interview can be on every platform. Think about where your client base is, and then how you like to interact with them.

The other advice I would give people on social media is to engage, listen, provide real value and be generous. There are all kinds of social media marketing gurus, mavens and experts out there. Most of them are dreadful and they're giving people really bad information. People hire one of these consultants and they set them up on all of these sites and they send out pre-programmed tweets and corny motivational tweets every two hours or so

then product pitches, and those people aren't really on the platforms, they're not engaging with their followers, they're not listening to what the marketplace is telling them. So as a result they're not really providing value, so they don't get real value from the platforms.

If you are on Twitter, use a program like Hootsuite and set up a column for the mentions column, anytime someone mentions you, you're going to see it, I think a tool like Hootsuite makes your life a whole lot easier, and it gives you the ability to do it in a very productive timeline. When people say stuff about you or they ask you questions, you see it and you can respond to them and engage with them. This allows you to do the other thing, which is to provide real value. If you're listening to the people who are your audience, you're going to see what their problems are, what they're looking for and you can give them value. Also, I would say retweet stuff, forward stuff, share stuff, like videos, everybody thinks they need to be the be-all, know-all, end-all expert and all they do is promote themselves. Whereas if you just took a few minutes every day, and shared the blog that you read this morning that was fascinating, or a YouTube video that you thought was inspirational, or a Tweet from somebody that you thought was really thought-provoking. That's what I think your audience wants to know, they want to follow you. If you engage with them, you're listening to them and you're providing real value and you're being generous.

SMM: What's one mistake that you see business owners make with marketing?

RG: One mistake is not testing. I'm mentioning that because I'm putting myself at the top of the list. I'm arrogant thinking that I know what my tribe wants and I can be lazy with this and the truth is, I would benefit and I bet everybody who's reading this would benefit if we get more testing because so much of the online marketing is driving the bus. That means we

can analyze anything and everything. So every headline, every price offer, every subject line, if we use the technology that's just readily available today, we could test all the time and really see what is getting us the biggest bang for our buck and then we could modify our marketing and go with it. I need to do more of that myself personally and I would bet most entrepreneurs need to do more of that as well.

SMM: Technology is constantly changing, what do you think will be some of the best platforms for marketing?

RG: I already mentioned that video is a big driver for any demographic. Mobile Apps are changing everything. I just finished my next book, it's called *Mad Genius*. It's about how to think like an entrepreneur and one of the things that I say in there is that I think mobile apps are going to change marketing more than direct mail, printing, the internet, email, radio, television, all put together. Mobile changes the dynamics of everything, it puts us in control in one sense. So if you're Delta Airlines, or Lufthansa Airlines, or Singapore Airlines, you create an app and all your frequent flyers get the app, then we can check in at our gates and check in for our flights, and pick our seats and select our meals. So it serves as golden handcuffs that wed us to the vendor we've chosen. Mobile apps give entrepreneurs the power in that way, but the other thing mobile apps do is they take away the power from the entrepreneur and they put it in the hands of the consumer.

Most of the apps that people are really crazy about aren't created by companies and entrepreneurs and vendors, they're created by a third party who disrupt the space. They create them from the context of what the customer actually wants. The third party app is going to tell you what time the plane is really going to leave, do they have a movie from this decade, where's the gift shop, etc.

If you look at apps like Uber and other apps that have just disrupted their space and changed the game, they're not really done from the context of the entrepreneur or the business, but from what the client wants. For example, I click my little Uber button and the car is downstairs before I get out of the elevator, it's already prepaid, the tip is at it, it's already going to be emailed to me and go to my accountant and they're going to have it all set for the income taxes, it's just a better idea! It's always clean, they're always friendly, they always speak the language, because they know they're going to get rated after every trip. So to me it's fascinating that Uber was created by people who were not in the taxi business. Amazon was created by people who were not in the bookstore business.

That's how mobile apps change everything because they're usually the ones that really go viral and create the most traction they are created by consumers who are seeking how to get something better and faster.

Every entrepreneur who's reading this, I would say ask yourself two things, "Should I have an app for my clients, customers, and prospects? Can I solve problems for them? How can I create an app that will connect me with my tribe, provide them with value, and help them reach their goals?" The other question I would ask is, "If someone else comes in to my space and wants to get between me and my customer, what is the app they would create? How do I protect myself against that?" There will always be somebody who's trying to create an app to keep you away from your customers and take your customers away from you, or find a way to get your product or service at a better price.

