

# NO LAW FIRM MAGAZINE LEFT BEHIND

August/September 2022

How To Finally  
Get Your Website  
To Produce

Negotiate  
Like A Pro

10 Proven Ways  
To Break Free  
From A Sales Or  
Marketing Slump

12 'MAGIC'  
STRATEGIES  
To Go From Basketball Star  
To Billionaire Businessman



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# Building A Positive Reputation In Your Community Starts With Taking Care Of Yourself

**F**ormer LA Lakers basketball star Magic Johnson is considered one of the greatest point guards of all time. In 1996, he made the list of the 50 Greatest Players in Basketball History and has since inspired millions of people through HIV/AIDS advocacy, philanthropy, and entrepreneurial ventures. But Magic didn't simply awake from bed one day and say, "Today, I will inspire millions of people." He took the advice of mentors and hired professional trainers and medical staff to keep him healthy, even after an (what was once considered fatal) HIV diagnosis. Many of my clients want to do the same thing: inspire their community and establish an admirable reputation. The problem is that you can't inspire those in your office — let alone your community — if you are drawing from an empty well. If Magic hadn't taken care of himself, he would not have been able to build his legacy. To start effecting change, you must ensure your practice is in good "health" regarding finances, culture, technology, and security.

Many lawyers I know seek to serve their clients well, go above and beyond to create a reputation they are proud of, and grow their practice. I do, too. I started my podcast, "No Law Firm Left Behind," because I knew I would lose customers if law firms shut down. I needed to take care of my business, and today I continue to run the podcast because it inspires people in my community. I know many lawyers who want to motivate change and inspire others, but they aren't taking care of themselves.

Without effective cyber security and business processes, you risk your client's data. Thus, your reputation is on the line, and your financial future. Cybercriminals are at law firms' doorsteps every minute of every day. There are infinite attempts to decimate a law practice, but all it takes is one mistake to lose hundreds of thousands of dollars. I've seen firms pay no less than \$80,000, often more, to recover from a cyber-attack. Like Magic, you need to surround yourself with expert advice and care to achieve peak health as an organization. You can't take your business to a day spa, but there's some "self-care" you can do — and that starts with an expert.

You have a couple of choices for bettering your business — graduating from the School of Hard Knocks or hiring an

expert. In an interview with "The View" about his docuseries, "They Call Me Magic," Johnson had this to say about how he got from his 1991 HIV diagnosis to his current state of health and success: "First of all, let me thank Dr. Fauci, Dr. Ho — they both really helped me to be here. They helped me understand that I had to take my meds, I had to be comfortable with my new status, make sure I kept a positive attitude and kept working out, and so I've been doing that. Here I am 30 years later."

Magic chose to hire several experts to keep him healthy, and now he's an inspiration to millions three decades later. That's what I suggest you do: Hire an expert who acts as your "Dr. Fauci." This is a managed services provider (MSP) who will run a technology assessment that allows you to leverage technology to improve your security and business practice — things no one taught you to do in law school. If you don't know an expert, let me know, and I can help you get connected.

In the third issue of "No Law Firm Left Behind," you'll learn more about how star athletes like Magic Johnson and "Iron Cowboy" James Lawrence created their paths to success. I'm sure you'll be inspired, just like I was. All the best, and here's to making a difference by taking care of yourself — and your business.

Sincerely,

*Jim Gast*  
**Jim Gast,**  
**CEO Of SpliceNet Consulting**



# 8 Strategies ‘Tougher Earth’ U

To Crush  
Obstacles And  
Achieve The  
Impossible

“ My story isn’t about triathlons. It’s about mindset and what’s between our ears. ”

–James Lawrence,  
The Iron Cowboy

# gies The st Man On ses

**O**n June 8, James Lawrence, the triathlete known as “The Iron Cowboy,” did the impossible ... He finished his 100th consecutive Ironman race in 100 days. For one quarter of 2021, his daily regimen consisted of starting his day at 5:30 a.m., swimming 2.4 miles, cycling 112 miles, and running a 26.2-mile marathon, the equivalent of a full-distance triathlon, which he calls an Iron Cowboy distance Tri.

Named the toughest man alive, Lawrence titled his personal experiment in human endurance and pain tolerance Conquer 100. The challenge was about inspiring people to go beyond their limits to show the capabilities of the human body and mind. “I’ll show you the example by being the example,” he said.

This wasn’t his first time accomplishing the impossible. In 2015, he completed 50 Ironman races for 50 consecutive days through all 50 U.S. states, breaking multiple Guinness Book records. But there were many unknowns, logistics were a nightmare, and he was sleep-deprived. “It was chaos upon chaos,” he said during the private Technology Marketing Toolkit Producers Club meeting in July 2021, his first live appearance after completing Conquer 100.

With Conquer 100, he tried to remove the unknowns. He did it at home in Utah. Completed the same course every day. Controlled his food. Had his team around him. And slept in his own bed each night.

Standing in front of a room of MSPs, Lawrence was raw and emotional. “This was like war for me,” he explained. “When I came up with the 100, I wanted to showcase what it will be like if you train really hard, put a team and systems in place, and remove chaos ... It was harder than we thought.”

In the first weeks, Lawrence struggled. He faced freezing temperatures, icy roads, howling wind, snow, and freezing rain. By day five, an ankle injury turned into shin splints and a fracture, forcing him to speed walk the marathon portion. Enduring excruciating pain, it took him seven hours to walk each day, and he blacked out while walking from the pain. “Every step I thought I was going to break my leg,” he said.

By day 59, due to help from carbon-plated leg braces which allowed his shins to heal, he felt almost normal. But then a bike crash caused his hands to swell and pain in his hip. By June, the

temperatures soared above 90 degrees F. The wind, heat, and dry air caused his lips to blister and scab.

During those 100 days, Lawrence faced his demons. He struggled, felt broken, and endured unimaginable pain. Here are eight ways Lawrence pushed through and how you can develop your mental toughness.

## **1 Surround Yourself With A Great Team.**

Everyone struggles. Surround yourself with unbelievable people who are more elevated than you, will push you, call you out, and encourage you to reach your potential. Lawrence has wingmen who never leave his side. One rides the bike portion with him every day, another runs with him every day. His wife, Sunny, ran the entire campaign. Community is also a big driving force. People came out and swam, rode, and walked with him. A core group of cyclists supported him every day, showing up the most on the coldest, wettest days. “Nothing great is ever accomplished on our own,” Lawrence said.

## **2 Be Okay With Asking For Help.**

Be in touch with your inner circle so they can help you evaluate, make sure you are conscious of everything around you, and bolster you up when you need it. On day 15, in the peak of pain from his shin, he wanted to quit. “As humans, when we are at the peak of struggle, our instant reaction is ‘I’m out and this isn’t worth it,’” Lawrence said. His wife, Sunny, knew what he needed after he communicated with her. She said, “You’ve done the work, you’re done for the day; let’s reset and look at tomorrow.”

## **3 Recall When You Did Something You Thought You Couldn’t Do.**

After finishing the 100, he celebrated, went home, and slept. But then the next day, he did one more full-length triathlon by himself. “I promise you when you’re broken and think you’re beaten, you can do one more,” he said. “Sometimes when you get up, it’s going to be by yourself. But if you keep fighting, you’ll find your team and you’ll make your own history.” To get your mindset right, remember the feeling you had when you decided to get up one more time when you thought you couldn’t or didn’t have to.

## **4 Shift The Narrative As Fast As You Can.**

Games and mental tricks make a hard journey more palatable. Hearing he had 16 days left mentally destroyed Lawrence, so he changed phrases and words to trick his mind.



"Instead of 16 to go, the team would say we only have 9 to go to 7 to go," Lawrence said. "Words and self-talk are important." When choosing words, get something so concrete that "you don't just say it, you don't just visualize it, you FEEL it."

