

# Better Business Focus

Expert Inspiration for a Better Business

October 2011

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Better Business Focus is the essential key for business owners and managers. It achieves that by focusing on the way in which successful businesses compete and manage their organisations.

It focuses on how people are recruited, coached and developed; on how marketing and selling is undertaken in professional markets as well as in markets with intense competition; on how technology and the Internet is reshaping the face of domestic and home business; and on how people are being equipped with new skills and techniques. In short, it offers expert inspiration for a better business.



# Price yourself back into the market

By John Stanley

Take a walk through the local shopping centre and the challenge is to find a retailer that is not having a sale. Sales and discounts in the past were a special event in retailing, but since the G.F.C. they have become the main way of retailing for many businesses. A consistent discount offer results in the customer becoming bored and the retailer becoming less profitable.

Research carried out by Harvard Business School found that 70% of retailers they surveyed thought that a discount policy had no affect on the bottom line. This should scare any retailer. The discount cycle will result in fewer retailers and less choice for the consumer.

It is now time to price yourself back into the market, but to simply just put prices back up will result in a customer revolt and therefore a policy needs to be carefully developed to ensure the customer continues to return to your store and not the competitor's store.

There are a number of strategies that can be developed.

## 1. Identify what is price sensitive

Identify what are the real price sensitive items and maintain the price incentive on those lines as you alter the price on the less sensitive items. In Australia the supermarkets are doing this exceptionally well. A standard loaf of bread is being promoted for a dollar as a means of getting the customer in the door. The dollar loaf is the draw card and other less sensitive items are retailed at

full margin.

Every retailer needs to be aware of what are the 'Know Value' items in store. These are the products that really drive the consumer in on price. Plus, what are the real non price sensitive lines where you have the opportunity to grow your margin.

## 2. Create a premium and value range

I have discussed this in previous editions. Again we can use the supermarkets as an example. Many stores have created a value range that is sold as a cheap product. At the same time they have created a premium range where the quality is perceived to be better. Not every customer wants the cheapest product on the shelf. Many retailers are using industry celebrities to market their premium range. The consumer often is more likely to believe that celebrity than the retailer themselves.

## 3. Identify your flour and pancake mix products

The idea of flour and pancakes comes from Jeff Stiely of Insight, a retail consultant in Perth, Australia. He gives an excellent presentation where he gets retailers to look at what they are offering the consumer. In his local store the price difference between the cheapest and most expensive flour is 20%. The pancake mix in the same store, which also consists of flour is sold with an increase in price of 900% compared with standard flour... His message is you cannot survive with selling the basics; you need to look for the added value products that will allow you to satisfy the customer's needs and

allow you to make the margin.

## 4. Create some price excitement

Be bold and be brave and really promote price when it is a real bargain and really promote "New" and "Best Sellers" in key locations at the same time. Price sensitive and non price sensitive lines need to be strategically placed around the store to maximise sales. Use your hot spot selling spots to grow sales.

Is there any way you can create some excitement like Bob Lee at his Steak House in Texas. People for miles around know he has a free 72 ounce steak on the menu.

The challenge is that if you can eat all of the steak the meal is on the house. If you fail to eat the whole meal then you pay \$72 for the privilege. Bob wins most of the time as most consumers cannot get through a 72 ounce steak at one sitting. This is a great marketing campaign and a profitable venture for Bob and his restaurant...

All retailers need to relook at the prices they are offering and ask themselves have they the correct pricing strategy to grow their business in the future.

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### About the author:

John Stanley is an internationally acclaimed conference speaker and retail consultant. The author of several marketing and retail books including the best seller "Just About Everything a Retail Manager Needs to Know", John's retail expertise



covers shopping centres, malls, supermarkets, hardware stores, garden centres, real estate, farmers markets and drug stores.

For more information on how he can help your business, council or centre, visit his website [www.johnstanley.com.au](http://www.johnstanley.com.au) or e-mail [info@johnstanley.com.au](mailto:info@johnstanley.com.au)

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**“Don't worry about people stealing your ideas. If your ideas are any good, you'll have to ram them down people's throats.**

**Howard Aiken**”



# Channel hopping culture chooses thought leadership

By Mindy Gibbins-Klein

The barrage of information can cause us to flit from one thing to another, to scan documents quickly instead of reading them thoroughly. We think that maybe we will be able to catch the main ideas, but we are asking our brains to apportion our concentration across too many things. I like to call this a 'channel-hopping society'. If we don't like what's on TV, we just click the button and we can watch any one of hundreds of other channels. Program not captivating enough? Click. Not exciting enough? Click. Too demanding? Too boring? Click.

I think where there is so much information competition for our attention, the only strategy is to scan it all quickly and see if we can make sense of it. But the danger in scanning things quickly is that you cannot truly get into the essence of the message in the same way as when you focus.

Apparently, the information available on the internet is doubling every few months. Even if you tried to scan every web page currently online, it would take you a lifetime. It seems that quantity has won a significant battle over quality and it is becoming harder and harder to find the needle in the ever-increasing haystack.

Most business leaders I know receive between one hundred and two hundred legitimate e-mails per day. Some people I speak to deal with as many as one thousand messages a day! They can hardly keep up and feel overwhelmed most of the time. I know that when I feel the pressure of too many

e-mails, I just delete everything that isn't essential.