So if you're not cognizant about what's going on in the mobile space, you're probably going to get disrupted and you're probably going to get crushed.

SMM: What are some marketing tips you would offer to a new business owner?

RG: First of all, get a picture in your mind of your perfect client. How old are they? What is their position? Are they a president of a regional community bank? Are they a sales manager at a car dealership? Are they a hobbyist who wants to know how to be a better archer? Are they homemakers who want to know how to raise healthy, happy children?

Second, learn the three things that are keeping them awake at night. If you know what the three most vital, critical, important things that keep your target prospect awake at night, then you know how to solve their problems and you will be the most valuable resource in their life.

You'll never have to worry about marketing, because you will have transformed yourself from a marketer who sells at them, to a trusted resource who solves their problem.

SMM: If you could only share one piece of marketing advice what would it be and why?

RG: Stop pitching people and start providing value. Now why would I say that, because that's where the breakthroughs live. That's where true relationships, lifetime value customer relationships are developed. Stop pitching people, stop selling at people, and start providing value. Engineer all of your marketing activities, all of your logistical activities, all of your customer service interactions with this mission of "how do we provide value to our audience?" I've been teaching prosperity now for 27 years and I can tell you that all true prosperity, all wealth is created by adding value or solving problems. Solving problems of course is just another way of adding value. If every entrepreneur reading this would just go back and stop saying, "How do we sell more of our widgets to our customers?" and reframe the question, because if he asks the wrong question, the answer is irrelevant.

So if we say, "Well, how do we sell more to people?" Well, I don't think that's really the question you're looking for, the better question is "how do we provide more value for our target market? How do we solve problems for our target market?" If you go with that mindset, that's the best piece of marketing advice I could ever give anyone.

Randy Gage is the author of the New York Times bestseller, Risky Is the New Safe. He was selected as one of the "Who's Hot!" 25 speakers worldwide by Speaker magazine. Randy is one of the preeminent experts on prosperity and success in the world.
<http://www.randygage.com>

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MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

The Proactive Employer Radio Show

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Show: The Proactive Employer

Website: <http://www.theproactiveemployer.com>

Show Description: The Proactive Employer is your source for the latest news and commentary on workplace issues, HR best practices, employment litigation risk management and EEO compliance. Host Stephanie R. Thomas, Ph.D., simplifies the complexities of today's business environment and engages listeners in discussions on key workplace challenges. Featuring conversations with leading policymakers, thought leaders and subject matter experts, The Proactive Employer focuses on issues of interest to HR professionals, compliance officers, corporate counsel, employment attorneys, and others interested in workplace issues in the United States and around the world. Our goal is to provide the information you need in a format you can use. We get past the rhetoric and reduce the noise to actionable items. At The Proactive Employer, we focus on the bottom line and give you the practical suggestions you need to become an employer of choice.

How often is your show/publication released? Weekly

What time does a guest need to call in? 2:55 PM

What is the length of your show? 1 hour

What would you like a potential guest to submit to you? Bio, Headshot, show title and short description of what they would like to talk about, 5-10 Sample Questions and how they plan to promote the show if they become a guest.

Delegate... or Stay Small Forever



One of the most important decisions an entrepreneur needs to make to get to six figures and then to move on and create a multiple-six-figure dream business is to release and let go. This strategy could make an amazing difference in your business with just three words – “delegate or die!”

At the very least, it’s “delegate or go directly to Squishyville”... do not “Pass Go” and do not collect additional revenue and higher profits. This mindset challenge is one that trips up far too many entrepreneurs and it is essential that you climb and conquer this entrepreneurial mountain if you truly want to create a dream lifestyle.

In the beginning, most entrepreneurs start their businesses on day one, armed with an idea, a skill, or talent they want to bring to market and build a business. Whether you’re a dentist, lawyer, accountant, or web site developer, you have a talent that solves problems, provides value, and fills a need.

That is the essence of a successful business. But something happens between the time you get your business cards and hang out your shingle and when your growth becomes impeded because you’re not willing to release and let go. This will shed some light on potentially what’s holding you back, and I hope the story and information I share will help you decide to act... decide to release!

In most cases, I think it’s fair to say to every entrepreneur initially you will wear many hats running a small business. In addition to your “skill” hat (whatever you do), you also wear the hat of other personnel within a typical company such as the accountant, customer service rep, delivery person, janitor, head of marketing, legal advisor and about a hundred more!

