



Business Success

STRATEGIES

LEVERAGING YOU AS THE BRAND

I have strongly advocated that positioning yourself is far more effective than prospecting and to work towards becoming a specialist and a credible authority on your subject. Irrespective of the business you are in, it is you that must be its best ambassador and public relations agent. That means you must utilize and apply every tool available.

Being able to confidently present at any meeting or networking and media event with or without notice or notes generates business for you. Because people buy confidence, it reassures them and in turn stimulates their own confidence. It is important therefore to have all the additional elements that back up you as the specialist, credible authority and confident person that you profess to the world that you are. And that means having the leveraging tools that make the best of you and your business for your customers. These tools can range from having just the right business card to a range of marketing products including having your own book, articles, newsletter or monthly missive.

I have often made more from product sales at events than the fee received for the event – but often I have just given away a signed book to every member of the audience. And there is no better ‘loss leader’ as they call this particular marketing tool. Everyone likes to receive a book and one that is also signed by the author. They may not read it, but they still keep it and put in on their shelf, and whereas they may well forget the people they met at conferences and networking events, even though they received their cards, the book is a reminder of you. This is important because when the time is right they contact you. And they do not object when you continue to contact them.

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For example when I published *Passion V Pension: Developing Corporate Entrepreneurship*, I sent a signed copy to the top 500 CEO's in the UK, with a short letter explaining why I was sending the gift. Within 30 days I had received many thank you letters and one invitation that transformed into a sales of 250 Books at the full cover price of £15 (and by now I was publisher *and* author) and an engagement for 2 keynote addresses. The book – the loss leader – led to me generating sales for my business and other products.

Now it used to be the case that everyone has a book in them but only a few ever write one and get it published. Those days are no more. Now everyone in business can write an e-book and send it to their clients. Though academics continue to write large toms, the fact is that your clients only want little, easy to read – or listen to – offerings. Academics have always made the mistake of writing to impress their peer group; the real secret is to write only for your targeted audience.

A PDF format e-book with illustrations of between 10-15,000 words is what people will be very pleased to receive from you and will set you and your business apart from others. An electronic or published White Paper, Little Book or short audio download is not hard to produce yet will seriously leverage you, your business and your brand.



For example you meet an interesting contact at a networking event, and you follow up with a nice email. Everyone does the same. But not everyone, a few weeks later sends an interesting gift in the form of an informative document, either by hard or electronic copy, that promises to deliver added value for the new contact.

Every business – irrespective what product or service it is selling – should position itself either as an authority on its subject or develop a reputation for giving things that add value to the customers. The book does not even have to relate to your own business. And it does not even have to be a book that you have written. Often I have sent (and received too) a particular book to a new contact that during our introductory discussion revealed an interest in a particular subject. The note accompanying the book is simple: *I saw the enclosed and it reminded me of our conversation and your interest in the subject.* However if you take the time to write something yourself, it adds more credence as well as giving value.

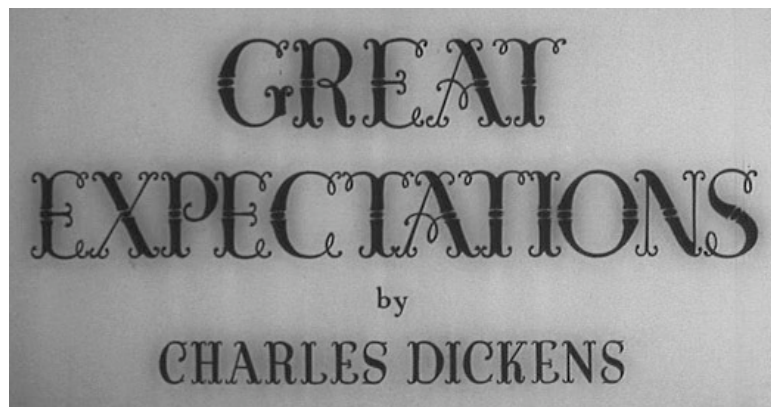
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So what is the best way to go about developing your own product? There is one good way that really works: **Understand how many words a small e-book will amount to:** e.g. 11,000 words with about 25 images.

