

BUSINESS FORUM

INSPIRING BUSINESS, LIFE, AND REAL PRINT SOLUTIONS

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Shape Up!

From die-cut corners to intricate folds, print doesn't have to be flat or square. We can shape your words in marvelous ways.





IT'S IN THE "HOW"

"Sustained business success year after year requires a passion for what you do, and for how you do it."
—Jim Blasingame, small-business expert and host of *The Small-Business Advocate Show*

The most successful business professionals on the planet have all talked about needing a passion for making a company or an idea succeed. We give a lot of attention to the drive or desire for achievement, faith in a product or skill set, and the hunger for success. But the not-so-glamorous side of success is being able to actually run the business.

Having a passion for the day-to-day running of your business is the only way to truly find long-lasting success or growth. Entrepreneurs who can find fulfillment in "how" their business runs are more likely to see continued success.

Managing Tasks

When you put as much drive into the tedious tasks as you put into your business's offerings, you'll create greater growth opportunities across the board. Start by recognizing the business tasks that seem difficult or not ideal.

Managing Employees

Employees should be one of your greatest resources. Be honest with yourself: do you think your employees are an asset or a problem? Do you need to change your attitude or your employees?

Managing Customers

When it comes to customers, remember that dealing with your

toughest customers will often bring to the surface deficiencies or holes in your systems. Use these interactions to improve your processes or products.

Managing Money

Pay attention to your finances. It is essential that your payables do not exceed your receivables. Have your finger on the pulse of this part of your business. Money management should be a priority.

By understanding the rough patches in your day-to-day operations, you will have a greater chance of overcoming your shortfalls. 🎯

PRINT IS NONINTRUSIVE


The perpetual interruptions of digital ads have led to a digital blindness that impedes good returns on Web ads and many other forms of digital marketing. The beauty of print is someone else's advertisement cannot pop up and interrupt your message.



When your customer picks up your material, they can focus exactly where you direct them. Your voice is not drowned out by any other noise. They have chosen the time and place to read your material and can do so without interruption. This choice makes them more receptive to your call to action than the ceaseless digital hammering of pop-up ads that are constantly in their face when they're online.

When your message is important, the best marketing strategy includes print. There are infinite options to choose from, and there's always a perfect solution.

When you carefully choose which resource to use, whether that's the perfect brochure or the biggest sign on the block, you can celebrate knowing that your words will not be interrupted by some annoying pop-up.

Take advantage of the attention your customers give you when they choose to read your postcard or your sales letter. You can deliver your information without competition. Focus on your whole message and ask for that sale, encourage further communication, or educate your audience, and know you have their undivided attention. 



"Example is not the main thing in influencing other people; it's the only thing."
— *Abraham Lincoln*

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started."
— *Agatha Christie*

"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got!"
— *Alan Scott*

"Entrepreneurship is living a few years of your life like most people won't so that you can spend the rest of your life like most people can't."
— *Anonymous*

"The longer you're not taking action, the more money you're losing."
— *Catherine Cook*

"Leaders don't force people to follow; they invite them on a journey."
— *Charles S. Lauer*

"The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second-best time is now."
— *Chinese Proverb*

"Our business in life is not to get ahead of others, but to get ahead of ourselves."
— *E. Joseph Cossman*



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Did You Know?

- » Fredric Baur invented the Pringles can. When he passed away in 2008, his ashes were buried in one.
- » Johnny Cash's song "A Boy Named Sue" was penned by the beloved children's author Shel Silverstein.
- » Ben & Jerry learned how to make ice cream by taking a five-dollar correspondence course offered by Penn State.
- » Carly Simon's dad is the Simon of Simon and Schuster. He co-founded the company.
- » When the mummy of Ramses II was sent to France in the mid-1970s, it was issued a passport. Ramses' occupation? "King (deceased)."
- » Kool-Aid was originally marketed as "Fruit Smack."
- » Only female mosquitoes will bite you.
- » "Jay" used to be slang for "foolish person." That's why when a pedestrian ignored street signs, he or she was referred to as a "jaywalker."
- » Duncan Hines was a popular restaurant critic who also wrote a book that recommended hotels.