To be clear: recognize that every big business starts small. As sales grow, so do the demands for the time and attention of the entrepreneur and business owner. The stumbling block for many entrepreneurs occurs when they hold on too long to the notion that they can do it all – the lean and mean approach.

One common expression you’ll hear around the entrepreneurial water cooler is, “I can do it faster, cheaper, and better than anyone else.”

Now if I took some creative license and got into the mindset of many entrepreneurs in a safe environment where full disclosure occurs, the full version of that expression probably sounds like this:

“I can do ‘it’ faster, cheaper, and better than anyone else, and I’ll be darned if I’m going to pay someone to do something I can clearly do myself. I want that money in my pocket. I also do not want to hire additional support personnel until I reach a certain point where I can no longer do it all myself.”

Do these words ring true for you? Have you actually said them to someone? Or at least thought them on more than one occasion?

Over the course of my entrepreneurial journey, I’ve gone from being an “I can do it faster, cheaper, and better than anyone else” entrepreneur to having a support team of nine plus people. And every time I hire someone new, my gut twinges slightly, so I ask myself two really important questions:

- Is this new person truly essential to my company and necessary for our continued growth?
- Will this new person either free me up or free up some other key person on my team, so we can implement more and move this business forward at a faster rate of speed?

Here’s the bottom line regarding personnel: You should hire slow and fire fast, but if you need to hire to keep growing – then hire! I created a video on this topic for Newsletter Guru TV and in delivering the message I likened it to this expression: If you’re thirsty, you should have already been drinking. If you feel like things aren’t getting done and your progress and speed are not what they should be, you should be delegating!

What’s even truer is that you do not hire anyone unless they’re going to increase your profits. That is really the only reason to “invest” in additional

help – to help you make more money! What’s important to keep in mind here is that the person you hire is going to help you increase profits by growing your business.

Don’t fall back to the “I’m not going to pay someone to do something I can do myself” mentality, thinking that doing it yourself leaves more money in your pocket. That mentality leads to slow-to-no growth. That mentality leads to Squishyville.



Jim Palmer is a marketing and business building expert and in demand coach. He is the founder of the Dream Biz Academy and Dream Business Coaching and Mastermind Program. Jim is the host of Newsletter Guru TV, the hit weekly Web TV show watched by thousands of entrepreneurs and small business owners and he is also the host Stick Like Glue Radio, a weekly podcast based on

Jim’s unique brand of smart marketing and business building strategies. Jim is best known internationally as ‘The Newsletter Guru’ and creator of No Hassle Newsletters, the ultimate ‘done-for-you’ newsletter marketing program used by hundreds of clients in nine countries. Learn more at www.GetJimPalmer.com.

How to Master Your **SEO**

So you built a great website. What can you do to bring in more new customers searching for your products or services? How can you attain a higher position in search engine results?

The simple answer is that your website must be built – and the content written – to accommodate more than one type of visitor:

- The human kind (your customers and potential customers)
- The robot kind (search engine robots that crawl websites and generate search results)

It takes a solid understanding of both audiences to optimize your website for search. This is the art of search engine optimization, or SEO.

First, you must have a basic understanding of how search engines work. Search engine robots crawl site pages, then catalog and file the pages based on the information they collect. Next, the robots serve and rank listings for those pages in search results based on relevancy to the search term(s) typed into the browser, plus other important factors.

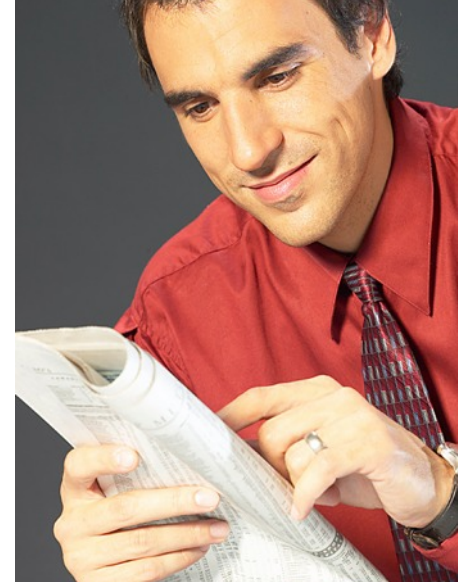
Here are SEO tips to help search engine robots interpret and catalog your pages correctly, which will improve your ranking in search results:

- Relax. It may seem overwhelming, but you can take some easy steps to improve your search rankings.
- Know your human audience. Identify keywords (search terms) they would use to search for your product or services. These may not be the technical or marketing terms you would personally prefer to use. Think like a customer – build a list of keywords that resonate with your customers.



