

# The Unconventional Marketing Guidebook for Soul Proprietors



*By*  
**Marty Marsh**  
*Soul Proprietor*

A SOUL PROPRIETOR GUIDEBOOK

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*A Publication of*  
Marty Marsh Creative Enterprises  
[www.MartyInk.com](http://www.MartyInk.com)  
[www.GoodCompanyClub.com](http://www.GoodCompanyClub.com)

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# Welcome Soul Proprietors!

These are the words that first greet every visitor to my website and I want to extend that same hearty welcome to you as you prepare to spend some time with me reading through this unconventional marketing guidebook.

If you've spent any time researching marketing help on the Internet and in your library or bookstore, you already know that there are many, many marketing strategies and tools available that you can use for marketing your heart-centered business.

The following are just some of the *best* strategies — not ALL the strategies — that I know of for successfully marketing a heart-centered business. Many of the ideas in this guidebook may not even sound like they could *possibly* have anything to do with marketing a business, but that's precisely what makes them unconventional. Actually, I suppose, this guidebook is really more about raising your marketing and business consciousness to a new level.

Much of what you read in this guidebook may seem counter intuitive for traditional marketing but as Soul Proprietors you and I are not interested in traditional ways of marketing our business, although many of these tips are

very traditional on the surface. The difference will be you — your authentic self — and in the YOU uniqueness of your delivery.

As you read through this guidebook and plan your marketing, please remember, you are marketing to other people — other human beings. Too often we lose sight of that. The anonymity of the Internet lets people hide behind a façade of anonymity to do business — often quite successfully — without ever having to have any real connection with another human being. I don't work that way. For me, business is all about building relationships based on positive connections.

Can you be a shameless self-promoter and still be a Soul Proprietor? You bet you can and if you read this guidebook and put these suggestions into practice you'll be doing just that — shamelessly promoting yourself and your business to great benefit to your own bottom line.

And remember, you owe it to the people you can help to let them know you are available, willing and able. You do that through marketing. Now let's get busy so those good people won't have to wait any longer and you can get busy fulfilling your dreams.

All the best  
for your success,



Marty Marsh  
Soul Proprietor

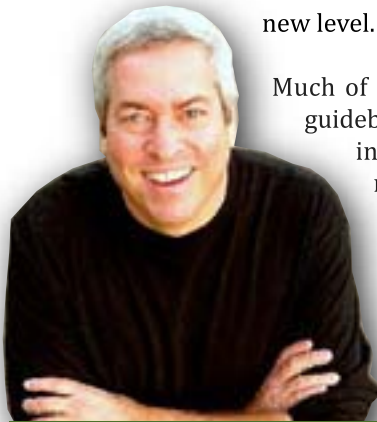
## In Gratitude....

Over the years I've had the pleasure to learn at the feet of some of the best marketing and business teachers in the world. Without them I would not know the joy and freedom that I enjoy by being self-employed.

In particular I'd like to thank **Suzanne Bird-Harris** who is not only an inspiration and a mentor but a friend as well.

In addition, I'm eternally grateful to **Robert Middleton** who taught me to love marketing a very long time ago; **Chris Gillebeau** who has taught me how to live an unconventional life; **Jonathan Mead** who is wise beyond his years and inspires me to live my life with intention; **Mark Forster** who gave me permission to "do it tomorrow;" and especially **Barbara Winter** who has taught me what it means to be a wanderer and to lead a "joyfully jobless life."

*This guide is really more about raising your marketing and business consciousness to a new level...*



# Managing your new marketing business

The day you went into business for yourself is the day that you put on your marketing hat and it never comes off. You are the *Chief Marketing Officer* for your new marketing business. Sure, you may be selling something — a service or a physical product or both — but the reality is that you are now in the marketing business. Full time.

A business, no matter what kind it is, will not flourish and last if you aren't continuously marketing it. And let's be very clear right up front: marketing (and selling) is not about persuading people to buy something they don't want. That's no fun and it's not the way a Soul Proprietor does business.

A Soul Proprietor lets people know what problems they solve and why they are the best choice for solving them, but would never pressure someone to buy something they aren't ready for, don't need, or don't want.



A Soul Proprietor has clarity of purpose, a vision for success, a clear understanding of what they are offering and have put into place a variety of marketing activities and strategies that will attract the right kind of client — their ideal client — to their business.

At that point, the client literally sells him- or herself and all that's left for you to do is deliver on your promise of great service and collect the money.

Soul Proprietors are a different breed of entrepreneur and the traditional way of marketing, selling and conducting business just leaves them cold.

Soul Proprietors love being in business because they've realized that a business is the best way that they can change the world — or at the least, change their world.

Soul Proprietors believe that being in business should be fun (and not feel like work) and should be centered around creating real relationships with real people.

Soul Proprietors surround themselves with positive-minded, self-empowered, conscientious, and kind people who are committed to excellence in everything they do.

Soul Proprietors are not afraid to make money. In fact, Soul Proprietors are rewarded in many ways — both financial and spiritual — from the great work they do in the world.

Soul Proprietors support and give back to their community.

So, if this sounds like you, or sounds like a way you'd like to do business for yourself, then let's get busy with some unconventional marketing ideas.

## Make time for marketing

One of the first questions Soul Proprietors ask me all the time is "How much time

should I be spending on marketing my business?" They nearly fall over when I tell them "at least four hours a day."

"Four hours?? You've got to be nuts," they say, "I can't get everything done now as it is!"

"How many clients do you have now?" I ask.

"Well, er, none, right now," they say.

"Then, obviously, you aren't spending enough time on marketing."

This conversation usually goes on and I eventually discover that the new business owner is spending a lot of time fixing up the office, running out to the

store, setting up their bookkeeping, calling friends on the phone — just about anything but marketing. It goes on and on like that and they always plan "to get around to the marketing part soon."

So, if you don't have at least 4 hours every working day to spend on your marketing, and if you don't have enough clients, how are you spending your time?

It may be time to find out.

***Capital can do nothing without brains to direct it.***

— J. Ogden Armour

Keep a record of how you spend your day for a week or so. You are likely to find any number of things you're doing that you can eliminate altogether, assign to someone else, or postpone until you've filled your calendar with client appointments.

## Make an appointment with yourself

If you want to fill your business with customers and clients you absolutely **MUST** make marketing a priority. There's simply no way around it.

**Try this:** For the next month, set aside at least 4 hours of every working day to devote to marketing your business. Use this time to write, to plan, to prepare ezines, to make appointments. Whatever you choose as your marketing focus should be done during this time.

Put this in your planner as an appointment with yourself and then honor it. Most of us are pretty good at honoring our commitments to others but pretty lousy about keeping those commitments we make to ourselves.



Soul Proprietors always look after their own well being first, everyone else after. Is this selfish? Not at all. You can always take better care of others if you are well-taken-care-of yourself, first.

If you have no clients, then spend 8 hours a day marketing. Yes, 8 hours. Without clients you shouldn't have much in the way of administrative work to do, so until you start serving real,

paying clients, spend all of your time marketing.

Get off the phone unless you're scheduling appointments. Get off the Internet unless you are doing market research. Get off email unless you are responding to, or generating, client inquiries.

Sorry to be brutal with you here, but you may just need to change your mindset and do it quickly. Growing a business requires discipline and there's no way around it.

The answer to having more time is not found here in this guidebook, the answer is not found at some time management website. The answer is discipline, plain and simple. Make up your mind right now that you are going to start marketing your business, make a plan, and then just do it.

## Never check email in the morning

That's the title of a really great book about managing time by Julie Morgenstern and its pretty good advice. It may or may not be practical advice for you — you may have lots of reasons why you must check email first thing in the morning — but the truth is that these days, for most of us, email is a wonderful and indispensable tool and the bane of our very existence at the same time.

It's the very thing that — more than anything else — keeps us from marketing our business.

Besides following the very good advice of only checking email at certain times of the day, your goal should be that you have a clean inbox after

every time you check it. Yes, clean it out.

That means acting on every single email you get during each session when you check.

I subscribe to the philosophy of time management espoused by Mark Forster, which is "Do It Tomorrow." This doesn't mean you're procrastinating. In fact, it means just the opposite. If something absolutely does not require action TODAY — and most things do not — then put it off until tomorrow when you can plan to do it at the best time.


Here's a brief summary of how I set up my email so that I can manage it more easily, with less stress, and I always have a clean inbox:

Decide that when you are going to check email that you've given yourself permission that that's what you're going to do for the next half hour or so and do nothing else.

Manage your email with some sort of email manager such as Outlook, MacMail or Entourage. You'll save yourself countless headaches by using a good email manager.

Set up 3 folders in your inbox: ACTION, TOMORROW, and REFERENCE.

Let ALL of your email flow into your inbox.



If you're using AOL, Hotmail or Yahoo for your email, stop it! Get a real email address with your business name in it (i.e. marty@martyink.com). You'll look far more professional than using free email accounts.

Then, one by one, evaluate each email and do something with it.



If it will take you less than 2 minutes to respond

You learn by studying what other marketers and business owners are doing to market using email, so it's a good idea to subscribe to LOTS of ezines. But it doesn't take long before those ezines and special announcements — they're all trying to sell something just like you'll be doing — will start to fill up your inbox in a hurry.

The solution to this is to create a separate email account in one of those free providers such as Hotmail, AOL or Yahoo and subscribe to ezines using only that address. You can then go check it at your leisure and all that email is not cluttering up your regular inbox.

Note what others are doing — good and bad — and what particularly resonates with you and what turns you off. Take note and try out some of these techniques in your own email marketing campaigns.

or to do what the email is asking, apply David Allen's rule and do it right then. Either delete that email or move it to your REFERENCE folder.

If it is something that will need your attention today but is not immediately urgent, put it in your ACTION folder. Then before the end of the day, complete all those tasks and then either delete those emails or move them to the REFERENCE folder.

If it's something that is not urgent, place it in your TOMORROW folder. Then, tomorrow, in your first email session for the day, handle all those items in the TOMORROW folder, and then either delete

them or move them to the REFERENCE folder.

Ta-DA! You always have a clean inbox!

If an email contains a link that you want to visit, resist the temptation to click on that link and instead, add that email to your TOMORROW folder. Set aside time tomorrow to surf the net and give yourself permission to spend your time doing that if that's what you want to do. It's okay, really, so long as you're not avoiding something else — like marketing.

A side benefit is that if you're not clicking links in emails you'll save a lot of money by not making impulse purchases. Looking at that tomorrow puts you in a better frame of mind — a less urgent frame of mind — and allows you to think a purchase through more clearly. You may find you don't want it at all, whatever it is.

The temptation, once you discover how well this works, is to then OVER organize your inbox, making folders for all kinds of things, and making rules to send emails all over the place.

This creates two problems: You then have way too many folders to check for new email AND you can never find anything you need later because you are trying to remember where you sent a particular email from a particular person.