How am I supposed to assimilate all that extraneous information? At this point, something really needs to stand out to get my attention.

Even though more and more people are becoming self-employed, the number of hours they are working is rising sharply. There is always one more call to make, one more deal to close, one more e-mail to send. In part it is because, as owners of the business, they are committed to their work and can see the value of working hard to achieve more and reap all the rewards. But the scarier truth is that the 'overworked, constant, Blackberry permanently on' mode is now the accepted and expected way of working. We know there is something wrong with our culture but we don't know how to stop the carousel and get off – or at least slow it down.

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#### About the author:

Mindy Gibbins-Klein, better known as **The Book Midwife TM**, has shown hundreds of experts how to get their message out into the market by writing and publishing the best possible books, ebooks and articles, and through delivering high impact, relevant presentations and key note speeches.

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# Win the online business game

By Eddie Yu

Internet Entrepreneur and author Eddie Yu explains just how his new book '**Speedlights & Elephants**' can give you the mindset of a successful entrepreneur through understanding your Vision, Purpose and Business Mission.

Developing your own mindset is the single most important factor to success as an internet entrepreneur or any entrepreneur for that matter.

Mindset is important because everything we do begins as a momentary flash of thoughts in our heads. Everything you see around you, from the lights shining from the light bulbs to the floor underneath your feet, started as a thought in someone's mind.

Technological knowledge is not so important because you can always go out and find thousands of web designers or developers. Engineers are a plenty out there, but visionaries are a rare breed.

The mindset is without a doubt the most important and even though at the time when I first started I didn't know this, looking back I realise that it was my mindset that really made the difference to my success.

At this stage I'm going to say outright that becoming a successful internet entrepreneur is no different to becoming successful in any given enterprise. You have to have the right mentality to do it. I can't tell you a series of steps and actions to take so that you'll become rich.

It just doesn't work like that and anyone out there telling you that they can teach you a system to get rich online, run from them as quick as you can.

The mindset is your thoughts and how they control the actions you take, whether those actions are taken consciously or unconsciously. These can amount to attitudes towards ideas, behaviour patterns and methods or strategies used to implement plans.

Every thought you have about your business will inevitably play into the grand equation of your success. This is why it is so important to work on your mindset before you even begin developing your business system.

The first most important question that you need to consider is what is your vision of your new business and how it will impact the world? This is often called your vision statement and this is the big picture outcome you have in your mind of how the world will be a better place with your idea in it.

Anything that was ever a success was because lots of people wanted it, and therefore it changed the path which humanity took. There were millions of people who wanted to get books cheaper and delivered to their homes, and **Amazon.com** came along to fulfil that need, changing the book industry forever. You can't even talk about books without mentioning Amazon in the same sentence!

The next biggest question I'm going to ask you is what are the reasons why you are embarking

on this journey to start your own business? This is your purpose, the reasons why you want to achieve the vision.

It's often difficult to answer this question of why we do the things we do because a vast majority of times we actually do things we don't intend to do on a conscious level, but we do them as a reaction to deep unconscious fears within us.

I don't know what your reasons are, but the one thing I do know is that you should make them positive, forward thinking with a lot of momentum, and you should constantly remind yourself why you are pursuing this path in life.

This purpose will be your biggest driving force that will bring your online business to success.

The last important question to answer is your mission. This is the 'how' question of how you are going to achieve the goals in order to serve your purpose and deliver the vision.

The mission often takes care of the strategy and operational requirements in order to do what you need to do, however if you haven't first defined what your vision and purpose is, there is absolutely no use implementing a mission because ultimately you haven't defined why you are passionate about your business in the first place.

In my book '**Speedlights & Elephants**' I discuss in a lot more depth all the components which I've found made a difference to my

mindset over the last 10 years and how I've defined why it is important to dream and keep focused on your vision first.

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### About the author:

Since graduating from Leeds University in 1997, Eddie Yu has been involved in various Entrepreneurial activities throughout his career, and eventually having built up a part time business between 2001-2003, he went full time in 2004 with Lady Luck Media Ltd.

Before then, he has worked for British Aerospace, FNX Ltd and Derivatech Ltd, where he consulted for top tier banks such as Bank of America, ABM Amro and Bank of China.

Eddie firmly believes that with social entrepreneurship and technological advancements we can create a world without offices and impact climate change for the betterment of our planet.

**Economic depression cannot be cured by legislative action or executive pronouncement. Economic wounds must be healed by the action of the cells of the economic body - the producers and consumers themselves.**  
Herbert Hoover

# Bestsellers



**1 Economyths: Ten Ways That Economics Gets it Wrong**  
(Paperback) By David Orrell  
Icon Books Ltd (6 May 2010)  
Price: £11.69



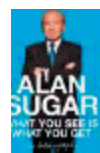
**2 Memoirs of a Fruitcake**  
(Paperback) By Chris Evans  
Harper Collins; First Edition edition (14 Oct 2010)  
Price: £14.00



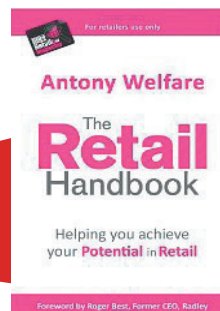
**3 Steve Jobs: The Exclusive Biography: A Biography**  
(Hardback) By Walter Isaacson  
Doubleday, Brown & Company  
Price: £16.99



