

# NO **LAWFIRM** LEFT BEHIND **MAGAZINE**

February/March 2023

**3 Strategies To Help  
You Stop Selling  
And Start Serving To  
Increase Revenue**

**Marketing 101:**  
*How To Strategically  
Pick Your Clients For  
Maximum Money And  
Maximum Growth*

## ***Building An Empire***

**Netflix Founder  
Marc Randolph Dispels  
The Myth Of Success**



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## Building An Empire

*Netflix Founder  
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# What's Next For You?

I've always found the television industry — streaming platforms, television networks, and media conglomerates engaged in a never-ending cat-and-mouse game. I'm always wondering what's next. Who's going to come up with the next big thing? Who's going to be pushed out of the game for good?

Netflix's streaming strategy was the beginning of on-demand video entertainment and the end for businesses like Blockbuster. At the top of Netflix's leadership were visionaries, including Marc Randolph, co-founder and first CEO of Netflix, featured in this issue of No Law Firm Left Behind. In the late '90s, Netflix leaders knew they needed a new strategy in the video entertainment space. They started by mailing DVDs and then, 10 years later, introduced internet streaming, which changed on-demand entertainment as we know it.

Blockbuster never adapted to the new strategy — one store remains in Oregon, surviving primarily on the nostalgia of tourists and merchandise sales — and Netflix quickly crushed its competition. The underlying theme of Netflix's success and Blockbuster's demise is not modern. It's a tale as old as time: evolve or die.

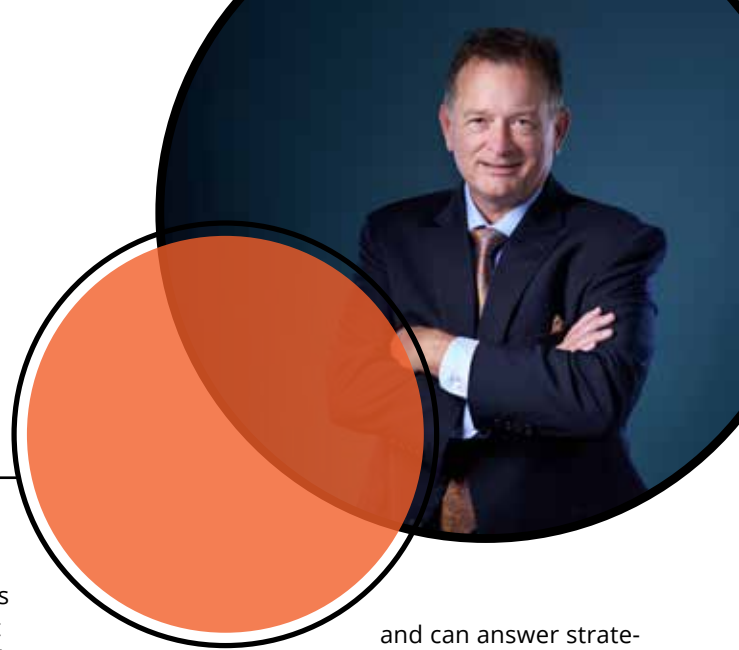
Today, Netflix faces fearsome competition in the same territory they forged nearly two decades ago. They are losing subscribers daily, and the gap between them and their competitors is narrowing. Companies going after Netflix, like Disney and HBO, aren't great visionaries so much as they are strategists — and that's the key to staying competitive.

As a law firm, if you don't think your competition is trying to take your business away, they'll make you a Blockbuster: irrelevant. If law firms hope to evolve with — and stay ahead of — the competition, I suggest they use a three-part strategy:

1. CRM tool to track opportunities
2. Data mining to inform next steps
3. A "golden nugget" to stand out

Do you have a process that helps you look down the road five years? Not just a way to keep track of potential cases and opportunities today but a way to plan for what's coming next? Many law firms use an Excel spreadsheet to track opportunities, but that's not enough. Visionaries want to look five years down the road and assume their competition will be in the same place. That's when they ask, "How do we get in front of them?" A CRM tool or practice management solution tracks your clients and opportunities and informs decisions about where to go next.

That's when the second piece comes into play — data mining. Data mining turns raw data into useful information



and can answer strategic questions like *Where are all of our cases coming from? What's the percentage of these cases to each other? What's the cost percentage to get them versus the win ratio of all of them?* Evaluate that data, determine your successes and plan for what's next.

CRM and data mining can also reveal something critical to your business — a "golden nugget." I talked a lot more about this with Dave Meyers in a recent episode of the "No Law Firm Left Behind" podcast, and I encourage you to listen if you haven't found your golden nugget yet. Your golden nugget makes you unique in a marketing environment — showing where your efforts are paying off the most. Are many of your referrals coming in from chiropractors? Then you need to be THE firm for chiropractors and build the relationship, so they refer all their personal injury cases to you, for example.

In addition to my three-part strategy, this month's issue has many great ideas about how to offer exceptional service and stand out in today's marketing environment. If you're going to evolve with the times and the competition, then you have to know where you're at and use tools to identify what's working and what isn't. It doesn't need to be complicated, but you must have a vision and a strategy.

So, will you be a Blockbuster, a Netflix, or maybe a Disney+? If you're unsure what's next for you, call me.

Sincerely,

*Jim Gast*

**Jim Gast,**  
CEO Of SpliceNet Consulting



# Pink Goldfish 2.0:

## 8 Terrible Strategies For Captivating Your Customers And Crushing Your Competition

What would it be worth if prospects and customers truly saw your company as unique?

In her book, "Different: Escaping the Competitive Herd," Harvard Business School marketing professor Youngme Moon argues that "the ability to compete is dependent upon the ability to differentiate from competitors."

However, she goes on to say that "the number of companies who are truly able to achieve competitive separation is depressingly small." This is because companies tend to define their strengths and weaknesses using the same measurements and standards as their competitors. This leads to homogeneity, not differentiation.

When everyone is trying to build on the same strengths and eliminate the same weaknesses, all companies start to look the same. Over time, the entire industry starts to look the same, feel the same, and sound the same. There are no differences. Nothing distinguishes one brand from another.

So, how can you create one of the few organizations that become extraordinary?

Maybe you could practice organizational *kintsugi*.

In the 15th century, the Japanese Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa broke his favorite tea bowl. When he tried to get it fixed, he was unhappy with the way it was done. So, he gave the craftsmen new instructions. He asked them to highlight the cracks instead of trying to hide them. On the second attempt, lacquer and gold were used to meticulously fill the jagged seams. The result became the art of kintsugi, which highlights the broken as more beautiful than the pristine.



Kintsugi Tea Bowl

This is the foundation of our differentiation strategy. We believe companies can separate themselves from their com-

petitors by illuminating imperfections instead of eliminating them.

A "pink goldfish" is a company that embraces this unconventional approach to differentiation. We gathered more than 300 examples and distilled them into a simple eight-part framework, which starts with flaunting.

### 1. Flaunting

Flaunt means to parade without shame. Flaunting is being unashamed and unapologetic about your organization's flaws. You take pride in your organization's faults. You emphasize them, accentuate them, feature them, highlight them, call attention to them, and openly display them. You definitely aren't trying to hide or fix them.

Alt Hotels is a great example of flaunting. They created a campaign that brags about all the things you won't find at their hotels. It's called **We Do Less**.

Each of the five ads focuses on what they don't do and what they do instead.



We **don't** have a minibar.



We **do** have a hip lounge.



