

A sunset over a pier with silhouettes of people. The sky is a mix of dark blue, orange, and yellow. The pier is in the foreground, with a railing and a light pole. People are silhouetted against the bright sky.

9 Critical Strategies

GROW YOUR BUSINESS TODAY

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HOW TO DOUBLE YOUR BUSINESS

9 Critical Strategies For Business Growth!



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Grow Your Business in 2020 - 9 Critical Strategies Exposed

In this article we're going to talk about 9 critical areas of your life and business you should be focusing on this year. By focusing on these specific areas, you will help your business grow by leaps and bounds.

Some are hard. Some are easy.

Some require you to make changes... and others require you to think and analyze what you've already done.

But, to find success, you need to TAKE ACTION.

Take action and you'll see your business and your life GROW in ways you never imagined!

But before we start, I want to point out a big change.

In 2020 we're going to start sharing more business related ideas on our blog. Not just focusing on Marketing in general, or Text marketing in particular...

We're going to get into some bigger topics that will help you grow and expand and improve your business... and your life.

So hold on, Today's article is going to challenge you a bit.

What if I promised to DOUBLE your business in 2020... all while working less and enjoying life more?

If I promised to double your business in 2020, would you believe me... would you even listen to me?

What if I promised to double your business... AND showed you how to do it with fewer hours and LESS stress?



Would you listen closely?

You should... and here's why.

I own a number of businesses doing more than a million dollars a year in revenue. AND they're all profitable and growing. And, best of all, I have a LIFE. I'm not chained to my desk 24/7.

I don't say this to brag... I say this so you know I'm the real deal. I want you to keep reading... listen to what I have to say... and implement the ideas I give you.

Think about it this way... you wouldn't trust a surgeon to cut you open if he didn't have EXPERIENCE and a MEDICAL DEGREE!

So, why would you get business advice from internet fakers?

If you want honest advice, look to real people who run real businesses.

I'm here to share my experience and knowledge... and I hope it helps you. If it does, shoot me an email at brian@betwext.com... I'd love to hear about your experiences!

Back to the task at hand.

As I look out on 2020, I know I need to keep improving... and so do you!

There are areas in each of my businesses that are struggling. There are areas we could do things better - much better. Plus, there are things we should STOP doing too, because they are a waste of time.

I'm always looking to improve... because that's real life.

Any business owner who claims they have the perfect business is a liar.

Organizing your business and making it operate efficiently is like nailing Jello to the wall... it's just not possible. Every time you think you have something locked down... the business changes.

Sometimes the change is for the good... sometimes it's for the bad.

But today we're starting FRESH for 2020. As I look at 2020 I see 9 big areas Business owners of all stripes need to focus on.

Here are the 9 areas I'm going to focus on... and you - as a business owner - should focus on them too:

- 1) Focus on PROFITS
- 2) Give your Customers special attention
- 3) Strive to be a great leader
- 4) Spend lots of time on marketing
- 5) Document your business... it could save you.
- 6) Inspire your employees
- 7) With Success comes money... Now invest it the right way
- 8) Realize Work/Life balance is a JOKE, and
- 9) Always be thinking of the future

I know what you're thinking... This is a ton of work.

You're absolutely right. Business isn't easy. But if you do the work, you will be rewarded!

So, let's jump in...

FIRST - Focus on Profits

Let me ask you a question... **Why are you in business?**

Don't be shy - you can say it... MONEY!

Right?

The reason 100% of people start a business is to make money.

Just to be clear, if you start a business for any other reason - that's a charity. A noble thing... but a charity and a business are very different animals.

Businesses EXIST to make money for their owners. Pure and simple.

And this year I want you to focus on PROFITS first.



As I like to say, the stuff you spend at the grocery store. Big sales numbers are nice, lots of employees are great... but at the end of the day you need to focus on PROFITS.

So carve out time to do that today.

But that's not all...

Show Some LOVE to Your Customers

I know that in today's "Automated" world, interacting with customers one on one is a problem.

In the software world, we're told to build products that don't require you to ever communicate with the user.

This is why getting support is such a pain.

Many businesses see the customer support department as a money pit.

They think that every minute you spend talking to a client, customer, or user is wasted money.

I'm here to tell you that's just wrong.

Give your customers some attention. Show them some love.

Don't be afraid to call and talk to them. Ask them honest questions... I know you'll learn something crazy.. and it will help improve your business.

Do it today!

Focusing on the numbers and on your customers is great, but as a business owner you need to step up and be a leader.

And that's my next suggestion...

Strive to Be a Great Leader

Leaders are MADE, not born.

The history books are filled with examples of leaders who showed up at critical times in history. But I think the harder part is being a leader day in and day out.

Being a leader in business has many facets...

- Sometimes It's making a tough decision that no one will ever cheer.
- Sometimes it's about being approachable and helpful to employees.
- Frequently leaders are asked to be a strong visionary.

You can read books about being a leader... and I suggest you do!

You can study great leaders in history... and I suggest you do!

But here's the big secret to being a leader - you'll never stop learning. Being a leader means being flexible in a world that's constantly changing. You'll need to try new things, and constantly be stretching the boundaries.

This is a skill you'll need to work hard at... and it's a skill with huge rewards!

While you're buying those leadership books on Amazon... toss in a few about marketing too... because that's my next suggestion.

Spend a TON of Time On Marketing

When I look at small businesses, the number one area in need of work is MARKETING.

Hands down sales and marketing is the most important part of a business... but it often gets thought of the least.

When times are tough, marketing gets cut.

When times are good, marketing gets ignored.

If you really want to see your business grow in 2020, PLAN TO SPEND A TON OF TIME ON MARKETING.

Look at every piece of your marketing puzzle.

Tear it apart. Make it better. Change it up. Then Change it again.

Challenge the status quo... do something CRAZY...

Your business will be the better for it!

Oh, and for god's sake, start using text message marketing in your business. (Betwext.com is the best... yes, I'm biased!) Trust me, you'll see massive changes in your business by just deploying a few marketing tests with text marketing.