**4 The One Minute Manager**  
(Paperback) By Kenneth Blanchard & Spencer Johnson  
Harper; New edition edition (1 Sep 2011)  
Price: £9.34



**5 What You See Is What You Get: My Autobiography**  
By Alan Sugar  
Pan (6 May 2011)  
Price: £7.59



## BOOK OF THE MONTH

**The Retail Handbook: Helping You Achieve Your Potential in Retail**

By Antony Welfare  
Published by Ecademy Press  
Price £14.99 plus P&P

For every retailer that wishes to learn how to achieve their potential in Retail. The Retail Handbook follows a logical 11 part journey that centres around, and begins with, the Customer. Based on 20 years of experience and a number of different retail businesses, this handbook will guide you through the journey to make your business customer focussed, and realise the potential you have to make your retail business a success. Whether you are a seasoned retailer or you are just starting out, The Retail Handbook will help you master the basics in retail and set you up to compete with the larger retailers ...and win the battle for your customers.

Antony specialises in Retail, with over 20 years' experience in the retail industry, including 15 years learning from the large retailers (Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's, Dixons Retail) and experience of smaller retailers, including the set up, and subsequent sale, of a very successful online retailer.

To buy the book of the month online from the Better Business Focus bookshop for just £14.99 plus P&P, or for further information please call: (01730) 233 870 and quote BBF Bookshop. Source: <http://www.global-investor.com/bbf>



# Develop your workforce through energetic communications

By Edel O'Mahony

There are many challenges facing businesses today in sustaining that dynamic energy in an ever changing global business world. For businesses to be dynamic, ahead of the game and leaders in their field, they need dynamic executives, who are confident, empowered and full of creative energy.

Unfortunately we are seeing more and more departments and teams who are over stretched, stressed and demotivated, which ultimately has a massive impact on the company as a whole, regardless of the expenditure to cover sick leave which is ever increasing.

The correlation between an individual not using their creative energy and falling sick is unmistakable. It has now been proved scientifically that what we 'believe' determines the frequency of our cells, when cells fall into lower frequency they come into 'illness'.

Let me explain: Our cells take their signal from our beliefs; this is transmitted throughout the body via the nervous system (our electrical system) and so determines the frequency of our cells and organs. A healthy body is around 72-83Hz, illness begins at 58Hz, colds, flu etc at 56-60Hz, cancer begins at 42Hz. So you can see, the lower the frequency of the human body, the more 'ill' it becomes.

When people say 'be positive' there is never an explanation as to why this is beneficial, well now there is! By being positive, means you are allowing your cells to remain in high frequency, thus maintaining not only a healthy body, but your own personal abundance. It is a scientific fact 'what is like unto itself is drawn', when you are resonating low frequency, you are actually attracting back the same energy vibration in experiences and opportunities. When you stay in high frequency, you then attract only high vibrational resonance back to you.

So how can business ensure its workforce is working with dynamic energy? It all comes down to individual business being consciously responsible for its employees. Business owners need to bring the means to educate their staff on understanding their unique energy. It has to come from an individual basis, when you understand that what you believe dictates the experiences coming into your life and that living in stress and anxiety is actually only attracting more of the same.

Due to social and generational conditioning we forget that we are the ones who control our lives, not others. So many people live in reaction to their experiences instead of taking the reigns and creating their experiences. This can only happen when there is a solid foundation of self belief and self love.

I remember I was asked to come in and create a new and dynamic department for a large company in London some years ago. The department was badly overstretched and in very low morale. Logistically I needed to streamline the processes and bring in new staff that would not only do a great job in their role, but who would also bring their own honour to their work.

It is so important that what ever your role is, it is always reflective of your values and I believe in honour, honesty and integrity, which is what I taught my team. I individually helped and supported them to value their own self worth as a person, to honour their amazing abilities and creativity both in their personal and business lives. This team were seriously over loaded and having to 'conveyor belt' process, yet each one of them honoured the quality of their work. So much so, we had other businesses coming to meet them and thank them for the care and attention they took with the accounts.

No matter how big a corporation or business, its bottom line is not about the profit, it has to be about the people. If you create a dynamic, confident, creative workforce, you are going to exceed your expectations for growth and abundance. It has to start with each individual employee and as your employees begin to acknowledge their self worth and self esteem, they in turn will become more



energetic, more dynamic in their outlook and their output!

The new face of personal development is energetic communications, where the workforce reconnects individually with their own dynamic spark. Look at this logically, we live in an energetic Universe, energy does not hear words...it feels vibration. Why do we spend so much time worrying about the mind chatter, when we should understand how we feel in any given situation? It is all about, business warrior wisdom, unleashing the warrior within and fulfilling your greatest potential easily and effortlessly.

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**About the author:**

Edel O'Mahony is an energetic communicator. She has created a unique 'Path of the Peaceful Warrior' programme, published several books, including: '7 Systems to Success', '21 Steps to Confidence' and her newest book 'Path of the Peaceful Warrior', she also speaks and hosts radio shows, events, workshops across the UK.

Website: [www.pathofthepeacefulwarrior.com](http://www.pathofthepeacefulwarrior.com)

Happiness does not come from doing easy work but from the afterglow of satisfaction that comes after the achievement of a difficult task that demanded our best.