We **don't** have a concierge.



We **do** have an app with all the hot spots.



We **don't** have a pool.



We **do** have a pool table.



We **don't** offer room service.



We **do** have fresh grab-and-go meals.



We **don't** have a bellman.



We **do** have a versatile helpful staff.

Flaunting is the foundation. You can't implement any of the next seven strategies if you are unwilling to practice flaunting.



## 2. Lopsiding

Lopsiding is about being unbalanced, imperfect, unstable, and odd. Lopsiding involves amplifying, not reducing, your brand's flaws. We want you to expand them, magnify them, increase them, turn them up, exaggerate them, and supersize them.

This is what Hardee's (or Carl's Jr., if you live on the West Coast) did with the Thickburger. When other fast-food companies were trying to create healthier options, Hardee's offered the unhealthiest option — and customers loved it.

## 3. Antagonizing

Antagonizing is about polarizing, alienating, repelling, and taunting. We want you to deliberately exasperate, irritate, provoke, aggravate, and instigate hostility. Go out of your way to rub people the wrong way. Try to earn a few more one-star reviews on Amazon or Yelp. Tell your employees to increase the number of complaints. Ring a bell in the office every time you get a nasty email. Try it. The more some people hate you, the more other people will love you.

The Alamo Drafthouse Cinema antagonizes when they kick out customers who talk or text during movies. Search YouTube for the angry voicemail a customer sent after being expelled. Alamo turned it into a PSA, warning people not to talk or text in Alamo theaters.

## 4. Withholding

Withholding is about limitations, restrictions, boundaries, and constraints. Withholding involves offering fewer options, locations, features, products, services, hours, perks, and discounts. This is about deliberately and relentlessly shrinking the things everyone else is expanding. It is purposefully doing less of what is considered normal by others. By reducing options or completely eliminating them, brands can stand out and differentiate themselves.

Chick-fil-A withholds by being closed on Sundays, not serving burgers, and rejecting 97% of franchise applications.

## 5. Swerving

As an example of withholding, we aren't going to explain swerving.

## 6. Opposing

Opposing is doing the exact opposite of what others are doing. Opposing brands are unlike other brands. They are contradictory. They refuse to give in, yield, submit, and surrender to the pressure to conform.

REI opposes when they close their stores and website on Black Friday, the biggest shopping day of the year.

## 7. Micro-Weirding

As we collected examples for pink goldfish companies, we had some that didn't fit into any specific category but were too good to leave out. So, we created another category: micro-weirding.

The Magic Castle Hotel's free popsicle hotline is micro-weird.

## 8. Exposing

Exposing is about transparency. Most companies try to hide their flaws. They market themselves as perfect and flawless. But prospects know that no company is perfect. People are looking for a company that will be honest about their imperfections.

Nebraska's new tourism campaign, where they admit that their state "isn't for everyone," is a great example of exposing.

### To help you remember the eight steps, we decided to create an acronym:

<b><i>F</i>launting</b>	<b><i>S</i>werving</b>
<b><i>L</i>opsiding</b>	<b><i>O</i>pposing</b>
<b><i>A</i>ntagonizing</b>	<b><i>M</i>icro-Weirding</b>
<b><i>W</i>ithholding</b>	<b><i>E</i>xposing</b>

**FLAWSOME** is a combination of FLAWS and AWESOME. We believe that your company's flaws are what make it awesome. Are you ready to start flaunting your organization's imperfections? ■



*David Rendall, TMT's "Expert In Resident," has spent the last 20 years speaking on every inhabited continent. Some of his clients include the U.S. Air Force, the Australian government, and Fortune 500 companies such as Microsoft, AT&T, and Fannie Mae, among others. His credits also include being a leadership professor, being a stand-up comedian, and managing nonprofit enterprises that provided employment for people with disabilities. David's educational accomplishments include a doctorate of management in organizational leadership and a graduate degree in psychology. To top that off, he is the author of four books. To find out more about David's coaching, keynotes, and workshops, visit him at [DRendall.com](http://DRendall.com).*



# What Makes a Strong Password?

## And Why Do I Need One?

Think about some of your private accounts right now. Chances are that you have an email account, social media accounts, bank account, and more that are all password-protected. Do you share passwords across different accounts, and are your passwords strong enough to keep cybercriminals away from your private information? If not, it might be time to evaluate.

Passwords offer the first line of defense when someone tries to access your sensitive information. Without passwords, anyone could gain access to your social media account, which could provide them with personal information that could be used to harm you. Even worse, bank accounts would be easily accessible to cybercriminals hoping to rob you of your funds.

While many personal accounts are password-protected, your business accounts also need to be properly secured. But this doesn't just exclusively apply to you — it needs to be understood on a companywide level. Every employee needs to use passwords to keep sensitive business information secure. Think about the damage a cybercriminal could do to your business if they gained access. They would permanently damage your business's reputation while also putting your employees' and customers' private information at risk.

However, it's not enough to simply put a password in place. The passwords you choose need to be complex. But what makes a password complex? A complex password will utilize a mix of upper and lowercase letters, numbers, punctuation, and special characters. Additionally, your password should not be related to any personal information, nor should you use dictionary words. Your password should be

incredibly difficult for someone to guess, even if they know you well, but you also need to ensure that your password is something you can remember.

But even with a complex password, it's likely still not enough protection. Each of your accounts and devices should have a unique password that hasn't been used anywhere else. If you use the same password across all accounts and devices, you're opening yourself up to a pretty extreme cyberattack if one of your accounts is compromised. All a cybercriminal needs to do is hack your Facebook page, and they will have the password for your bank accounts and email.

You might think that it'd be impossible to remember so many different complex passwords, but software is available that can help. The best way to keep track of your passwords is to use a password manager. With a password manager, you only have to remember one master password, and the software keeps track of the rest. It will even help you create complex passwords for your different accounts to ensure that your information is as protected as possible.

If you oversee a team of employees, then it's vital that they understand why creating strong passwords is so important. Your team should have training on cybersecurity practices, including information on creating passwords. If just one employee fails to create a complex and unique password, it could open you up to a cyberattack.

Creating strong passwords does not have to be difficult. If you're struggling to remember or create strong passwords, use a password manager. Strong passwords will help keep your sensitive information protected. ■



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- **Why the old model of attracting clients is dead and what you need to do immediately instead.** (This is mission-critical information, especially with what is happening right now.)
- **How using George Costanza's marketing secret will leapfrog you over your competitors.** (This principle is shockingly simple, but only the bravest of the brave will ever use it. See if that's you when you tune in.)
- **The ONE THING that will make you the preeminent authority and go-to professional in your target market.** (Do this, and you'll immediately escape the commodity trap. Again, this is more important than ever for thriving now and in the future.)
- **The three biggest mistakes that kill webinar results and what to do instead.** (Almost everyone makes these mistakes. Fix them, and the number of appointments you get will skyrocket.)
- **How "psychic selling" will increase the number of qualified prospects who schedule appointments with you.** (This is the most controversial part of the training, but if you use it ethically, more people will say "yes" to 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."

During this one-of-a-kind web class, Dave will show you a new and unique way to attract a consistent, reliable, and predictable flow of new customers, clients, or patients every month like clockwork using webinars.

# 3 Strategies To Help You *Stop Selling* and *Start Serving* To Increase Revenue

During a time when people are buying less, you still need to create sales and build profitability in your business. The problem? No one likes sales calls. No one likes to make them, and few enjoy receiving them.