5

### Identify Your WHY.

Lawrence had millions of reasons to quit. He recalled losing his concentration, falling asleep, and falling off his bike when he did the 50 campaign. He didn't know how he was going to keep going until he remembered his daughter was waiting for him to run the marathon with him. "He who has their 'why' to live for can bear almost any 'how.'"

6

### Just Do 1 Minute.

When he doesn't know how to keep going, he focuses on that one moment in front of him until he gets past the overwhelm and anxiety. "Motion creates emotion," Lawrence said. "When in desperation, you must figure out how to be perfect just for one second. Build on that second until you perform a perfect minute."

7

### Get Experience In Isolating, Tackling, And Overcoming Your Fears.

When he started running, he struggled to complete a 4K fun run. At that point, he never could have imagined doing one

Iron Cowboy distance Tri, let alone 100. But after experiencing 50 in a row, he believed he could do 100 because he had the experience of having and winning those conversations in his head about doubt, fear, and wanting to quit. "It's through your experiences that you become mentally tough," Lawrence said. "To grow, adapt, and evolve, we need to become uncomfortable intentionally. Only then will we meet the best version of ourselves and honestly find out what we can accomplish."

8

### Just Start.

"You're never going to feel 100% ready," Lawrence said. Everybody's "hard" is different. When he did his first triathlon, he didn't know how to swim. You're never going to be an expert when you start.

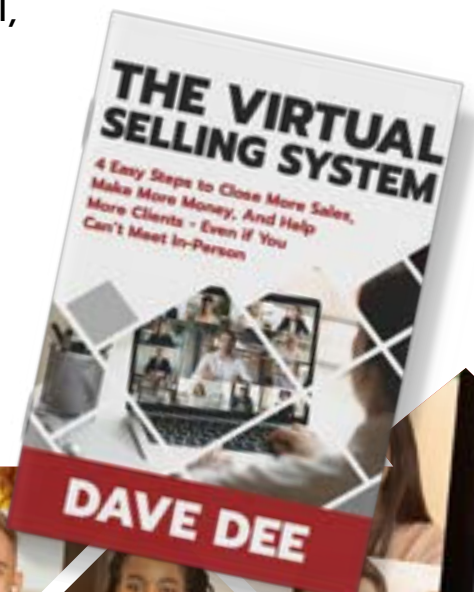
Lawrence's ultimate reason to keep showing up and pushing is about inspiring hope. "Your word should be your bond and every time you commit to something, you should finish it," he said. "It's not for you. It's for other people. As we choose to show up in our lives each day, **we truly have no idea who is watching, and we truly have no idea the impact we can have on the people around us.** If you go through life and say, 'How can I live my life in a way that enhances someone else's life?' then that's what should drive you." ■

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#### **About Your Host:**

Dave Dee has been helping entrepreneurs sell more of their products and services for the past 25 years. Known as “The King Of One-To-Many Selling,” Dave is a master of showing business owners how to craft and deliver group presentations that convert.

Tim Piccirillo, a marketing consultant says, “Your stuff as basically tripled my business and my income. Anyone not using your material should have their head examined.”

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# Where Have All The Good Salespeople Go



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**B**ack when I was buying a new home, I attended a lawn and garden show, with the intention of attempting to find a good landscaper. A buyer with MONEY and an immediate need. I wanted to buy, but what I came home with was a big bag of appalled.

First off, all the landscape displays were woefully lacking ANY sales presence. Only ONE had a crappy brochure set out for people to take — but even THAT was a brochure produced by one of their vendors who supplied the stone on display, NOT a sales brochure for the actual landscaping company. I walked around no less than a half dozen displays that must have cost thousands to put up (not to mention the sponsorship fee they had to pay to display there) without a single person present from ANY of those companies.

However, the sales prevention didn't stop there. I went on to visit another dozen or so vendors WITH salespeople who would have been better off left at home and replaced with a brochure. Not one — NOT ONE — attempted to ask any closing questions. NOT ONE attempted to make me a "show special" offer. NOT ONE asked for my information so they could follow up. Seriously, what a bunch of knuckleheads. In the case of a specialty concrete company, I asked a ton of buying questions and was very interested in having them do work at my new home. I spent roughly 15 minutes flipping through a book of pictures, asking about textures and colors. The sales rep (if they could be called that) never even suggested I come visit their showroom. In fact, they never even asked what my first name was and just let me and my husband walk off without even trying to capture our contact information!





# one?



Now, let's imagine REAL salesmanship and leadership existed in these companies. The Fairy Salesmother visits, waves her magic wand, and suddenly, there's a professional and effective sales program in place.

Now, instead of having some goofball with greasy hair tucked under a baseball cap who stinks of smoke and is talking to their friends on their cellphone while I patiently wait to ask them what it would cost to fit my 9,000-square-foot home with the retractable screens they were selling (and who didn't hang up but just held the phone away from their mouth and said, "You need help?"), someone actually gets a friendly, enthusiastic, and well-trained SALESPERSON to WORK the booth. They address people as they walk by, do not have their nose glued to their cellphone the whole time, and who actually attempt to ask some closing questions and ask for my email address — or heck, even a mailing address (gasp) — that they type into an iPad on the spot so it instantly gets entered into the company's CRM, which then automatically associates it with that show for ROI purposes and kicks off a series of automated messages designed to get me into the showroom. Maybe one of the tasks set up is to mail me a Shock-and-Awe box with an authoritative book, a box of popcorn to entice me to watch their well-crafted sales presentation, along with a book of happy client testimonials, a client bill of rights, a guarantee certificate, and a personal, handwritten note from the person in the booth thanking me for my time and offering me a bonus, discount, or other incentive to entice me to buy NOW. And then maybe it triggers the salesperson to actually call me and follow up the following week.

Now, stretch your imagination a bit further ... Let's imagine there's actually some MANAGEMENT going on. That the sales

manager or owner of the company actually goes on-site with the rep for at least part of the show to ensure they have the pitch down and that they're capturing prospects' information correctly before setting the sales guys loose with no supervision for the four days of the event. Let's imagine they actually sit down with the rep after the event and review all the leads that have come in, questioning each one to find out what happened, what the next steps were, who's likely to close, etc. And let's go wild and assume that the owner/manager actually picks up the phone and secret-shops 1 out of every 10 leads who didn't book an appointment or who didn't buy to check up and see what went wrong.

And in a complete flight of fancy, let's imagine that after a few weeks of these productivity and sales reviews, there are actual consequences and people actually lose their jobs for not following a fully detailed sales process or for simply being sloppy and lazy with the leads that were produced. Unheard of!

I'll bet you a dollar to a doughnut that many of the reps/companies that were there produced ZERO return for their investment of time and money, complaining all the while about the show, the lack of qualified prospects, etc., etc. You know, I don't expect everyone to be as experienced and capable at sales and marketing as I am, but COME ON! How do these people actually stay in business? And if YOU want to make sure you're not in the same boat, you had better get to work on crafting a marketing/sales process, then constantly review, tweak, and INSPECT IT to make sure what you want to be done is actually being done. The SAME goes for the technical/operations side of the house. Don't expect what you don't INSPECT. Remember the Boy Scout motto: Be prepared. ■



# 10

## And Get Money Flow

to sell them on managed services. If they are a managed services client, attempt to sell them a phone system or an upgraded cybersecurity solution. If you're doing QBRs (quarterly business reviews), you should be uncovering opportunities — but sometimes you need to just create something new and sell it to them OUTSIDE of those meetings.

**L**ast year, we saw a 500% increase in the number of small businesses that closed their doors either permanently or rolled over to a competitor who absorbed them. All were small and had no marketing plan in place and no salespeople.

Simultaneously, we saw a small percentage have their absolute best year ever, nearly doubling sales with bottom-line profits to match. The rest, which I dub the mediocre middle, essentially survived by treading water. They lost some clients and lead flow dipped, but they didn't go out of business.