If all finished emails that you might need later are in the REFERENCE folder, then you always know where to look or where to do a search.

The payoff for you: ALL your email gets handled, nothing slips through the cracks, there's no stress, and you can always find something later.

Now, having said all of this, if you work with lots of different clients as I do, and you have lots of email correspondence going back and forth be-

tween you, you might want to set up a CLIENT folder with a folder inside for each one of your clients and then set up a RULE that filters all those emails into their appropriate folders.

Still, having every email come through your inbox is preferable because you can make a decision about what to do with it on the spot, and you never miss something important IF you are truly keeping your inbox cleaned out.

Following this routine alone has done more for improving my productivity and lowering my stress level than anything else I've ever done, AND I have much more time to work on marketing my own business.

And here's something else I've discovered about handling email: When you're excited about and passionate about and engaged with your business, you won't find email to be much of a distraction. You'll deal with it because you have to, but you won't be distracted by Internet wild goose chases because you'll want to get right back to managing your business and your marketing and serving your many clients.



## Black Hat Marketing vs. White Hat Marketing

I'm sad to report that there are many, many marketers out there who are making their living in unscrupulous ways. They are typically very successful financially — something we all want to be — but I'll venture to guess that those people are not happy and that most folks really don't like them. (I also believe that, eventually, karma will catch up with them.)

These are the people who lie, cheat and sometimes steal to get what they want out of you, the consumer. That's usually your dollars and cents and they really don't care how they get it — nor what they say or do — so long as that money goes from your bank account into theirs.

I call that kind of marketing, Black Hat Marketing. Remember the Westerns of long ago? You could always tell the good guys from the bad guys by the color of their hats — even with the sound off. The good guys were wearing white hats and the bad guys were wearing the black ones.

***Nice guys  
(and gals) do  
finish FIRST!***

You, of course, will be wearing the white hat.

Hype and scamming is nothing new, of course, it's just that the Internet has made it

that much easier for people to put stuff out there, both good and bad. Personally I'm quite tired of all the emails I get touting that I can get rich on the Internet and not have to do any work.

I have a feeling that if anyone is getting rich on the Internet — and there are many, many people who are — it's because they are working pretty diligently at doing so.

Just yesterday I saw a big launch of a new Law of Attraction product that sounded like it was coming from three of the big names from the movie, *The Secret*. The sales page for this contained "testimonials" from some big name peo-

ple, too, but as it turns out, whoever is putting this product out is merely using these names in a way that makes it look like these people are associated with it and that the testimonials are, in fact, just quotes that they picked up from other places. Besides the fact that they've probably opened themselves up for a lawsuit, the sad fact is that they will probably sell a boatload of these products and then shut the site down as soon as the heat gets put on. And the product is poorly done to boot.

Truth is, I don't have a problem with me or anyone else getting rich on the Internet and I don't have a problem with doing it quickly and I'm sure you feel the same way. But I'm going to suggest that those that will win in the end are the people who slow down and pretty much get rich the "old fashioned way" and that is with honesty, integrity, and some late nights and diligent work.

I really do believe that nice guys (and gals) can finish FIRST. Individuals and organizations that compete with generosity and fairness repeatedly win out over those that lie and cheat.

Of course, if you were interested in learning how to lie and cheat you wouldn't be reading my stuff anyway.

## **Be a Person of Positive Influence**

All Soul Proprietors are People of Positive Influence — PPI for short.

Because we've chosen business as the vehicle for bringing positive change to our world, and

because all of us are in a healing profession no matter what kind of business we're actually in, our position as experts in our field gives us the opportunity to bring a positive influence on everyone we work with or who comes in contact with us.

We do this not only in the words we write or speak but more so in the way we live our lives and conduct our business. People are paying attention.

I spend a lot of time in RV parks and campgrounds and I'm always amused when I find out that someone has been paying attention to my comings and goings and to what I'm doing. You could say they are just being "busy bodies" and maybe they are, but I'm always reminded that other people are always paying attention to us whether we realize it or not.

My southern mama would always say, "You've got to keep your nose clean" which was her way of saying that people are paying attention to you, you better look good and watch what you do.

In no way, however, am I advocating that you should ever compromise your integrity or your authenticity just because you think others are watching. This isn't about pleasing other people.

This is all about showing up in your world as your authentic self. Sometimes our authentic selves make other people uncomfortable, but we always get their attention. If you want a good example of this, visit my website and read my FAQ page.

I've spent most of my life being a people pleaser, but I've learned that people want the real me.

So that's what I give them. It makes life much easier, too.

Set your intention to show up in your work and your life as your authentic self and watch the clients flock to you.

Just remember that you have a wide circle of influence, wider and bigger than you might realize right now. But its there and YOU are the center of it.

## Give (almost) Everything Away

Ever since the Internet came on the scene it has been all about access to oodles of free information. I see this as a very good thing and I hope that much of the content on the Internet will remain free.

The traditional way of doing business online has been to give away about 10% of the good information — a “teaser” of sorts — and hold back the other 90% to sell. I've been doing just the opposite. I typically give away 90% of my stuff. The rest of it is for my fans and those who need specific help better suited to a more in-depth approach.

I sell my coaching and consulting services and some programs and teleclasses and ebooks, but most of my writing is put out there for free.

Of course, free may not be an accurate term to use because in reality there is always a price that must be paid. Usually when something is offered for free it is done so in exchange for an email address and a name.

Take my “How to Get the Word Out About Who You Are and What You Do” guidebook that's available for free on my website. It's free so long as you are willing to give me your first name and email address in exchange for getting it.

Now, this is no 5 page special report that tells you what you should be doing and then telling you in the end that to get the full story you must buy one of my programs. No, this is a 75+ page ebook that not only tells you what you might do to market your business it also tells you how to go about implementing those strategies.

That guidebook has done more to generate new business for me than any other marketing strategy I've implemented. Those people that have come to me as a result of reading my free guidebook have been so impressed with what I've given them for free that they already are certain that they will get incredible value if they actually pay me for something.

Now, some people want EVERYTHING for free. They even balk at having to share their email information to get access to the guidebook. Those are the people that grudgingly put in their email address, download the free ebook, and then just as quickly, unsubscribe from the list. It happens all the time and it will happen to you, too.

That's okay. I'm very clear that those people will never buy a single thing from me anyway, so why should I invest any more of my time – even digital time – with them?

I've always subscribed to the idea that you can't give away too much. Many people take issue

with me on this including my partner and my accountant as well as many of my students and clients. “What will be left to buy if you give it all away?” they cry.

Just bear in mind that you won't sell something to everybody. The whole idea behind giving stuff away for free is to have an opportunity to get people interested in what you have to say, get to know you better, confirm in their own minds that you are, indeed, an expert in your field, learn to like, and then trust you, so that one day they may decide it is safe to buy from you.

I've had people receiving my ezines and downloading every free thing I offer for more than three years before deciding it was time to buy something.

I've got thousands of people on my list but only about 10% buy from me or hire me. But every time someone downloads a free report or reads one of my articles or a blog post or even emails me for some free guidance (which I usually happily provide) that interaction has the potential to bring them that much closer to possibly becoming a paying client on down the road.

I've known lots of marketers and business owners who literally give everything away for free. All one has to do is read their blogs, their ezines, their special reports, and attend their free teleclasses. But many of those same people who can get all that stuff for free will happily pay for the exact same information if they can get it all in one place such as in a book, ebook, membership site, or audio program.

So, go ahead and give away as much free stuff as you can. All the while you're not only build-

ing a vast library of material that you can collect later on and sell to many of those same folks, but you're collecting valuable contact information that you can use to send your marketing messages for as long as they will allow you to do so.

Those that truly value what you offer will become your fans and then your customers. Those that don't, don't matter anyway.

## Name, rank and serial number!

You don't want to go THAT far, of course, email address and first name is plenty sufficient.

If you've got a website or a blogsite you must have some way to capture the email address of the people who visit. This way you can continue

to be in contact with them with the aim of building a relationship of trust that will eventually lead those people to buy something from you.

Even if right now you are not prepared to send out a regular ezine or to do any form of email marketing, start collecting those names and emails now so you have them when you are ready to start regularly marketing to them.

This is one of the easiest things you can do and if you have a webmaster you just need to ask them to add this capability to your site -- and to do it soon.



First you'll need to sign on with some third party emailing service such as iContact, Constant Contact or Aweber. You'll need to know what you want to do in the way of email marketing before you sign on with a provider. We'll talk about that a little more later on.

The main reason you want a third party service is because of deliverability. You don't want to be seen as a spammer and the sophisticated spam detection programs out there — fairly or unfairly — will likely see you emailing multiples of the same message from one computer, think you are spamming and shut you out or shut you down.

It's a slippery slope navigating this world of anti-spam insanity and its best if you leave the job to the professionals. Third party emailers are known for sending out "clean" emails and so your chances of getting your messages delivered quickly and on-time is pretty much guaranteed.

Plus, you want an easy way for people to opt-in to your list and you want it to be easy for readers to opt-out, or unsubscribe, from your list. The third party provider does all of that automatically for you. You don't have time to be doing that sort of list maintenance manually because you could better use that time for marketing your business.

Here's what to think about when deciding on a third party email provider:

Decide how you intend to use email to market your business, how often you want to be in contact with your list and who will be responsible for getting all these emails out to people (That

could be you or someone you hire to do that job.) Then choose your third party provider accordingly.

So ask yourself, are you only going to be sending out an ezine and the occasional special announcement or do you want to implement a full blown autoresponder campaign?

If you only intend to send newsletters ezines, and the occasional special announcement, a service like Constant Contact might suit you best.

If you want to send out ezines and also automatically be in touch with your list at timed intervals with very little ongoing input from you, then choose a service like iContact or Aweber.

Personally, I've had extensive experience with all three and I prefer iContact over all the rest. Why? Because it is half the cost of the other services, it includes autoresponder capabilities, it includes survey programs, and you can import your current list without having to force all of your readers to re-opt-in into your system.

I'm not going to discuss the value of double opt-in versus single opt-in here. You can find articles about that at my website. Just search for "opt-in."

There are lots of third party email providers out there. Personally, I think these three are the best, the easiest to use, the cheapest to use in the long run, and are the most reliable.

When asking people to give you their contact information don't ask for too much. People are usually willing to part with their email address

and their first name, maybe their last, too, but ask for much beyond that and they'll balk at giving it to you. They may just click away instead no matter how enticing your gift to them might be.

Get them on your list first and then later on you can ask them to provide more information. I like getting a full postal mailing address from the people in my soul proprietor community and I do that by offering something physical that I can send to them in the mail, like a bumper sticker or a refrigerator magnet.

I don't always tell what I'll be sending. Usually I'll just offer a surprise gift in exchange for their mailing info. I can then send direct mail (see offline marketing sidebar) to them from time to time. And, occasionally, I'll send another surprise gift as a thank you for sticking with me. It's fun, the recipients love it, and I get another channel for contacting and marketing to people who already know who I am and like what I offer.