The process of selling can be intimidating and carries with it a negative stereotype — the main one being soliciting and manipulating prospects to buy something they don't need. When approaching sales, people tend to think they have to be so persuasive that they end up on the border of manipulation.

## But what if you could change the way you sell, resulting in more sales?

Increasing sales in your small business is going to require a refresh. Here are three simple ways to reboot your sales strategies for results that everyone can feel good about.

# 1

### Reframe Your Sales Mindset.

Before anything else, you must start elevating your sales techniques by flipping the script from *selling* to your customers to *serving* your customers.

Once you make this small but powerful change, your sales will occur more organically. If you know your offering will improve their life, you have a responsibility to get it in their hands. That's being of service. Now, let's talk about implementing that mindset into the sales process.

# 2

### Elevate Your Sales Skills And Communication.

Your sales call may be your first impression. Your customers may not yet know you and, ultimately, won't understand the full benefit of your service until they buy from you. Their introduction

to you, that first impression, will be based on how you're selling to them. How you communicate with prospects will influence their decision whether or not to become your customers.

The first step is to begin making *service calls* and stop making *sales calls*. If you're simply calling to be of service, it changes everything. During the sales process, consumers will be asking themselves if they trust you and if you're offering something to genuinely help them. Service over sales will gain that trust.

Now that you're coming from a place of service, it's important to carry over that mindfulness to your sales communication. Everything you say in your sales communication will build your customer relationships and business reputation.

- **Listen First:** The most effective communication is born from listening. This takes active practice and requires less thinking about a response while someone else is speaking. Make sure your potential customers feel heard and that you understand their needs. Let them speak, then ...
- **Ask Questions:** Questions show you've intently listened, are engaged in the conversation, and are interested in thoroughly covering all of the requirements your prospect may have.
- **Then Offer:** Your offer should be less about sales and more about informing and educating what your product is and how it will solve a customer's problem. Upgrade the conversation by eliminating the old sales phrases that don't sound integral. Ask if they would like your assistance. If they say yes, then you may proceed with closing the sale.





Your potential customers need to feel their concerns are understood and that you are the trusted expert that can give them a solution to their needs. Illustrate that their well-being is more of a concern than the sale. Have a sincere discussion to determine what your prospect needs and explain how you can serve them now.

Conversely, if you feel you may not have the solution they require, be honest about it not being a fit for them at the moment. This transparency will give you a trustworthy business reputation, create stronger customer relationships, and ensure customer loyalty.

### 3 Audit Your Sales Process And Consumer Journey.

When you make a sale, that's only the beginning, not the end. Your customer needs to feel confident in their decision to work with you from start to finish. This means every financial transaction, email, phone call, and delivery date needs to be met with continued, thoughtful service and zero friction.

While your customer is waiting for their product to be delivered, stay in communication if there are any changes along the way. And after the deliverable is met, follow up with them to let them know you care about how it served them and if they require anything more.

Your customers' experience with your entire sales process determines not only if they become loyal customers, but if others do, too. While you don't want to rely on word of mouth for future sales, you must also remember that reviews and

conversations about customer experiences will directly affect your future sales.

Your reputation is only as good as the action you take. How you serve is everything. Be of service.



**For free chapters, resources, and keynote speeches from Mike Michalowicz, scan the QR code. ■**



*Mike Michalowicz (mi-KAL-o-wits) is the author of "Profit First," "Clockwork," "Surge," "The Pumpkin Plan," and his newest release, "Fix This Next." By his 35th birthday, Mike had founded and sold two companies — one to private equity and another to a Fortune 500. Today he is running his third multimillion-dollar venture, Profit First Professionals.*

*Mike is a former small-business columnist for The Wall Street Journal and the former business makeover specialist on MSNBC. Over the years, Mike has traveled the globe speaking with thousands of entrepreneurs and is here today to share the best of what he has learned.*



# Holding Your Team Accountable

Leaders often fail to hold their team accountable. During research for our book, "Powerscore," we found that only 8% of leaders are good at holding people accountable. One of the main reasons that leaders fail in this area is because when it's done wrong, it makes things more difficult for everyone.

Here's an example: I was giving a keynote speech at a Fortune conference a few years back and asked the audience, "How many of you have goals for your teams that are written down?" Only 10% raised their hands. Failure to write down goals opens the door for confusion. It becomes nearly impossible to hold someone accountable for delivering a result when you have failed to articulate what you're looking for.

In order to hold your team accountable, you need to be specific with goals and use numbers that others provide to measure performance. When I was still a young CEO with ghSMART, I struggled to hold a consultant accountable. She was brilliant and had great technical skills but failed to call clients proactively and didn't follow up with them. Many clients did not ask for her to come back as their trusted advisor.

I called her into my office and told her that she needed to work on her client relationships. She disagreed and stated that her clients loved her work. I said, "Well, one client told me that although he values your work, he feels you treat

him like 'processed cheese' and that you rush to finish projects with him, then you move on to your next client project." She said that her work spoke for itself, and the meeting abruptly ended.

This was a huge failure on my part, as I failed to set specific, mutually agreed on goals and used vague wording. I talked about this with a mentor, and he said, "Make sure you have clear goals, in writing, so your consultants know what 'great' looks like. Then, have somebody other than you collect data on their performance. Then, you can sit down as a coach to review their results versus their goals."

It was great advice that I immediately put into practice. When you properly hold people accountable, high performers will know they are performing, and they will keep doing what they are doing. And lower performers will know they are not performing well, long before anybody has to sit them down to have a conversation. ■



*Dr. Geoff Smart is chairman and founder of ghSMART, a leadership consulting firm that exists to help leaders amplify their positive impact on the world. Dr. Smart and his firm have published multiple New York Times bestsellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.*

# Upgrade Your Network

## And Quickly Experience These 4 Amazing Benefits

If you own or operate a business, you've probably had to adapt to a number of changes over the years. As you venture further into 2023, it's time to figure out what still needs to be done. One of those potential changes might be an upgrade to your network infrastructure.

When you look at making updates or adjustments to your business, you're probably doing so in an effort to bring in a greater profit than the previous year. While updating your software or hardware might not provide an obvious benefit to your sales goals, it can help save your business quite a bit of money in the long run. It can even boost your sales and overall productivity when the right updates are put in place.

Here are four major benefits that come with updating your network infrastructure.

### Faster Internet Connection

New technological advancements are made every day, and failing to keep up with them can hinder your business operations. This can be seen clearly with internet connectivity. If your internet speeds are slow, your employees will work at a slower pace. Client-facing applications will also lag and can be detrimental to your customer's satisfaction with your business. Investing in a new network will allow you to utilize faster internet speeds, which will allow you and your employees to work quicker with fewer interruptions, improving productivity and helping more clients faster.

### Better Network Security

We talk about the importance of cybersecurity a lot, and it's because one successful cyberattack could bring irreparable harm to any business, regardless of reputation or size. Cyberthreats are more complicated than ever before,

and cybercriminals can easily navigate old and outdated networks. Newer networks are built with more defenses to thwart would-be hackers. Even if you've recently upgraded your network, you need to continually update your software. New patches are regularly released that help plug the holes that cybercriminals are exploiting.

### More Compatibility

An upgraded network provides business owners with more options than they could ever dream of. You'll have access to countless applications that will benefit your business and put you a step ahead of your competitors, but your network needs to be as strong as possible to get the most out of them.