Need additional help? Free keyword tools can help you select some of the more relevant search terms for your products or services.

- Create original content unique to your products or services with your human audience in mind – and keep it up to date. Search engines reward fresh content with higher rankings.
- Use keywords naturally within your page copy and headlines. Also, include them in your URL, page title tag, alt image tag and in your meta description. While Google has eliminated the ranking factor of meta keywords from its search ranking formula, we still use language for search. Use what you can to your advantage.
 - The URL and page title tag are the first two areas a search robot will scan. They tell the robot what the page is about. The page's title tag is important, as it is visible on the tab above the browser and appears as the search engine results listing headline. It should not be longer than 50-60 characters.



- Alt image tags are descriptions of photos on the page and can be found in coding. Search engines can't see photos, so alt image tags provide important information about this piece of content on the page.
- Meta descriptions are the descriptive copy that shows below the search results listing headline. Although meta descriptions won't help your ranking, they will help the searcher choose whether or not to click the search listing, so keywords can also be helpful here.
- Provide a great user experience. Make it easy for human visitors to find what they need within one to two clicks. Give them good content so they'll stay. Multiple page visits and more time spent on the site are good signals to a search engine that your content is valuable to users.
- Make sure your site is multi-device ready – not just for desktop computers, but also for tablets and mobile phones. This goes back to the user experience. Make it easy for users to use your site regardless of which device they use. With the explosive growth of smartphone penetration and mobile devices often within arm's reach when the urge to search occurs, this is something you can't ignore. Also, Google is now identifying sites that are mobile-friendly in mobile search results and prioritizing them in rankings.

Is local search traffic important? List your business in Google My Business if your business needs to rank locally for search. It will list your business in Google Maps (shows up in search listings) and Google+.

Local search results get priority in search rankings on Google.

- Make it easy for visitors to share content from your website by providing social share buttons. Also, share news and links to content on your website within social media posts to give your followers easy access. Social media activity shows search engines there is value in the content.
- Make your pages accessible to robots and link to other pages of your website; make sure there is no coding impeding robot access.
- Links from outside websites to your website can help your site receive visitors you may not normally reach. Links from sites that have a high domain authority (what I like to call content authority) rubs off on your website. That means top trade or news sites help your ranking. Want to know your link status? [Open Site Explorer](#) is a very useful SEO tool.

Eliminate duplicate pages, or provide a 301 redirect if you want to preserve the link juice from an older version of the page.

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Push and Pull:

The balancing act to get better sales performance

If you have ever managed employees, or more specifically sales professionals, you know how delicate the balance between pushing and pulling for better performance can be. I remember when I was just starting out as a business owner I thought that everyone I hired should be able to perform at my level. This, of course, was a catastrophic mistake when it came to my demeanor while managing my sales team. It meant that as a manager I certainly was much more of a stick man than the carrot and unfortunately it took me too many years to learn that you can't manage everyone that way. So how do you achieve that balance and discover what works best?

Let's take a few of the realities of the typical sales professional into consideration. They tend to be hungry for recognition, are used to winning, are horrible with paperwork and are often less detail oriented than other folks. These general traits create havoc when trying to manage a group of individuals that don't necessarily respond to the exact same motivation techniques. Some feed on the competition and beating out their neighbor in the next cube while some only focus on their own wallet and could care less about what Larry sitting next to them is doing.

In the past I managed each individual exactly the same way and did not take into account their personal motivating factors. More recently I've realized that to achieve the best results, each team member needs to be managed according to what best motivates their performance. Once you determine what someone's motivating factors are, you can communicate with them more effectively to get better performance.



Here are a few tips to help you strike a balance and achieve better performance from your sales staff:

1. **Determine their motivating factors** – You can have a system in place and manage staff within that system. But that does not mean you should ignore their individuality and what pushes each rep to succeed. You can use assessment tools or your own intuition to determine someone's true motivation to help keep them focused on achieving their personal sales goals. By getting to know each rep on your team better, you can personalize a performance plan and incentives that will really make them push harder to close deals.
2. **Cater to their strengths and support their weaknesses** – I use an assessment during our hiring process on each new rep to see what their strengths and weaknesses are. When we create their four week on-boarding and training program, my staff creates each program individually to focus specifically on bolstering the sales rep's strengths and identifying and supporting their weak points

during the sales and then new account process so there are no surprises when a new rep hits the field.