To put that in context you speak at a rate of about 160 – 190 words a minute. So if you hold a conversation for 60 minutes on your subject around 10,500 words will have been spoken. When preparing a presentation professionals write out their script. So the script can become both your presentation and a keynote speech. It will also make you focus on what you really want to say about your industry or business and all the challenges and advantages you have learned.

You have to think of a title: This starts stimulating your mind as to what you will produce and you immediately begin to notice similar articles and books on the subject for you to start collecting. A title makes you focus on what you want to impart, in the same way that a headline indicates what the story is about. For example: *The 31 Keys I had to Turn to become a Good Widget Maker.*



You have to schedule an hour every day to write. It does not matter what you write, you just write. As you are writing on the subject that interests you and it is about your business specialty this is not hard. You already know your subject and the bonus is that you raise your knowledge and interest. To put this in context, if you write just 350 words a day for 30 days you will have written 10,500 words. Writing 350 words is not a big deal, although clearly to have the right content is. But in 60 minutes you will write at least 350 words and you can arrange it in key points. The following morning you edit what you have done before proceeding to the next 350. For example your e-book of 31 Keys comprises 31 points amounting to 350 words each. And how much is 350 words? This paragraph is exactly 175 words - half 350. Your book can comprises 32 pages, with each key occupying one page.

The preceding paragraph took me 5 minutes to write yet imparts useful information that when followed will raise your credibility and generate goodwill and good business for you. It did not take long to write because I know my subject and what I am recommending I do myself and therefore know that it works. Yet most people think writing a book is hard because it takes a lot of time. It doesn't. It requires regularity – just one-hour a day. And if you really want to write something that will leverage your

business, surely one-hour a day is a worthy investment. The average person watches 4 hours of TV a night, which does not generate any money – unless you are in the TV business and you have to



watch programs. I personally prefer to write before breakfast. It is a great feeling to have done something that benefits you – like exercise – and then have the rest of the day to focus on whatever you need to. This paragraph was clearly much easier to write as it flowed from the first. It has taken 4 minutes and yet amounts to 223 words, making the total for both this and the preceding one 394 as an example of how much you only have to write to complete a great e-book within 30 days.

With practice and the right notes prepared you could write an e-book in just a couple of weeks. And if you arrange it in bullet point format to highlight the keys you are sharing, then it will appear an easy to read yet informative page. And then all you do is convert your document into a PDF Format. You then have a document that you can electronically send to customers and clients or send direct to a printer to have 50 copies made up and bound, so that you can send a physical copy to customers or even print out yourself and bind together with a spiral binder available from an office stationary shop such as Staples.

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Finally you have to fix a date that you want to have it done by. A goal to write an e-book is not a goal unless you have a date to work towards: The date that you plan to start using the e-book as a leveraging tool in your marketing campaign. The e-book will need editing and proof-reading by someone to make sure it reads properly and there are no mistakes. Usually there are colleagues or friends that will do this for you, but there are proof-readers and editors that you find on Google to send your work to. An alternative is to record your material, which requires you to read it properly and thereby you will spot errors as you read it aloud. Then, of course, you have a recording that you can now offer as an audio download to send to your customers and prospective clients. I regularly offer clients and prospective customers audio downloads and enjoy great success from the action. For example, just one mailing to my clients attracted over 150 requests for the free download. One of those 150 commissioned me on the basis of listening to my material. I am sure that a good number of the remaining 149 will do so in due course when the timing is right for them – particularly as I will continue to keep regularly in touch with them. By the way this paragraph is 266 words long, so there is no excuse for not capturing your own subject on paper. The person that will benefit the most is you.

Planning to produce e-books, audio downloads, regular newsletters or business bullets are an absolute must for your marketing campaign. It is a non-expensive yet highly credible tool to leverage your business that will result in building the client in the very best way: Through KNOW, LIKE and TRUST. Customers will look forward to your missives and appreciate you taking the time to produce them. They will feel valued and will be reassured to give you their business. And you will become the authority on your subject because you have taken the time to write just a paragraph a day on something that you already know about and are of course to become the expert on.