While you'll spend a ton of time working on your marketing, here's something that should only take a day or two.

DOCUMENT your Business Process.

Please, if you do nothing else I suggest, do this.

If you have a business you depend on... or if you have employees... Document your business.

Simply answer this question: "Who does What, When, Why, and HOW?"

Just jot this down and it will save your ass one day.

In a future article, I'm going to tell you a story about a business that was SAVED... 10 jobs were saved... because they insisted that everyone DOCUMENT their job.

More on that later, but It's a huge lesson... Trust me... do it. This is a project that could SAVE your business one day.

While documenting things isn't fun, this next suggestion could be!

Work to Inspire your Employees

I don't care if you're the only employee in the business... Or, if you have 500 people working for you.

Being inspiring will take your business to the next level.

How do you inspire people?

That's the age old question.

- How did Ghingis Khan inspire his warriors?
- How did Alexander the Great inspire his men?
- How did Churchill inspire a nation during World War II?
- How did Steve Jobs inspire at Apple?
- How does Gary Vaynerchuck inspire a generation of entrepreneurs?

The answer isn't easy - but just realizing you need to focus on it is an important first step!

Next is one of my FAVORITE TOPICS...

MONEY - Invest it the RIGHT Way.

I've had the fortune to meet many rich and "very rich" people.

I've had dinner with billionaires! Surprisingly, they're just like you and me.

Better still, I consider many millionaires to be my friends.

Let me share a little secret... Earning money can be a struggle... but if you invest it the right way, it will make your life really easy!

I've got an article in the works... I'm going to share my method of investing those big bucks you earn.

Someday you're going to cash a six figure check... or if you're good, it will be for millions. What you do next, will have a major impact on your life as you know it.

My article... is going to discuss how to invest for safety, big returns, and to make your life EASY... (Doesn't that sound nice!)

Stay tuned for that one.

There's two more areas I want to highlight, and this next one is going to raise some eyebrows. Here we go...

Realize the IDEA of Work/Life Balance is a JOKE.

Controversial, right?

I don't care how many business coaches and internet gurus you listen to or read... anyone who pushes the Work/Life balance hasn't really lived.

I'm going to go out on a limb and say this...

PASSION is unbalanced.

Passion in anything is unbalanced.

If you're passionate about something, anything... balance goes right out the window. You can be passionate about your family, friends, a significant other, business, a hobby... You can be passionate about anything.

And answer me this... if you're passionate about something, where is your focus? ON THAT THING...

See, there is no balance.

Accept it... and I'll show you how to use this knowledge to be even more successful in business and in life!

Finally, the ninth and final area you need to focus on to take your business to the next level in 2020...

Always be Thinking of the Future.

This is one big thing that separates us from the animals on the earth. Our ability to think not only a few minutes or days or weeks ahead... but the ability to think Months... even years at a time.

Now tell me, when was the last time you sat down and thought about your life 5 years from now?

I mean honestly thought about it.

- What did you see in your mind's eye?
- What did you focus on?
- What did you feel?

In business we're pulled into the day to day nuances. But great leaders and successful business owners schedule time to think long term.

They block out the day to day noise and focus on the future. Try it, it's not easy...

That's how they plan, and grow, and reach levels of success many will only dream of.

So there you have it...

Your Next Step to Grow Your Business in 2020.

We've covered 9 different areas every business owner needs to focus on. I teased you about some of these topics.

I've given you a glimpse at what you should think about and focus on.

But, don't worry. This isn't the end of the story.

I've got a series of articles in the works to unpack and examine each and every one of these topics in detail.

I'm going to be publishing them on the blog over the next few weeks and months.

Now you're probably wondering why I'm going to all this effort?

Why am I willing to spend my time and share with anyone these ideas... It's because I'm greedy. I know it. And, I'm not afraid to say it.

[I want to see my business - Betwext.com succeed.](#)

I want to see Betwext.com become the number one text marketing platform for businesses throughout the United States.

Here's my thinking...

If I share my views and experience... If I share the lessons I've learned in the business world over my career... I know it will help a few business owners.

I hope those business owners share their experience with their friends and other business owners... AND I hope they share their experience... and so on, and so on.

I'm hoping these articles appeal to business owners of all types.

I'm hoping these articles will help you!

Eventually, you'll hear stories about how text marketing is changing businesses right now... and you'll wonder: [Could text message marketing work for my business?](#)

(Here's a hint: It can and It will!)

Then you'll read more about Betwext.com... and some of you will sign up for Betwext.com... and then my business will grow.

I plan to be greedy by giving first!

So, if you're a business owner... read what I have to say. Make some changes in your business and in your life. [Then click over to Betwext.com and start using text marketing.](#)

Before long, you'll be sending me a thank you note!

Focus on Profits... To Grow Your Business in 2020

I'm going to break some eggs with this article...

If you want to grow your business, you need to **FOCUS FIRST ON PROFITS.**

Seriously.

Let me ask you a question... Why are you in business?

Why did you start your business, and why do you work hard to make it a success every single day?



Don't be shy - you can say it...

You can be honest with me... and yourself. **You started your business for MONEY!**

Right?

Deep down inside, you'll realize along with 100% of the other entrepreneurs out there... everyone starts a business with the hopes of making money! Everyone!

In all my years on this earth, I've never met a business owner who said to me... "You know, I hope my business makes me poor."

People have lots of reasons for starting a business, but at the heart of it, everyone starts a business to make money.

Just to be clear, if you start a business for any other reason - you've started a charity. That's a noble cause, but don't be confused. A charity, and a business, are very different animals.

Businesses EXIST to make money for their owners. Pure and simple.

Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

So, it makes sense... If your ultimate goal is to make money, you need to focus on business profits.

Remember, profits are what the owners of the business put in their pocket at the end of the day. So if you OWN your business, above all else, you must become and stay profitable.

The alternative is business death.