3. **Rules are meant to be bent** – Now, not every rule. Your sales goals are your goals. What I mean is that you need to take into account a complete overview of a staff member and their performance when doling out a reprimand or even a compliment. If you have a professional that pulls in 60 percent of your business and consistently hit their goals but struggles with paperwork guidelines.....put performance plans in place that allows people who sell at certain levels to get help with their paperwork. This will allow those top performers to focus on selling more deals. Remember, you are in business to make money and not just to be fair to everyone. Top performers DO get special treatment. If others want that treatment then the hope is that this preferential treatment will encourage them to work harder and perform better.
4. **Praise more** – Give people credit for the little things they do during the day so when you bring the hammer down it really strikes a chord and it properly motivates them to have corrective behavior. Having a tendency to be consistently negative will not only make your staff immune to true criticism but also tends to drag performance down. I find that positive reinforcement is a great motivator. I put together a “Rep of the Month” club where sales reps get gold stars for following procedures. The rep with the most stars at the end of the month wins a small prize, usually a gift card.
5. **Have a stick** - Yes, there’s always a carrot and a stick. I believe in positive reinforcement, but if there’s a rep who doesn’t repeatedly shirks policies and procedures with no

repercussions, eventually the rest of your team will follow suit. Lay ground rules, give people some wiggle room, but have a plan in place to give verbal and written warnings, and even have penalties in place if bad behavior progresses past those points. Things like getting skipped for house leads, lowering their networking budget for a month or getting skipped during referral partner assignments can all be effective if used correctly.

Whether you are a small or large team, big business or small, I personally feel that these are a few rules that are cost effective to implement. They simple take time and effort to put into place, but they will be well worth the effort.

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Top 5 Tips for **Networking** Success

1. I publish an article once a week around topics that my readers will find interesting and helpful and they will then hit replay and ask if I would be able to help them in their business.
2. In addition to using Constant Contact once per week for my newsletter, I arrive early and stay late to each of my presentation so I may greet and get to know my audience. I personally say hello and shake hands with as many audience members as I can so I can better hear their stories and challenges which will help me change or create new presentations around those challenges. This also helps me with newsletter content if my ideas are timely and relevant to my readers.
3. I volunteer in my local community through various non-profit Boards, Rotary and my church. By reaching out to help my community become more successful, people take more of an interest in what I have to offer as a business owner.
4. Whenever I am at networking functions I try to connect with a few people authentically versus trying to canvass the gathering for quantity of connections. If I can offer insights or help just a few people I meet at these events, I am creating a more positive, lasting impression which great networking is all about.
5. I use social media as more of a place for people to find me. If my profile on these sites like LinkedIn and Twitter looks professional and my expertise is relevant and helpful, potential clients do reach out to me to talk further about how I may help them.

Tips shared by Diane Amundson, Diane Amundson & Associates <http://www.dianeamundson.com>

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How to Master your SEO

...continued from page 14

- Add rich snippet markups to add content to your search engine results, such as ratings and reviews, locations, contact information, author photos, video images, price ranges, event dates and times. For more on rich snippets, visit <http://moz.com/blog/a-visual-guide-to-rich-snippets>.

The following can hurt your ranking in search results:

- Don't put important text or headlines in images or photos. Search engines cannot read images or photos.
- Don't rely on photos and videos to tell part of the story for the same reason as above.
- Don't stuff your pages with keywords. This could do more harm than good, as search engine robots may see your pages as marketing spam.
- Don't use the meta keyword coding field in your CMS unless you want your competitors to know the keywords for which you want to rank. Only use it if needed for internal search functions.

Wendy Storey is a search marketing and media professional with a history of successful integrated campaigns and product launches. She has national, international and regional experience in a range of categories, from agriculture and automotive to financial and furniture. Storey leads search marketing strategy and implementation at Wray Ward, a leading creative marketing communications agency located in Charlotte, North Carolina. <http://www.wrayward.com>