Think about what you can offer, too, for your people. Make it something relevant and useful but also small enough to mail and light enough to go with a stamp or two so you can keep your costs relatively low.

## Lumpy mail gets opened

Which brings me to a quick note about sending out what is known as "lumpy" mail. In the U.S., anyway, you can pretty much mail anything you want so long as you can put an address on it. People have mailed underwear, coconuts, and lots of other oddball things, and you can just bet that the recipients took notice.

You can do the same thing when you mail something that's "lumpy." That would be anything that lets the recipient know right away that there is something more than just a letter in the envelope. People are curious and most can't resist opening up to see what's inside.

Be sure to include a compelling offer and an attention getting letter or device inside the envelope so that once they've opened it, they'll have a reason to want to read what you're saying and find out what else you've got for them.

Be sure to check with your post office about their rules and regulations first before you invest in a mailing. They'll tell you what you can and can't do and give you specific instructions on how to do the mailing to ensure accurate delivery. All you have to do is ask.

We'll be discussing other "Offline" ways to market your business later in this guidebook.

## Help people

Back in the days when I was strictly doing graphic design work, I didn't have a brochure or a business card. I was very fortunate that I was getting great word of mouth about my business and so I wasn't finding it necessary to get out and stump for business.

Then I started going to networking events. What a miserable time that was.

I remember my first networking event. It was a rather large gathering of the local chamber of commerce and I was told that everyone there would have a chance to speak a few words about their business.

Back when I was stationary and living in one place, I used to do luncheon meetings where people would come to a local eatery to "lunch and learn." I would teach about marketing or I would have a special guest come by to teach us all something.



To promote those events I would mail out a lunch bag to my list and inside I would put a plastic fork to make it lumpy along with a menu for the day and other good information about the topic we'd be discussing. The call-to-action was to go to my website and sign up, make the menu selection in advance, and to get them on my electronic mailing list so I could remind them about showing up.

I charged a small fee for the event that included the cost of the lunch. It was always a big success and usually more folks would come who had not even bothered to sign up. Those events were a big success because it let people experience me in-person and I got several new consulting clients that way. It also got my name out in the community in a big and positive way.

I was determined to be prepared so I printed up some business cards and went out and got myself a little book about how to network. I boned up, prepared my little speech, dressed in my sports jacket and tie and went to that meeting.

When it came time for me to make my little speech — what I now know as an elevator speech — I suddenly felt like a fool and a fraud and I barely stammered out that I was a graphic designer. Everyone smiled, blinked, and then the next person spoke up and gave their little speech.

Looking back on it now I realize that just about everyone there did as poor a job as I did in introducing themselves. It was painfully obvious that nobody really cared. We were all there for the same reason: get as many business cards as we could so that the next day we could call all those people and sign them up as clients.

But we didn't.

Even though I came away with a pocket full of business cards, I didn't call a soul because I knew they wouldn't remember me and I just couldn't face the rejection, and probably fearing the same thing, not one person called me either, even though I had given out more business cards than I had gotten.

Take my  
card....  
PLEASE!



But I persisted and I found that no matter what I did, networking was a miserable, unproductive, time-consuming experience that was not working for me. And the food was awful, too.

Traditional networking typically involves going to an event trying to find people who can do something for you — mainly buy whatever you are selling. I just absolutely hate this. I know that networking isn't only about this and I know there are ways to make networking events much more enjoyable and useful. I don't like the pretentiousness and besides, now I have an excuse. Living on the road makes it impossible for me to go to networking events. (Not really, but I like to think it does.)

So today I network in a different way. I spend a lot of time connecting with people online in various ways — through my ezine, my blog, and through individual emails I get from people. Everyone who writes to me gets a real response — from me. Sometimes it takes me a while to get to all of them but I take this seriously and do my best to get back to folks in a reasonable amount of time.

So if you're going to go to live networking events — and networking is often just having a conversation with the person in the line at the grocery store or bank — or if you're going to network online like I do, then instead of trying to get people to do something for you — like buy your stuff before they even know who you are — find out what you can do for them.

Ask them, "What are your goals for your business? How can I help you achieve them? What would you like me to tell other people about you?"

These are the same questions you can ask yourself every day when you go to work in your business: How can I help my clients and prospects achieve the goals they desire?

It's a lot more fun than eating rubbery chicken.

## There is NO Competition

If you've been around me awhile you know how much I love to connect people with other people who can help each other. I long ago gave up the idea of competition because I came to realize that what I offer is unique just because of who I am. Some people resonate with what I have to say and how I say it such that they become fans and clients. Others don't.

What I do know is that there is someone else out there that may have the same or similar message but that would be a better fit for the person who doesn't quite click with me.

You'll find the same thing to be true for your business as well if you open yourself up to the idea that there is no competition.

In his book, "The Art of the Start" Guy Kawasaki relates that in the beginning, Apple Computer was in the business of destroying Microsoft. Apple struggled for years and nearly didn't make it a time or two. It was only when they finally decided that they were in the business of creating useful, innovative products that made people's lives easier and more fun did they begin to enjoy the success they have today.

Sure their commercials still poke fun at the PC and Microsoft but that's just a clever marketing strategy. I've been a Mac evangelist since before

they were actually called Macs and I enjoy many of their other products as well. But these days for them — and for many of us — the real competition is within ourselves.

Most of us are striving to be better at what we do and how we live our lives. My friend Chris Guillebeau rightly says that the competition we face every day is not the store or the business down the street or a click away on the Internet, but is INERTIA. “The competition comes from within to get up every day and help people change the world,” says Chris.

I couldn’t agree more.

Instead of fearing your competitors, embrace them. Get to know them. Find out whom they serve and who is a good fit for them

One of the big reasons for being very clear about the kind of clients you want to serve — those that I call your ideal client — is in being able to recognize when someone shows up that is not a good fit for you. Not every prospect that comes along will be a joy to work with and I decided a long time ago that I was only going to work with people that could bring me joy. (You should, too.)

So in getting to know people who might traditionally be seen as a competitor, I’ve embraced them, asked them who they most like to work with, and when someone comes along that I know to be a better fit for them than with me, I can happily refer that prospect over to them.

We all win. I’m happier because I’m not having to work with someone who is not a good fit for me and that might create all kinds of grief, the

prospect is happier because they’re working with someone who can serve their needs much better than I could — they would likely be as unhappy with me as I would be with them — and my competitor is happy because they’ve gained a client that is a good match.

At other times they do the same for me. Sending me clients that are a better fit for me than for them. Competitors make wonderful referral partners.

I love how that works.

Also, I have much to learn from other people—competitors or not. We all bring something special to the world of business and we expand each other.

## Choosing your clients

**I**’m sure I’m not the first marketing teacher to tell you that you need to be abundantly clear about who you want to work with so my question is: ARE you abundantly clear about who you want to work with?

Most business people just won’t take the time to figure this out. They think it’s hard to know this because they’re looking outside for the answer.

The key to this is in knowing the kind of client you “want” to work with. Yes, you get to decide. And it’s as easy as saying, “I want this.”

Many years ago I put the word out that I was looking for some new clients and got a referral for a guy that was publishing a new magazine and at first we seemed like a perfect fit for each

other. The project was something I was enthusiastic about, I was eager for him to succeed and for me to be a part of that, but I soon came to realize that this particular client drove me crazy.

Week after week I came to dread our time together and I did not enjoy doing any work for him. Eventually I had to “fire” him. I just couldn’t take it anymore and the money was not worth it.

After that I got very clear about whom I wanted to work with and you can do the same.

First, it may be easier for you to think in terms of all the qualities that you really dislike in a client.

Make a list of all of those things that make you crazy. Some things on your list might be some of the same ones that are mine:

- Clients who are late for appointments.
- Clients who don’t pay me on time.
- Clients who look over my shoulder while I’m working.
- Clients who don’t have the money to pay my fees.
- Clients who are not open to new ideas.
- Clients who always feel like victims.

Then, turn those statements around and ask yourself, “so, what do I want in a client?”

Your new list might look like this:

- I want clients who are on time for their appointments.

I want clients who always pay my invoices in 10 days.

I want clients who trust me to do good work for them.

I want clients who have plenty of money to pay me without creating hardship for themselves.

I want clients who are open to new ideas and learning new things.

I want clients who embrace life and love what is.

You can also be very specific:

I want clients who are female, 45 to 60 years old.

I want clients who are starting a new business.

I want clients who are looking to increase their sales by 50% or more.



Want to really know who your ideal client is? Take a look in the mirror. Most of us want to work with clients who are a lot like us. They share our values and our ideals and want to accomplish many of the same things in their lives that we want for ours.

Are you getting the idea? The takeaway here is that YOU get to decide exactly the kind of client you want to serve. When they show up, you can embrace them and get to work. When those that don't fit you show up — and

they always will — you can gently let them go to someone else who can serve them better.

It makes life so much easier, so much more joyful, and that makes everybody happy.

## Just say NO — to the money

You may find that what is standing in your way of success is all the stress that gets created when you find yourself working with difficult clients or clients that aren't a good fit for you. That kind of emotional stress takes a huge toll on you and all those around you.

It's stressful — and unfair — to the client as well. Everybody can feel it and somebody has to end it. Unfortunately, that will probably have to be you. Firing a client can be one of the most difficult things you can do, but if you've already lined up some referral partners it will be easier to do if you can hand them off to someone else.

The key is in being honest with the client without being hurtful, explaining that you've come to realize that you just aren't the right person to meet their needs. You put the onus back on yourself. They'll probably be as relieved as you are.

Once you get used to working with only clients you love, you'll get better at weeding out the problem ones early on — hopefully before you ever start working together. When you're working with only clients you love — those that are a perfect fit for you — you'll never miss any money you turn away by saying no to a client that is anything less than ideal because there will always be a better client to fill that space.

And then, sometimes we sell something to someone and for some reason they come to us and want their money back. Even if you know their reasons are not valid, even if you suspect that they might be simply ripping you off, just give the money back. I've learned over the years that most of these battles are not worth fighting

and you'll save yourself a lot of grief if you just give a cheerful refund and be done with it.

If that sort of thing starts happening a lot, THEN you might want to take a look at what you're offering and double check the value quotient. If a refund prompts you to improve what you're offering, then everyone else who buys from you later on down the road will be that much better off. And you will be, too.

## Get away from it all

Now that I live full time on the road in my RV you'd think I really have gotten away from it all. Not so. I'm still working, still trying to grow a business, and trying to balance all that with a happy home life, albeit in a very small space.

Back when I first started my business and all those years I was living in one fixed place, from time to time I would pack up my stuff and head to a local hotel for a long weekend; just me and my books and my writing stuff.