But the bigger issue is that many businesses have STOPPED all marketing efforts and haven't started again. They're in a slump and need to get a fire lit under their butts to start moving but don't know where to start or what to do. Many businesses get into similar slumps — COVID-19-related or not — from time to time. Sometimes it's because you get so busy that you stop all marketing. Other times, you lose a major client and funds get tight (although I would argue that's exactly when you need to start marketing MORE, but that would be the logical response, not the emotional response, most make).

Regardless of what PUT you into the slump, here are 10 recession- and slump-busting ideas for when you need to kick-start your marketing and sales efforts.

**1 Segment your customers into buckets to determine something NEW they could buy, then create a custom campaign (offer) for that segment.** For example, if they are break-fix, try

**2 Go to current clients and incentivize them to give you a referral.** Don't wait for them to give you a referral. Actively ASK them for an introduction to at least one other business owner they know and put a big incentive on it. Sometimes simply asking will trigger a referral, even if you don't offer a reward, but I suggest recognizing and rewarding that behavior. What kind of gift? It depends on the client and season. During the summer months, giving away a package of high-end Wagyu steaks can pull them, as can a really nice Yeti cooler or grill. In the fall, you might consider two bottles of wine, bourbon, or whiskey (their choice, and something really high-end).

**3 Seek a promotional partner or JV.** A JV, or joint venture, is where you get another noncompetitive company to endorse you to their members or clients for a purpose of mutual benefit. Sometimes, you pay them for that promotion in a formal sponsorship. Other times, they will promote you because they like you and want to help you (like current clients you have who have clients who could hire you). But another way to do this is to offer to conduct a webinar or seminar, or provide some educational, valuable information to their audience. Right now, that could be a report, e-book, seminar, or webinar. If you're in a niche, there may be more relevant topics for your industry. For example, over the last year, I conducted close to 20 webinars for the partners of various vendors in the IT industry on how to

# Proven Ways To Break Free From A Sales Or Marketing Slump

## Coming To You Again

market your MSP during COVID-19 shutdowns. I waived my regular fee for doing these sessions and capitalized on the lead generation they provided me.

**4 Run the '9-Word Email' to unconverted leads.** An unconverted lead is a prospect that showed interest to some degree — from mild (opting in to your website but not booking an appointment) to HOT (going all the way to the proposal but not converting to a client). One tried-and-true campaign is to send a short, to-the-point email (we call it the 9-Word Email — thank you, Dean Jackson). The subject line is ONLY their first name, NOTHING else (this is important). In the email, it says, "Are you still looking for <<a new 'blank'>>?" with your signature. NOTHING else. In the << >>, put whatever it was they were talking to you about or showed interest in. Short and to the point. You will get a response — trust me on this.

**5 Consider a lower-priced, stripped-down offering to go after the 'low end' of the market.** Many businesses make the decision to sell only to larger companies with 50-plus employees. That's a perfectly acceptable strategy — BUT, if sales are lagging, you might swim downstream to go after the larger pool of smaller clients. That's not to say your offering should be priced so low that you don't make any money. That's not what I'm suggesting. Strip out some of the more expensive services down to a "good" core offering. Maybe monitoring and basic maintenance with all support calls as a billable event. Small businesses (less than 20 employees) are the majority, so you'll have a bigger pool of clients to go to.

**6 Ask your vendors for MDF (marketing development funds).** Many will provide it if you ask. If not money, often they can provide swag of some kind or "door prizes" for events or gifts to give

existing clients and prospects as a bonus for buying, booking an appointment, attending a webinar, etc.

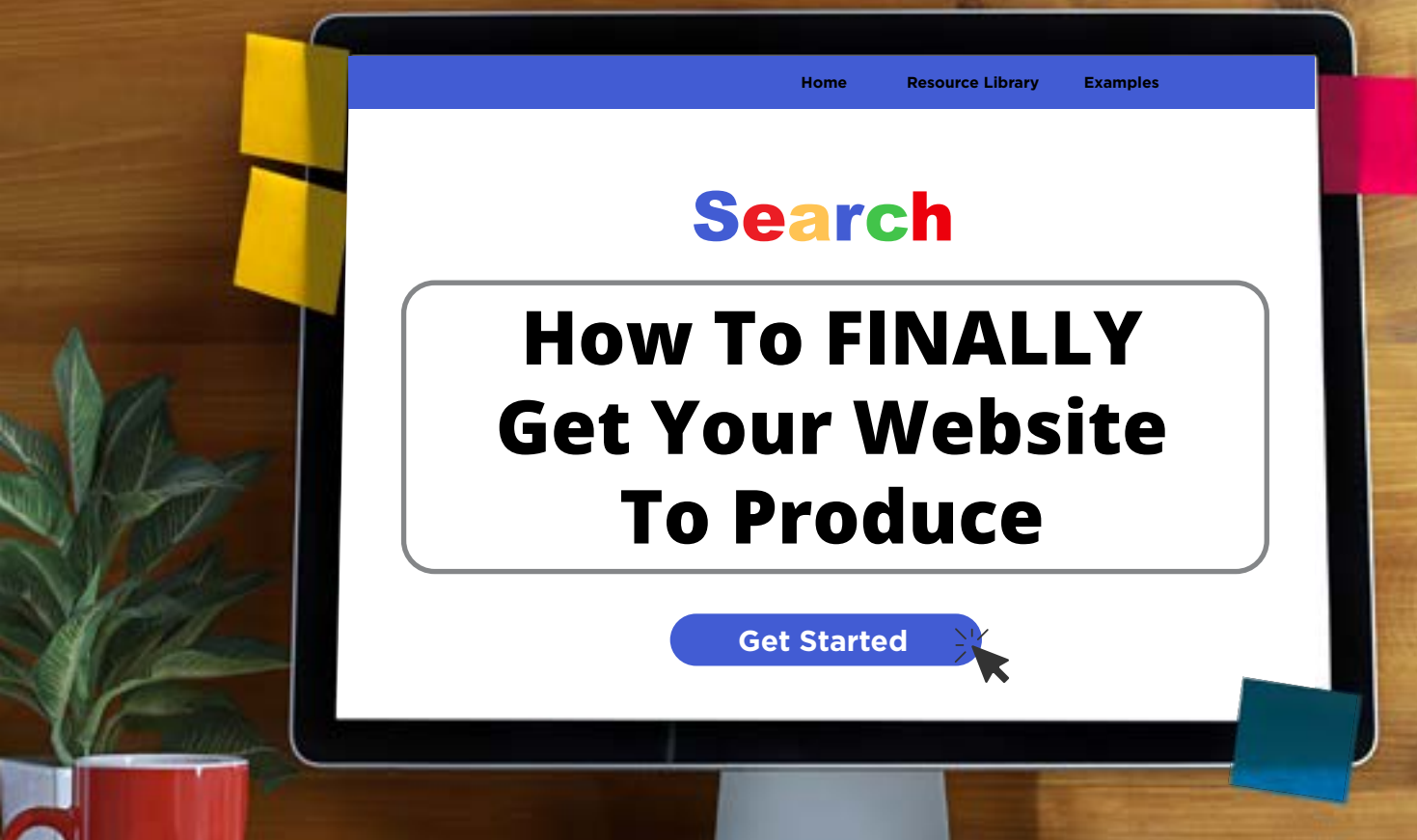
**7 Hire a sales rep.** If you're not recruiting 24/7/365 for good salespeople, you're not serious about growth. Frankly, if you're not recruiting for ALL positions 24/7/365, you're setting yourself up to fail. Great people don't come around all that often, so if you ONLY start looking when you're desperate, you'll end up settling for whatever you can "absorb" from the market at that time. Keep in mind you don't have to hire all the people who apply, nor do you have to meet with them. I filter 95% of the resumes I get based on the resume, background, and experience (or lack of experience). But keep a line in the water at all times so when the right candidate presents themselves, you get a shot at hiring them.