I don't know of a single business that survives long term without being profitable.

You can't help yourself, your family, your employees, society, and the world as a whole if you're losing money. You may have grand plans to change the world... make no mistake... **It all starts with profits.**

I know your next question... since profits are so important...

How do I Increase Profits?

That's a great question... and one every business owner wrestles with almost every day.

I only know of three ways to increase profits.

- First, you can increase Revenue in your business.
- Second, you can reduce costs in your business.
- Third, you can spend less time in your business.

I know that the third one is a bit of a mind warp... but stick with me and we'll get to it in a moment.

Let's unpack each of these in a bit more detail.

4 Ways to Increase Revenue

If your focus is on increasing revenue, there are only four ways to do that.

- 1) You can bring in more customers.
- 2) You can sell them more stuff.
- 3) You can sell them more frequently.
- 4) Or, you can monetize them in other ways.

I know what you're thinking: "*Great... How do I do that!*"

Well, let's look at each one.

More Customers

If you want more customers... that means more marketing and sales efforts. Right off the bat, I'd focus on marketing.

Answer some of these questions:

Am I getting the most leads for my marketing spend?

Maybe you can increase marketing in some areas, or spend more money on marketing that's working particularly well. Maybe you need to fish with different bait - in other words change up your marketing message.

Have you tried a new offer, or tried new marketing avenues? **If email isn't working have you tried Text Message Marketing (Betwext.com is the best)?** What about good old fashioned phone calls?

I know businesses that are going back to direct mail - yes sending marketing messages through the US postal service!

Another thing to look at is how you screen and qualify customers.

Let's say you focus on improving the quality of leads your sales people talk to... you'll immediately increase the number of deals your sales people do... that means more revenue... no other change needed.

Crazy right?

But that's not all... maybe you should focus on the commission structure for your sales people... might that drive more business.

Here's another radical way to build revenue... change your pricing.

I know of one business that started off with a single product... it only cost \$3 a month. The idea was they'd build the business on volume.

When new owners came in, the first thing they did was raise prices to \$7 then \$9.99... a few months later, they raised prices again... this time to \$19.99... then \$24.95... Crazy right!

What changed with the product... nothing significant.

They simply started charging more for it, and a very strange thing happened... they started attracting a different quality of customer... new customers paid more, and used the system more.

What they discovered was by charging more they found a new, better customer!

But that's not all. By raising prices, many of the high demand customers went away. Customer service volumes dropped... and customer complaints fell!

Crazy right!

So if you haven't tried raising prices yet... give it a go. (You can always cut prices later!)

What else?

Sell more stuff

This is a no-brainer that many business owners overlook.

I know a supplement company that did this, and they saw their revenues jump significantly.

They offered a bottle of product for \$39.95. It was a great value for what they sold... but they wanted to grow.

So they did something crazy...

They offered three bottles for \$113.85. If you do the math, that's a \$2 discount per bottle... but their customer was now spending 185% more on every order.

Want to hear the funny part... the three-pack now outsells the individual bottles by two to one. But that's not all.

Their shipping costs are nearly identical for a three pack as a one pack... saving them over \$5 per order... almost 83% the cost of the discount!

Not only did they skyrocket revenue... but they increased overall profits too!



But, don't start thinking this is only good on products.

It works on services and software and every other type of business.

The other day we had our carpets cleaned... and the guy walked up to me and said, "You know, for an extra \$50 I'll steam clean your couches too."

With three big dogs in the house, how fast do you think we took him up on that offer.

He was already there... and aside from a few minutes of extra time and a minimal amount of product, he increased his revenue.

Ok, you get it... but I want to give one more example.

Look at the online software business. These SAAS companies (Software as a Service) are masters at upsell pricing. For a few dollars more you can get some additional services, support, advanced features... the options are endless.

That's where the Bronze, Silver and Gold packages come from.

You'll discover something interesting... most customers will pick the middle package. They don't want to cheap out... but they also don't want to splurge for the most expensive one... so that mid-tier package will be selected more frequently - increasing your revenue!

One SAAS company I work with added a new feature... well... it's a stretch to call what they added a feature. They decided to offer a startup package for new customers.

When a new customer signs up, for an additional fee of \$99, they can have customer support get the software set up and ready to go.

The funny part, their customer service agents were already doing this for many customers.

Now they have a new upsell to boost revenue... and customers love it!

A lot of people call this process upsells, downsells, cross sells... or packaging. Regardless of what you call it, the most famous example: *"Do you want fries with that?"*

Don't ignore the power of this idea... it's literally worth billions.

Here's a few more ways to build up revenue...

Sell more frequently

This is a great one for businesses like restaurants. It's also perfect for businesses selling products that get used up.

The famed Italian coffee company Illy Increases revenue in a dead simple way...

Illy contacts customers a few weeks after delivery... They time the message to arrive JUST BEFORE the customer uses up the last of their coffee.

The text is simple... it just says they are probably low on coffee and asks if they want to reorder.

If the customer responds with "Yes" the company processes the request. Can you believe 6% of customers who get the text message reorder?

It doesn't seem like much but if Illy is able to increase reorder rates by 6% that could translate into MILLIONS of dollars of increased revenue!

It's not just coffee... I've seen this with Wine too.

We were in Napa sampling some great wines... and we had a few bottles shipped home.

You know what happened next. A few weeks later I get a phone call about a special release of wine. Then the Spring release... Then a few weeks later a call about the summer rose!

This was followed by a call about the fall release... and of course we got a beautiful postcard about deadlines to order for Holiday gift giving.

The only thing they missed was calling a few weeks before my birthday to see if I wanted to buy more wine then too!

You get the point.

The final method to increasing revenue is one I've never heard talked about...

Generate Revenue in Other Ways

If you sell your customers something you have created some valuable data. Did you know you can generate revenue from that?

Here's a secret.

Many magazines make money in a crazy way... they sell the contact information of their subscribers.