The Art of **Family**

SUMMER RE-SPONSIBILITIES

Preparing for the summer when you have school-aged children can be nerve-wracking. But whether your child is now preparing for college or preparing for high school, the end of the school year is a time to level-up responsibilities.



More and more high-school-age youth are so busy with high-level sports, music, or other interests that a traditional summer job would interfere. Even so, the symbolism of ending a year of school should be associated with added accountability.

High School

For kids who work, setting a goal for saving as well as a goal for personal spending is a way to add the next level of responsibility. Raising the expectation of what they are to achieve, even just a little bit, is a great lesson for the summer season.

Middle School

Often it is in middle school when kids are forced to specialize in their interests to compete at the high-

school level. Since formal jobs are not a possibility, developing a child's talent is a great way to give them a summer focus. Don't know what they're interested in yet? Diversify and give them options, but make sure to include plenty of downtime. Days for just playing with their friends are still crucial at this age.

Elementary


Graduation from kindergarten? Now is a good time to introduce more chores and higher rewards. No matter what grade your elementary-school student has just finished, add new tasks to their daily or weekly responsibilities. When boosting their chores, be sure to add to their rewards and also increase the consequences of neglecting their duties. 🕒

Featured Product

THE NEXT GENERATION: BROCHURES & CATALOGS

The tried-and-true staples of marketing should be in every business's print assets. Brochures and catalogs are recognized elements of any marketing campaign and should be included in every marketing portfolio.

Plain and simple, brochures and catalogs are effective. But don't think that they are old and outdated just because they have stood the test of time. Innovations in print have made the simple brochure or catalog as modern as any marketing idea out there.

Consider the use of QR codes or augmented reality that can add a new dimension to any asset and connect all of your print and digital offerings together. Or how about a secret reveal? Special inks can use light, heat, or water to reveal hidden surprises almost as if they are right out of a science-fiction movie. Take your brochures and catalogs to the next level today! 



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Business Funnies®



"This one has three speeds: fast, slow, and mosey."


Customer Care

Are You Listening?

Have you ever been surfing your social-media account and discovered a negative review of your product or business that was posted by someone you thought was a loyal customer? It happens. What do you do about it?

Listen harder!

The chances are that you may have missed multiple opportunities to hear that your customer was struggling with your product or lacked enough information for a successful outcome from your services. Go back to that customer, either in person or by phone, and ask where you went wrong. Yes, that's right, how **you** went wrong.

Approaching it from the perspective that you were wrong helps you learn from your weaknesses. By knowing your weak points, you can do what you need to do to improve. Your willingness to seek their input will give you knowledge for future satisfaction. 



May is Stroke Awareness Month. One of the most devastating health threats that can destroy one's current way of life happens with virtually no warning.

Time to Act Fast

Luckily some of the signs of a stroke are easily recognizable.

- » Paralysis
- » Numbness or weakness in the arm, face, and leg, especially on one side of the body
- » Difficulty speaking or trouble understanding speech
- » Confusion
- » Slurring speech
- » Trouble seeing in one or both eyes, with vision blackened or blurred, or double vision
- » Trouble walking
- » Loss of balance or coordination
- » Dizziness
- » Severe, sudden headache with an unknown cause

If you think you or someone else is having or has had a stroke, time is the most important factor. Get help for yourself or the other person as fast as possible. The effects of a stroke can be long-term brain damage, disability, or even death.

For a unique perspective on what happens to the brain after a stroke, Dr. Jill Bolte-Taylor's *My Stroke of Insight* is a best seller for an amazing reason. She was a brain scientist when, at age 37, she suffered a stroke and had to relearn everything from how to talk to who she was.

Dr. Bolte-Taylor completely recovered from her stroke and was able to share her insights, both personal and scientific. Not everyone who suffers a stroke is that lucky. 🍀

Apps Scene



Customer Feedback by Elegant Surveys
Android & iOS

This app is free to download but must be part of a service package that starts at \$29.99/month. The user can create and send out unlimited surveys that fit every kind of measurable feedback necessary to improve your business, products, or services. Collect customer information, customize forms, and run reports to help measure or manage all points of survey data.