**8 Diligently plug all the holes in your in-bound lead generation bucket.** Many businesses have more holes than they have bucket, with no lead capture forms on their websites, no one answering the phones live, no name capture of inbound leads into a CRM system, and no follow-up. If you're swimming in opportunity and money, you can survive with money slipping out of your hands (although I'm certainly never okay with this, no matter how well I'm doing). But when opportunity dries up, it's critical that you fix the giant, gaping holes in your lead capture and follow-up.

**9 Rerun a campaign you used in the past that worked.** Sounds crazy, but often businesses run a campaign that worked really, really well but then fail to run it again. I'm sure there's something in your history you did that could be repeating again now.

**10 Turn off the news and turn ON productive, positive content.** Tigers starve last in the jungle because tigers hunt. Sales slumps and tough periods come from time to time, but they STAY because of the attitude of the sales rep or entrepreneur who slips into complacency. There's ALWAYS something you can do to improve your situation, to make a sale and to get leads, sales, and money flowing again — but that won't happen if you're in a funk. Turn off the news. Get off the sewer of social media and start watching, reading, and listening to quality information that will inspire you and instruct you. Yes, you might have to modify your approach but NEVER modify your goals or ambition. ■





**A** common complaint: *My website isn't producing any leads.* More common: *"My MARKETING isn't producing any leads."* Even more common: *"What marketing?"* Okay, I digress ...

With all the digital and social media marketing available, far too many businesses still overlook one of the most critical "hubs" of all marketing efforts: their website. All too often, it was set up several years ago and has been sitting out there on the "interwebs," untouched and preserved in time like a fossil.

So, when a business comes to me and tells me their marketing isn't working, it's the first place I look. Why? **Because ALL marketing efforts, from referrals to social media posts, drive potential prospects to check out your website.** You do it, too. When you hear of a new company, service, or product, what do you do? Google it. Go to the website and check things out. The question is this: Are you driving them to an updated, high-converting site that brilliantly conveys your professionalism and competence, or an abandoned, ancient, broken-down site with "cobwebs" gathering in the corners?

So, I wanted to take this month and talk about a few critical things as they pertain to your website. First and foremost, what can you expect your website to do and produce in terms of leads, and second, how do you make sure you're squeezing all the juice from that proverbial orange without wasting time on frivolous pursuits and time-sucking activities that aren't really going to move the needle all that much? Let's begin.

#### **How Many Leads Should Your Website Produce?**

You ready for this? Zero. You heard me ... none. That's because your website doesn't make cold-calls, send out

emails, stand at a booth at a trade show, or knock on a prospective customer's door and convince them to buy. All your website can do is **get the prospects coming there from other marketing activities to call, opt in, or engage.** So, **your website's ONLY job is to convert visitors into leads.** **Therefore, your website doesn't "produce" leads — your MARKETING does that.**

I suppose you could argue that if someone searches in your area and your website comes up, they click on it and they opt in, call, etc., your website "produced" that lead. But I would argue that Google search produced that lead, and your SEO plan and activities executed through your website facilitated that opportunity.

This is hard for many businesses to get their head around, so they make the mistake of paying someone \$10,000–\$30,000 to design a website with the intention of getting it to produce more leads and are then shocked to discover it didn't produce any better, or only produced marginally better, than their old website. So, here's my first big recommendation: Have a well-designed, working website with excellent copy that converts, then take the money you save on expensive design and put it into DRIVING TRAFFIC to your website. In fact, I'll argue that your website only really needs five pages: 1) Home, 2) Services, 3) About Us, 4) Blog, and 5) Contact Us. Testimonials can be put throughout the site, and an offer should be on critical pages like the top of the Home page and the Contact Us page. Then use LANDING PAGES for offers and campaigns (more on this in a minute).

If you look at your website's analytics, you'll discover the two most visited pages on your site from organic traffic are the Home page and the About Us page. Therefore, those pages need to be very well-written so a prospective customer is convinced to call or opt in.

### **Conversion: The TRUE Measure Of Your Website's Effectiveness**

Now that we've established your website doesn't produce any leads (your marketing does), how DO you know if your website is effective or needs work? You look at conversion.

Conversion is a measurement of how many unique website visitors call your office or fill in a form. If you had 2,000 visitors to your website last month and generated two phone calls and two form fills from that traffic, that's a total of four leads and a 0.2% conversion ( $4 \div 2,000$ ). Most websites convert at around 1%–2%. E-commerce sites tend to convert higher at 2%–5%. Businesses' websites tend to convert at a lower rate, around 0.1%–1% on average. However, those are averages and do not necessarily mean your site has to convert at those rates. Further, that's a measurement of your generic website with general traffic, not necessarily specific landing pages you are using in a marketing campaign that is driving people from an email, ad, or other marketing promotion to a landing page.

So, the first step in figuring out if your website is converting well or not is to get a true measurement of its conversion. That requires you to PROPERLY install and configure either Google Analytics or some other website tracking software to get accurate data. Over the years, I've had members make radical changes to their websites because they didn't "feel" it was producing anymore, or they were bored with it, only to discover that the changes instantly stopped all lead flow. Further, I've seen businesses taken advantage of by web design companies who convince them their site is ugly, old, and unproductive, then sell them a \$20,000 website project WITHOUT ever even looking at the DATA for its current conversion! It's shameful. Would you allow a doctor to do major surgery on you without data in the form of X-rays, MRIs, blood tests, etc.? I should hope not. This is why a critical first step in improving your website's performance is to get a real and true reading of conversion.

Now, which analytics software is best? Google Analytics is free and very powerful, but it's a nightmare to figure out and can cause you to waste a lot of time looking at statistics and information that isn't really relevant to measure for YOUR business.

We use and recommend CallRail, which is a very simple and powerful tool to measure and track website conversion that we put on all our clients' websites so they can see how their site is producing as well as listen to calls from inbound leads to ensure they are being handled properly.

Another piece of software we recommend IF you are going to work on SEO is Moz Local (if you're targeting local traffic) or Moz Pro (if you're targeting across the U.S. or the world). They also have a free tool that is a good starting place if you want to check it out before paying for a subscription. Moz also has a lot of great SEO training that can help even a layman figure out a plan to get higher rankings. Simply go to **Moz.com** for more information.

## **10 Critical Components To A High-Converting Website**

As I said earlier, your website doesn't need to be an expensive, high-design site with bells and whistles, but there are things you should have to maximize the conversion of traffic to your website.



### **A FUNCTIONING Website.**

I'm amazed at how many businesses have sites that are rife with broken links and webforms that don't work. The other day when I was troubleshooting a client's digital

marketing plan, I discovered that two out of three of their website's forms were not working. Specifically, they were not delivering the results they should (one promised a free report that was NOT on the next page, although it was promised on the opt-in form), and both did not alert this client that they had a lead. Another client discovered their site had been hacked and was displaying an ad for sports gear right in the middle of their website. They only discovered it because they came to me because their marketing wasn't working, so I reviewed their site with them (to be crystal clear, this was NOT a site we had produced). All of these are not uncommon. Therefore, the first critical step in any website conversion is to make sure the links work and the forms actually do what they are supposed to do. And here's another IMPORTANT tip: I would also strongly suggest that all webforms flow into a proper marketing automation system (or CRM) where they can be tracked and instantly followed up on.



### **Website Tracking Software.**

As I said above, CallRail is the one we use and sell to our clients. However, there are dozens of them out there. The key is not necessarily which one, but to make sure you actually USE IT properly and use REAL DATA to make changes, not your feelings. As Mark Twain once said, "Supposing is good, but KNOWING is better." When it comes to digital marketing and websites, you use actual data to deduce, not opinion.



### **A Site Built On A Proper SEO Plan.**

I don't have the space in this article (or this magazine!) to convey how to do a proper SEO plan, but I will tell you it's worth outsourcing this activity. SEO is one of those specialty skill sets best outsourced until you're running a full marketing department and can afford to bring it in-house. Further, it's critical you understand that SEO is an ONGOING effort, not a "set it and forget it" activity.