### Less Time Maintaining Your Network

If you upgrade your network on old infrastructure, you will put more strain on your system, and your IT person or company will have to step in to help out. Investing in modern infrastructure will help fix many problems in your business and will give your employees more time to be productive, including your IT specialists.

Now that you're aware of the benefits of upgrading your network infrastructure, when should you do it? As your business grows, your network needs to grow with it. You will also need to upgrade if you're experiencing any issues with your current network. If you work in an industry that deals with sensitive client information like a law firm, you may be legally required to keep your network up to date as much as possible.

Upgrading your network and keeping it up to date will come with many benefits and few drawbacks. If it's been some time since your last upgrade or update, it's time to re-evaluate your need. ■







# Robin's Rules For Salespeople



## YOU Have To Be SOLD Before You Can SELL.

If you're not excited and deeply passionate about what you sell, figure out how to *get* excited — or find another job. Talk to someone who is passionate about a hobby, and they'll "sell" you on why it's so exciting. They don't need a script or clever closes. They sell because of their sheer passion for what they do. If you are not as convinced about what **you** do, then make it better so you **can** be passionate.



## Always Be The Most Professional Person In The Room.

Dress modestly and professionally. Don't get angry or defensive.

Say "Please" and "Thank you." If you say you're going to do something, then **do it**. Be prepared, professional, and have a process. Too many salespeople are casual about their performance. They show up late, unprepared, and unscripted and are not ready to close. No pro would ever show up that way to their "game," be it a professional athlete or actor.



## TRUE Sales Pros NEVER Wing It.

They follow a highly strategic, planned-out process. There aren't 10, 20, or even two "best ways" to do something. Only one. Find it, and repeat it.

Don't  
Miss  
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Are you ready to take your marketing game to the next level and set your business up for long-term, sustainable growth?

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**Never Trash The Competition.** If you have to bad-mouth a specific competitor to win a sale instead of selling on **your** merits, you're pitiful and unprofessional. If someone has to sell you on their services by telling you how bad a competitor is, you should walk away. Sell on **your** merits ... and if you don't have any, **get some**.



### **Sending Emails And Connecting With People On Social Media Are NOT Productive Prospecting Activities.**

You get **zero** points unless a call is tied to it. Outside salespeople are called "outside" salespeople for a reason. You're supposed to get outside of the office to go meet with check writers. COVID-19 is over. Get out to networking events, meetings, and conferences. Network. Visit people. Conduct canvassing. That's your job if you're a hunter.

NEVER leave a meeting with a prospect without a **SCHEDULED** next action. Don't waste your time. If they aren't interested, have a polite and professional way to find out — and then walk away to find a better, more interested prospect who is ready to buy. You must maintain control of the process or you'll waste your time.



### **Don't Sell To People Who Only Have The Authority To Say 'NO.'**

It's difficult enough to deal with *willingness* to buy; don't handicap yourself with their inability to buy, too. How do you know if they have the authority to buy? Who influences their decisions? Who is truly calling the shots? Scripts and practice help, but you must have a willingness to ask tough questions. Are you the fool or the favorite? Ask, "Why do you want to do business with us?"



### **ACTIVITIES Drive RESULTS, Period.**

Don't whine and complain about the competition, the market, your customers, the leads you're getting, etc. IF you're doing enough of the right activities, you will succeed.

You have to make up in *numbers* what you lack in *skill*. Following from the above, the weaker and more underdeveloped your skills are, the more you'll need to do. Repetition of correct fundamentals develops skill. If you're not willing to put in the work and do the activities required to succeed, you shouldn't be in sales.



### **Follow Up Fast On EVERY Lead.**

The faster you respond, the better your chances are of getting the deal. Make sure you don't give up on leads too quickly, and call at least 5-7 times in addition to emailing, mailing, and social messaging before you put them into drip marketing.

If you want to be *successful* in sales, you should work MORE than 9 to 5. You control your income — and your raise becomes effective the minute you work more. Also, as the saying goes, "Learners are earners." What book are you reading? What method are you studying to be at the top of your game? If you see yourself as a professional, you are constantly sharpening your skills.



### **Have Something INTERESTING**

**To Share.** Why *should* someone take your call? Your meeting? If all you can offer is to pitch a product or talk to someone about their "needs," you don't deserve a callback or a meeting. Great salespeople are fountains of knowledge and true consultants. They know things others don't. When you meet with a true professional who knows their industry, product, and client, they can tell you things that are truly valuable. Bottom line, if you want more prospects to meet with you, do a better job at selling them on what THEY will get from the meeting.



**Invite The 'No.'** Your job is not alchemy, turning a cold rock into a gold nugget. Instead, keep prospecting to find the ones who **want** what you're selling. Endlessly following up on people who were too polite to tell you "no" to your face is a giant waste of time. Let your marketing do the drip marketing for you, and put your efforts into finding someone who is ready to buy now.

Whining and complaining has **never** solved a problem, closed a sale, or accomplished anything productive. Grow up. **Nobody is impressed by how good your excuses are.** ■

*Robin Robins*

***There is no doubt about it: Robin Robins has helped more MSPs and IT services businesses to double - even triple - sales, profits and MRR growth than any other marketing consultant in the IT services industry, period. As a trusted advisor to over 10,000 IT services business owners for over 18 years, Robin knows a thing or two about what it takes to grow sales, recurring revenue streams and a profitable client base for an IT services business.***





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# Puncture The Myth

Marc Randolph On Netflix, Mentorship, And The Importance Of Testing Your Ideas

**I**f there's one person you'd be surprised to hear say, "There's no such thing as a good idea," it's Marc Randolph. As co-founder and founding CEO of Netflix, Randolph, along with co-founder Reed Hastings, created a company that is regarded as one of the best ideas in Silicon Valley history. In a place that's in love with grand innovation, it would be easy for Randolph to view his career in tech as the foregone conclusion of coming up with a concept that is now one of the textbook examples of disruption.

But Randolph, never afraid to go against the grain, rejects the conventional narrative of tech startup success. Early in his new book, "That Will Never Work: The Birth of Netflix and the Amazing Life of an Idea" (Sept. 15, Little, Brown and Company), Randolph immediately puts the sword to the Hollywood version of the origin of the streaming giant. "There's a popular story about Netflix that says the idea came to Reed after he'd rung up a \$40 late fee on 'Apollo 13' at Blockbuster," he writes. "He thought, 'What if there were no late fees?' And BOOM! The idea for Netflix was born. That story is beautiful. It's useful. It is, as we say in marketing, *emotionally true*. But as you'll see in this book, it's not the whole story."

*The Birth of **NETFLIX** and  
the Amazing Life of an Idea*

That Will  
**NEVER**  
Work

MARC RANDOLPH  
CO-FOUNDER AND FIRST CEO OF NETFLIX

If that didn't make his point clear enough, he later adds, "One of my goals in telling this story is to puncture some of the myths that attach themselves to narratives like ours."

## The Art Of Storytelling

"That Will Never Work" revises the myth and attempts to tell the whole story while also dispensing what Randolph calls "hard-won truths" from his 40-year career in entrepreneurship. "I did not want it to be a 'you' book," he says. "You have to do this. You have to do that." It's telling a great story — about the things we over-



came, the problems we had, the close calls. People will then pull out of that some of the lessons they can apply to their own lives and their own businesses. It's absolutely meant to be a great story first."