I called these weekends mini retreats and I went with the express purpose to get out of my usual routine so I could think more clearly and to be very good to myself. I would read a business book or a trashy novel or both. I would relax in the pool or I would get a massage. I would indulge in food that I loved without anyone reminding me it might not be on my diet, I'd stay up late, or I'd take naps, and I would write down ideas and plans for my business.



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. — Margaret Mead

I suggest that you might want to do this yourself. You'll be surprised at how much better you can manage your business when you return and the ideas you'll generate when you're relaxed.

If you can't afford the cost or the time to go to a hotel for a whole weekend, you can always spend an afternoon at a library or a coffee shop or a park just so long as you are away from your office and your normal routine.

Turn off your cell phone and do not take your computer with you unless you need it for writing and capturing ideas. Otherwise, no Internet surfing, no email checking, no making phone calls.

Do a mini retreat once a quarter, more often if you can. And you might want to arrange your schedule so that you can take a whole day or an afternoon off every week and sneak off someplace that gets you away from your work and your routines. Find a sitter if you have to. It will be money well spent.

Let yourself be in the moment and let the ideas flow. And have some chocolate ice cream. No one has to know but you.

## Write something special

Having something that you can give away to your website visitors is the best way to get people to sign up for your list. And a special report or an ebook is the easiest, cheapest and fastest way to give something in exchange for that valuable contact information.

This is not a time to be stingy but you don't have to write an epic novel either. Ask yourself: What

is the biggest problem my clients are facing and how can I help them solve it? Then tell them just that.

If you are afraid that you're giving away the proverbial farm, there's no need to worry. (Re-read the Give [almost] everything away section on page ???) When people realize that you're providing extremely valuable information — and at no cost to them to boot — they'll stick around to hear what else you have to say, and when the time is right, they'll become one of your best customers.

Write as much or as little as you want, but probably not less than 8 pages. If you are not a great writer, admit it and find an editor who can clean things up for you, checking your spelling and sentence structure so that you present a professional image.

I read a book recently on my Kindle that was just awful in terms of grammar, spelling, and sentence structure, and the total lack of proper punctuation actually made it extremely difficult to read. (And I paid for this one.) The only reason I read the whole thing is that the author had really good and valuable things to say. I had to keep reminding myself of that, but was also always questioning whether this guy was really the pro he claimed to be.

You really don't want to publish a mistake-riddled ebook or report because most people are not nearly as forgiving in this regard as I am. If you come across as stupid — and you will if you misspell words and can't string a coherent sentence together — your readers will dismiss you very quickly and you'll have lost any chance to make that great first impression.

Remember, your website and whatever you give away for free will be the first impression that people have of you. Make sure it is the kind of impression you want to give.

## Pick 3, Any 3

You've heard the saying, I'm sure, "Failing to plan, is planning to fail" and I couldn't agree more.

Trouble is, most of us running a business rarely take the time to do any planning at all beyond a daily to-do list. And even then, too often, we put too much on our list and never get around to most of it.

I'm a strong advocate of creating, at the least, a quarterly marketing plan. Planning at least 3 months in advance gives you the opportunity to look far enough ahead so that you can plan marketing campaigns around special holidays and special month, week and day designations.

Three months out will generally give you enough time too, to plan a promotion and still



Having a hard time with your writing? You may find it useful to write specifically to only one person whenever you're writing anything — an ebook or an article or a blog post.

I've got a favorite client of mine. I just love her. I enjoy working with her and we always accomplish a lot together. So when I sit down to write something, I always write it just to her. I know — since she is my ideal client — that whatever I write to her will also benefit everyone else that will be reading it because "she" is the kind of client I am trying to attract.

allow plenty of time for writing, printing, and distribution such as you might need for a postcard mailing.

I also think planning out the entire year in advance is a good idea. This doesn't mean that the plan can't evolve and change, but at least doing an annual plan will give you a good overview of what you want to accomplish and when. You can then focus on your plan before the start of each new quarter, adding, changing, and deleting strategies as your needs change.

So, right now, go to your calendar and mark off the last couple of weeks of the year to set aside time for making a plan for next year. Actually, a really good time to do this is in October. You already have a good picture of where you stand for the present year and you can think clearly and without a lot of pressure about what you want to accomplish in the coming year.

When doing this annual plan, look at a good calendar — or Chase's Event Calendar — for each month of the year to see what holidays and special designations are coming throughout the year. You can plan fun and unusual marketing promotions around those events if you know about them well in advance.

Be careful though. When you're not under a lot of pressure you can plan too much for yourself. You may come back to your plan later and discover that you've just scheduled way too much to comfortably accomplish during any given time period.

This is one of the reasons that I suggest to business owners that they pick 3 (any 3) marketing strategies that they really enjoy doing and that

they know will work for them in their industry and concentrate on just those three strategies at any one time.

For example, you may really enjoy public speaking, as I do, teaching teleclasses, publishing an ezine, writing articles, mailing postcards, networking, sponsoring events, writing ebooks, and conducting workshops. But you'd make yourself crazy if you tried to do all of those things every single month and at the same time.

So pick 3 marketing strategies that you enjoy — remembering that if you don't enjoy it you won't do it — and concentrate on just those 3 things. Do them well and do them consistently for at least 3 months.

Be continuously monitoring the results you see from each strategy. If you've given something your best shot, and it's just not working for you, then drop that and try something else, also giving the new strategy time to prove itself.

Concentrating on just 3 things will keep you out of overwhelm and you can more easily track the results you get when monitoring only a few items.

## Plan just one thing at a time

**M**y friend, colleague, and mentor, Jody Gabourie, took a look at all the different marketing strategies that most people do and realized that a single strategy is really made up of many parts and many steps.

So it isn't enough that we just plan a variety of strategies to work on, we must also break each one of those strategies into its individual com-

ponents and add those components to our planning.

For instance if you were going to start an ezine you might define "publish weekly ezine" as one of your marketing strategies, but there are number of steps involved in actually getting one completed and mailed.

You must write it, proof it, maybe have an editor look at, select appropriate photos, figure out all the links that will go in it, come up with a call to action for each issue, do the layout — all before pressing the send button in your email program.

Just in that example alone are 7 separate steps not including pushing the button.

Too often we fail to plan out how we accomplish all the parts or all the steps to any one strategy.

Figure out your strategy, i.e. publish weekly ezine, then decide the date for publishing, then work your way backwards from your publishing date and assign a date and time for doing each step. Again, this is a way to avoid surprises and soon you'll know exactly how long to allow for publishing each ezine and can set aside the appropriate amount of time for each step. This is a great way to avoid a lot of last minute stress.

Now, Jody has created a program called "Ready-Made Marketing Plans" and she's basically done all the planning work for you. All you have to do is fill in a few blanks and make a few decisions.



You can learn more about Jody and her RMMP's in the Resources section at the end of this guidebook.

## Better stick with it

Of course, we all would love to have instant results with any marketing strategy we implement. Actually, that's what we call "making a sale."

Marketing is really that stuff you do on a consistent basis that keeps your name in front of prospects all the time. That way, when they're ready to buy what you're selling, they'll buy it from you and not from someone else.

So marketing is one of those things that you have to keep doing over and over and over. Since you never know when someone will be ready to buy, if they aren't thinking of you, then you won't get the sale.

The real key to marketing effectively is consistency and the best way to do consistent marketing is to have a plan in place and then work that plan.

Trouble is, most folks don't allow a marketing strategy enough time to work.

I recently worked with a client who hired me to help them get their marketing in order. This client readily admitted that he had never stuck with any marketing strategy beyond one or two tries.

They were sending out letters to previous patients to invite them back to their office and I helped them rewrite the first letter and they did a mailing. They were mailing to several hundred previous patients and they got a response

from only one. He immediately decided the letter campaign was a complete failure and did not mail again. They tried other strategies once with lackluster response and did not try them again.

The lesson to be learned here is that a single campaign — whether by email or by regular postal direct mail — will rarely work all by itself. You must make the commitment to follow through and repeat a mailing multiple times.

You might change one thing such as the headline or the offer — never both at the same time — to see if that change makes a difference in the response, but the key of course is for your prospects to see your message many times. And if they are seeing your message in several different forms — ezine, letters, postcards, special announcements, etc. — you can reach through the clutter even faster.

The truth of the matter is that people have very short attention spans and they are being bombarded with literally thousands of marketing messages every single day from thousands of sources. Your message is mixed in with all the others, and the only way to break through that clutter is to mail (or email) multiple times, or do something so unusual that it grabs your prospects attention out of everything else calling out to them.

## Finding your "true north"

If your inbox is like mine it's crammed full of lots of unread ezines and newsletters from people that, at one time, you thought offered enough value you were willing to get on their list and to read what they had to say in the future.

Unfortunately, most of us have gotten on so many of those lists that we just don't have time to read all of them anymore.

Unfortunately, the same thing is going to happen to your ezine too, unless you are ridiculously clear about the value you offer readers and prospects. You must create an ezine that consistently contains so much valuable information that the people who sign up for it and get it wouldn't dream of NOT reading it.

Now, please don't let this scare you off from writing or

starting an ezine. It can be tough work creating that kind of value consistently. But I believe that if you are passionate and excited about what you offer, that passion and that excitement will show up in every issue you produce. Be gentle with yourself, especially at first, because there's always a learning curve. Pay attention and you'll begin to see what your readers want.

Take the time to get clear within yourself what it is that you are wanting to accomplish or to create with your business. The answer can usually be found in the main problem you solve for your clients. (If you don't know what that is, then ask them.)

Every time you talk about your business or write an article, or every time you publish your ezine, focus on that problem and tell people what they get when you help them solve it.

During the 2009 Oscar broadcast I learned of a



snack company called True North. I love their snacks by the way, and I love their way of doing business and I love their marketing and promotions. In short, I guess I just love the True North Snack Company.

The folks at True North say: “When a strong passion guides your life, it becomes your true north. Our TrueNorth™ is a simple one: to bring inspiration to natural snacking.

So if someone can be that passionate about snacks, just think how you would come across if you held that much passion for your own business.

My true north: To help Soul Proprietors get ridiculously clear about the value they bring to their marketplace and how to share that passion with the world.

What is your “true north”?

## Putting your best face forward

**I**t used to be that I thought putting your photo on your business card or in an ad was just an exercise in vanity. But over the years I’ve changed my mind about that and I can see great value in having your photo in all of your marketing materials.

A photo on your business card will help folks remember who you are, especially if you meet them at a networking event or in the line at the bank and then you call them later to talk business. Of course, you only call them later if you’re sure they’re interested in what you have to



**A word of caution:** Use a photo that is flattering but shows you pretty much as you would be if someone were to meet you in person. Avoid those glamour-type shots — you know the ones I mean — the ones that doll a person up so much you wouldn’t recognize your own grandmother, unless, of course, that’s how you present yourself to the world on a daily basis. Dolly Parton can get away with it, but most of the rest of us just look silly.

offer. Otherwise, the picture alone isn’t going to make them want to talk to you.