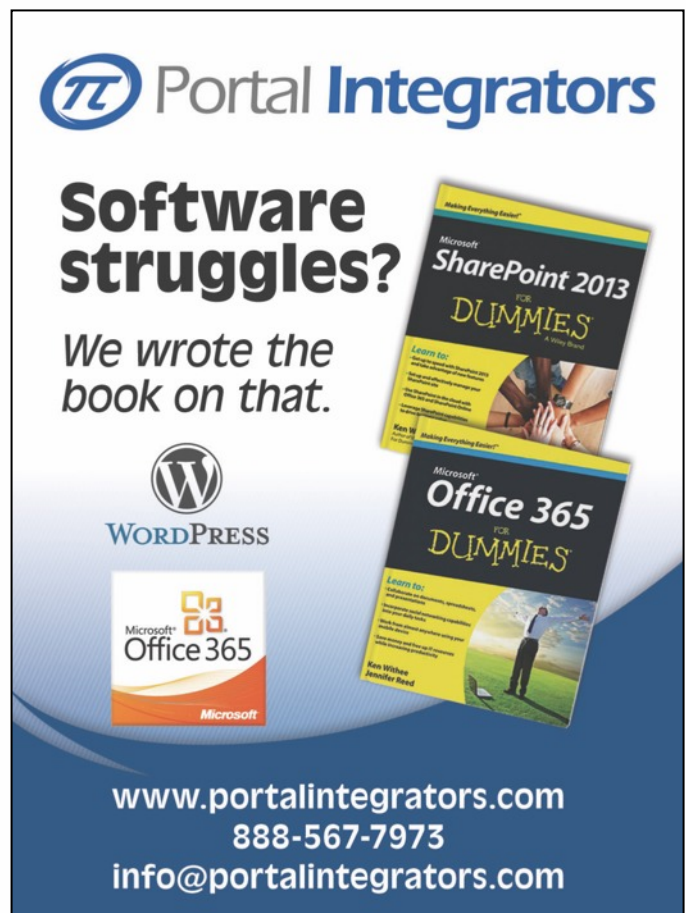


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What a **Highly Effective Sales Process** Can Do For You

The goal of marketing is to create interest in your product or service and then direct these prospective buyers to your door. Once there, it's the function of sales that takes these interested prospects and converts them to customers, thus generating revenue. Many business owners do not realize how vital this one component is: your sales process. You may also not realize that the success or failure of your business relies on it.

What's true for many organizations is that they have a team of salespeople with different levels of sales skill. Some salespeople have high closing rates while others convert a smaller number to sales. Certain individuals sell very high dollar transactions while other salespeople miss opportunities leaving money on the table. Wouldn't it work out well if you had your best closers deal with all your most lucrative prospects, and this happen every time? In order for that to happen a system must be in place, otherwise your results will be random.

The most successful organizations have a "system" for everything, also known as a process. A process is something that is set in stone and followed by everyone because this is the standard protocol for a particular event. If you found something working very well and it's producing the highest results compared to all other approaches, wouldn't it make sense to have everyone use that same high yielding approach? Of course. For example, there is a reason why your best salespeople are consistently getting more sales and for higher dollar amounts than the rest. It could be a number of things from; connecting with the prospect, understanding their needs, how these salespeople are presenting your products, etc. Imagine if all of your salespeople did the same thing from start to finish? That would be a sales process.



A sales process should not be created just by mirroring your top salespeople. When organizations try this approach they wind up copying the wrong things. Each person on your sales team has their own individual personality so copying someone else will not work. In this article we will teach you exactly how to create a sales process that is very effective and can be used by anyone. This framework will allow each salesperson to implement their own personality into the structure of the sales process.

Let's talk about what exactly a sales process is and who should have one. A sales process is a structured way to help a customer purchase. It guides them by understanding exactly what their needs are and by educating them on how to meet those needs with your company's products or services. As far as who should have one? Everyone. Let's take a simple example, a restaurant. Pretend you go to a restaurant and as you are greeted by the waitress with a big smile, you're given a menu. The waitress asks if you'd like to start with any alcoholic beverages. She says "we have the most amazing strawberry frozen margarita, would you like to try it while you go over the menu?" You agree. She also mentions a couple different appetizers that they have on special to munch on.

