

ADMINISTRATIVE VIEWS


Accurate Business Services (Contact: Jeannine@Accbizsvcs.com)

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Making Volunteer

Spring 2005

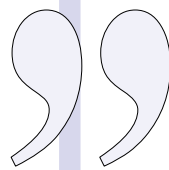
Connections



have been an avid non-profit volunteer since I started my own business. I remember my Mom being a volunteer for the March of Dimes, PTA, and an assortment of other organizations when we were young, but we really weren't "taught" to volunteer our time and efforts. We had a basic understanding of making donations, but not actually expending our time to assist organizations, whether civic minded, or industry specific.

Since I was now the master of my own time, and I had read all those "start up" books about how getting involved was a good way to market yourself, volunteering seemed to be a great way to connect with clients and peers, and keep up with current markets and business strategies.

What I didn't realize would happen was that I would build long-lasting, lifetime relationships with people nationwide and worldwide. Although the business I had anticipated would come streaming in, was a long time coming, I found that it



"What I didn't realize would happen was that I would build long-lasting lifetime..."

was more about what I could do to help someone else, or an organization, that truly gave me the connections to increase my knowledge of an assortment of business and industry related information that has helped me be successful in my own business.

I am on the verge of taking over the leadership role in what I believe is THE VA organization that is the role model for all the rest, IVAA (www.ivaa.org), and it is with apprehension, and a good dose of fear, that I imagine how well I will be able to achieve the many lofty goals I have for them. I know it will not be easy, I know it will be all consuming, and I will need the help of like-minded leaders such as myself to really make a difference, but if I don't give it a try, I will certainly regret it, and always wonder if I could have somehow made an impact on the future of the organization and the strength of the VA industry.

Making volunteer connections has afforded me the opportunity of an incredible 'resume' of important and impressive offices within some well recognized local and national organizations that will live on long after I have retired. Who knew volunteering could allow me such great rewards!



An accountant once told me that he never met anyone who didn't want to make 30% more money. Whether you want a better lifestyle or to take more vacations, buy a fancy car, spend more time with your family, send your children to college or to give it all away, you could always use more money.

If you sell services, your primary limitations on earnings are your costs and the number of hours in a week. Most independent professionals are already working well over 40 hours a week and can't work longer hours to increase earnings. Your goal should be to find ways to work less and increase your earnings. How can you market smarter and make more money?

DON'T DISCOUNT YOUR SERVICES

Have you ever heard of a lawyer or carpenter offering a 20% discount on their hourly or daily rate? Every time you offer a discount or reduce your regular rates, you are sending a message to prospects that your services really aren't worth what you're asking.

Once your clients know that your prices are discounted or negotiable, you will always be fighting a battle to be paid full price for your work. Never offer discounts; your clients will assume that they are expected to pay the asking price for your services.

OVERCOME OBJECTIONS TO PRICE

Prospects invariably want to know your pricing before they understand the benefits your products and services provide. Quoting prices is meaningless until prospects can put the cost into the context of the results they can expect.

When prospects show concern about your pricing, it's a good sign. It indicates their interest in buying your services and a need to understand the value you provide. You could list all the benefits of your services but if you really want to make the sale, it's far more effective to let prospects sell themselves.

A client's perception of value isn't based on how much they pay, but on whether their expectations will be met and the benefit they will receive. Don't get stuck on the dollars you charge per hour. Instead help prospects define the dollar benefit of your services.

When prospects query you on price, respond by asking questions to help them identify for themselves the problem they want solved, the cost of the problem, the solution they need, and how you can help them.

Prospects buy when they think their expectations will be met. Let them define their expectations and they'll be far more likely to sell themselves when you finally explain your pricing at the end of the conversation.

POSITION YOURSELF AS AN EXPERT

Differentiate yourself from your competition by using your articles to regularly provide insight and ideas to your prospects and clients so they come to view you as an expert in your field. Use expert positioning and consider raising your prices.



When Arnold Schwarzenegger first arrived in the U.S. he had trouble getting work as a stonemason with his funny accent, despite charging less than his competitors. A friend suggested he set his prices above the competition and bill himself and his partner as exclusive European masons. His business took off and look where he is now!

CONSIDER USING VALUE BASED PRICING

You can pay \$30 or over \$5,000 a night for a motel or hotel room. Both provide a roof over your head, a bed and your own bathroom, so why do some people pay over 150 times more for one than the other?

People buy based on their perception of the value provided. If they understand the value that your service or product provides, they may be willing to pay much, much more than you are currently charging. Look at the results you provide for clients and reassess your pricing.

LEVERAGE YOUR TIME AND MONEY

Like most service professionals you have limited time and money to spend on marketing. Much of your time is spent delivering services. Is your marketing helping you earn more? Do prospects understand the unique value you provide? If not, take a look at the way you are positioning your firm and adjust it to clarify your value to clients.

Are you making what you could be? If you apply even one or two of the above strategies, you'll be making more money than you are now without working any harder. You'll probably still wish you had 30% more.

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The author, Marketing Coach, Charlie Cook, helps independent professionals and small business owners attract more clients and increase their earnings with the 5 Principles of Highly Effective Marketing. Sign up for the Free Marketing Guide and the 'More Business' newsletter, full of practical marketing tips at <http://www.charliecook.net>

How to Choose Your Reputable Domain Registration Service

by Robert Leggett Copyright (c) December 2003

Years ago we registered our first domain name with the only show in town -- InterNIC. They were expensive and not consumer-friendly -- can you spell "monopoly?" Then we registered two more domain names with them. Expensive...but OK...if that was all we wanted to do. They would charge us to sell one of our domain names...monopolies can do this!