One of the first things I do when I land on a new website and like what I read is to click on the About button to learn more about who owns the website and what they look like. It’s not that I’ll like their website any more or less based on their looks, but a photo there makes me feel more of a connection with that person.

Seeing their photo makes them real. Personally, I’m not interested in dealing with faceless organizations that are only after my money. I like to know I’m dealing with real people and those that I can see who they are.

So use your photo everywhere.

*Today, people ask us if we have a website and we better be able to say “yes!”*

## Is your website marketing savvy?

**W**hen was the last time someone asked you for your brochure? Maybe 5 or 6 years ago? Longer?

Today, people ask us if we have a website and we better be able to say “yes.”

I used to believe it was okay to put up anything for a website just so long as you had one and that it made some sense. But today, since so much of our business is going online I believe that to be truly successful you must have a marketing-savvy website.

What I mean by that is that every word and every page is carefully chosen to consistently market your business and lead site visitors closer to buying whatever you’re selling.

You’ve only got a few seconds to let site visitors know whether or not they’re in the right place, so make sure that right up front on the home page or landing page that you identify who your site is for and why they should stick around.

If you visit my Soul Proprietor Coach site, the headline you’ll see there as soon as you arrive is this:

**Welcome Soul Proprietors!**

**Are you a great Coach, Therapist, Healing Professional, Teacher, or other Spiritual-Minded Entrepreneur.... but nobody knows it?**

That leaves no doubt who the site is for and

gives a hint as to why they might want to stick around to learn more.

Give your site visitors reasons to delve deeper into your site by giving them directions as to what to do first, then what to do next.



People will get on your list for a variety of reasons but mostly because they believe you can offer a solution to their problem. They are willing to part with their contact information in exchange for some help that you're promising. Some folks will stay on your list forever and you'll never hear a peep out of them. Some will start engaging you right away, and most others will lurk around to get to know you better before extending the relationship any further.

Soul Proprietors ask me all the time, "how long should I leave someone on my list especially if they are unresponsive?" The answer to that is: You leave them on your list until they ask you to take them off.

I've had people hang around my list for 3 or more years before they ever bought a thing.

my headline, I want to make sure that visitors to

On my site — and I suggest you do this on yours — I ask the question: How do you get started? Then I give 3 recommendations of things I want them to do. At the end of the home page and then on most all pages on the "inside" I ask at the bottom of the page what they would like to do next. This way, the visitor is guided through the site in a systematic way.

Now, does everyone follow my guidance? No they don't, but asking those questions keeps them engaged even if they don't follow things "in order."

To follow on with the question I ask in

my site can recognize their own situations as problems that might be solved either at the site itself or by hiring me to help them. A marketing savvy website will always have a page titled something like "Is this you?" or "Does this sound like you?"

On that page you'll want to put several possible scenarios that your clients might be facing. Hopefully, they'll recognize their situation in at least one of those scenarios, maybe more, and now they know they've come to the right place to get their problems solved.

Use sidebar and navigation links to point visitors to articles you've written that will help further clarify in their minds that they are in the right place and that they want to start a relationship with you.

The best relationship starter is getting them to sign up for something you're offering as a free gift in exchange for their contact information. This then gives you the opportunity to send an ezine on a regular basis and stay in touch with them on a consistent basis by other means.

An about page is crucial. This is where you once again take the opportunity to tell site visitors all about the site itself, what they can expect to find, what they can expect from you, and to learn a little more about who you are.

Be as candid as you are comfortable being and be sure to include your photo on your About page. I have both an About page — where I detail what the site itself is about and what folks can expect — and a Meet Marty page where I get a little more personal in letting people know more about who I am. The goal is to make the

site visitor as comfortable as possible.

I want to have real relationships with my site visitors and I want them to know they are dealing with a real person who has ups and downs just like they do. You'll want to do the same at your site.

Every marketing savvy website provides a way for site visitors to get in touch with you. ALL the ways you can be reached including your phone number, mailing address, and fax number.

A contact form is the best way to handle email because you don't really want your email address published on your website. This is because robot trawlers from spammers are looking for emails to send spam emails to.

I made this mistake early on and now, many years later, I still get tons of spam email.

## Add your signature to every email you send

One of the easiest and no cost ways to promote your business is to include an email signature in every email you send.

It's easy to do and you can set it up in most



It used to be that you could get away with writing your email address like this: marty @ soulproprietor-coach .com or marty at soulproprietorcoach .com, putting spaces in between the parts of the address, but the robots have gotten smarter and smarter and now they can eliminate those spaces and still grab your email address. So it's better to use a contact form and not take the chance.

email management programs like Outlook, MacMail and Entourage to be automatically applied to every email you generate from your computer.

You just never know who will see that email and even the recipient who knows you well might learn something new about your business depending on what you include in your “sig.”

Your email signature is a great place to include all your contact information and is a great place to include something new you might be introducing to your marketplace. When I introduced my new Inner Success




Circle site, I included that in the signature of my emails and got lots of new members from that.

There’s probably a lot you could include in your signature, but

if you put too much in there, you might start triggering your recipients spam filters and your email could wind up in their junk folder. Not a good place to be. So keep your sig short and to the point.

Many emailers these days are including graphic image files for their signature which creates an attachment in the email. Again, many spam filters will either strip out attachments before delivering your email or will dump it in the junk folder. Neither situation is a good one, so my advice is to nix the graphic file and just go for a plain or slightly embellished signature.

Here’s an example of a simple email sig:

<p><b>MARTY MARSH, Coach</b> <i>Soul Proprietor &amp; Chief Clarity Officer</i> Visit my website: <a href="http://www.martyink.com">http://www.martyink.com</a> Email me: <a href="mailto:marty@smartyink.com">marty@smartyink.com</a> Call me: 206.290.7901 Fax me: 904.216-7945 Have you seen my new Members-Only site? <a href="http://goodcompanyclub.com">http://goodcompanyclub.com</a></p>	
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That’s really all you need. Change things up from time to time to keep your signature fresh but still include your basic contact info.

You can also, in most programs, create several signature files and let the program choose one at random whenever you create a new email to send. That keeps things spiced up a bit and you don’t have to do a thing after you create the original files.

## Creating anticipation

**E**very Sunday afternoon when I was a teenager, my best friend and I would drive out to the river near my home, park my little red VW at the edge, and turn up the radio to listen to Casey Kasem’s American Top 40 where he counted down the hits every week.

Casey sure had a knack for building anticipation for what was coming next or later in the show. I’ve been reminded of this lately because of the miracle of satellite radio that brings me one of those old Top 40 episodes from my teenage days every Saturday morning. I enjoy listening now for the nostalgia just as much as I did back then.

You can create anticipation in your marketing, too.

email sig or on a Twitter post) that you’ve got a surprise coming up and tell just a bit about it to begin to arouse curiosity about what you’re going to be offering.

Perhaps you have a teleclass you’re planning to offer and you’re not quite ready to announce the particulars about it yet but you can still start building excitement and anticipation for it by mentioning that its coming.

Just be sure that you do, indeed, follow through on what you’re building excitement about. Otherwise, your credibility goes right out the window.

## When less means more

**I**f you’ve been learning about marketing for a while now this won’t be big news to you: to be successful in your business — no matter what it is — you must narrow your focus so that you can concentrate on a niche.

The marketplace for your services is probably huge anyway and with the advent of the Internet, the marketplace can be the entire world, but it is impossible to market to everybody in the world.

You know that already, and yet, you might be surprised at the number of people that still respond “everybody” when I ask them “who is your target audience?”

Perhaps you know that already but perhaps you're still thinking that's okay for everyone else, but your services or products truly are

*It is much easier to focus your marketing on a smaller group of people than on everybody.*

something that everybody could use and might need and are afraid to limit yourself in any way.

Choosing a niche, or a target audience, is just the opposite of limiting. In fact, study after study, both scientific and not, prove that if you are marketing to a more tightly

focused audience your sales will naturally be higher.

Why? Two reasons are at play here.

It is much easier to focus your marketing on a smaller group of people than on everybody.

Over the years my design work began to focus on and center around two different groups: chiropractors and lawyers. Obviously these people have pretty much nothing in common except that they are service professionals.

I found that I liked working with both groups and I had a pretty good understanding of their businesses and what they needed from their own clients. Since I had something of value to offer to both groups, I designed all my promotions exclusively for each group.

If I was marketing to the lawyers everything I did focused on them. The content and the language I used, the artwork, and the offering I made. I mailed or emailed ONLY to the lawyers on my lists.

In turn I did the same thing with the chiropractors.

So you see, you can certainly have more than one niche if you like, you just can't market to all of them at once.

It may be that you have a narrow niche and a broader niche that you are marketing to. If you sell a program or a product that is great for athletes, for example, athletes in general might be your larger niche.

You might find, though, that you would be more successful if you marketed your product to just one narrow niche at a time, say, runners or weight lifters. Or you could market to your broader niche — all athletes — by promoting your products to people who have gym memberships. You'd be letting those people know, by listing the various athletes that can be helped with your product, that you have something available. You run a bigger risk, however, of people not seeing themselves on that list, by marketing in this broad way, but it is doable.

You are still focusing on two relatively small niche areas but can you see how much easier your marketing becomes when you focus tightly on one niche group at a time?

The other benefit of doing this is that it costs much less money to market to a smaller group than to everybody.

Advertising can be very expensive and is usually not effective for most small businesses because it has to be too broadly focused to try to appeal to a random group of readers. But advertising can be very cost effective if you market your athletic products only in places where athletes would see your message.

So if your narrow niche is runners, you could run ads in running magazines and probably do quite well.

The same holds true for online marketing including adwords, and search engine marketing, or when using direct mail as an offline strategy. It is much cheaper to mail a thousand postcards to a tightly focused niche of runners than to try to reach a few million athletes with a postcard.

I hope you're beginning to see the value in thinking about and choosing a narrow niche market for your own business.

In case you're wondering, these days as a marketing coach and consultant, my narrow niche is coaches, and my broader niche is service professionals.

## Lead, follow or get out the way

In my travels I've seen that phrase on a bumper sticker more times than I can count, and while I can appreciate the amusing sentiment directed at other drivers, the same philosophy can apply to your business and marketing efforts.

I'm sure you've heard many, many times some-

one ask you if you needed brain surgery, would you go to your general medical practitioner or would you seek out the best brain surgeon money could buy?

The answer, of course, is obvious, and while you may not be doing brain surgery, what you offer in your business is just as important to the person who has the very problem you can solve. They want you to be good at it. No, they want you to be an EXPERT at it.

So ask yourself, “Why am I an expert in my field?” Maybe you already are THE expert in your field. If so, you’ve got it made already in many ways but if nobody knows it, then you can be the best at what you do and still starve to death.

You must establish and exploit your expert status in every way you can, getting the word out to the world that you are the go-to guy or gal in your field.

Of course, most of us were taught as we were growing up that it is impolite to brag about ourselves and our accomplishments, but the fact remains that to be successful in business, self promotion is what it’s all about.