You and your guest pick one while she goes to get your drinks. With a couple drinks and appetizer, your tab is already 40% higher than it would be if you hadn't even ordered your food yet. Now she comes over and starts going over the menu. She asks you if you prefer chicken, fish, or steak so that she can recommend the best choices. After all, she knows more about their food than you do, right? After understanding your preferences she recommends two delicious dishes for you and your guest. A couple times she popped by and simply said "would you like another?" These harmless refills are not only adding to the tab but she made it so easy to buy. Now your meal is done but before you can ask for the check, the waitress comes by with a tray filled with deserts. You might have planned on skipping dessert but now that it's in front of you and that cheesecake looks so good, you agree to share one with your guest. You went from a \$50 dinner to a \$100 dinner just through the process of this great salesperson. What if she asked you what you'd like to order, would you have chosen to get an alcoholic beverage on your own? Maybe, maybe not. What about the appetizer? If she didn't tell you about the appetizer special you might not have thought to order it. What if she told you about the appetizer after you already made up your mind about the dinner? Most likely you would have said no because you had already solved the hunger problem in your mind. At the point of ordering appetizers, you were still hungry and that decision was asked to be made in that moment. That moment was the most opportune time to get an appetizer sold. What if she had asked if you'd like to see the dessert menu once you were finished with your meal? If you were so full there was a good chance you'd say no. Instead, she assumed the sale and showed you the desserts knowing that there was a 30% better chance of you saying yes after physically seeing a piece of your favorite dessert in front of you.

To create your own sales process, it must have these components:

Connecting- People must like you before they can buy from you or listen to your recommendations. They must trust you.

Understanding Needs- You can't solve a problem you don't know they have. Gather information of how you can help them.

Presenting- Demonstrate how your goods or services are a solution to their needs.

Closing- A salesperson's job is to recommend to buy, in quantity and quality. You're the expert.

Objection Handling- A customer sees an obstacle and you must help them overcome that obstacle through education.

Delivering- Deliver more than you promise. Create a better experience than the expectation.

Upsell/Down sell/ Cross sell- If the customer says yes, then 30% of the time you can up sell or cross sell additional products. If the customer says no, down sell to a smaller product or trial package.

With a well-planned sales process, your organization can deliver a better customer experience and dramatically increase profits. Take the time to create this process and train your staff on how to deliver it effectively.

George Athan, CEO, Mindstorm Strategic Consulting. You can learn more about George by visiting his website at <http://www.mind-storm.com>

Top 10 Advertising Myths

We have compiled the top 10 advertising myths that are present in today's market.

Netflix is killing TV. In reality, audiences are watching *more* programming than ever before. The difference is they are often time shifting—watching programs at their leisure—and they're viewing TV-based content on a variety of different devices. Because they may be multitasking when watching, they may not be nearly as engaged with the content as in previous generations. However, in spite of this, TV is still the #1 place to get the most eyeballs: it's still the largest mass reach advertising vehicle in existence.

Digital is measurable, so measure everything. It's easy to drown in a multitude of analytics and metrics. However, most of this data doesn't provide the insights necessary to make good business judgments. It *is* possible to have too much data, and more is not necessarily better. Think about generating smart data vs. more volumes of data, and how to turn these analyses into actions that matter.

Magazines are dead. It's true that the print medium is not what it used to be even a few years ago, but magazines are alive and well, thank you very much. Audiences are still reading them, they're just doing so in online formats and on multiple devices. Audiences today may be reading a publication online, going to the website, using apps on their phone for instant updates—or all of the above. Consumers today approach content on their own terms. Let them consume content on their terms.

No PR is bad PR. Just look at Inc. Magazine's 2014's list of social media fails. From Global Village (Duluth, MN) supporting MLK Day by offering "25% off anything black," to LG's mockery of the iPhone 6. Problem? The tweet in question was sent from an iPhone! The point is that PR and social media are only as good as the people behind the tweets or posts or... well, you get the picture. Before trying to take advantage of topical "real-time marketing," make sure your guidelines are well-defined and rules of engagement are put in place.

No one watches live TV anymore. This would be a major concern if it were true. But in actuality people still *do* watch live TV. As much as today's audiences record and time shift many entertainment programs, they still don't time shift live sports, breaking news, and big events, like the Academy Awards or Saturday Night Live's 40th Anniversary Special. What's important is to know your audience and to go where they're likely to be watching.

Next year will be the "Year of Mobile". Mobile is here in force. This is particularly true among ethnic audiences. African-Americans and Hispanics consume more media on their mobile devices than in any other form. The one piece of technology people are most likely to buy is smart phone, which allow the user to accomplish many things with just a single device. It's also likely the most affordable, too.

Consumers hate advertising. This might be true if we left it at that. Consumers appreciate advertising that delivers content they want, when they want it. Content drives engagement. The more advertising aligns with the content that attracts audience interest, the more likely that content will be accepted and considered. In many ways, native advertising is the newest version of the advertorial—but it's much more targeted. It's an old idea that's been reworked for today's modern environment.