Think about it... if you publish a magazine about travel... who else would love to sell you stuff. Airlines, Hotels, travel agencies, Cruise lines, Travel insurance companies, Luggage companies, the list goes on and on.

So, they sell your information to other businesses... and generate revenue... at virtually zero cost.

They're not the only ones.

You know those frequent shopper cards and apps the grocery stores offer you? I bet they sell that data to consumer products companies.

Credit card companies too.

Oh, and don't forget the banks!

They all have learned how to generate revenue from your data. And you don't even know it!

If you have data in your business... analyze it. Study it. It may have value to someone else... and they might be willing to pay you a big hunk of cash for it!

Ok, this is getting long... we went deep on building up your revenue... but that's not the only way to increase profits... you can...

Reduce Costs In Many Ways.

Now this is a huge area of opportunity.

There are entire books on this subject... So I'm going to try and keep this short with a few real world ideas.

When I get involved in a new business, the first thing I do is look at their credit card statements... and their bank statements. All I'm looking at is the expenses... the money flowing out of the accounts.

Then I ask myself WHY?

Why is this expense needed... Is there a cheaper alternative... Or a better way?

In the software business I'm always finding monthly fees that rack up thousands of dollars a year. \$19 here, and \$39 there... every single month... often for software we no longer need or use.

Also don't be afraid to challenge your employees.

I know one business where the IT guy casually mentioned they'd probably save some money by moving to amazon servers.

I talked to the business owner a few months later - they didn't just save money - they cut their server bill by half - and improved service and uptime. This turned out to be a savings of over \$10,000 a year!

TEN friggin grand!

Don't forget to give your employee a bonus for saving you money like that!

How else can you save money?

Have a big contract with a service provider - look to renegotiate. Order products from a manufacturer, ask about volume discounts. Selling a physical product? Change up your packaging. Don't forget to look at shipping costs.

As a business owner you also have an advantage...

Tax deductible expenses can be huge. I'm not a tax guy, so find a good one and talk to him often... but deducting things like travel, and vehicles, and retirement packages... Those should all be great ways to cut your tax bill.

Before we move onto the next topic, I want to share with you one BIG way to cut your costs... and this is controversial.

Ready...

Fire Your Customers.

Yep - you read that right. Fire your customers. Look for customers that are a pain in the ass. The ones who call into customer service and bitch for hours on end. Those customers that complain every time prices go up by a nickel, or expect a major credit when something goes wrong.

Here at Betwext, we deploy this very strategy.

One day I was working beside our customer support rep and they received a very disturbing call.

It was from a client who had a string of endless complaints.

They were upset about almost everything. They wanted us to build them special features, and change how our system operated.

They complained about our billing cycle and how we processed payment (which is very clearly explained).

When this customer realized we were not going to just modify our world for them... they started swearing at our customer service rep. Shockingly, my customer service rep kept his cool.

But I was mad as hell.

I immediately jumped on the phone and told this customer in no uncertain terms he was no longer our customer.

We refunded him every penny he spent with us... and banned him for life.

It was only after this interaction I learned this wasn't the first time we'd had a problem. Looking back I discovered we'd fielded dozens of support tickets over email... and spent hours of support time on the phone trying to help this ONE CUSTOMER.

And to boot, this wasn't the first time he'd verbally abused our staff.

Immediately we implemented a zero tolerance for jerks.

Then something funny happened... morale improved in customer support. *No big shock.*

But then, we purged a few more bad actors, and our customer service workload eased up... we responded to questions and problems more quickly and discovered our support team was more efficient.

That meant they could help out on other tasks - like marketing!

When we purged the jerks, we freed up a huge amount of resources... and improved service for everyone else.



This is a long story to say don't be afraid to prune customers who are overly demanding or under appreciative of you and your products and services. In the end it will make you a better company... and make you more profitable.

Alright we've covered a lot.

We've focused on improving profits by increasing revenue... and the 4 ways to do that.

Plus we discussed cutting costs. I gave you a simple method for finding those hidden expenses... plus a few ideas on how to reduce expenses overall... including asking employees for help, and not being afraid to prune bad customers.

This leaves us with the third and final way to increase profit...

Spend LESS Time Working on your Business.

How does this increase profits?

Let's wrap our heads around a big idea... **money is the same thing as time.**

I'm a big believer in this fact... MONEY is the same as TIME.

For example, you don't want to mow your lawn... so you pay someone to do it for you. You trade 2 hours of work, for a fist full of dollars.

I have house cleaners for the same reason...

This is also how I think about profits from my business. Remember I own multiple businesses. Some take more time than others to run.

So let me ask you... which business is more profitable for me... Business A that sends me \$1,000 a month... but I have to work 20 hours a week. OR Business B that sends me \$1,000 a month, but the hardest work I do is cashing the check.

Technically, both businesses give me the same profits.

But in reality, one business is much more profitable than the other.

So, let's apply this to your business. One of the best ways to improve your profits is to get someone else to do all the work.

Don't think you can do it... I call B.S.

Do you know who Christopher Kempczinski is? He's the CEO of McDonalds. Do you think he knows how to make a hamburger... you bet he does. But how often do you see him man the grill at McDonalds?

Let me give you a hint - Unless it's a photo op - NEVER.

The CEO of McDonalds could man the grill, but there's a reason he doesn't... it's because his talents are better served elsewhere.

As a business owner, no matter how hard it seems, you need to act the same way. No you might not be able to get out from under all the work right away... but **you need to work yourself out of a job.**

The best way to grow your profits exponentially, is to not do the day to day work on your business.

This is the holy grail of business ownership... and something every business owner should be striving for.

Ok, I've blathered on long enough...



Why you NEED to Focus on Profits

Today we spent a bunch of time talking about profits... and why profits should be the number one focus of every business owner.

We talked about the three ways to increase your profits...

- Growing revenue,
- Cutting costs, and
- Eliminating your time in the business.