## **A Well-Designed Home Page, Specifically The Top Of The Site.**

A website's Home page is almost always the most visited page on the site and is the entry point into the marketing funnel. Therefore, the top of your site that's "above the fold" (meaning the visitor sees it without scrolling down) is the single most critical piece of real estate on your entire site. Visitors will hit that first and decide to call, click, or engage ... or bounce. So, the copy on that section, or the headline, is essential to successful conversion. The problem is that most businesses have vague or confusing copy, like "Experience The Difference" or "Business Clarity Empowered." Or they have no copy and the images make no sense to the average visitor looking for your service. What you need is a simple headline or something that simply states what you do and for whom you do it. **A REAL prospect coming to your site is trying to figure out ONE thing: Is this what I'm looking for?** The more they have to click around or guess, the higher their chances are of just leaving your site without taking any action.



**Offers!** If you want to generate leads on your website, you NEED to have an offer they can respond to. The two primary ones are free information they can access (report, video, checklist, etc.) or some type

of assessment or appointment. I recommend having BOTH. If you go to my website, you'll see a current offer for a free guide titled "6 Ways To Get More High Paying Clients Without Spending A Dime On Marketing." This is an offer we discovered that generates a high conversion. You need something similar for your company's website, for example, a report titled "10 Surefire Signs Your Current IT Company Is Failing You" or "Free Dark Web Scan Reveals The Passwords, Emails, And Other Confidential Data Hackers Have On YOUR Company Right Now."



## **If Targeting Local, Have A Prominent LOCAL Phone Number Displayed.**

Customers want to deal with a local provider, so put a local number on your home page, right at the top of the site where it can easily be seen.



## **A Complete And Up-To-Date GMB Directory Listing With Copious 5-Star Reviews.**

We estimate about 30% of businesses have never claimed their Google My Business (GMB) listing, which is a HUGE mistake

for SEO purposes, as it provides credibility to people searching for you. An even higher percentage, roughly 80%, have it but never update it or use it to drive reviews.



## **Well-Designed Social Media Profiles.**

Specifically, Clutch.io, LinkedIn, and Facebook are the most important if you're targeting small businesses. If you're targeting consumers, I'd throw in Instagram as well, although Instagram and Facebook are linked easily, so you can add that to the mix with little effort — just know it's not going to drive a TON of traffic. Another social media site I'd recommend is YouTube; however, it's a bit more difficult to get right because you have to be good on video and deliver relevant and interesting content. But overall, make sure you keep all these sites updated and monitored for leads. Having a Facebook page you never update is just as bad as having no Facebook page at all (or maybe even worse). You also need to monitor these sites because prospects and clients alike will message you via these platforms, expecting a response.



**Retargeting.** Retargeting is the practice of displaying ads to visitors to your website throughout the Google display network or on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for the purpose of getting them

back to opt in or call. I'm sure you've experienced this before, maybe even after visiting one of our sites. LinkedIn can also send InMail messages to prospects who visit your site to drive them back to opt in or call.



## **Last But Not Least, Answer Your Phones Live.**

Most businesses don't consider this a website marketing strategy, but our research has shown that nearly 70% or more of the HOT leads coming in from your website are going to call versus complete a webform. We also know if they call and get voicemail, many hang up and call the next business that came up on the Google Search. Trust me on this: How you answer the phone has a MAJOR impact on the overall success of your website's conversion rate and marketing success.

Of course, there are more than these top 10, but if you get these right, you're well on your way to dramatically improving the performance of your website. ■





# Your Retention Strategy Needs A Boost

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Did you know that it costs 5 times more to attract a new customer than to retain an old one?

It's true! When it comes to building a successful business, retention is essential. **In fact, it's estimated that an increase in customer retention of just 5% can result in a profit increase of between 25% and 95%!**

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**12 'Magic'  
Strategies  
To Go From  
Basketball Star  
To Billionaire  
Businessman**





**F**ormer National Basketball Association (NBA) player Earvin “Magic” Johnson Jr. is known for his strong work ethic.

When he was a kid growing up in Lansing, Michigan, he would shovel the snow off the basketball court just so he could play basketball every day. “Everybody in the neighborhood thought I was crazy,” Magic said.

But the two-time Hall of Famer, five-time NBA Champion, three-time NBA MVP, Olympic gold medalist, and founder and CEO of Magic Johnson Enterprises wasn’t *born* with a strong work ethic.

Magic watched his father, Earvin Johnson Sr., work two jobs his whole life to feed his 10 kids. One job was on the assembly line for General Motors, and the second job was picking up trash. Magic and his siblings went along to help pick up people’s trash on the weekends and when they weren’t in school.

“It was a cold Saturday,” Magic recalled. “My job was to break the ice, get the trash out of the ice, then throw it on the truck. It was maybe 7 below in Michigan and just freezing. I went and got half the trash out of the ice and jumped in the cabin of the truck and shut the door. By the time I shut the door, my father had opened the door back up. He grabbed me by the neck and dragged me all the way back to the trash that was still stuck in the ice and said, ‘Son, if you do this job halfway, you’re going to practice basketball halfway. Everything you do in life, you’ll do halfway. You have to do things right.’ At that moment in time, I became a perfectionist, not just in basketball but also in life and in business. I’m so happy my father taught me that lesson early because it’s helped me not just to achieve my goals and dreams in basketball but also my goals and dreams in business, as well.”

Here are 12 strategies Magic used to build his business empire that will help you achieve your goals and dreams in your MSP.

## **1. Believe And Achieve.**

As a young man, Magic didn’t just dream of playing in the NBA; he dreamed about being a businessman. “I didn’t know people of color could own buildings and car dealerships,” Magic said. “There were two gentlemen back in Lansing, Greg Eaton and Joe Ferguson, who were African American and owned businesses. I got a chance to meet them, and they showed me their businesses. So, my dreams changed. Now I was saying, ‘I want to be a basketball player playing in the NBA, but I also want to be a businessman one day.’” They gave Magic his first job, cleaning all seven floors of their building. A big believer of “If you dream it, you can become it,” Magic vividly envisions what he wants. When cleaning the CEO’s office on the seventh floor, Magic would kick his feet up on the CEO’s desk,



hit the intercom button, and pretend he was the CEO asking his assistant to bring him donuts, coffee, and the paper. "I was sitting there dreaming I was CEO at 16 years old, and now here I am 60, and I'm the CEO and own my own business. I think those moments helped shape who I am today."

## 2. Seek Out Mentorship.

When Magic started in the NBA, there was an unwritten rule that "players just played, and owners owned." Unfamiliar with this rule, Magic started a conversation with the owner, Dr. Jerry Buss, which led to a lifelong mentorship. "I had never been away from my family my entire life," Magic said. "Dr. Jerry Buss picked me up, and we instantly hit it off. He knew I was out in Los Angeles by myself, so he used to pick me up every weekend, and we used to sit and just talk and talk."

When Dr. Buss asked Magic what his dreams were after basketball, Magic told him he wanted to be a businessman. "He didn't say anything, but a week later, he brought me all these books he wanted me to read," Magic said. "And then he said, 'I'm going to help you accomplish your goal. I'm going to open up the Laker books to you to teach you business,' and he did. I learned so much, and he became my first mentor."

After five years of mentoring, Magic asked Dr. Buss if he would give him the names and phone numbers of all the season ticket holders. Magic wanted to cold-call all the CEOs and presidents that were season ticket holders to invite them to lunch so he could pick their brains. "I wanted to find out how they became successful and what I should look out for," Magic said. He called all 50 names, and all of them said yes. One of those 50 turned out to be Peter Guber, who was running Sony at the time and later became one of Magic's business partners.