But, even if you are a shameless self-promoter — and I think all of us should be one of those — the very best promotion you can get is when someone else is doing the bragging about you.

You get people to brag about you by asking them to write or record testimonials for you after they’ve experienced your high value and have grown to know, like and trust you. “Ask them?” you say.

Your clients are happy to do this for you. In fact, they WANT to do this for you. The reality is, however, that these people — your fans — are busy, too, and they may never get around to writing that testimonial even as much as they would like to do it. So you simply ask them and then make it as easy as possible for them to do it.

These days it is so easy to set up a special, private phone line where your fans can simply call in and tell you what they like about you and your products or services and why they would recommend you to others. All you have to do is either transcribe what they’ve said, or shape it into a testimonial that you can then use in all of your marketing materials, both in-print and online.

Often, someone will be talking to you and gushing about how much they love your work. At that point you can simply ask, “would you allow me to use the remarks you’ve just made as a testimonial for others to hear or see?”

I guarantee that they will be delighted that you asked and honored to help you in this way.

What I suggest is that you write down what you heard if you’ve not got it recorded, then email it to the person, have them read it over, and let them make changes if they need to so that you are sure you are accurately portraying their words and their intent. You don’t want to literally put words in their mouth, although some folks are so busy they will simply ask you to write the testimonial yourself and then let them either revise it or approve it.

Testimonials really work best when you can convey in your marketing that these are real

people who are doing the talking. Including their full name, and any other information about them, especially where they are from, will go a long way to adding credibility to the testimonial. Avoid using just initials if you can. This is a sure signal to most people that the testimonial might be just made up by you.

Better yet, ask for a photo, and use that along with the testimonial. Now there is no doubt that the person making the testimonial is real.

Always ask permission before posting a testimonial and let the person know how you will be using it. If just in print, tell them that, but if you’ll also be posting it to your website or using it in emails, tell them that, too.

It is the courteous thing to do and is a way to respect the privacy of the individual. Some folks are happy to provide a testimonial, they just might not be comfortable having their photo, or in some cases, their name, being put out for all the world to see.

Other ways to establish yourself as the expert in your field is to write stuff. Books, ebooks, special reports, articles. You name it, if it can be



*An example of a testimonial:*

**Why folks like to work with Marty...**

“Over many years of our working association, Marty Marsh’s innovative ideas and creative visions have helped us produce unique projects that stand out in the crowded print marketplace. He’s easy to work with and understands the importance of customer service and support.”

—Barbara Bigham & Ardith Oaks, BARD Enterprises

seen in print or on the web, people will naturally associate you as an expert because only experts write and publish books, right?

I've heard of many people who write a book, self-publish it, and then use that as their business card. If they meet a likely prospect, they hand them their book instead of a card. Wow! Instant credibility. The recipient will feel as though you are the expert before reading a single word.

In fact, they may not read a single word but they'll call you and hire you just on the basis alone that they have put you in the expert category and they want the expert to help them.

There are many ways to establish yourself as an expert including writing articles, writing a column in a newspaper or a trade journal, offering teleclasses, being a guest on someone else's teleclass, and speaking at public events such as chamber of commerce meetings and Rotary Clubs, just to name a few.

What can you do that you are comfortable in doing that will show the world — at the least, your niche — that you are the go-to expert?

## Smart clients are the best clients

If you take the time to educate your prospects ahead of time, once they become an actual client, they'll be your BEST clients.

You may be in a profession that you think people will recognize clearly what you are offering just by simply rattling off your job title.

Lawyers, Chiropractors, Coaches, and Accountants come to mind.

But if you are a lawyer, a chiropractor, a coach, or an accountant, or whatever you are, do your prospects REALLY know what it is that you do, the problems you solve, and the benefits you offer to those that work with you?

There are as many different kinds of lawyers as there are stars in the sky. A real estate lawyer can help protect you when you're buying a house or a commercial property, and a criminal lawyer can help get you out of jail when you are innocent. A family lawyer can help you plan your estate and write a will.

So if someone asks you what you do, and you respond only by telling them what your job title is, you've done yourself a huge disservice because the word lawyer, accountant, coach or chiropractor, or whatever you are, can have different meanings for different people.

I learned early on that some people are afraid to go to a chiropractor even if they are already convinced that they really should go see one. That fear — which is really just a lack of understanding — can often be dissuaded because the chiropractor takes the time to educate his patient on what to expect.

You can do that too, and you should be doing that on a regular basis. That's why we publish ezines, write articles, publish books, and create all manner of marketing materials that are designed to gently persuade through education.

Because we are "in the business", we often take for granted that everyone else out there that we

are trying to attract understands our business as well as we do, but they don't, of course.

Therefore, the more prospects know about your business through your educational marketing materials whether that's a brochure, an ezine, a newsletter, a blog or a website, the easier it will become for them to sell themselves on working with you.

These days, a blog is an excellent way to educate your prospects. And don't forget your



clients, too. Once they've become a client you don't stop marketing to them. Once they've become a client is all the more reason to keep educating and keep reassuring them that they've made the right decision in following you, the expert.

Did you know that many of the car advertisements you see on the television are aimed at offering reassurance to recent buyers that they've made the right car buying decision? Sure, they want to sell more of those same cars, too, but most car buyers go through a period of "buyer's remorse" shortly after making that decision.

Those ads reassure them that they are smart and that they've made the right choice.

The same will be true for you, too. Your continual writing and your educational efforts will reassure your clients that they too have made the right choice in hiring you.

**Keep educating ALL of them.... clients and prospects alike.**

Another big advantage in having educated clients and prospects is so that they can refer you to others who might want and need your services. If they have a clear understanding of what it is you do, the benefits you offer, and that you are the expert in your field, those people are better able to refer the right client to you.

Coming back to the way you respond when someone asks you, "so, what do you do?" how you respond to that question is a way to start educating a prospect right from the start.

The simple formula for responding to that inevitable question is this:

Tell them who it is you help, the problem you help them with, and the benefit that they will receive when they work with you.

A business coach, like me, might respond: "I help empty-nesters discover their passions and start a business from their home which they use to positively change the world."

You can be more provocative than that, too, in your response. Years ago I worked with an accountant who would respond in this way anytime someone new asked her what she did: "Oh," she'd say, rather off-handedly, "I help my clients stay out of jail."

Of course, the response we always want when we tell people what we do is for them to either ask us to tell them more or to ask us, "how you do you do that?" You can imagine that my accountant client almost always got that response from anyone she told that to.

If you're wondering, she would go on to explain that as a professional accountant it was her job to make sure that tax forms and payments were filed on time for her clients so they never had to worry about the tax folks showing up at their door with their hand out or to haul them off to jail.

It was clever, and it got people's attention, and it allowed her to explain in further detail what services she could offer as an accountant. Like all professions, every accountant offers something a little different to their clients and she found a way to capture attention for her unique business.

And a great byproduct of educating your clients is that when they are smart about what you are offering and can clearly see the value of it, they are more apt themselves to spend more money with you. It is an old marketing maxim that it is much easier to sell to an existing client than to a new one.

So keep educating ALL of them — clients and prospects alike.

## What to do when the phone rings

**C**ongratulations! You've been consistently and diligently marketing your business and the long awaited moment finally arrives: the phone rings!

Someone is calling to make a connection with you and to inquire about your services and how you might work together.

This is not the time to be unprepared but so many Soul Proprietors are. They do all the work to get that phone to ring and then forget to plan for when it does.

So, before that phone rings, you want to have planned out your sales process. If you've done this in advance and know what you are offering because you've really put some thought into it, you'll come across as confident, competent and that you are the expert you have been claiming to be.

Write out a sales script that you can refer to when someone is on the phone. In addition to anticipating as many questions as you can that you think the prospect might have and having answers at the ready, you'll also want to create a list of questions that you'll want to ask the prospect.

In fact, you should take immediate control of the direction the interaction will take right at the get go by asking good questions. Many prospects are curious about whether they can



afford your services or not, and most — not all — will invariably start out the conversation by asking what you charge.

At this stage of the interaction you have no idea whether this prospect could be your ideal client or not and you know nothing of their situation yet so you won't know whether you could help them or not.



If you're familiar with NLP and different learning styles, you may pick up on the learning style of the prospect from the way they phrase their questions and in their responses to yours. So you could phrase your last question in a way that would appeal to their particular learning style.

For a VISUAL learner you might say "Can you **see** how this might be something that would benefit you?"

For an AUDIO learner you might say, "Does this **sound** like something that would work for you?"

For a KINESTHETIC learner you might ask: "Does this **feel** like something that would benefit you?"

You might just ask them sometime during your conversation how they like to learn, giving them the cues of visual, auditory, or kinesthetic. The kinesthetic folks are the ones that say "I feel" a lot. (Like me.)

So before answering that dollars and cents question, ask questions of your own to find out as much as you can about the needs of this prospect. Then, as you ask and get answers and engage the conversation, you can then determine if this is a client you might like to work with and again, before revealing your prices, tell the prospect, with confidence, that you can help them and why.

Let them know how you will work with them and what you expect from them and what they can expect from you. Your last question should be something like this: "Does that sound like something that would work for you?"

Then — and this is important — let them bring up the issue of the cost again. When they do, and they always do, be prepared with at least three options for them. I call this the YES-YES-YES strategy.

You want the client to be able to say "yes" to at least one of your offers, so create a different set of options or services for one price at the lower end, one in the middle and one at the high end.

You can at first mention the high end explaining that this is your most comprehensive plan and the best value, and then tell them about the low end before telling them about the middle option which generally is the option that most people go for.

When explaining the middle option you can tell the prospect that this is the option that most of your clients take. Be sure that there is enough difference in your various options so the prospect can readily understand what she is getting at each price point.

Then you can ask which option would work best for them. They may still tell you they want to think about it, but chances are, if you've clearly established with them the value you are offering and painted a clear picture of how much better their life can be after working with you, then many prospects will accept one of your offers.

This is a sales technique that works in any business. You don't feel like you're selling them something they don't want and they are selling themselves on you. It's a win-win for everyone and everyone can feel good about it.

Doing this kind of preparation will also help you to create a very clear sales process on your website as well, since many prospective clients won't call you, but will seek out the information they want on your website.

Remember, whether on the phone or on your website or in an email, you must always have a compelling call to action. Know what you want the outcome to be from your visitors or your phone conversation and structure your offer to get that result.

## Sell without selling

I think it was Jeffrey Gitomer who first said that people love to buy but they hate to be sold. Every Soul Proprietor I've ever known hates the idea of selling. They hate it to the point that they oftentimes drive themselves out of business because they will not ask for the sale.

The thought of doing any kind of hard-sell is a total turn off for me. I will walk out of a store if a salesman tries to use guilt or scare tactics with me and I'll leave a website post-haste if I encounter the same thing.