I tossed out some crazy ideas like:

- Uncovering new revenue opportunities with data
- Why firing a customer can be a good thing, and,
- How the same profit from different businesses can have different values.

All that's left is for you to spend some time with your business, and look to see how you can increase your profit levels. Remember every penny of profit you save is another penny in your own pocket!

I hope you found today's article very helpful.

If you implemented a strategy here to grow your profits... shoot me an email (brian@betwext.com) and let me know. I'd love to hear from other business owners about how they improved their business.

And remember... if you want to try text message marketing... look no further than Betwext.com. Like the example I used above, just sending a message or two at the right time could significantly increase your revenue... with very little work.

[To learn more about Betwext.com... and how it can help your business, click here.](#)

Up next... all about the numbers!

Don't be STUPID - Know Your Numbers...

My last chapter went a bit long... we talked a lot about the importance of Profits for a business owner.

But that brought up a lot of questions.

As people went wading through their finances, focusing on growing revenue... or cutting costs... the question came up over and over again...

What Numbers Should I be Following?

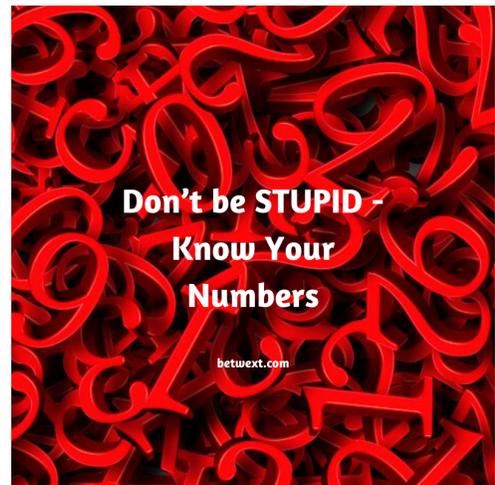
It's said the great business management guru - Peter Drucker - uttered the phrase...

"That which gets Measured gets Managed."

It's a great quote, but Drucker never said it.

And there's a bigger problem... you can measure almost anything... that doesn't mean you should. Measuring the wrong things can be a bad waste of time. Still worse, if you have the wrong data, you'll make bad business decisions.

In software, many companies produce a "Dashboard" to give a user vital statistics... we're guilty of having that feature here at Betwext.com. ([Remember, we make great texting software!](#))



But the problem is, many of these dashboards measure the wrong data.

Or worse, they measure too much data.

Facebook should be put on trial for the amount of useless data they provide. If you've got a Facebook ad account, just look at your campaign overview page... you'll see more than a dozen datasets you can look at... and each data set has dozens of data points.

It's enough to drive a marketer crazy.

But I understand why they do it.

Facebook has (as of my last round of research) some 7 million advertisers on the platform. And each one of those businesses are different - so they need to look at different data.

But it creates a problem...

What's Critical for a Business to Measure?

Sorry, I can't just give you a list of things to track.

This is where you need to step up and use your brain and figure out what's most important for you and your business.

I will however give you some help.

I want you to think of your financial numbers like the branch of a tree.

The trunk of the tree holds the big numbers - financial numbers. Revenue, Cost, Profit, Assets, Liabilities, CASH. You know big ones!

Then you have numerous branches... one for marketing and sales... one for production and manufacturing... one for customer service... one for shipping... and so on.

Then each branch will have little twigs where the data sets become very specific. For example, in marketing it might be page views, or site visits. For production it may be equipment downtime or machine throughput. Shipping might measure time to ship, or on time delivery, or shipping damage, or returns.

You see how each and every business is different... and the data sets you should follow are very different.

Here's a real world example.

In the Cabinet Company... we measure shop efficiency. We look at things like the number of shop hours spent for a project verses our original project estimates. It's critical we know those numbers... because it tells us if we are under bidding projects.

But for the financial publishing company, we don't have a shop! So, those shop numbers mean nothing. With the publishing business, the most important things for us to track include email delivery, open and click rates...

In this example email stats are tracked by the Cabinet company marketing team... but they have nowhere near the focus as at the publishing company.

Here's What I'm Planning to Track...

The funny thing is, I'm about to launch a new business in the telecom space. It's a business focused on delivering low cost phone, voicemail, and texting services to small businesses and entrepreneurs.

And I've been trying to figure out what we should be tracking.

This is what I've come up with so far...

- Cash
- Revenue
- Expenses
- Profit

That gives me a good overview of the entire business. And by the way, I'll look at cash balances almost daily... along with daily sales numbers. But the others, like expenses and profit... those will get measured monthly.

FYI - every business I work with does financial numbers monthly... and if you don't... start doing that right now.

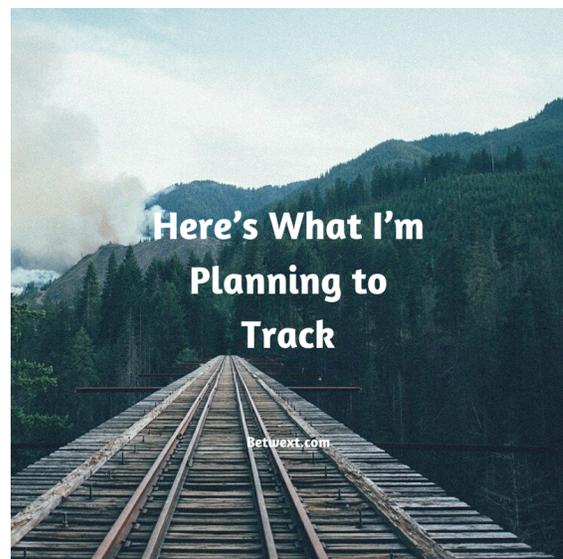
Often I discover when businesses are in trouble the owners are ignoring their financial statements.

Here's a not so funny story. I rescued one business from the brink of bankruptcy... literally with hours to spare. It turns out the owner was 3 years behind on his business taxes... and hadn't done a financial statement in almost 26 months.

His numbers were not good... and not doing them didn't help the situation.