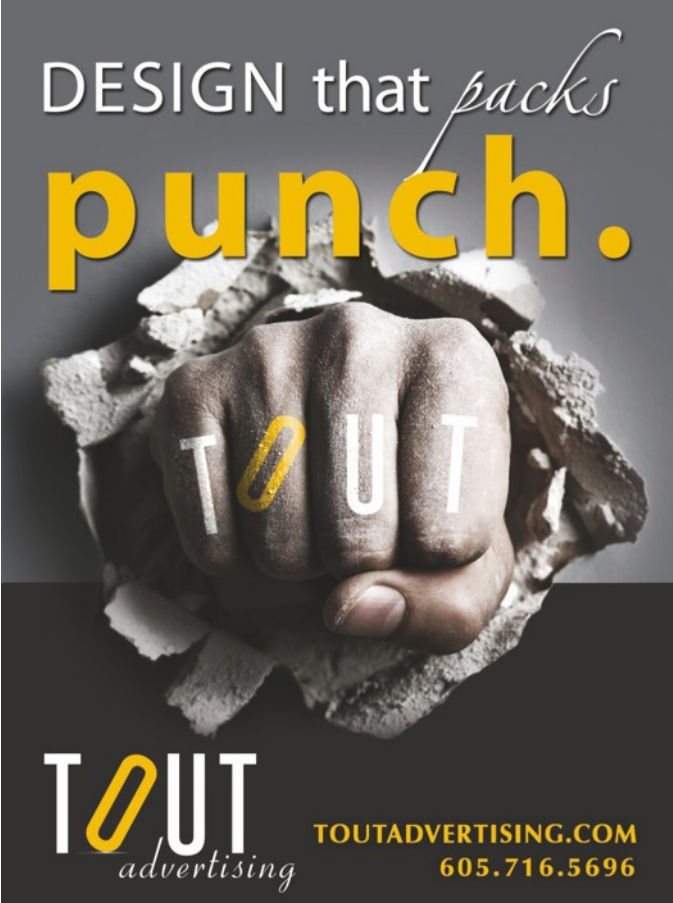
Social media drives everything. Social media works among certain audiences at certain times with relevant topics. For the wrong audience, however, social is not just a waste of resources, it can seriously hurt a brand. It's great to be able to use a tool like Twitter to respond in real time. But to do that, it's important to confirm that the groups you're targeting are likely to be watching or listening to the social media you're using.

Digital is different. Different than what? The same strategy, audience targeting, and messaging need to be the foundation for every marketing and advertising medium—whether online or off. The basics of marketing and advertising strategy remain the same. It's the delivery that's different.

Be everywhere you can. Just because you can, doesn't mean you should. There are more advertising options than ever before. But to be heard above the noise, it's critical that advertisers focus on the media and tactics that are going to best reach their target audiences. The best way to be heard is to go where people are already actively listening.

Linda Popky is a Silicon Valley-based strategic marketing expert who helps transform organizations through powerful marketing performance. Her new book, [Marketing Above the Noise: Achieve Strategic Advantage with Marketing That Matters](#), is now available. Learn more about her at www.leverage2market.com or follow her on Twitter @popky #mktgabove.

Judy Popky is an award-winning veteran of the advertising industry having launched several Fortune 500 brands across many industries. She is currently VP, Group Director at Optimedia in Seattle. Follow her on Twitter @jpopky.



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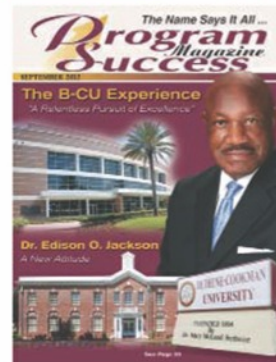
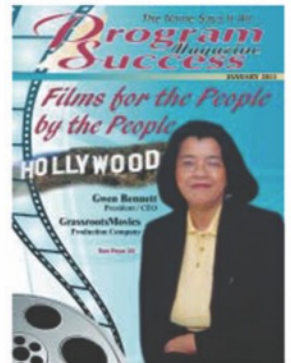
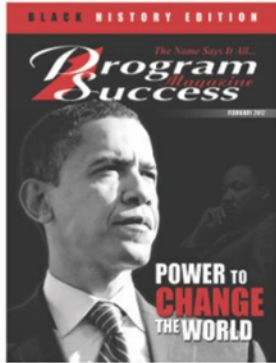
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