Quick Tap Survey Offline
Android & iOS

Download this app to create surveys on any tablet or phone, online or offline. This app is part of a service from Quick Tap Survey that starts at \$16.99/month. Use it to create POS surveys, kiosk surveys, and any other device-interaction-type questionnaire to get customer feedback on any part of your service or sale.



Simple Customer Feedback
Android, Free

This app is exactly what the name states: simple. Your customers simply tap on one of three faces to represent their feedback: a smiley face, a straight face, or a frowning face. You can customize the faces to a small extent, such as changing the color. Export your results to analyze as a report. When you create a survey, simply export the XML file and add it anywhere you need it.

TO EMOJI OR NOT TO EMOJI

If that is the question, at work the answer is “no” most of the time. In this current digital atmosphere, when people express themselves in pictures, it might be confusing as to when to be “like everyone else” and use emojis in texts and emails, and when not to. There are a few circumstances when you can choose a tiny pictorial expression of your thoughts in the workplace.

Marketing materials that use text or mobile themes as part of the messaging or content can be suitable uses of an emoji or two. Design is its own category of communication that can break norms or social standards as necessary. If the message needs an emoji, use an emoji.

Friendly exchanges between coworkers can be an acceptable place for an emoji if there is an informal rapport established between the people involved. This assumes there is an email or text-message exchange just between coworkers that will not be forwarded on to customers in the future.

If a customer sends you an emoji, you might be wondering if it is OK

to use emojis in your response. It depends on the circumstance. If the customer is angry and has sent an emoji to match his mood, it is best to not respond with any emoji. If you have an informal relationship with that customer, and they send you a nice or even benign note with an emoji, then it is OK to respond with the same emoji, or no emoji if you're discussing work-related business.

In the end, it is best to keep emojis out of professional communications between coworkers or with customers. When there is a question, it is a safe bet to exclude those cute, crazy, and sometimes misunderstood images. 🚫



Books in Review



Never Split the Difference: Negotiating as if Your Life Depended on It

by Chris Voss with Tahl Raz

Don't we all want to get better deals or get larger paydays for our work? Former FBI negotiator Chris Voss has turned decades of dealing with kidnapers, terrorists, and bank robbers into a foolproof process for negotiating anything. It doesn't matter if you are working on the biggest contract deal of your life or trying to get a lower cable bill, Voss wants you to see them all as chances to use his negotiating formula.

Never Split the Difference reads like a thriller. Voss takes us inside some of the most crucial and sometimes the craziest standoffs with the criminal minds of kidnapers. He walks through the history of FBI negotiation techniques, what worked and what didn't, and how his techniques in this book were vetted by some of the finest business schools in the country.

Voss outlines a few very specific techniques. He teaches by example, and it really does take the entire read to “see” his techniques come to life. 🎯



If you can hear the smooth-flowing song "Summertime" waft through your brain after reading the title of this piece, you can probably already feel the warm winds blowing past you, taste the iced tea, and feel the relaxation.

SUMMERTIME: THE LIVING IS EASY

If your business does not already have adjusted hours for the summer, and you're not in a summer-intensive industry, consider the benefits of making adjustments to let employees take advantage of the summer sun.

Studies have shown that companies who allow employees to adjust their hours for special periods of time see higher productivity, a boost in sales, and better morale overall.

Try doing what PBS member station Prairie Public does in the summer. They allow their employees to adjust their time Monday through Thursday to be able to leave at noon on Friday and still have all 40 hours on the clock.

By allowing employees to choose how they get their 40 hours in, they feel a freedom in creating their own schedule, and that leads to better time management, more focus on achieving their weekly goals, and a feeling of happiness that doesn't otherwise come from "sticking to a schedule." There is a psychological trick that adjusted hours plays in the brain. Even though they are not working fewer hours, the brain tells them they have less time to get everything in. Therefore they are "forced" to work more efficiently.

Tricks of the mind or not, making the most of summer brings smiles to employees' faces. 🕒



MAKE THAT **IMPRESSION**

Make sure your marketing materials support the impressive connections you make with customers!



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