On that level, the book is an unmitigated success. It's the opposite of the dry business tome in which the author pontificates from on high about abstract concepts and actionable takeaways. Encompassing the brief span of time between Netflix's initial conception (January 1997) and its IPO (May 2002), "That Will Never Work" gives readers an inside look into the halcyon days of Silicon Valley, when, as Randolph puts it, "You couldn't prove to your investors that your idea would work unless they gave you money to prove that your idea could work."

The structure of the chapters, split into narrative blocks rather than digestible nuggets of wisdom, echoes the author's insistence on pulling the universal from the particular and not vice versa. Along with the scenes that teach some of those "hard-won truths," there are countless vividly detailed moments that would work as well in a novel as in a so-called business book. In one outrageous passage, a screening of "Boogie Nights" at Steve Kahn's house turns into something worthy of its own inclusion in a Paul Thomas Anderson film, complete with Reed Hastings swimming laps, Mounds bars, and "Dirk Diggler [letting] it all hang out in crystalline, DVD-quality resolution, across an 8-foot screen."

As rollicking as the narrative itself is, there's no denying that this book will help business owners think critically and provide them with a fresh perspective. "It's designed mostly to be inspirational," Randolph says, "because I want people to feel they can do *this*. Whether it's taking their business from where it's currently at and growing it to the next level, whether it's overcoming some challenge they see on the horizon, whether it's straddling some new technological shift: I think all those things these days are doable, possible, and, I won't say easy, but certainly within everyone's grasp."

Perhaps the greatest way "That Will Never Work" achieves this, as its subtitle suggests, is by demonstrating exactly why there's no such thing as a good idea.

### **Build A Better Test**

"The fundamental problem most people have," Randolph says, "is that they are obsessed with coming up with this great idea. And I have now become convinced in my wise old age that there's no such thing as a good idea. Every idea is wrong. They're bad. Every one. But they're all starting points. So, the longer you keep that idea in your mind — polishing it, augmenting it — the longer you put off actually figuring out what's wrong with it, so you can begin fixing it."

Herein lies the crux of Randolph's argument. In his eyes, an idea is not anything until it's testable. Or, as he puts it, "The success of an idea is directly proportional to how many things you can test." When Netflix was just a talking point, it sat on equal footing with competing ideas like customizable surfboards and personalized baseball hats. Only after Randolph proved the idea had legs, in the form of safely mailing a CD, did everything else fall by the wayside.

As Netflix grew and Randolph continued to test aspects of the business, he realized there was a quicker and more efficient way to perform testing. "At one point in our saga, we were selling and renting DVDs, and we decided to walk away

from selling in order to focus everything we had on rental," Randolph recalls. "We had lots of great ideas on how we could make rental work. At first, I was testing them in a very comprehensive way. I was doing a perfect test, custom copy, custom photography, stress-testing the site. But it would take me three weeks to do that, and the test would fail."

Eventually, Randolph hit upon what he calls "validation hacking." "We don't have to build a real test," he says. "We can fake it. We can do something that makes no sense in the long-term model but is a great way to find out whether it works or not in a quick and cheap way." The point wasn't to give the idea the best possible chance to thrive. If that happened, it would only allow delusions to fester. Instead, making an idea prove its mettle quickly and in adverse circumstances was an effective way to kill Netflix's proverbial darlings. "If it was a bad idea, no matter how much polish we put into the test, it wasn't going to make it a good idea; but if it was a good idea, it immediately sprang out to us. Then we knew what we had to fix."

### **'This Is Not For The Long Term'**

While Netflix may have taken validation hacking to never-before-seen heights, it was actually an idea Randolph first learned from a mentor during his days running a mail-order company called MacWarehouse. "One of the pieces we needed was a huge computer because back in those days, if you wanted to take orders for a mail-order company, you had to buy a half-million-dollar IBM mini mainframe to do it," Randolph says.

Randolph went to his mentor, who was also the largest stockholder in the company, and asked for the money to buy the computer.

"That's crazy," the mentor replied. "Why don't we just do contract fulfillment? Let's do everything through a third party."

"That's a good idea," Randolph answered, "but that's going to cost us \$25-\$30 an order, and our margin is probably \$15 an order, which means we lose \$15 per order."

"Of course," his mentor responded. "But this is not for the long term. It's not something repeatable or scalable, but this will allow you to learn if your idea is good for \$15 an order. You can do that 1,000 times, and it will only cost you \$15,000 if you've made a bad decision."

Would you rather spend \$15,000 to test your idea or \$500,000? The answer to that question is self-evident, and it certainly helped instill in Randolph a willingness to experiment with every facet of Netflix rather than simply being enchanted with the emotion of the core idea.

### **The Last DVD Rental**

Just as Randolph is willing to tease apart an idea to find its shortcomings, he's also unafraid to take a hard look at himself. In 1999, he famously stepped down from the CEO role at Netflix and turned the chair over to Hastings, who remains in place to this day. The move was one that required Randolph to do some self-reflection in a hurry.

In "That Will Never Work," he recounts in excruciating detail the conversation when he realized he would no longer be the CEO of the company he helped to start. "I knew that a lot of what he was saying was true," Randolph writes of his conversation with Hastings. "But I also thought that we were talking about *my* company. It had been *my*

idea. *My* dream. And now it was *my* business. While Reed had been off at Stanford and TechNet, I'd been pouring my entire life into building the company. Was it realistic to expect anyone to get every decision right? Shouldn't I be allowed to work my way through mistakes?"

In the moment, his sense of indignity is easy to empathize with. Who wouldn't feel as though the rug they had woven was being yanked out from under them? Over time and through introspection, however, he realized the decision was best for everyone involved. "I love Netflix, and it's my baby," he says. "Of course I want to be there forever, but there are people who are way better at it than me. Just like a child, at some point, it has to stand on its own without you. The best thing you can do sometimes is get out of the way. It really comes down to parsing two different dreams that are melded together: I want to build and grow a company. Which is more important? That it's you doing the building and growing, or that the company gets built and grows? If you're really honest with yourself, do they have to be joined?"

### **From Mentee To Mentor**

His emotional wisdom may be easily replicable, but Randolph credits mentors throughout his career with helping to cultivate his business savvy. "I've always been somebody who glommed onto anyone who knew what they were talking about," Randolph reveals. "It's part of this insatiable curiosity I have." Having never attended business school, he had to learn by doing. "I was fortunate in that I bumped into two or three phenomenally good entrepreneurs who I enlisted as mentors. From each of them, I



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# New Book Reveals

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#### **Powerful information for anyone passionate about what you do**

Dave Dee is the most contemporary and cutting-edge master of sales I have ever come across. Congratulations Dave on an absolute life-changing manual (this book).

- Scott Kilpatrick

#### **All you need to do is follow along**

This is basically an instruction book getting people to buy what you're selling. All you have to do is follow along. The only difference is that this one is the furthest thing from boring; you'll instead be entertained and engaged through the entire book. The author breaks everything down with flawless precision and puts you right into the mind of your customer so that you not only know what to say but how to say it. I've seen Dave present this content on stage before, so I was very excited to pick this book up as soon as it dropped. You'll be glad you got it as well. Highly recommended.

- Drew K.

learned some really interesting lessons. Not by them sitting down and watching them lay it all out on a whiteboard, but just by watching how they did things, how they prioritized things, how they chose what and what not to work on."