Theodore Isaac Rubin



# 5 best practices for B2B sales & marketing firms

By Bob Apollo

What separates the top-performing B2B sales and marketing organisations from their also-ran competitors? What are the winning behaviours that enable them to create repeatable, scalable and predictable businesses? After observing many of these best-in-class organisations in action, I'd like to suggest five best practices that all B2B focused companies ought to think about adopting...

These best practices appear to be particularly relevant to B2B organisations with complex, high-value products or services that involve extended sales cycles, and where uncovering better qualified opportunities, shortening sales cycles and increasing sales win rates can have a dramatic impact on revenues, profits and market share.

While the list is by no means exhaustive, and it's no substitute for a detailed review of your current sales and marketing processes in the light of your specific current situation, I hope that the list encourages you to identify some obvious areas for potential improvement. Here are those five best practices:

1. Creating detailed ideal prospect profiles for the types of organisation you have chosen to target that go beyond conventional demographics to identify their common environmental, situational and behavioural characteristics.
2. Creating detailed stakeholder profiles (buyer personas) for the key roles that are typically involved in your prospects' decision-making process, and which anticipate their most likely priorities, concerns and motivations.

3. Documenting the most important market trends affecting each of your key target audiences, at both an organisational and a role-based level, and incorporating these insights into your marketing communications programmes.

4. Identifying the specific issues and trigger events that are most likely to cause your potential prospects to become dissatisfied with the status quo and which cause them to start searching for new solutions.

5. Focusing the bulk of your marketing energies, messages, activities, materials and campaigns on identifying and addressing your prospects' business critical issues rather than on promoting your products and services.

There are 20 top tips in total to read on, go to: <http://www.inflexion-point.com/Blog/bid/69716/20-Best-Practices-all-B2B-Sales-Marketing-Organisations-Should-Adopt>

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**About the author:**

Bob Apollo is the founder and principal consultant behind Inflexion-Point Strategy Partners, one of the UK's leading B2B sales and marketing performance improvement specialists. Bob works with clients to help them implement repeatable, scalable and predictable sales and marketing processes.

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# The retail inspector: retail principles

By Antony Welfare

There are many retail principles that have been adopted and developed over time. The purpose of this article is not to discuss these principles, but merely to highlight a few of the important principles at the start of your journey. This introduction will help navigate you to the right place in order to start your journey to achieving your potential in retail.

## **Principle 1 - The customer is the most important person in your business**

The customer holds the key to every successful retailer, and to master an understanding of your customer there are many processes and procedures you could follow. Based on my 20 years of experience and a number of different retail businesses, this article will introduce you to the journey to make your business customer-focused, and realise the potential you have to make your retail business a success.

Therefore, the main retail principle to master is the customer; the customer should be the centre of your business and everything you do must revolve around that customer. Knowing them, and focusing on them in everything you do, will help you grow your business and your team – The Customer is King.

## **Principle 2 - Retail is detail**

One of the most famous principles in retailing is, of course, 'Retail is detail' – this is where the challenge lies: how do you become more detailed and what detail should you focus on? You need to start to address and improve your understanding of your customer,

and the details of running a retail business. Every retailer must focus on the detail and get the detail right the majority of the time. Mistakes are OK, but you must learn from them and do not repeat your mistakes. Customers will allow you some mistakes, but too many will turn them away; understanding the detail is a key skill to master in retail.

## **Principle 3 - Understand the 4 Ps**

This is a very old principle but still has validity – most people have heard of the principle from school, college or university. This retail principle will help you understand the overall foundations of a retail business; the 4 Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion. These are the main areas you need to perfect for a customer, to provide them with the basic foundations of a successful retail business.

**Product** – You need products that your customer wants to buy and a product range that will satisfy your customers' needs, wants and desires. The products must also deliver a profit for you to have a successful business.

**Price** – Price must be consistent across the whole marketing mix and meet all requirements for your business. You need to price your product range at the correct level for the customers to be able to buy your products, and for them to gain value from your products. This could mean pricing high or low – this very much depends upon your customer offering.

**Place** – You must provide somewhere for your customers to purchase your product, be that a physical store, a catalogue or an E-commerce website; there needs to be a place for the customer to visit (in person or virtually).

**Promotion** – Once you have a product – at the right price, in a place where the customer can access it – you need to tell them about this and promote your business and your products; make sure your customers know that you and your products exist and are available for them to enjoy.

## **Principle 4 - Go the extra mile for your customer**

Providing great customer service starts with understanding and knowing your customer; however, knowing them is the start of the journey and you will need to deliver more than just customer service. To be successful you must deliver world-class customer service; you must 'go the extra mile for the customer'. This principle is founded on years of experience with customers and working with many different teams that provide customer service.

Having a total focus on the customer is the start, but to provide 'world-class customer service', you and your team must continually go the extra mile for the customer, each time delivering just a little more than they expect. Doing this each time you and your team interact with your customers will win them over and make them loyal over a long period of time.

## **Principle 5 - Location, Location, Location**

The final retail principle I will introduce is: Location, Location, Location. History has dictated that this is one of the most important factors in the success of a physical store, and still to this day it will have a major impact on your success. The best location of your store will be dictated to by your brand and product strategies – i.e. what



you intend to sell will affect the location of your store. For example, a supermarket operation needs a car park and a high fashion store needs to be in a high fashion area that attracts the right customers for the store. I would argue that location has less effect now than previously, due to two main factors: the first being the flexibility of the customers; now we often travel more, to more varied locations than historically.