Many of Magic's mentors and business partners came out of those lunches and are still his mentors today. "If I were to tell anybody anything, it's that mentors are very important, especially when you have goals and dreams but don't know how to get there. They can tell you their journey, and you can grab from that and incorporate it into your own goals and dreams. I have mentors today, and I became a mentor to a lot of people, as well."

## 3. Refuse To Lose.

When Magic left basketball and started in business, people thought he had it easy, but he struggled, made mistakes, and even failed. There was a lot of pain and frustration. People wanted his autograph, so they'd take a meeting but didn't take him seriously. "I could get the meetings," Magic said. "Magic Johnson got me that part, but Magic Johnson also played a role against me getting deals too ... I used my own money in the beginning, but then I wanted growth and sustainability. I wanted to go for bigger deals, and I needed other people's money to accomplish that, but they all turned me down."

It took him three years before he was *finally* able to get a loan. He made wise investments with that money, which took him to a whole other level in business that he is at today. And all those banks that turned him down? They all want to do business with him now, and *he* is the one turning them down.

"It's not about name recognition," Magic said. "It's not about anything other than you having a solid business strategy. Show them how they're going to get a return on their investment and also how you're going to drive ROI."

## 4. Play Outside The Lines And Develop A Solid Business Plan.

At the time Magic was trying to get a loan, investing in urban development was not an obvious choice. Magic's forward-thinking plan and unwavering belief that growth was in urban America is what drove him to keep trying despite being turned down over and over. "I didn't think; I KNEW my business plan and my business strategy was sound," Magic said.

Magic illustrated that minorities would spend money with the African American \$1.5 trillion spending power and another \$1.5 trillion spending power from Latinos. Magic told potential bank investors, "Nobody is going after their disposable income" and "I've got a plan that can make you guys a lot of money." His plan was to build businesses in urban America. He emphasized this was a good plan by also talking about how everyone was going after the money in suburban America, which made it a much more competitive market.

Once he demonstrated to the bank that there was incredible spending power in targeting minorities, that there was much less competition for their money, and how he could get a return on their investment, he got a "yes." This loan is what kicked off The Magic Johnson Theaters and Starbucks.

## 5. Get Your Audience To Buy In.

Magic went to the urban communities he wanted to develop first. He talked to the people living there and told them what he wanted to do. He told them about the quality retailers he wanted to bring to their community and that he would hire people of color to work inside those businesses and give them training to do their jobs. He also got buy-in from the business community. "This was thinking outside the box, so I had to have a CEO who had the ability to think outside the box," Magic explained.

Magic asked Mike Norris, the CEO of Loews Cineplex (later AMC Theatres), to look at the data. "The data shows that if African Americans like a movie, they go see it three times," Magic said. "They don't go just one time. And we were the No. 1 group of people at that time going to the movies because we were priced out of professional sports ... so we go to one of the most affordable things, which is going to the movies."

Next, Magic bet him that the concession stand sales would be among the highest-grossing theaters in the country, showing Mike the data to back up his claim. "When I showed him that information, he said, 'I get it. Let's start building Magic Johnson Theaters,'" Magic said.

## 6. Do Your Homework First.

The first Magic Johnson Theater was built in Los Angeles, and as predicted, the concession sales landed it in the top 10 highest grossing theaters in the nation.

**"It takes the same amount of time to do a million-dollar deal as a billion-dollar deal."**

Magic knew his audience's likes and dislikes and catered to them. He removed everything from the concession stands that minorities didn't like and replaced it with the items they did like, whether it was sodas or candies, and so on. He understood their buying behaviors. For example, he knew that minorities don't go to dinner and a show — they eat dinner at the show. The number of hot dogs he sold in one night took suburban theaters an entire month to sell. "Understanding your customer, knowing your customer, overdelivering to your customer brought me back the returns that I was looking for and that Loews Theaters was looking for," Magic said.

When the first theater came in the top 10 highest-grossing theaters in the nation, it was easy for Magic to get others to buy in and build more theaters after that. (Magic and his partner Ken Lombard sold Magic Johnson Theaters to Loews Cineplex Entertainment in 2004.)

He repeated the same strategies when he started building Starbucks. After replacing scones with desserts minorities enjoyed and playing music that minorities liked, revenue skyrocketed. He built 125 Starbucks before selling his share in the company.

## **7. Let Your Playing Do The Talking.**

Magic Johnson brought Howard Schultz to urban America to get the deal with Starbucks.

Howard showed up on the day that Whitney Houston's movie "Waiting To Exhale" came out. People were lined up around the block. The lobby was loud, not quiet and reserved.

Every show was sold out, and 5,000 women were waiting to see the show. "Twenty minutes into the movie, every woman in there thought they were Whitney Houston personally," Magic said. "They're talking to the screen, 'Girl, why are you still with him?'"

Howard nudged Magic and asked him to step outside and said, "I've never had a movie-going experience quite like this. You know what, Earvin, you got the deal. I've seen everything I need to see. I see they embrace your business, they support your business, and they spend money in your business, and I can see the same thing happening at Starbucks."

## **8. Champions Learn From Failure.**

There were business failures too. A TV show called "The Magic Hour" was canceled after only two months due to low ratings. When he opened Magic 32 Retail Chain, he sold nothing for 3–4 months and lost \$200,000 because he tried to be the buyer and pick out the merchandise to sell himself. Although he didn't get the results he was looking for, it inspired him to be successful.

Plus, he learned lessons that he says made him a better CEO. For example, he learned "to stick to what you know and what you can do best," "to hire the best people," and that he was "too much of a control freak and trying to make all the decisions." He also reflected on what went wrong, asking himself, "Why did I fail?" and figured out what he could do better the next time. "I looked myself in the mirror," Magic said. "Self-evaluation is hard ... but I'm going to stay motivated and move that motivation, passion, and love into another area where I will hopefully excel because I didn't excel at late-night hosting."

## **9. Rivals Make You Better.**

Magic Johnson and Larry Bird's heated rivalry is famous and well documented and added fuel to the long-standing feud between the Celtics and the Lakers. "I disliked the Celtics and Larry because you have to in order to beat them," Magic said. "But your competitor can make you better. I knew Larry Bird was taking 1,000 shots a day, so I had to make 1,000 shots a day. I knew he was working on a new move, so I had to work on a new move. I knew he was going to come back better, so I knew I had to come back better. So, I owe Larry Bird a lot because he made me better. And it's the same in business. Your competitor can make you better. You're going to work harder. They'll keep you up at night sometimes because you wonder what he is going to do next."

Later, the two became great friends after shooting a Converse TV commercial together at Larry Bird's house in Indiana. "Larry's mom made lunch, and he invited me up to the house for lunch," Magic said. "She brings out all the food, and they aren't talking, and Larry's mom says, 'Did you tell him yet?' to which Larry says, 'No, you tell him, Mom.' And Larry Bird's mom says, 'Magic, you are my favorite basketball player.' That broke the ice, and we found out we had so much in common."

## 10. Elevate Your Game.

"It takes the same amount of time to do a million-dollar deal as a billion-dollar deal," Magic said.

His point is that you must have guidelines on what deal fits within your brand, within your system, and within your company. "I've given everybody the guidelines on what I'm looking for in a deal, Magic said. "And if you can check only five of the 10 boxes, then we shouldn't be doing a deal."

For Magic, when the brands are aligned, the core values are aligned, and the revenue that they both want is aligned, along with a component to give back, that is an indication that a deal will work out.

## 11. Don't Let Good Enough Be Enough.

Whenever he starts a business or buys one, he does a SWOT analysis right away. (A SWOT Analysis is a framework for identifying your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.) This helps him improve and grow. When he bought a health care business in Florida, he did a SWOT and discovered it had growth potential, but the management team was weak. From this, he knew he needed to move in a new management team to grow the business. He bought the company with 17,000 members for \$20 million, grew it to 300,000 members, and sold for \$900 million two years later.