That's one of the reasons I'm not an advocate of squeeze pages at websites. A squeeze page is a



page that promises you information but won't allow access to that information or into the website itself unless you first put in your email address and name. I know they work for many people who use this tactic but I will never do it.



**Just be nice.** One way to be nice to folks and to surprise them is to write a handwritten thank you note or “nice to meet you” note as a means of following up. Send a note to prospects after you've made a good connection and to clients after they've hired you.

People will remember someone who takes the time to write them a note by hand and it's a great way to up the “like” factor when you're trying to win clients.

It is so unusual for anyone to get a real hand addressed envelope that just in doing that will up your open rate a thousand times whenever you send out a marketing letter, a note, or some other follow up through the mail.

Soul Proprietors avoid any kind of selling that plays on guilt, fear, or greed because they know that that sort of thing only creates a negative relationship. Personally, I want to build my business on mutually rewarding relationships built on positive connections.

Another hard sell I really dislike is when I do give in and put in my name and email to break through that squeeze page and then am confronted with an offer that “I must take now or I'll forever lose my chance to get the same offer again.” I don't even know these people and already they've made me mad — twice! Do this kind of thing yourself and I can guarantee that your charge card chargebacks will go through the roof. To me, it's just a lousy way to start a relationship with someone.

If someone ever writes you or calls you and says that they are thinking of buying something from you or hiring you and want you to “sell” them on it, your answer should be, “No, sorry. I'll be happy to tell you about it and why I think it will help you, and I'll be happy to answer any questions you might have, but no, I can not sell you.”

Through educating and regularly communicating with your clients and prospects, by always offering great value in both the things you give away and the things you sell, and by always being your authentic self, prospects will sell themselves on what you're offering and you won't have to.

Offering several options for saying “yes” is another way of non-selling. People will only buy from you when they know, like and trust you, and any attempt to make a hard-sell will destroy your credibility as a Soul Proprietor in a heart beat.

**SIDEBAR:** Just be nice. One way to be nice to folks and to surprise them is to write a handwritten thank you note or “nice to meet you” note as a means of following up. Send a note to prospects after you've made a good connection and to clients after they've hired you.

People will remember someone who takes the time to write them a note by hand and it's a great way to up the “like” factor when you're trying to win clients.

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## 5 Essential Marketing Action Steps

We've come a long way together in this guidebook and to wrap things up here, I wanted to just point out some things that you really should get clear about. As you've learned so far there are many, many marketing strategies available to you and if you avail yourself of just a handful of them you'll be well on the road to creating a thriving, successful, joyful, fun, and profitable business venture.

Following are 5 Essential Marketing Action Steps that I believe will help you more than anything else, at least in the beginning stages of your managing your “marketing business.”

### 1. Get clear about your Primary Marketing Goals

At some point, and the earlier the better, you must ask yourself about what it is that you want to accomplish with your business. It's fun to say you want to change the world or that you want to help people, and those things are certainly true, but what is it, more specifically, that you want to achieve by being in business?

For many Soul Proprietors, being self-employed and having a business is a way to pay the bills. For others it may be that they want to bring in enough extra money to take the family on a great cruise vacation every year. For someone else, it might be that they can stay home with their children while they are growing up.

For me, being self-employed means freedom.

Freedom to do what I love, to make my own mistakes, to be responsible for my success, to work with only those I love and care about, to work as many (or as few) hours as I want, to live my life in an RV traveling around the USA, and the freedom to be my authentic self showing up everyday to do what I can to change and improve my part of the world.

If I absolutely had to, I could go back and work for someone else, but I don't think I'd be very happy and therefore probably wouldn't do that great a job. When I had a corporate job so many years ago, I spent so much of my head-time thinking of ways I would do things differently in my own business. You probably know as well as I do that ideas are not always that welcome in corporate life.

So, ask yourself, "Why am I in business? What does being in business for myself allow me to have or to accomplish?"

Now, you thought I was going to ask you to come up with a list of financial goals for your business didn't you? Well, I AM going to ask you to do that, too, but I want you to think about those other goals first and write them down.

Then, since numbers really are our friends, you can come back and set some financial goals. For instance, if you want to earn enough to take the family on a cruise vacation this year, how much do you need to earn each month, each week, each day, and each hour to make that happen?

Once you know that number it's very easy to do the math to figure out how many clients you need to see or how many products you need to sell to earn that amount. So your goal might be

to attract X number of clients by a certain date so you can be sure to make the cruise deposit, and another X number of clients to pay for the rest at a later date.

These kinds of goals are much easier to achieve because you've got something of value that you are working toward and you've got a date by which you will accomplish it — or else, you won't be taking anyone on that cruise!

Remember, too, that your clients and customers want you to succeed. They're all rooting for you. They want you to take that cruise and they're happy to help get you on it even if they don't know that's what they're doing.

Don't worry that your goals might seem selfish. Believe me, you are NOT being selfish. It is never a selfish act when you help someone get what they want and they reward you by paying you what you are worth.

## 2. Know your ideal/perfect client

It bears repeating that you absolutely must be clear about who your ideal client is. I can't say it enough. Sadly, most Soul Proprietors avoid thinking about this because they are afraid they might exclude somebody. If you've read through this guidebook this far, you already know that I'm a strong advocate of knowing your ideal client and recognizing the ones that aren't.

This is one step that I hope you will not skip. Remember, figuring out who your ideal client is as easy as just deciding who they are and all the qualities you want them to possess. That's right,

don't make this hard, you decide whom you want to work with. While I don't believe there's anything magical about marketing, this step comes mighty close to being just that — magic.

Because when you decide who your ideal client is — who will bring you the most joy to work with and who will happily pay you what you are worth — exactly those kinds of clients begin to show up. It's the best example of the Law of Attraction at work that I know of.

Because our thinking along these lines is not always perfect, just be prepared for some folks to show up asking you to work with them who are not your ideal client. Here's where the magic really kicks in. You get to say "no" if they aren't a good fit. Of course, you are still free to say "yes" but at least you will enter into the relationship with your eyes fully open, knowing that there might be a few rough spots. If you're willing to work through those, then that person may very well turn into your ideal client.

Just remember, you always have a choice. Isn't that exciting?

## 3. Know your core message points

What I'm really talking about when I say "know what your core message points are" is that you need to take the time to think about the unique benefits that you are offering your clients. What are the 3 or 4 main things that your client can expect to get from you when they hire you and work with you?

These benefits become your central marketing

theme and everything you do in the way of marketing hammers these points home. Once you are clear about these points, it becomes very easy to have sales conversations and referral conversations. It is easier to write articles and publish an ezine and to write copy for your website.

*One of my most powerful core message points is that “Good guys and gals can (and do) finish FIRST.”*

Once you are clear and can articulate these benefits, then your clients and prospects will also be clear about them and they, too, can articulate them to others as well as to themselves.

One of my most powerful core message points is that “Good guys and gals can (and do) finish FIRST.”

The others go back to what I mentioned at the very beginning of this

guidebook where I talk about what it means to be a Soul Proprietor.

So, my other core message points are:

- Being in business should be fun and not feel like work.
- Being in business is all about creating relationships.
- Being in business is about sharing your talents, resources, and knowledge to better both your clients and your community.

And lastly, “It is okay to make money doing what you love.”

## 4. What is your lead generation strategy?

Without people to share your message with, you’ll never have the opportunity to share your talents and knowledge and you’ll lose the opportunity to improve the world.

Finding those people with whom you can share your message is what we call, in the marketing business, lead generation. I call these people prospects. Others like to call them “future customers” or “clients they haven’t met yet.” No matter what you call them, they’re all coming into your life for one reason: so you can let them know that you are the expert that will help them solve their problem and that you are happy for them to pay you to do that.

So one critical marketing step you must think about is how you will attract these “leads” to your business. Actually, generating leads, or attracting clients, is what we’ve been talking about all along in this guidebook. Now you have the opportunity to narrow all of this information down so you can choose the few things that you will enjoy doing, and that you can and will do consistently, that will attract your ideal clients.

One thing that is easy to do — and I believe to be the most critical thing you can do for generating leads — is to have some way for people to sign up for your mailing list on your website. Without that information, you can never develop a relationship that will allow those site visitors to learn to trust you enough — to know you well enough — to be comfortable enough to actually pay you money.

But, as you’ll recall, this is only half that step. You must create something that you can give them in exchange for their personal contact information.

You’ll want to brainstorm and create a list of every way you can think of to reach your niche market and in particular, your ideal clients. Perhaps you can reach them by email, regular mail, direct mail, lumpy mail, public relations efforts, having articles published in other ezines and newsletters or magazines and newspapers, through a network of referral partners and joint ventures, or maybe through networking events both live and virtual.

You’re likely to come up with a combination of these and other ways to attract leads. It’s a good idea to come up with at least one lead generation tactic in each of these areas: advertising (which would include your website, ads you run, postcards and any other direct mail you might do), public relations (which would include press releases, your media kit, articles), and referrals (which includes referrals from clients, joint ventures, referral partners, affiliate plans, etc.).

Put into place at least 3 tactics for lead generation — remember, pick 3, any 3 — and watch your lists grow and grow.

## 5. What is your client education process?

As we discussed earlier, you’ll stand a much better chance of converting leads into paying clients if you educate them about what you do, why you do it, and how what you do benefits them.

You need to write down, step-by-step, what you will say or what you will do next when your lead generation strategies work and you start hearing from prospective clients.

What you do if someone comes to you via your website will be different, most likely, than if someone picks up the phone and calls you.

If they come to your website, you want them to sign up for your list and get your free gift for doing so. You'll also want to guide them through the pages of your site so they can discover more about what you offer and how it benefits them.

***One of the biggest mistakes that Soul Proprietors make is in not following-up.***

If they call you on the phone, you'll need to be prepared with a list of

questions you can ask them, and be prepared to answer their questions. It may be, too, that you need to send these callers even more information before they can make a decision.

One of the biggest mistakes that Soul Proprietors make is in not following-up. People are busy and if they've expressed interest in what you offer then you owe it to them — and yourself — to follow up with them in some way so that you provide them with more information and answer their questions.

Here are some things, then, that you might consider as part of your client education process and follow up system when people contact you:

- Send them more information either via

email or the regular mail

- Send them your regular ezine
- Send them an ebook
- Send them your printed and bound book
- Send them a postcard
- Send them a thank you note
- Send them to your FAQ page on your website
- Book an appointment for over the phone
- Arrange to meet in person
- Send a referral to them
- Have them talk to one of your satisfied clients
- Have articles published in magazines and newspapers and trade journals

The list could go on and on so think about the ways that you will educate and follow-up with your prospects and clients. Remember to pay as much attention — maybe more — to your existing clients since it is easier to sell them again than it is to sell to new people.

## Move your feet

One of the problems that most Soul Proprietors experience at one time or another — and more often than not — is in planning and preparing and getting ready but then not actually getting anything done.