Secondly, and most importantly, the internet has changed our shopping habits and will continue to do so. The internet and E-commerce websites have opened up the world of 'non-geographic' retail – a retail world without the need to visit the physical store. The emergence of 'etail' from 'Retail' has been the biggest change over the last 20 years and will continue to transform retail over the next 20 years and more.

You will notice that 'etail' has always been part of the word 'Retail' - the journey from retail to etail has been quick, and we need to embrace the world of etail and ensure we understand its effects on our customers, today and in the future. The etail world is growing significantly and with new technologies, such as iPads and M-commerce (using mobile devices to access the internet and buy products), will continue to change the shape and opportunities in the world of retail.

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#### About the author:

Antony is the director and founder of Retail Inspector Ltd and is 'The Retail Inspector'. Antony started off in a newsagent at the age of 15 and was soon running the shop on a Saturday and Sunday morning from 6am until 10am - no mean feat for a teenager. The excitement of dealing with stock and customers led him to give up the usual "sports Wednesday" at school in preference for some more time in the shop and consequently, he fell in love with retail.

'The Retail Inspector's Handbook' (£14.99 Ecademy Press) is Antony's first book.

# How to evaluate your accountant, advisor or mentor

Azure Partners provide practical help for business owners and directors in identifying and exploiting new opportunities, creating and implementing strategies to meet the challenges their businesses face. Business owners can and do benefit tremendously from the services of business advisors if they pick the right ones and then develop relationships in which the skills and experience of the advisors are used effectively. Picking the wrong ones can be a waste of time, money and effort.

If you are trying to develop your business so that it emerges stronger from the downturn you need to be sure you are supported by the right people internally and externally.

Business owners can benefit tremendously from the services of business advisors, but they need to pick the right ones and then develop a good relationship in which the skills and experience of the advisor are effectively used to achieve the objectives of the owner.

Business advisors help clients in three broad categories:

**Compliance with regulations and financial reporting - all accountants should offer this;**

**Project or transactional assistance - e.g. a lawyer helping with a trade dispute;**

**Business strategy, implementation and performance leading to financial and other gains for you and for your business - more difficult to source but with a high benefit.**

Azure partners suggest that business owners should evaluate their advisors against the following criteria (High, Not Bad, Needs Improvement):

**Practical experience of growing businesses including knowledge of techniques used in other sectors;**

**Demonstrable experience of successfully advising other business owners;**

**Access to the full range of business skills and disciplines;**

**Independence and impartiality;**

**A willingness to support your business in the long term;**

**Flexibility: reasonable availability at short notice;**

**An enthusiasm for your business;**

**An understanding and sharing of your vision for your company;**

**Good contacts;**

**A willingness to challenge your thinking;**

**The ability to take problems away from you and implement solutions independently;**

**A good decision maker;**

**A good personal relationship with you and your colleagues and critically - 'On balance, an asset to your company'**

**Source:** [www.azurepartners.co.uk/business-advice-and-tips/how-to-evaluate-your-accountant-advisor-or-mentor](http://www.azurepartners.co.uk/business-advice-and-tips/how-to-evaluate-your-accountant-advisor-or-mentor)



# Has selling changed? Is it time for out with the old & in with the new?

By Gavin Ingham

A lot of people over the last few weeks have been talking about “the best ways” to locate new customers and clients. A lot of people think that the strategies required have changed and that many of the old strategies don't work anymore.

Out with the old, in with the new?

Not really. I agree that there are many “new ways” of reaching prospects and customers...

I have a LinkedIn account and a LinkedIn group (Sales Psychology & Performance if you want to have a look). I have a Youtube channel, I use Twitter, I have a sales training blog and was blogging well before most other's in the market place. I have numerous other social media profiles which I don't use as much and I am also looking at the newest trends all of the time. I love to use the new ways and embrace change...

However, I think there is a real danger of throwing out what was and is still good about the old in chasing the new with comments like this one that someone made on one of my groups the other day when talking about traditional sales methods in particular prospecting...

“...you'll be missing the 90%+ of the market that don't buy like that...”

I am always suspicious of statistics but that one just looks wrong to me. To start with, if I only look at my own stats, I can see that my business comes from multiple sources. It does not just come

from cold calling, or from blogging, or from videos, or from article marketing, or from networking, or from referrals, or from sales meetings...

In fact, most of my clients and prospects travel through multiple touch points before buying i.e. “Well I saw you on a video programme where you were a guest expert, then I read one of your articles in a (traditional print) magazine, then someone said something about you at a networking event. I always thought I might book you for my team but then I changed roles and someone sent me a copy of your newsletter and so I came to one of your seminars and then I thought “Wow!” I need this guy for my next sales conference.”

Furthermore, it is indeed amazing how much of it still comes from traditional sources... speaking, referrals (proactive and reactive), word of mouth, recommendations, networking, traditional sales... with a kicker that most have read my blog after they found me, or watched my Youtube videos or checked me out on LinkedIn etc.

There are some markets where many sales are made using totally new ways of selling and there are some where no-one is buying this way. I am constantly amazed by how many of my paying clients do not have video enabled on their PCs, do not use Twitter and have failed to respond to invites to any of my online groups or communities.