Not only does he do a SWOT on his executive team to see if his companies are headed in the right direction, but he also does a SWOT on himself. "I run a personal SWOT on myself because I want to be a better man, a better husband, a better father, a better grandfather, and a better CEO," Magic said.

As he looks to the post-pandemic future, he says the question he is asking is, "Can this team take me where I want to go tomorrow?" "I'm asking myself that because I want to make sure when we get back to normal, I can get where I want to go," Magic said.

## 12. Have An Exit Plan In Mind When You Start.

No matter the business, Magic always builds in an exit strategy from the beginning. "You don't have to use it," Magic said. "But it puts you in the position to sell it if you ever want to."

He reevaluates the business to see if he likes the business well enough to keep it or why he is going to keep it. For example, he has businesses he is keeping for his kids because they are interested in them.

It doesn't take athletic ability or name recognition to hustle. Using these strategies, you can follow in Earvin "Magic" Johnson's entrepreneurial footsteps and be a true champion in your industry. Remember, don't do things halfway. Keep your head up, have a positive attitude, and always strive to do better, and you'll come out ahead. ■

88%

of SMBs are vulnerable to a payments data breach.

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**"We don't want to push our ideas on to customers; we simply want to make what they want."**

–Laura Ashley, fashion designer



**"A lot of people have fancy things to say about customer service, but it's just a day-in, day-out, ongoing, never-ending, persevering, compassionate kind of activity."**

–Christopher McCormick, CEO of L.L. Bean



**"My metric for success can be summed up in one phrase: Earn customers for life."**

–Mary Barra, the chair and CEO of General Motors



**"You can close more business in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get people interested in you."**

–Dale Carnegie



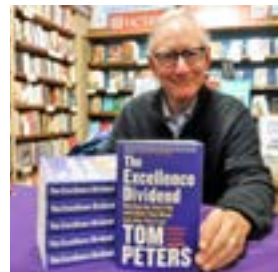
**"To earn the respect (and eventually love) of your customers, you first have to respect those customers. That is why Golden Rule behavior is embraced by most of the winning companies."**

–Colleen Barrett, Southwest Airlines President Emerita



**"What is necessary is to listen to your customers: understand their needs, expectations, and jobs to be done and design an experience that meets those needs. The same goes for your employees."**

–Annette Franz, the founder of CX Journey



**"It never ceases to amaze me that companies spend millions to attract new customers (people they don't know) and spend next to nothing to keep the ones they've got! Seems to me the budgets should be reversed!"**

–Tom Peters, the coauthor of "In Search of Excellence"

**"All businesses need to be young forever. If your customer base ages with you, you're Woolworth's."**

–Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon



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

–Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonald's





# Negotiate Like A Pro

## 3 Steps To Finding Out If You've Left Anything On The Table

*"How do I know whether I've gotten everything I could have out of a deal?"*

This is one of the most common questions people ask me. To be fair, it's a great question — and one that nags at all of us.

What if I told you that you can make sure you haven't left anything on the table by following a simple three-step process that requires very little energy on your end? Here it is.

### Step 1: Create A Positive And Playful Environment

People are six times more likely to make a deal with someone they like.

A few years ago, the great Tom Girardi — known as the top trial lawyer in California and of Erin Brokovich fame — told my negotiation class at the University of Southern California that the key to getting what you want in a negotiation is to be "nice and gentle."

Tom knows that, in order to get what he wants, he needs to create an environment that immediately encourages the other side to lean in his direction.

This is another version of one of our rules around The Black Swan Group: *Never be mean to someone who could hurt you by doing nothing.*

In every negotiation, your ultimate goal is to find out whether the other side can help you even more than they already have. You're looking for every inch of latitude they could possibly give you. At the same time, you need to see far enough ahead to understand how you want to leave them before your next interaction. When the conversation is over, you want to make sure your counterpart is in a positive place.

Research tells us that people don't remember things as they happened. They remember the most intense moment of an encounter, and they also remember how things ended. As we say here, *the last impression is the lasting impression.* That's why we have to orchestrate our interactions so we control the end — and can then ensure that the end is positive.

The flip side to this is that we also know our brains work up to 31% more effectively when we're in a positive state of mind because, quite simply, we're smarter when we're in a positive frame of mind.

It doesn't hurt us, then, to make our counterpart smarter, too. After all, we want them to come up with the best ideas that help us — and enjoy doing it!

### Step 2: Produce Empathy

In any negotiation with your clients or prospects, your goal should be to produce empathy and make the other side sympathetic to you and your goals. So, kick off a conversation with an apology. Nothing gets someone's attention faster. They'll wonder what the heck you're apologizing for.

Believe it or not, this approach has the phenomenal effect of totally breaking the other side's train of thought (in a nice way) and putting them in a position to be riveted by the next few words you say.

Introduce yourself and reintroduce yourself. Get your name out there. Make yourself a person. If you've been dealing with someone for a while, it never hurts to put your name back in their mind again. It's a good refresher. You might also want to sprinkle in some self-effacing humility, which is a form of empathy that elevates your counterpart in a way they appreciate. You'll also want to use their name sparingly — but not too sparingly.

A few years ago, after giving a session on negotiation at an Association for Financial Professionals (AFP) conference in Denver, an attendee taught me a brilliant insight I hadn't known before. He suggested that when your counterpart says *that's right*, they are confirming that you've hit the empathy bull's-eye.

When you've gotten the *that's right*, you're ready for the next step.

### Step 3: Provoke The Response With A Killer Label™

*"It sounds like there's nothing more you can do, like this is out of your hands. It sounds like you're powerless here. It sounds like there's nothing I can say to get you to make this deal."*

When you've gotten your *that's right*, it's time to use Labels™ to get more information from your counterpart. Labeling is a **communication skill** that allows us to attach a tentative identification of the dynamics, emotions, or circumstances implied by your counterpart's words, actions, or demeanor. Such labeling shows that we are attempting to gain an understanding of the position they are in, who they have to influence, and challenges they face. When used effectively, labeling becomes one of the most powerful skills available to us because it helps us uncover the factors that drive the counterpart's behavior.

Do *not* ask a question here. Say the Label gently, then go silent, keeping a supportive and approachable look on your face.

Let them respond. If they do have latitude, this is when you'll find out. This is how you both figure out what's what — and when you work to leave them in a positive frame of mind about the interaction. If they can't do anything more, you've at least made a deposit in the karma bank, and you never know when that might pay a dividend in the future.

Never underestimate the power of Labels. People *hate* being powerless. I once had a customer service agent offer me a concession that I hadn't even considered in response to this: *It sounds like you're powerless here.* And doing so made them feel that much better.

When you've got your concession, thank them for their generosity, leave them with a smile, and make it rain! ■



**Christopher Voss** is the CEO of The Black Swan Group, a firm that solves business negotiation problems with hostage negotiation strategies. Chris is also an Adjunct Professor at the University of Southern California (USC) Marshall School of Business and Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business where he teaches business negotiation in both M.B.A. programs. **Learn more at [BlackSwanLtd.com](http://BlackSwanLtd.com).**





# How Your Employees Are Screwing Up, Sabotaging, And Sinking Your Marketing Efforts — *And What To Do About It*

By Robin Robins, Founder of Technology Marketing Toolkit

**E**arlier this year, I bought a beach house on the Florida panhandle in an area that the locals call “30A,” which is the name of the road running through all the little beach towns between Panama City and Destin.

The house was newly constructed and came semi-furnished. Wanting to change some of the furniture and buy a considerable amount more, I contacted the designer who was hired by the builder to furnish the home. Of course, I didn’t get a live answer but voicemail, so I left a message. Not hearing back, I made a point of driving to their retail store to see if I could get help in ordering additional furniture. Upon entering, I was not greeted by anyone and walked around for a good 15 minutes before finally tracking down someone who worked there (I almost wrote “who could help me,” but you’ll see why I changed the wording in a minute).