Needless to say, that was the worst business partnership I ever got involved in... and I regret it to this day. But that's another story for another time...

Now that I have my big picture reporting, I'm going to focus on marketing.



Tracking Marketing

Now, don't go crazy.

Like I said just above, with Facebook, and any other advertising platform, the data you can suck out is shocking.

But I'm going to focus on a handful of things.

First, we're running two types of ads...

One ad redirects people right to an "order now" page.

The second ad directs people to an educational piece of content. Which then has a call to action to buy at the bottom of the page.

Here's a critical piece of information... Our order page has two steps. First you create an account, then you drop in your credit card information.

Finally, both pages will have the option to drop an email or phone number to get a demo. ([Believe it or not. I'm going to use Betwext.com to text people their requested info!](#))

So what am I going to track?

- 1) Total ad spend in dollars.
- 2) Number of accounts created
- 3) Number of paid customers who signed up
- 4) Number of demonstrations requested.

That's it.

You'll see each of these data sets provides some interesting numbers... and we'll use these numbers to manage the business.

But ultimately I'm focusing on one number... My CAC.

My CAC is my Customer Acquisition Cost.

CAC is calculated by taking the number of PAID accounts and dividing it by the total ad spend.

So, If I spend \$1,000 marketing this product, and we get 25 Paid customers... $1,000 / 25 = \$40$ per paid customer.

Now I have a number I can track over time. Changes I make to the advertising efforts will either make this number better or worse.

Now before you say anything I know there are loops in the data... for example, we have a follow-up sequence for prospects that create an account but have not yet dropped a credit card. It's a series of emails, texts, and personal calls.

Of course we'll track that data too to see what's working and what's not... and eventually cut the stuff that does not work. When we dial that in, it will improve the CAC.

We'll also follow-up with prospects that requested system demos.

Our sales team will track the number of Demo requests we get, and what the conversion rate is to paying customers. That's it... number of requests and number of sales. This activity will improve CAC too.

If those numbers are good enough, we might change our advertising to go right to a demo request. **See how I'm going to use the data to manage the business?**

I'll probably look at that data on a weekly basis... maybe daily if we're testing new marketing material.

Here's an important note... your data is going to be unique. So the timeframes you choose will be important. For example, our product pricing should encourage customers to sign up within a few days of seeing our product.

This is not a multi-million dollar product with a long sales cycle.

If it was, I'd change not only WHAT i'm measuring but how frequently I monitor the numbers... I'd look to change measurements to monthly or quarterly...

Do you see how you can get bogged down in data?

You need to be careful what information you track and focus on.

For example, if I had a staff of 10 sales people, I'd track sales by salesperson, lead source, response time, connection rate, and conversion rate... just to name a few.

Now that we have a customer... we have new things to track...

Tracking Customer Support

Since we're just starting out, we're planning on having a customer support team member reach out to every customer and make sure they get onto the system as smoothly as possible.

Why track this?

So we can make changes to the signup process... and discover where people are getting bogged down.

Here it's less about tracking numbers, more about tracking questions, comments and problems.

Over time, we'll also get a feel for our customer service demands... how often do people reach out to us... and what types of support we need to staff. We're going to start lean and add people only as needed!

Now that we have customers, we're going to monitor them in batches and see what important metrics we can learn.

For example we're going to start calculating an important metric... your LTV.

What's an LTV?

It's a customer lifetime value. In other words, what will the average customer spend with you over their lifetime.

Why is LTV important?

Another great question. You can use LTV to help get an idea of what to spend on getting new customers. But you want to use it carefully... I'll explain more in a moment.

Remember the CAC above... that's your cost of acquiring a new customer?

You want to make sure your CAC is BELOW your LTV... WAY BELOW...

You can also use the LTV to separate customers into high value and low value buckets... and also identify the best customers ahead of time! *That's great in theory, but in practice it's a bit more difficult.*

Here's my plan...

I'm going to take the first 25 customers that sign up and that will be my data group. (Some people call it a cohort, but for some reason I don't like that word... "group" is good enough for me, Mr. PHD.)

Anyway, I'm going to look at these 25 customers and measure a few things.

First I'm going to look at their average monthly revenue. On average what do these customers spend with me every month. I don't have numbers yet, but let's just estimate that the average customer is spending \$14.99 a month.

Second, I'm going to look at how long they have an account open and active. Again, I don't have data, but let's assume they stay using the system for 14 months. That might be really high or really low... but we'll find out over time.

How to Calculate LTV

Now we do some math. If 25 customers average spending \$14.99 a month and they use the system for 14 months... their lifetime value is ($LTV = \$14.99 \times 14$) or \$209.86... let's just round up and say \$210.

Remember, this is an average... so some customers will spend more - much more... and some will spend less... much less.

Theoretically, you can use these numbers to calculate your advertising spend... and some marketing Guru will say now you can spend up to \$210 to get a customer!

Wrong, wrong, wrong... I say dial that back buckaroo.

Yea, a LTV gives you some interesting numbers to work with... but they also present two big problems... First, they don't take into account cash flow or expenses... and, Second LTVs change over time.

Let's look at the first part of this problem... pretend you sell stuffed teddy bears over the internet. You determine that your customer has an LTV of \$125... great... but if you rush out and ramp up your marketing to \$125 a customer you're going to quickly realize two things.

First you'll run out of cash and second there won't be any profit left!

If your customer's LTV is \$125 and you spend all of it on marketing... how do you pay for the cost of the product... or shipping... or customer support... **Where do your profits come from?**

On top of that, you're going to run out of money very quickly.

Remember, the \$125 is the lifetime of the customer... they might spend that amount over two or three, or more years! If you spend \$125 to get a customer... and their first purchase is only \$25... you're now \$100 in the hole, and waiting for those next purchases to get back to even.

That's a recipe to run out of cash very quickly!

The Other Problem With LTV

The other problem with LTV is it changes over time.