We want to do it right — whatever IT is at the moment — and our perfectionist self kicks in and we figure we need to read one more book, take one more teleclass, and consult with our astrologer one more time to make sure the

planets are aligned for success, and then we do — nothing.

Nothing at all.

I talk to Soul Proprietors all the time who are just on the verge of doing something. They already know what they should be doing and they're going to start marketing their business just as soon as they get the ebook written, the website ready to go, the glamour shot done, or the dog bathed, but it seems like those things never get done.

And therefore the marketing never gets started.

I've been there myself more times than I care to admit and I know what you're going through. It's funny how we think that, if we just plan more, that somehow, miraculously, in defiance of all odds and in spite of all else that we know to be true, those long yearned-for clients, will one by one magically start to show up at our doorstep.



Hate to burst your bubble, but it ain't gonna happen.

All you have to do is get started. You can read my ebook over and over, take my free teleclasses, and ask me for advice all you want, and you still won't get one more clients until you do something.

Figure out what you want to do to market your business — choosing no more than 3 things that you know you'll enjoy, perhaps from this

guidebook — and then move your feet. Move your fingers. Move your lips. Get busy. Get into action.

I'd be delighted to help you get started. Be sure to visit my website often, read my ezines and announcements when they show up in your email inbox, get to know me better, let me get to know you better, and then, when the time is right, call me and we'll chat.

Sometimes all you need is to brainstorm with someone else for an hour, sometimes all you need is to chat about your plans, get some reassurance that you're on the right track, or sometimes you just need some advice to help you get over a hump. I'm available as your coach and consultant to help you with all those things and more.

I'm happy to chat with you for a half hour or so at no charge to find out if we'd be a good match for each other, so be sure to visit my website and schedule an appointment.

Just remember, this is how I make my living. I charge for what I do, but I also believe that I give you lots of value in return.

Now, get out there and do the same for your circle of influence.

## Postscript

You may have noticed that in this guidebook I haven't talked any at all about using social media such as Facebook and Twitter as a marketing strategy. I've not done that because at this writing I don't know enough to talk intelligently about it.

I'm learning, but I also don't like sharing strategies that I've not tried myself. So I'm beginning now to add social media to my marketing mix and when I can share more with you on that I'll put out a revised version of this guide.

And in the meantime, I'll be sharing the things I learn on my blog and with articles in my ezine. So stay tuned for that. ■

# It all started with a hotdog stand and a printing press...

My real name is Martin but all my life I've been called Marty. My first grade teacher told me once that one day I would want to be called Martin since that name was more "grown up" and she refused to call me Marty.



Well, I suppose then, I've never grown up. I refuse to do so! Instead I've done my best to capitalize on my name: Marty Marsh. It has become my brand and people know me as Marty, The Soul Proprietor.

The combination of my first and last names seems to amuse people, some disbelieving that my parents would actually name me that, others saying that it's a great radio name. No matter what you think of it, it has taken me far.

The entrepreneurial bug bit me when I was about 13 years old even though at the time I hadn't realized what was happening.

"Daddy, can I sell hot dogs to your workers?"

My dad was a cattle man and a watermelon farmer and when it was time to harvest the melons it was pretty much a non-stop, get-it-done operation for about two weeks. Workers would often leave at lunch time and not come back in

## Other Soul Proprietors we love doing business with....

**Suzanne Bird-Harris: Websites in Wordpress:** <http://www.websitesinwordpress.com>

**Barbara Winter: Joyfully Jobless™** – <http://www.joyfulljobless.com>

**Chris Guillebeau: The Art of Non-Conformity** – <http://chrisguillebeau.com/3x5/>

**Jonathan Mead: The Illuminated Mind** – <http://www.illuminatedmind.net/>

**Elizabeth Hagen: Organize with Confidence** – <http://elizabethhagen.com/>

**David Allen: Getting Things Done** – <http://www.davidco.com/>

**Mark Forster: Get Everything Done** – <http://www.markforster.net/>

**Charlie Gilkey: Productive Flourishing** – <http://www.productiveflourishing.com/>

the afternoon, and so my dad liked my idea for selling hot dogs.

So I set up my stand and we were all surprised at how much business I did. It helped my dad, it taught me some valuable lessons, and I had a ball. Best of all, I earned enough money in those two weeks to buy a printing press. I loved printing then and I love it today although I've not personally touched a printing press in decades. But the smell of ink still sends me.

From a book about printing I taught myself how to set metal type by hand and that led to my first real paying job at the local weekly newspaper. The owner and publisher of that paper, Walter Wilson, was the best teacher I ever had. I learned so much from that man — not only about printing — but about being in business and about life in general. He gave me opportunities that led to other greater opportunities and I guess I kind of owe my career path to him.

### School calls

He encouraged me to go on to college, to get my degree, and I did just that, earning a B.S. in Printing Management and Technology from the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York; one of the best things I've ever done for myself because not only did it open my eyes to the world and set the stage for my life-long love of learning, but it opened doors for me in the corporate world that might otherwise have been closed.

After graduation, I enjoyed a fabulous 13-year

career with USA Today during its formative years and look back on those days with fond memories. USA Today revolutionized the newspaper production world and I was a part of that. I still think of it as "my newspaper" and am so glad that it's still around today.

After a series of job and business missteps — although valuable learning experiences all — including ownership of an ill-fated under-capitalized printing company, I returned to USA Today/Gannett for a brief stint before going out on my own again in 1995. For years I had done graphic design work and typesetting and layout jobs for printers using my Macintosh computer, all on the side, all from a spare bedroom, even then not realizing that I was growing a business.

I just knew I was having a lot of fun as I always had with any business enterprise I undertook. That little printing press followed me everywhere I went and I always managed to make money with it even when I was going to college.

Even though I was making more money in that spare bedroom than I ever had at any job, I really wasn't doing it for the money. I was doing it because I was doing something I loved, for people I genuinely liked, and I would have done it for no payment at all. The money was just gravy. Pure gravy.

**Side Note to Would-Be Entrepreneurs:** Follow your business dream but keep your "day job" for a while. Having that job security allows you to really build the kind of business you want while working with just the people you want, and when the time is right to go full-time, you'll know it. (That's exactly what I did.) More and more I discovered that I had an inter-

est in marketing and my graphic design work always started with an understanding of how what I was doing fit into the overall marketing plans of my clients. As I learned new things I would pass this information along to my clients and little by little more and more of them turned to me first for marketing consulting and then to graphic design.

### Soul Proprietors

Then, I began to realize that the kind of people I was working with were a lot like me. They approached business more from a spiritual standpoint than they did a profit-motive and while I fully support that all of us are in business to earn a living and make a profit, business can hold a lot more satisfaction than just that. I dubbed these people "soul proprietors" because the work they were doing touched not only their own soul, but the souls and spirits of their own clients.

For a soul proprietor, being in business is a way to connect with people in a kinder, more gentle way in every area of our business dealings from marketing and sales to delivery of the final product or service. Soul Proprietors build relationships first.

### We're all healers

Ever since then everything I've done has been from a spiritual — not religious, mind you — approach. To me, no matter what kind of business we are in, we are all in the business of solving problems, which in turn helps people. So we are all healers in our own special way.

When I was a kid I loved the idea of being a teacher. Many times I've wondered if I missed my calling by not teaching at a school some-



where, but as technology started changing not only the way we do business but our very lives, I realized that I could teach people what I knew that worked for marketing and I wouldn't even have to be in the same room with my students.

I soon discovered just how much I loved teaching teleclasses. And that's what I started to do. So for the last few years, I've been attracting new clients, making friends and helping people succeed in their own businesses all through teleclasses and the things I write. It's a great way to make a living and I'm still having lots of fun.

Part of the reason for creating my *Soul Proprietor Coach* site is so that I can work on providing more great content and valuable information to the many people I serve and to have a home for marketing my private coaching practice. In addition, I'm exploring the many options we have available these days for providing learning programs online. From what I know about most business people today, they are all looking for ways to have a business and have a life, too, and I strive to help my clients enjoy both.

## Hitting the road

In mid-2006 I started doing something that I had been thinking about doing for years: I sold everything I owned, bought a 5th Wheel Trailer and a truck and hit the open road. I've been living (and working) on the road and traveling the highways and byways of these beautiful United States ever since. As of this writing, 45 states (many of them twice and three times) and nearly 80,000 miles including some brief jaunts to Mexico and Canada.

Everywhere I go I meet the nicest people and

often I get to meet some of the wonderful people who have taken my classes or who have worked with me over the phone as a coaching client. It is always great fun to get to meet someone face-to-face. I am so fortunate to know so many fine people. They all enrich my life in ways beyond any money they've ever spent with me.

## Balance

The hardest part of living this way, though, has been trying to balance my love for my work and the time I want to spend on my business with time spent being a tourist. I love the beach and when I'm at the beach I want to be in the sand, not sitting behind my computer. But alas, I still find myself at this computer a lot more than I would like. So I'm working on finding that balance. In the meantime I'm just going to keep enjoying my fabulous life every single day.

I travel with my life partner, Bill, and up until mid-October 2008, I was also traveling with my Bichon Frise, Barkley was nearly 17 years old when he left us and although he's left a huge hole in my heart for now, I will always love him and cherish the many memories I have from his long dog-life. He was a good companion and a great and tirelessly loving friend and I'm ever so grateful that he chose to come live with me.

All of my family — from the youngest to the oldest — live within about a mile of each other in the state of Florida so I spend a good deal of time there. Living the life of a gypsy allows me to see the country, spend some time with my family, reconnect with old friends, and still get my work done. What could be better than that?

My desire is that you achieve exactly the kind of success that you want and if I can help you get there, then that's what I'm here for.

I hope you've found some benefit in this Unconventional Marketing Guide and that you've gotten to know me a little better. I'd love to get to know you better, too, and it would be my pleasure to hear from you.

All the best,

**Marty Marsh**  
*Soul Proprietor and  
Chief Clarity Officer*



P.S. Why "Chief Clarity Officer"? One thing I pay attention to is my intuition and I've always had an intuitive knack in getting to know people and I've found that I can often help people gain clarity about their business when they can't readily see it for themselves. That's what my private coaching practice is all about. Clarity. So if you need some, get in touch and let's see if we could do some great work together.

P.P.S. Ever since my first hot dog stand — and I sold hot dogs to my dad's workers for several seasons in a row — I've longed to sell hot dogs. So one day I suspect that I'll fulfill that dream with a nice little hot dog stand on a beach somewhere. I think that would be the perfect way to spend the rest of my days when I'm ready to give everything else up. Trouble is, I've got way too many interests and not nearly enough time.

This is not the end. It is just the beginning.  
The beginning of your brand new life as a Marketer.

*You are cordially invited to join Marty's*

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If you're a Soul Proprietor and you'd like to have a professionally designed newsletter, special report, or ebook like this one, contact me to discuss your desires and we'll create something beautiful together.

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