Then, they followed the fate of MaBell. Government stepped in and allowed competitors in the Domain Registration business.

If you feel more secure sticking with a name-brand with a long track record, register your domain name with them. However, do check their prices...still higher than their competitors who offer identical and sometimes superior service -- (<http://www.nic.net/pricing.html>) -- Domain Name Registration Pricing. Deregulation forced them to be more competitive. But they charge more...relying upon their "brand name."

We moved our three sites over to Terrasite...about half the price we were paying...and no charge for selling off one of our sites. Hooray! For competition! And a level playing-field!

More Domain Register companies have since set up shop in CyberSpace. Some are very good. Others are very questionable.

After beginning our quest for our ***perfect CyberSpace profession where we could do nothing! and make a whole lot of money! in a month! and be set for the rest of our lives***, we registered 2 more domain names.

We approached Terrasite. Did they have an affiliate program where we would make money every time somebody registered through us? Or when we registered more sites? No response after several tries. We guess they found their niche market and their ***perfect CyberSpace profession where they do nothing! and make a whole lot of money! every day! and are set for the rest of their life.***

So...we registered these through one of the I-Marketing gurus we like. Better through him than with a faceless big operation which doesn't answer emails.

We pursued our learning curve over the months. Not guru-material yet...but we can dream. Isn't that what makes life interesting?...pursuing a good dream? So...we plan to register many more domain names...all will help us expand our business(es). We want a reasonably priced credible service...and not consumer-challenged.

We searched in Google. We searched Whois. Note: We like using -- (<http://www.whois.sc/>) -- Whois Source: Domain name search lookup that

allows a wildcard search of all current/deleted/expired whois domains. It is EZ to use and results are good.

We are trying out what we feel may be the right one for us -- Domain Direct -- (<http://www.EarnYourLiving.com/DomainDirectRegistration/>) -- The Easiest way to Register, Build & Host your Website!

Why do we feel good about them? They are affiliated with Tucows. Tucows are good people and have been around for many years. We used to visit them for a lot of free downloads -- back in the days of DOS 5.0. There were similar operations out there, but Tucows always had it together and was consumer-friendly.

Also, they register your domain name with ICANN. Find out more about the importance of ICANN -- (<http://www.icann.org/>) -- The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers. This is the Master Registry of all domain names -- somebody has to do this in order to keep order.

Terrasite gave us no problems transferring our Registration over to DomainDirect. We are conservative. We left our other two domains with Terrasite -- let's see how DomainDirect works out. These two don't need to be renewed until 2004...we have time.

When we tried to move one of the two we had registered through the "guru"...we had to threaten the service we would report them to their state's Attorney General. We copied everything to the guru...who may have marketed the wrong service...honest mistake. They finally let it move over to Domain Direct. Hey...it's *our* property, it's *our* money...it's *our* choice of where we do business.

NOTE: When you change registrars -- begin 2 months before your expiration date. That gives you time for "screw-ups" along the way. Basically, if you are paid up and request your move outside of 30 days...there should be no problem. If you move at the last minute, some registrars will charge you another year as a penalty. Also...when you move to another Registrar, you don't lose money -- your original date of registration gets credited over. So...you pay for a year. Your date of renewal is at the end of that year plus the remaining time you have left.

The "guru's" registrar offered renewal for half their fee if we stayed with them. Our experience with them dictates we walk away and never look back. We voted...with our feet and our wallet. There should be no problems when we move our other site...

We feel good about DomainDirect. We have an affiliate relationship. Yes...we get a little commission every time we register another domain name. And...every time somebody registers through our affiliate link. DomainDirect pays affiliates when \$100 in commissions is accumulated. This equates to every time 8 new domains come through us, we get \$100. Ain't much...but it helps lower the cost per each domain name we register for ourselves. If you plan to register 8 or more domain names...it is worth your while to become their affiliate.

Robert Leggett has over ten years experience marketing Dive Adventures over the Internet. Robert helps individuals and businesses globally grow their businesses and enrich their lifestyles. Learn more - (<http://www.EarnYourLiving.com>). Subscribe to his "Free for Life" newsletter - "CyberSpaceMarketeer" - Receive your Free eGift.



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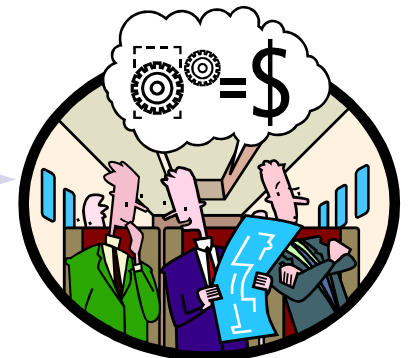


Focus on the things that you get paid well for doing...

Hire a VA
Let them do the paperwork!

What's inside:

Making Volunteer Connections
Marketing Smarter to Earn More
How to Choose Your Reputable Domain Registration Svc.



Business Tips UPDATING MATERIALS

This quarter, I'm addressing your basic Marketing Materials, and the need to consistently update and change them to represent a change in your business focus, or in the marketplace.

Okay, I'm not saying to go out every few years and create a new logo and website design, but I am saying that you need to "freshen" them

up periodically.

Even if you've paid someone to create your materials, and you LOVE the look and feel, periodically change the content, add new testimonials, slightly change the color of your letterhead and/or business cards—maybe even change your title, anything that can make someone take a second look at what they have to say about you, and

your business.

Don't be afraid to give your marketing materials a facelift, and if you haven't updated your logo in more than 10-years, you should consider updating it the next time your letterhead, and envelopes are ready to be ordered. It's always nice to create a new YOU. I'm sure you'll be pleased with the results! :-)