Remember, I said I'm going to use my first 25 customers to do the initial calculation... well, a year later, you might use a group of 200 customers to calculate LTV... and you'll get very different numbers.

At this point you might have other product offerings. Maybe you added in an upsell to increase customer spending. You might have made the system easier to use to lower customer turnover.

So pretend that a year later you now have an average customer spend of \$23.45 a month... and the average customer stays for 18 months. Your LTV has changed...

Now your customer LTV is \$422.10.

Be careful when using customer LTV numbers... they are changing all the time, and can vary with changes in pricing, billing cycle, product offerings, changes in features. You'll be surprised at what impacts your LTV.

Because it changes, I'll look at LTV a few times a year.

Just remember this... **Use LTV with extreme caution when managing your business.**

So where are we...

We're monitoring Cash, and Revenue daily, we're watching expenses and profit too. We're also going to make a point of tracking CAC... and we'll use a rough estimate of LTV to keep us honest.

What do we Track Next?

Honestly, nothing.

Looking at Revenue, expenses, profit, cash, CAC and LTV is enough for us to get started.

Could we track other things... Sure... but why?

If LTV is low, I'll look at pricing and features... and how much customers use the product. If CAC is high, I know I need to spend more time dialing in the marketing.

Cash will tell me if I should speed up or slow down my marketing... or grow or shrink the business. Finally, revenue, expenses, and profit will give me the 20,000 foot view of the business as a whole.

That's how I plan to manage this new business...

I hope this explanation helps you too. Like I said, each business is different. If you have a shop or manufacturing facility, you'll develop a set of metrics to track efficiency there. If you have a shipping department, you'll want to track different metrics in that group.

Remember - overall, less is more.

Here's a personal piece of advice, if you look at a number and it moves up or down... you should be answering this simple question - Is it good or bad, and what do I need to change?

If you look at a number in your business and you can't answer why moving it higher or lower is a good thing... maybe you shouldn't be tracking that number. The same thing can be said for numbers that you have no idea how to influence.

Let me give you an example... Video View Time.

This is simply a measure of how much of your marketing video people watch.

Many marketing people say this is a critical metric. The reasoning... The longer people view your videos the better it is. A long video view time means your videos are useful and engaging.

Low view times means bad videos that need to be improved.

However, in my opinion, this is a useless metric.

The goal of the video is for people to click through to my website and eventually sign up for my product or a demo.

At the end of the day I don't care how long people watch my marketing videos... What I care about is if they click through and sign up!

Making people watch more of your video is a vanity metric. I'd rather all my videos have 1 second view times and 100% click through rates (Not possible, but one can dream)!

Now of course, if my signup rates are low, I'll look to improve the video... but I'm improving it NOT to get people to watch more... I'm improving it because I want more signups!

See what I mean... be careful of metrics that on the surface look important... but at the end of the day really don't help you run your business.

Your Turn to Take ACTION...

I know it's shocking, but I've run out of things to write about.

It's your turn.

Take a few moments and look at your business. What metrics do you need to be tracking?

What areas of the business can you improve by making changes... now start tracking and changing things... Just remember... Every change needs to get you closer to the goal of bigger profits!

Don't forget that.

Alright, I'm sure I missed something... if you're using some other tracking metrics, please let me know. I'd love to hear from you and learn what you're tracking in your business... and why.

Just email me at brian@betwext.com

One final note... [To learn more about Betwext.com... and how it can help your business, click here.](#)

Customer Secrets: Do This NOW to Double your Business...

In our last article we spent a ton of time going over numbers... What numbers to study and watch... what numbers might lead you astray... and I even gave you examples of the numbers I'm watching for a business I'm involved in.

While watching the numbers is important... It's hard to squeeze bigger profits from numbers.

Numbers will show you what areas to change and test... and if your changes are good or bad... but you'll be hard pressed to double your business just looking at numbers.

I believe if you want to double your business this year... you need to pay more attention to your customers.

Yep, it's that simple.

Just pay more attention to your customers.

Mic Drop.

Wait, wait, wait... Here's the problem... paying attention to your customers isn't easy... it brings up all sorts of questions.

- What do you focus on, and why?
- How do you focus on customers?
- What questions do you ask?
- When do you talk to them... how often?
- What if you have thousands of customers... Who do you talk to?
- What if... gulp... your customers don't want your attention?

Today, I'm going to jump into each and every one of those topics... and much much more.

However, a warning... I'm only going to focus on the very top of this very big iceberg... I'm only going to focus on a handful of things you can be doing.



You'll need to decide which ideas to follow - and which not to. You'll need to decide if there are other ways of reaching out to your customer that are better. You can do it... it's not hard... you just need to think.

So, let's jump in...

It's Time To Show Your Customers Some Love...

I made a huge claim just a few moments ago... **I said if you want to double your business, you just need to pay attention to your customers!**

Before we go any further, I'm going to prove that to you right now.

Every week I try to talk to a handful of customers... sometimes it's our VIPs, sometimes it's old customers who have been with us for years... sometimes it's brand new signups... and sometimes I talk with customers who are cancelling their service.

Sometimes I spend time talking with prospects who are thinking about signing up!

Crazy right - technically they aren't even customers.

Why the heck would I spend so much time talking with these customers?

One word: **KNOWLEDGE**

Every time I get on the phone and speak with a customer, I learn something new. Sometimes I share great ideas, others I just educate, sometimes I'm solving problems...

But the knowledge I gain is HUGE.

So how does this "DOUBLE MY BUSINESS"???

Here's some real world examples...

One customer I spoke with expressed frustration at how the system worked... they were about to cancel their service. I showed them a cool feature that did what they wanted in half the steps... and we made a customer happy - and kept them from cancelling.

We also quickly shot a "How To" video - to educate other customers who might have the same problem!

How much revenue was saved with that move?

Another day, I spoke with a prospect who had some really complex questions about our technology. They wanted to use our texting service to drive customers back to their website... I jumped on the phone and we figured out how to accomplish their needs.