Now, long after the events of "That Will Never Work," Randolph finds himself on the other side of the mentorship coin. It probably won't surprise you to learn that he isn't interested in going through the motions in that arena, either. "When I first left Netflix," he says, "I got lots of invitations to be an advisor, quote-unquote. You go, and you have lunch with someone; you go sit at the meeting. They tell you about their business, and then you give them this pattern recognition answer. It sounds smart, but you're really doing a one-size-fits-all answer." Randolph had no interest in doing that.

In an age when mentorship and coaching have become commodified industries in their own right, Randolph urges people to find mentors who are truly willing to do the grunt work with you. "It's all about listening," he states. "When you're talking to your mentor, do you really get the sense that they understand what your problem is?"

Once you have an established relationship with a mentor, you have to be willing to be both adaptive and steadfast, depending on the situation. "The critical thing to being mentored is to walk a very careful balance," Randolph advises. "On the one hand, the reason that you are successful in your business is that you've been listening to people tell you that will never work, and you have enough self-confidence to persist. On the other, you have to be the kind of person who can listen to the advice and truly consider it before you accept or reject it. When I'm selecting a mentee, I'm looking for somebody who can demonstrate that they're open to other ways of thinking about a problem, whether they take my advice or not."

Today, Randolph contributes to the entrepreneurship programs at both Middlebury College and High Point University, where he mentors the next generation of America's business leaders. After 40 years spent creating and growing a business, Randolph still maintains an enthusiasm for the future. "I've been doing this since before people called it entrepreneurship," he says with a laugh. "Back when I was a lad, when you wanted to start a company, you had to do everything yourself. Now, of course, everything's there; everything's in the cloud. The overhead flow of trying something different is remarkably low. That frees people up to try things." In "That Will Never Work," Randolph encourages readers to do just that. ■

# Give Your Business An Advantage In 2023

## *By Paying Attention To Important IT News And Trends Of 2022*

**2**022 was a big year for IT, experiencing growth in all areas, especially for infrastructure in remote work due to the pandemic. When businesses fail to have updated IT infrastructure in place, regardless of company size or location, their customers' and employees' sensitive information is at risk. By investing in proper IT infrastructure, businesses can improve productivity while saving money. It's a win-win situation.

Keeping that in mind, business owners need to be aware of changes in the IT industry so they can best protect their businesses and customers. The IT industry is continuing to grow, so you must make necessary updates. Here, you'll find the most important IT news and trends of 2022. Understanding these trends will help foster success into 2023 and beyond.

### **Increased Need For IT Services Due To Remote Employees**

One of the biggest challenges for many industries was the need for reliable IT services for remote employees. Businesses had to send their employees home, so they needed to find ways to ensure their information would stay protected.

To fix this issue, many businesses started working with MSPs to help with their IT and cybersecurity needs. MSPs can install, support, and maintain all the users' devices and PCs connected to the network. Since they manage devices remotely, they're available to help employees with their concerns as soon as they arise. MSPs are also incredibly beneficial when it comes to protecting information from hackers and other significant problems. They'll be there to assist with issues such as lost devices, hardware failures, natural disasters, and many other situations.

### **A Need For More Automation**

Between rising costs due to inflation and staffing issues, many small-business owners are doing more of the repetitive but necessary tasks that don't bring much value to the business. However, many things can be automated, including email marketing and data entry. Business owners don't have to do everything on their own, especially when they can automate many of these essential daily tasks. Implementing automation leave business owners and employees less stressed while freeing up time for higher-valued tasks.

### **Cyberattacks Of 2022 To Be Aware Of**

Cybercriminals are getting smarter and bolder. In 2022, we saw cyberattacks against the Israeli and Polish governments, the school system in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and large businesses such as Uber and Crypto.com.

No business is exempt from cyberattacks. Many small businesses don't prioritize cybersecurity, and cybercriminals know this. They will try to target and compromise businesses if they think they are an easy target. Proper cybersecurity training for employees as well as hiring an MSP can reduce the risk of hackers gaining access to critical information.

If you're a small-business owner, it's essential that you include your business' IT needs in your plans for 2023. Doing so will allow you to stay ahead of your competition while ensuring that your employees and customers are well protected. ■

# 8 Smart Tips For Easing Your Transition To A New CRM

## Save Your Sanity With These Genius Ideas

You've chosen a CRM with marketing automation. You mean business and are ready to keep track of customer data, get your marketing on autopilot, and streamline internal processes for your business. Many business owners dread making this transition to a new CRM and marketing automation platform — the whole process can seem incredibly daunting, but if you use these helpful tips, getting started can be a lot less stressful for you and your team.

Here are some ideas to help you get on the quickest path to ROI and help you save your sanity throughout the process.

**1 Designate A Project Manager:** Choose a point person to head up your transition to your new CRM. Who at your company can take the lead on this project with the technical know-how and organizational skills to keep the transition on track, manage onboarding tasks, and schedule training for the team? This person should also exude loads of enthusiasm and dedication to keep the team excited throughout the onboarding process!

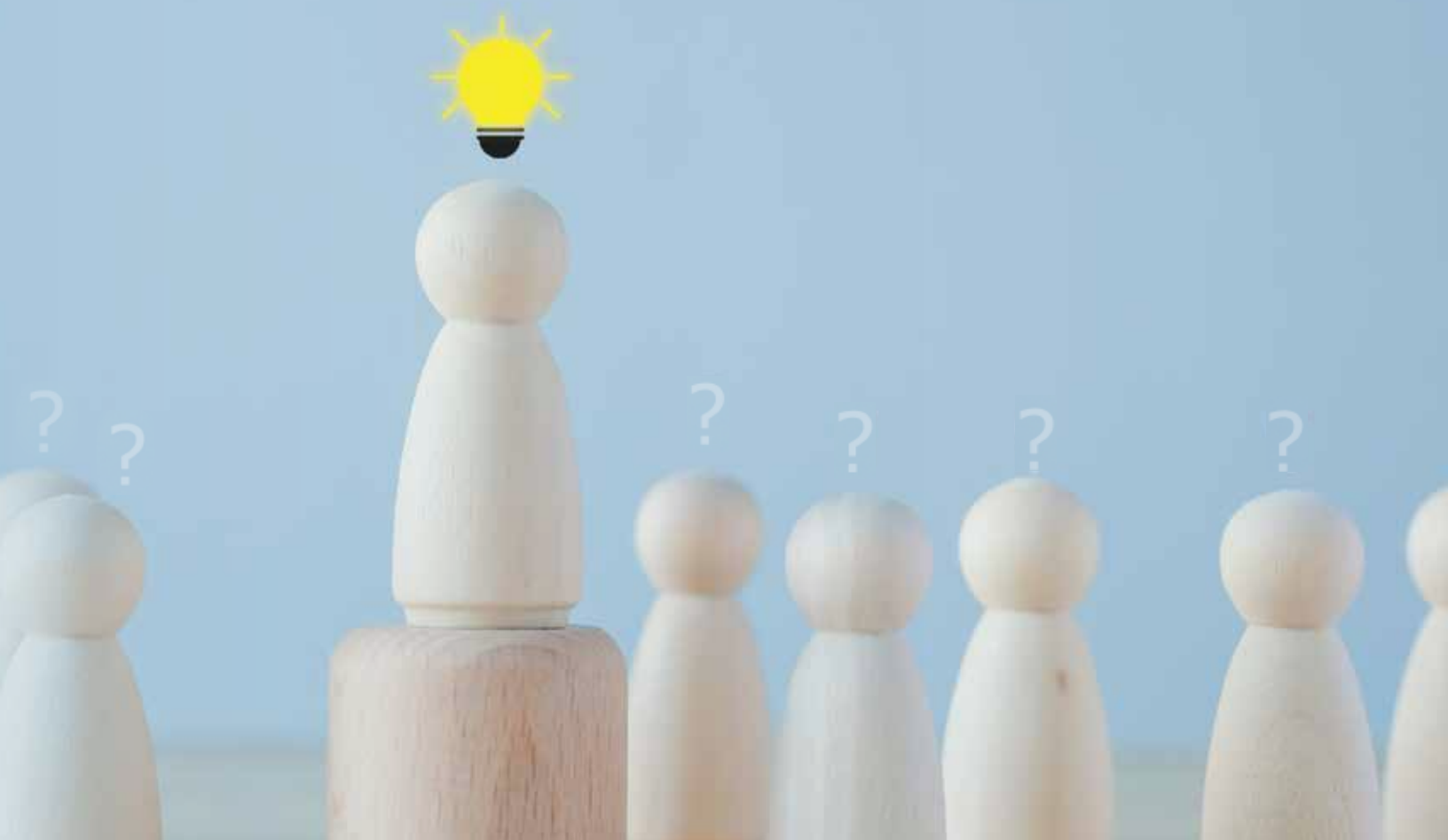
**2 Prepare Your List For Import:** As soon as you know you are switching to a new CRM, start organizing and cleaning your existing data. So much of the results and success you will have with your marketing has to do with the quality of your contact list, so NOW is a great time to clean it up!