She said I would have to talk to the actual designer for my specific house, and she couldn’t know who that was(!). She gave me a number to call where I could find out, leaving me to walk out empty-handed when I had come in ready and eager to buy. Stunningly stupid. No name captured and **no** attempt to try and sell me something — a ready-to-buy customer who drove to the location seeking to buy furniture. **Easy** pickings. Perhaps she’s not been told or taught that that’s her **job** to actually **sell** to customers

who come in. My guess is that there’s been zero thought put into what should happen, and certainly no

training for how *salespeople* put on the showroom floor to *sell* should handle prospects walking in.

Since the store visit, I’ve called twice, leaving messages, with no response so far. I’ve since given up and gone elsewhere, spending roughly \$100,000 with a competitor.

Now, maybe they’re so successful they don’t need the business. *Maybe*. Or perhaps you think this is just my luck, since I seem to run into all kinds of businesses out there that seem to go out of their way to make it difficult for me to give them money.

However, I can assure you this scenario is one that’s played out again and again in various types of businesses I’ve attempted to buy from: salons, restaurants, doctor’s offices, banks, you name it. It’s *rampant*. Selling — and following up with prospects — is, at best, treated like an afterthought in most companies and a major inconvenience in others. The owner forgets that the purpose of the business is to bring in clients and sales, not just “do the work.”

Left unchecked, this total lack of structure for selling robs you of untold profits. It suppresses the return of every marketing dollar you invest and lowers your net worth. If, like me, you want to reach financial independence and true wealth as *fast* as you can, you’re a fool to not pay attention to how new prospective customers are greeted, handled, and followed up on (minimum). Are you lacking a strategy for maximizing every lead, every customer, and every everything in your business?

The first step in fixing this is an acceptance that it’s your job as the owner to ensure all employees are told, trained, and managed to ensure that new opportunities, leads, prospects, and even clients are handled properly so that





## **NO opportunity is missed, overlooked, and BURNED.**

Now, here's a list of ways your employees are sabotaging your marketing and your business.

### **1 Ignoring Your Procedures, Processes, Scripts, And Rules And Doing Whatever THEY Want To Do**

I often remind my sales team that there's not 100 "best" ways to close a sale, overcome an objection, or book an appointment. There's **one** best way — let's find out what that way is and rinse and repeat. Since we've already done a lot of testing and refinement to find a system that works, I do not want you to come in and deviate from that recipe **unless** we are doing so as a controlled test to see if we can beat the best methods we have. Not innovate, not "sort of" say things that way, but follow the process. Of course, a lot of people don't want to be that disciplined in their speech and methods, and those people need to have their futures freed up (fired).

### **2 Telling Prospects And Customers Your Prices Are Too High**

Twice I've had a *salesperson* look me in the eye and whisper that I ought to go buy from a competitor, and/or they give me an alternative place to purchase what I was thinking about buying. The other day, while in a cosmetics store, another customer commented to her husband, who was standing next to her, about the prices being high. The clerk, overhearing what she said, snidely replied, "The owners *love* to mark the prices up on everything around here and take pride in overcharging everyone," implying she agreed with the customer and that

the owners were greedy bastards who found glee in "sticking it to" their clients. Another friend of mine was sitting in a dental practice when he overheard a patient complaining about the fees he was being charged. The secretary replied, "I know. I have a friend working at another dental practice that doesn't charge anywhere near what we charge and does just as good a job, but the doctor just bought a new Jaguar and has to pay for it somehow ..." No, I'm not kidding. And if you don't think *that* conversation is going on somewhere in your business, with your salespeople, you're grossly mistaken. It does happen and will happen, unless you are on the watch for it.

### **3 Treating Inbound Leads And Calls From Prospects As An Annoying, Bothersome Interruption That Should Be Ignored (If Possible) Or At Least Dealt With As Swiftly And Plainly As Possible**

They are not eagerly jumping to answer the phone but letting it roll to voicemail. If they happen to pick up, their annoyance with the "interruption" is obvious in their voice. They make *no* effort to capture the name and full contact details of the person who's called and don't try to facilitate the sale by booking a consultation or appointment and promising to send out follow-up information by email and mail. They answer the questions fired at them as simply as possible, offering the laziest "I don't know" and "I can't help you with that" answers, and hang up. The end. Remember, your **hottest** leads are going to call your office. If you've not scripted out what's supposed to happen, formulated answers to frequently asked questions, and trained the

person answering the phone on the best way to handle that opportunity, start there.

#### **4 Hiding Incomplete Work And Skipped Steps: Follow-Up Calls, Documentation, Sending Information, Making The Calls They Said They Would Make, Etc.**

This is where a good CRM/marketing automation platform and dialer comes in handy. If you ask a salesperson if they hit their prospecting quota (and you have given them one, right?), they will almost always give you an enthusiastic “Yes!” Go check. Years ago, when I was working in sales at CGI Systems, the manager hired a sales assistant to help me and the other reps by entering inbound leads into our CRM, organizing, and cleaning them for us to follow up with (back then, we received a lot of fax-back forms and direct mail response forms). One day, she quit without notice to sell Herbalife, so I went through her desk to pick up the pieces. What I found was two big drawers of paper leads from prospects that were **not** processed and **not** entered into the CRM, but stuffed into a drawer to be forgotten about. Both drawers were so full I could barely open them. This may seem like an extreme example, but over and over again, I see salespeople skipping steps, not making calls, not following the script, not leaving notes, etc., etc. I recently had to fire a rep because she simply refused to follow the steps and cost us two sales, and if it’s going on in my organization where we train, script, and manage tightly, I can absolutely guarantee this is going on in your organization too.

**5 Falsifying Sales Statistics** This is similar to the above but worth noting. I often get told a campaign “isn’t working,” only to find out that the sales or marketing team is outright lying about the data for a number of reasons. One reason is to cover up the mishandling of leads (see No. 4). Other times, they simply don’t like the ads and, therefore, take a passive-aggressive stance on trying to undermine the efforts of the CEO and me. If they are a marketing person, they sometimes want to sabotage the marketing because *they* didn’t create it. Salespeople will falsify stats to cover up a bad closing percentage, save face, or get out of doing the tracking because they’re busy and don’t like to do it, so they just make up the numbers.

I had a sponsor client leave the company they were working for and go to another company in the channel that also sold to MSPs. When he told the new company his plans for sponsoring our events, he was bluntly told they don’t sponsor our events because the leads are terrible and the event doesn’t deliver an ROI. Unconvinced based on his successful experience in sponsoring our events in the past, he pressed the matter and dug into the results from the last event that company had sponsored with us. Turns out that not only was it the highest-returning event they had ever sponsored

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in the company’s history, but it also was the only event where they actually closed sales in the booth. When he pressed the person who was sent to staff the booth on the numbers, she admitted that she falsified the results because she was busy the entire time, didn’t get breaks, and had to be in the booth for “long hours” talking to prospects and customers and didn’t want to repeat the experience.

There are more ways employees can muck up and mess with your money, and that’s what they’re doing. In some cases, you might be dealing with one or two of the above. Worse case, it’s all five. It’s up to **you** to not only create the playbook of how things are done at your place of business but to also monitor, manage, and train to ensure they are *actually* being done that way. ■

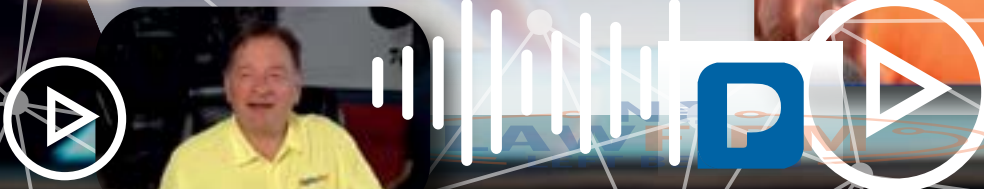




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