The only “new way” they respond to

is my email newsletter (permission based but the only one that interrupts them) and then they won't post a blog answer on my website, they prefer to e-mail me their thoughts and questions instead.

The new way of selling is here. The new way of making contacts and differentiating yourself from the market is here but it is not about new methodologies...

The new way of selling is about adding value for your clients. The new way is about better engaging your clients. The new way is about caring about your clients and their businesses. The new way is about focusing on your clients and not on you. And if you can use new media to do this, that's great.

But the new way of selling is not about activity, it is about mindset. Selling is an attitude that leaves behind a trail of techniques.

It is misleading to assume then that the old methods do not work anymore. When you apply the new mindset to them they work incredibly well but too few people (know how to) do this and therefore fail miserably.

After my cold calling seminar of last week, someone Twittered the next day to say they had already set up 4 meetings. After my cold calling seminar of Tuesday this week, someone already e-mailed me to say they would never have thought that they would be the person e-mailing

me at all let alone saying that they had set up 5 appointments the very next day.

The old ways still work when you use the new mindset and new technologies to pimp them up.

It is also worth noting that many people using the new technologies do not have the new mindset and are just spamming anyway. The vast majority of comments and discussions posted in my communities are by people who ought to know better saying "go look at my seminar" or "see this article I wrote and spammed across every group". They are no better than old school, bad, cold callers and I believe will be looked upon as the same in time. They add no value to their groups, no value to their communities, no value to their readers and this approach will not work long term.

Someone said to me the other day that I am the only person who consistently gives away stuff of value. This is clearly not true and I could name others who do too but it says a lot about the state of how people perceive the way people are using these new mediums.

People are unsubscribing from social media. People are clicking off from newsletters. People do not have the time to take part in discussions a lot of the time. I only need to look at the number of people who ring me and speak to me about booking me for a conference and who then fail to respond to emails. When I pick the phone up to them they invariably say, "I meant to call you," and then book me.

And if every person out there started blogging, Twittering, Facebooking and videoing, firstly, many would just be no good at it and, secondly, no-one would be able to find anything worthwhile through the white noise...

So...

The expectation of salespeople has to change. The approaches you take

have to change. The mindset you have has to change.

We have to add value. We have to utilise multiple routes to market. We have to employ new strategies, old strategies and hybrid strategies.

We have to use what works.

It's not out with the old in with the new. It's embrace the new, pimp up the old and mash up the lot to come up with a viable approach that connects and adds value for your clients. And this should include whatever strategies, old or new, that work best for you.

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#### About the author:

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“Long shots do come in and hard work, dedication and perseverance will overcome almost any prejudice and open almost any door.”  
John H. Johnson

Don't worry if you don't know what the words Shariah - Islamic law, Shariah advisor or Shariah compliant means here are the explanations:

#### Shariah - Islamic law

A Shariah compliant product meets the requirements of Islamic law. A Shariah board is the committee of Islamic scholars available to an Islamic financial institution for guidance and supervision in the development of Shariah compliant products.

#### Shariah advisor

An independent professional, usually a classically trained Islamic legal scholar, that advises an Islamic bank on the compliance of its products and services with the Shariah, or Islamic law. While some Islamic banks consult individual Shariah advisors, most establish a committee of Shariah advisors (often know as a Shariah board or Shariah committee).

#### Shariah compliant

An act or activity that complies with the requirements of the Shariah, or Islamic law. The term is often used in the Islamic banking industry as a synonym for "Islamic" — for example, Shariah compliant financing or Shariah compliant investment.

Source: Bizezia's Glossary of Islamic investment and Financial Terms is available through Bizezia's Online Business Library the UK's leading online business library with 750+ publication

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# Quick Q&A with Susanne Newman

By Susanne Newman

Garmentology is a piece of software that retailers can embed directly onto their ecommerce site with the aim to attract retailers to install this software. This was founded by expert image consultant, Susanne Newman, after working within a corporate company and realising the importance of image and how it made people feel.

Garmentology is a tool designed for retailers to embed on their ecommerce sites, taking shoppers through an online image consultation. After finding out customers' shape, size, height, proportions and colouring, the Garmentology application delivers personalised recommendations of what styles and colours would best suit that person. It also recommends relevant products stocked by the retailer.

It provides customers with an online feed of suitable clothing matched up according to their body shape. In many cases, Garmentology utilises third party product feeds supplied to the company by affiliates and not via direct arrangements with retail brands.

## **What are the key new features you've added to Garmentology?**

Last year we spent a lot of time user-testing our service, and this proved that the technology works and that the recommendations we make really do help people find the clothes that suit them. While doing this, we learnt that we have two very different types of user. Some really want the feedback and tips we built into our full consultation while others just wanted to get to

the bit where they go shopping! So probably the biggest thing we've done is to add a 'quick start' session that lets people go this way if they want to, without dropping our commitment to creating accurate and worthwhile results.

Retailers can now choose either, or both of these options, and we've redesigned our own home page to show how easy it is to get started with our service, and make the whole proposition clearer.

My favourite bit of the redesign was to commission a really cool animation from The Brothers McLeod to communicate our vision of creating personal shop windows, and we're really pleased with the job they've done!