Export all contact records (clients and prospects) from your existing CRM and/or PSA tool to a spreadsheet. Then, review and validate that the information you have is correct and up to date (name, title, company name, mailing address, phone number, email address, industry, etc.). Importing a clean list will be key to making sure you don't waste time or your marketing efforts and dollars.

**3 Get A 'Lay Of The Land':** Get comfortable with navigating around your new system. Add a test contact record, locate your user profile, and try creating a task or reminder. To get a jump-start, attend office hours provided by your CRM provider, watch tutorials, or just roll up your sleeves, log in, and start playing around! The more you work in the system, the more comfortable you'll be.

**4 Integrate Your Website To Capture Leads:** Review your website and update all of your web forms (contact us form, free report opt-in, appointment requests, etc.) with new codes so all form submissions are added to your marketing automation platform. Create a follow-up system that immediately sends you an alert for each form submission and create a workflow that helps you remember to call and follow up with your new leads.





### **5 Give Your Current Clients A 'Heads Up':**

Send an announcement email to clients to let them know you are establishing a new CRM system that will help you to better serve them. Let them know what types of communications will be sent from your new system (email alerts, quarterly business review invites, other event notifications, etc.). Ask them to keep their eyes open for these emails and to let you know if they have any concerns or questions.

### **6 Track New Opportunities In Your Sales Pipeline:**

Begin to manage your potential deals to make sure no opportunities fall through the cracks. Review your notes, files, and calendar to find any current opportunities and add them to your sales pipeline. Have you recently met with a prospect who is highly engaged as a potential buyer? Do you need to create any proposals and present a report of findings, or are you waiting for a response from a proposal you have presented? Add all of these to your pipeline. Indicate the sales stage, potential revenue, and notes and set up automated follow-up tasks for each opportunity.

### **7 Meet With Your Team Regularly:**

Schedule meetings for ongoing implementation and team training for the first couple of months. Create a plan and review progress toward your goals weekly. Develop operating standards to ensure consistency of usage among staff.

Use the weekly check-ins to monitor reporting, answer questions, and, most importantly, keep the team on the same page.

### **8 Don't Stay Stuck!**

Always reach out to your software provider for support when you have a question, need technical assistance, or simply hit a roadblock when using the system. Consider working with a knowledgeable consultant who can provide you with guidance, streamline your process, and offer proven marketing content to help you maximize your investment. ■



**Janette DeGrazio** is the Director Of Marketing Automation Programs and Chief Architect of TMT's results-generating Marketing Automation Platform (MAP) systems. It is her No. 1 priority to make sure all of TMT's MAP members know HOW to use their powerful automation tool to generate leads and sales. Her goal is to equip members with the tools, guidance, and training needed for the best success in the MAP program. She can be reached at [Janette@TheMarketingTeam.com](mailto:Janette@TheMarketingTeam.com).

# Marketing 101:

## How To Strategically Pick Your Clients For Maximum Money And Maximum Growth



One of the core fundamentals I teach is summed up in a favorite quote from my long-term mentor, Dr. Nido Qubein: **“Who your customer is today is a piece of data; who your customer should be is a piece of strategy.”**

To whom do you want to be a hero? Who has a flexible wallet? Unmet needs? Who is ready, willing, and able to pay a premium for the results you deliver and the services you provide?

A big reason businesses stay small is they approach their business with the “We’ll take anyone with breath and buck” strategy. The problem is that a lot of people have BAD breath and ALL they have is a buck. Now, they won’t *say* they’ll take anyone, but their behavior reveals an entirely different truth. Look at their client base — it’s rife with low-money, pain-in-the-ass clients who drain their energy, suck up resources, and are NOT true “assets” that can be developed and grown. And now, in this tough labor force, you cannot afford to have a low-money, no-growth client sucking up both your time and your employees’.

I have a small garden in the back of the house with limited space. If a plant isn’t producing, is diseased, or is showing signs of root rot, it’s removed and replaced with a productive plant. I don’t coddle it, hoping it will get better. It won’t. I rip and replace.

**So, let me be VERY clear:** As long as you refuse to STRATEGICALLY clarify WHO your target market is and really dig in to understand them and use that information to construct products, services, and marketing messages that have a strong appeal to them that they will enthusiastically respond to and

open their wallets for, your fate is going to be one of commoditization, mediocrity, and poverty.

I hear “bad clients” as an excuse for why businesses can’t get ahead. They love to blame their current clients for their failures in business: *My clients are CHEAP. My clients are STUPID. Often, my clients are stupid AND cheap. I “can’t” get my clients to pay that much. I “can’t” get my clients to take my advice. I “can’t” get my clients to meet with me to do QBRs. I “can’t” get my clients to pay via ACH draft. I “can’t” \_\_\_\_\_.* The list is long. Just like bad dog owners, they blame the poor animal for the bad behavior. A dog WILL crap on your carpet IF you don’t train it otherwise. Yes, some train easier than others, but ultimately, you the owner are at fault if the dog misbehaves.

### So, let’s start with a few fundamentals:

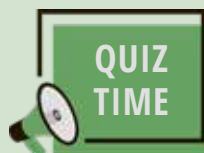
**No. 1:** If you cannot describe, in detail, who you want as a client, you can’t possibly be effective at building a business, period. How can you build a list or write content for your website if you cannot clearly define whom you are trying to persuade? Surely a practice manager at a small doctor’s office needs to be talked to differently than the CEO of a construction company — and trying to broaden your message and approach is the fastest road to failure.

**No. 2:** Once you have identified the “WHO,” and ONLY after you’ve identified the who, can you go about building the “mousetrap” that will attract them. It is SO easy to get sucked into focusing on the deliverable over the client. It’s what you know and love. It’s what you *think* your business is about. But this is not the correct order of things.