## **What have you been working on behind the scenes?**

Garmentology's recommendations are based on a detailed, knowledge based process that works out how well each garments suits each user, and making the technology perform well for the loading we anticipate has been key for us. We've also been doing a lot of technical work checking that our recommendations are properly tuned for each user as the one thing we know is that each user is different!

We're very retailer focused and delivering recommendations into retailers' sites – and not just our own – is critical for us, so we've continued to work on making integration simple for retailers. We've got further ambitions in this respect and are looking at

implementing single sign on which will make registration and integration even easier, especially for users who are on Facebook or Twitter.

## **What are the key reasons why retailers should be interested in Garmentology**

Fashion is an emotional purchase and the challenge facing fashion retailers is how to provide an environment that provokes an emotional response. Personalisation for fashion is especially complex. Take peer reviews: what works well for one person may not suit another as they are completely different shapes and colouring.

Putting people into groups doesn't always work either because when it comes to style, everyone is different. Garmentology is unique because we treat each user as an individual, and that's hard work!

We do it in two different ways which work together very well online. By allowing retailers to create personal shop windows for each customer, based on the garments that suit them best, retailers can make their site instantly more relevant in a very personal and engaging way. And by displaying our ratings next to the most relevant garments, we increase the customer's confidence to buy, right at the point of sale. All the garments look great on the models on the web page. What customers want to know is 'will this look good on me?' That's the question we answer.

It's important to add that we aren't judging the garment itself, or the retailers own stance on fashion trends – that's not our job at all. Every garment will look good on



someone – our job is to make sure they find it!

Can I also say that in fashion retail, it's not just all about sales. Returns are a big cost for online fashion retailers, and by guiding shoppers to the clothes that will look good on them, and that are styled to flatter their body shape, we're confident that our retail clients will be able to reduce the cost of returns considerably.

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“Be grateful for what you have now. As you begin to think about all the things in your life you are grateful for, you will be amazed at the never ending thoughts that come back to you of more things to be grateful for. You have to make a start, and then the law of attraction will receive those grateful thoughts and give you more just like them.  
Rhonda Byrne”



# Pit stop customer service quality

By Ron Kaufman

While it's certainly true that frontline people are key drivers in customer service quality, they aren't solely responsible for winning the race. Don't forget the power of the "back-end" to bring home a victory! In every insurance company you'll find actuaries, policy administrators, IT professionals and clerical support staff. These folks have little contact with external customers, but they can certainly set the mood and the pace for the insurance agents and brokers who work out in front. When they are on their game, customer service quality will reflect this fact. If they're not, satisfaction may plummet.

In a theatre you enjoy actors on stage. But there would be no play without writers, directors, set design, lighting and make-up. Their contribution to overall quality is essential.

In a restaurant you meet the waiter and host or hostess, but without cooks, dishwashers and accountants, you'd never get a meal.

Car races are often won and lost by mere tenths of a second. The winners have great drivers, but also top performing pit crews who change oil, tires and fuel.

Southwest Airlines (famous in the United States for friendly frontline service and customer service quality) puts equal value on back-end support. Their benchmark for getting planes unloaded, reloaded and back in the air is the pit crew (not the driver) at the Indianapolis 500.

## Key learning point

To win in the front you need great support in the back. Customer service quality hinges on everyone's willingness and ability to perform at peak.

## Action steps

If you work on the frontline of service, give extra appreciation today to those who support you behind the scenes. If you work on the back-end, remember the power you have to boost the motivation and morale of those who work out front. Customer service quality depends on the whole team.

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## About the author:

Ron Kaufman is the world's leading educator and motivator for upgrading customer service and uplifting service culture. He is author of the bestselling "UP! Your Service" books and founder of UP! Your Service. To enjoy more customer service training and service culture articles, visit: [www.UpYourService.com](http://www.UpYourService.com)



# How to get more done working from home

By Lorraine Pirihi

Who wouldn't enjoy working from home? Well not everybody does.

Gary ran his accounting practice from home. With pre-school children and trying to grow his business, he and his wife used to get very frustrated they could never remove themselves from the workplace. They felt their business totally overwhelmed them and caused many challenges which affected their relationship.

We were able to identify exactly where their time was being spent and found that there were simple changes they could make to their growing business and still have a life. Three years later with the growth of their practice they have had to move their business to new premises.

Here are seven ways you can successfully work from home and enjoy the benefits...

## **Establish a routine**

Structure your day so that it is both purposeful and productive. Decide on a starting and finishing time for your day; allow for breaks so that you work smarter, not harder. Doing this will also allow you to better differentiate between work and home, and will encourage you to be more professional.

## **Focus on your strengths, outsource your weaknesses**

Spend the maximum amount of time working on the parts of your business that you are best at. If your billable time is worth \$200 an hour, then make sure you spend most of your time on the activities that will produce that for you.

If you don't want to employ an administrative assistant, invest in a virtual assistant who works off-site (see [www.asecretary.com.au](http://www.asecretary.com.au)). Avoid filling up your day with non-productive activities. Invest your time and money into the right areas of your business; don't just keep yourself busy.

## **Organise your environment**

Have the right tools and systems to work with - an appropriate chair, desk, computer, filing system. This will make you look, feel and act more professionally. In addition, if a client comes to your home, your professionalism will inspire confidence in you.

## **Declutter the clutter**

A messy working environment which forces you to be continuously spending valuable time searching for things, whether files and emails on the computer or documents in filing cabinets and cupboards, cumulatively wastes hours a day. In fact The Wall Street Journal found that the average white collar worker spends 6 weeks a year looking for things around the office! Clutter is distracting and causes stress, and it is the primary enemy of productivity.

## **Learn to say 'no'**

Inform your family and friends of your working hours and that because you're working from home doesn't mean you're 'available'. If you were in a corporate office, you would not allow your friends to drop by. Enforce these same rules at your office at home.

## **Network to expand your business and your mind**

Join local networking groups to meet other like-minded business people. Share knowledge and discover new ways of doing things. Check out your local council and chamber of commerce. Enquire about active small business networks. Join your own trade association and share ideas. An organised business referral group like BNI can also be of enormous benefit to the home based business owner.

## **Take time out for you**

It can be easy to lose yourself in your work. Take time to 'smell the roses' and to make human contact. When I'm spending the day working from home, I always go out for a walk at lunch-time. Plan time to have coffee or lunch with a friend or colleague once a week. Go for a walk every day. Have a weekly or fortnightly massage. Visit the gym more often.

These ideas are simple... and guess what? It's generally the simple ideas when acted upon consistently that will make a dramatic impact overall in your business and your life. You'll feel happier and more fulfilled. You'll also discover extra time in the day that you never had before.

If you feel stressed out, snowed under and completely overwhelmed and need help getting on track contact [lorraine@productivityqueen.com](mailto:lorraine@productivityqueen.com)

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### About the author:

Lorraine Pirihi, The Productivity Queen is Australia's Leading Productivity Specialist. She's a business and life coach, speaker author and licensed Avatar® Master.

Through her workshops, courses, coaching programs, and products, Lorraine shows her clients how to overcome stress, frustration and overwhelm so they reduce their hours, make more money and get a life!

You Can learn more about Lorraine at: [www.productivityqueen.com](http://www.productivityqueen.com)

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# 3 sales myths

By Ashley Latter

I am often told by clients that they are no good at selling and you either have it or you don't. In other words, successful sales people are born. This is incorrect. I have never yet been past a hospital with a banner outside which says sales person born today weighing 7lbs 3oz. There is no such thing as a natural born salesperson.

Everyone starts out with pretty much the same abilities. Where you go from there depends on a lot of factors. However, what you become in life boils down to the skills you master along the way.

Selling has been called both an art and a science. The title doesn't really matter. What matters is that selling skills can be learned just like the skill of riding a bicycle, or developing a golf swing. It just takes practice, practice, practice and more practice. The key though is to ensure that you are practicing the right techniques under coaching from a top professional, otherwise you will end up practicing the wrong technique and then you are bound to fail.

Another aspect of this myth is that in order to succeed in sales, you must have 'the gift of the gab.' While it's true that you must not be afraid to talk to people, it's even more important that you learn to listen. The human body is amazing. We have been given two eyes, two ears and one mouth. However, very rarely does it get used in that order - it should be. If you spend the vast majority of the time asking questions and listening to the wants and needs of your clients, you will create more opportunities and sales.

Another myth that people have, is that people think that that you have to be an extrovert to be successful in sales. This is truly not the case. Both introverts and extroverts can do well in sales. The major difference between the two types of people is that extroverts tend to be interesting while

introverts are more interested.

I have personally trained many hundreds of introverted people who have used my techniques and have become outstanding and successful in building relationships and creating new sales opportunities. Some of you may know that for 10 years I used to work for the world famous Dale Carnegie Training Organisation and in his best selling book [How to Win friends and Influence People](#) there is a story about a man who was invited to a party where he only knew the hosts. During the evening, he mingled with many of the other guests. After the party, many commented to the hosts on what a wonderful person this new guest was. When asked what they found so interesting about him, the guests realised they hadn't learned much about him at all. He had made them feel important by getting them to talk about themselves. He was interested.

I feel you need a bit of both. You need to be obviously interested in your clients, but at the same time, you don't want to come across as a wet lettuce.

However, if you keep your focus on asking questions about the clients' needs, why they want to purchase what you are selling and you hear the emotions behind the words, then you will uncover more selling opportunities and create more sales. That of course all depends on the fact that you can provide what it is that they are looking for.

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### About the author:

Ashley is not a lecturer and has a unique style where he manages to coach delegates to operate outside their comfort zone and take on tasks that before were deemed impossible. For further information visit [www.thesellingcoach.com](http://www.thesellingcoach.com)



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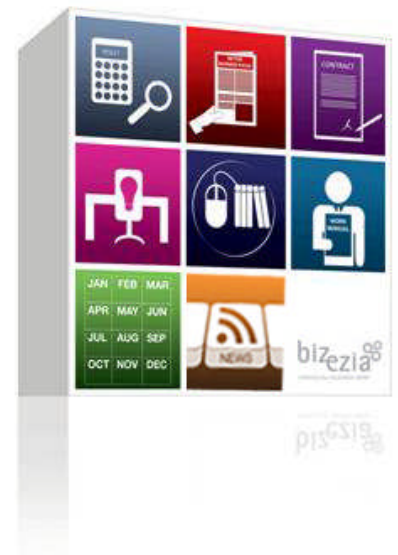
Steve Pipe, Managing Director, AVN

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