If you want to succeed in business, you must be MARKET DRIVEN, which means you first determine the client you want, THEN build the service and business that will deliver something to them they can't get anywhere else, that they truly would want to buy.

While I'm completely for understanding industry norms and how most others deliver business, I'm against **BLINDLY CONFORMING to such norms**. No breakthroughs come from that type of thinking. You must constantly ask yourself, what will my chosen target market buy? What do they want that they aren't getting now? Uber was able to take a HUGE piece of business away from taxis because they eliminated a number of irritants people had with rude, smelly, difficult cab drivers. Yes, they have other problems they are dealing with today, but overnight, they stole a giant chunk of business away from the cab industry.

Starbucks crushed Dunkin' NOT because they had better coffee but because they created the "third place," delivering an experience where coffee was just part of the equation — NOT by focusing on making better coffee, which Dunkin' is still trying to promote with their stupid ads with Santa Claus hanging around someone's house because they have Dunkin' coffee.



Here's a pop quiz to see just how much you really know about your clients. I would suggest you think about your HVCs, or "high-value clients," as you go through these

questions to see how much you know about them. If you can't instantly and confidently say what the answer is, you have work to do.

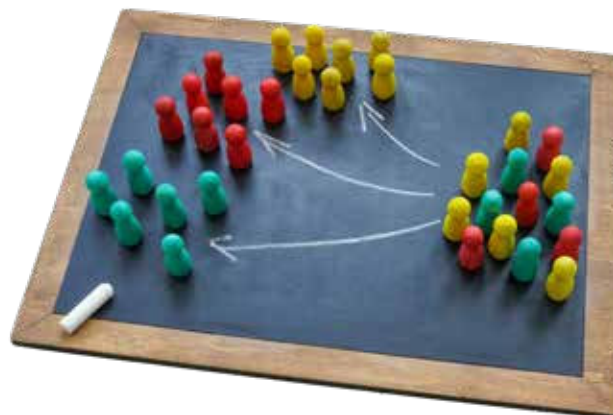
1. **What are the most common demographics of your HVCs?** (These are data points such as industry, size of company, geographic location, number of employees, clients they serve, etc.)
2. **What are the shared psychographics of your HVCs?** (These are things like core values, mindset, buying preferences, value hierarchy, political views, etc.)
3. **What are the most common situations/problems that drive them to seek out your services?** (Hint: This should be the focus of marketing communications, including your website. "Are you a \_\_\_\_\_ struggling with \_\_\_\_\_?")
4. **What are their primary goals?**
5. **What KPIs are they focused on?**
6. **What are the top three biggest problems they struggle with and against in their business?**
7. **What trends are happening that affect them either negatively or positively?**

8. **What are their buying criteria for what you sell? How "savvy" of a buyer are they?**
9. **What other characteristics make them a good client?**
10. **Where do they get their information? What associations do they belong to? What conferences do they attend?**

### How do you get such information?

Well, demographics are easy. You just have to compile the data about all HVCs and take a look at what they have in common. It might not be number of employees or industry (niche) but age, years in business, type of client served, etc.

Psychographics are only obtained by interacting with them on a level that goes beyond fixing computers. You have to have real business conversations with them, asking them key questions such as "What are the top 3-5 KPIs you watch in your business?" or "What are your greatest fears about your industry as a whole?" which is a better way of asking, "What are you most afraid of?" which they may not answer.



You should also read industry publications for trends and subscribe to the social media sites they frequent, reading the threads and conversations they have in their "natural habitat." Talk to other successful salespeople who sell to those same clients (just make sure it's a successful salesperson) but are non-competitive with you. Find out what objections they get and what hot buttons they sell to.

Finally, you have to get out of the "box" you're in of thinking you're "just" a business. With an open mind, you might find big opportunities for unmet needs within your client base that you can work to develop a solution for and profit from.

I've often said if the sales letter is hard to write, the product is flawed. I would add if the person selling the product CAN'T write the sales letter because they don't know anything about the client TO write it, the CEO and business strategy are flawed. ■

*Robin Robins*



# HAVE A LAUGH



**88%**

of SMBs are vulnerable to a payments data breach.



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**"Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them."**

–Madam C.J. Walker, first female self-made millionaire



**"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."**

–Walt Disney, co-founder of The Walt Disney Company



***"You can't just wish to be a millionaire; you have to figure out how to earn it."***

–Dolly Parton, singer-songwriter, actress, philanthropist, and businesswoman

**"If you don't find a way to make money while you sleep, you will work until you die."**

–Warren Buffett, business magnate, investor, and philanthropist



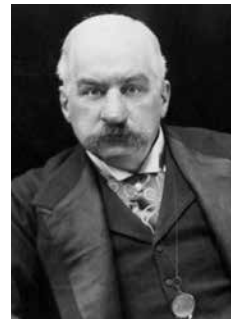
**"The easiest thing I ever did was earn a million dollars. The hardest thing I ever did, and it took years, was believing I was capable of earning a million dollars."**

–Les Brown, American politician and motivational speaker



***"It doesn't matter how many times you fail. You only have to be right once and then everyone can tell you that you are an overnight success."***

–Mark Cuban, American billionaire entrepreneur & television personality



**"Go as far as you can see; when you get there, you'll be able to see farther."**

–J.P. Morgan, financier and investment banker

**"Being confident and believing in your own self-worth is necessary to achieving your potential."**

–Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook





# Get Hired At Your Dream Job

## ***By Closing With These 3 Things***

Over 20 years ago, I taught as a volunteer business finance teacher at a low-income/high-crime high school. A junior at that school approached me for mentorship, so my firm bought this aspirational leader a Wall Street Journal subscription and requested that he read it every day. We also invited him to check back with us every six months if he wanted more career advice to become a successful business leader.

This student continued to work hard and earned a scholarship to a highly respected college. After graduating, he worked long hours for two different investment banks and even served a successful stint as a COO of a public company. Recently, he reached out to me and asked, "Geoff, a headhunter says I'm one of two [finalists for my first CEO job] with a decision to be made shortly. Any thoughts on how to close the deal, or should I let it close itself?"

I was excited for my mentee, as this was a great opportunity. I didn't have to ponder his question long to come up with an answer. I told him, "You close it! Here's how. You reflect your understanding of their goals and wishes, tell them you are fully excited, tell them you look forward to working closely with them, seek their counsel, and keep them fully apprised of what's happening in the business and your intentions."

Hiring managers and boards want to know that their potential candidate is crystal clear about their expectations and long-term goals. By stating your understanding of their specific goals, you're showing that you're on the same page

as them. Boards don't feel comfortable when they feel that CEOs want to take the company in a direction that does not match their wishes.

You tell the board that you are fully excited because sharing enthusiasm and unbridled excitement for the mission is not something your competitors are going to do. They'll view it as a sign of vulnerability when in reality, it's a sign of confidence. Sharing your love for the opportunity is never a bad idea.

And you tell the board that you're looking forward to working closely with them because one of their greatest fears is that a new CEO will leave them in the dark. Boards want to know what is happening in the business and what the CEO plans to do to reach their goals. When you inform your new bosses that you plan to be communicative, you're reassuring them that you will keep them in the know.

Never leave the close to chance. Following this advice will lead to a better chance of landing that dream job you recently interviewed for. ■



*Dr. Geoff Smart is chairman and founder of ghSMART, a leadership consulting firm that exists to help leaders amplify their positive impact on the world. Dr. Smart and his firm have published multiple New York Times bestsellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.*



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