They're now a VIP level customer and spending thousands a month with us... all from a phone call.

What's that worth to a business... an hour long call results in a high value customer...

I'd do those calls all day.

I've done calls where clients have pointed out bugs in the system... We quickly got those fixed.

I've been on calls where clients have requested new features... and when it made sense, we quickly built those out.

On some of our customer calls, we end up getting testimonials, case studies, or ideas for blog content!

All of these interactions can help build your business... make your products better... and uncover great marketing ideas.

But the biggest benefit of jumping on calls with clients... the best way to increase your business... it's the referrals.

I can't even count how many times I jumped on a call with a customer... and a few days later I discovered they referred us to a client.

What's the ROI on that phone call?

Here's the funny thing... sometimes referrals become a daisy chain effect.

What's that?

I did an onboarding call with a client and he casually mentioned if the system worked, his business partner might be interested too. A week later, his business partner signed up and started using the system... two weeks later the business partner referred us to a friend of his, who eventually referred us another friend!

It was incredible... One client led to three more... 2 of those customers ended up purchasing our premium package!

That's how you can DOUBLE your business.

Alright, enough bragging about our great customer calls... Honestly, there's actually more to it than that.

Let's start at the beginning.

How to Develop Great Customer Relationships.

Unfortunately great customer relationships don't happen overnight... and they're not based on any ONE thing.

There is no magic word, or email, or gift you can use to connect with a customer... It's the entire experience combined.

It starts with your advertising and marketing.

How is that possible?

Think about your personal experiences... Have you ever joined an email list for information, then suddenly received 20 email messages in a row... or worse phone calls?

A few years ago I made the mistake of signing up to get information about solar power for my home.

I filled out a few online forms, and I got some great information.

We were remodeling the house, so it was the perfect time to look into Solar.

BIG MISTAKE on my part.

The phone calls and emails started... I quickly opted out of the emails... but I kept getting phone call after phone call. In the span of 2 years I got dozens and dozens and dozens of calls.

Every time it was a different company. Every time I asked them to put me on their do not contact list... but the calls continued.



Clearly, the companies I signed up with were selling my data, over and over again... *and worse still the companies buying my phone number didn't care.*

If you can believe it - 40 months later - I'm STILL getting these phone calls. (And the remodel is long over with!)

Do you think I'll ever have a good relationship with a solar company? **Of course not.**

The deck is stacked against them, and I've never even bought their product.

So, start with your marketing.

If you're selling a physical product, make sure you live up to your hype! Don't over promise, or make crazy claims to get the sale.

I'm a believer in educating your prospects... send them information or news... or something useful.

Also send it in ways that can be consumed easily. Remember everyone is different. use a combination of email, phone calls, direct mail, video, and even text messages. ([Remember Betwext.com is the best Text Marketing system out there!](#))

But be respectful of your prospects and customers. Give them information they need, and important reminders, but leave the "Sleazy Car Salesmanship" tactics behind you.

There is one thing that you can do right now, and it will improve your relationship with your prospects... **CLEAN YOUR LIST.**

At the publishing company we clean the marketing list every 90 days. If someone hasn't opened an email, or engaged with our content in some way, we put them through a re-engagement sequence.

The re-engagement sequence offers them more information, reports, and special offers. If they don't engage at that point, *we stop emailing them regular content.*

I don't want to pester people... and neither should you.

Focus your efforts on prospects who want to hear from you!

Here's a takeaway tip... **Some customers take longer than others to buy.**

Thanks Captain Obvious!

Here's what I mean, You might have one group that picks up the credit card and buys just moments after finding your business.

Some businesses who sell high ticket products might need to design weeks or months of follow-up.

When you bought your house, you didn't just pick the first one you looked at... nope, you spent days and weeks looking at houses, studying neighborhoods, checking out the commute, researching schools for the kids.

You didn't buy right away, you were in the "education phase".

No doubt your realtor worked with you and educated you... and that's why they got the commission check when the deal closed.

So, make sure your marketing efforts match the sales cycle.

Ok, enough about marketing what about...

Getting Case Studies... the Easy Way!

Every business loves testimonials and case studies. **Testimonials and case studies are marketing GOLD.**

Every business HATES trying to get them.

Here's two quick tips to make your life easier...

- 1) Ask for testimonials the day someone buys your product, and
- 2) Don't be afraid to offer compensation for case studies.

Alright, I know that goes counter to everything you've ever thought. Maybe your head is exploding right now, just keep reading.

Here's what I know...

First, people are never more excited about a product than the moment they buy it. Customers are on a buyers high. And you want them to stay in that state as long as possible.

This is the time to strike...

As soon as someone buys your product, ask them for a testimonial... ask them why they bought the product... ask them what it's going to help them do.

Think about it... in January, thousands of people set a new years resolution to lose weight. Then, they rush out and buy diet books, a treadmill, and those special weight loss supplements.

They expect these products to change their life!

The buyers see themselves getting up every morning for a quick jog on the treadmill. Then they're going to eat a low carb / low fat / keto / atkins / south beach diet... They imagine showing up for their high school reunion looking skinny and sexy.

They think, "This product is going to help me lose 40 pounds... and change my life."

Unfortunately, we all know, reality is very different.

Very few people follow through.

If you sell treadmills, you need to get the testimonials while people are still in the BUYING MOOD. Get them to talk about what they want to accomplish... what the product will do for them.

If you wait, the pool of customers who follow-through on the dream will be much, much smaller... and testimonials and case studies will be harder to come by.

Sometimes, you can't get testimonials right after someone buys... that's ok.

Build into your sales process regular "Asks" for testimonials and case studies.

Two more quick examples...

At Betwext.com ([The best system for text marketing - BTW!](#)) We have an onboarding process.

As soon as a new customer signs up, we walk them through setup, and have customer support reach out and actually TALK to new customers.

They get the basics all set, like lists, and keywords, and auto responders... and make sure their systems settings are optimized.

Guess what we do then... we ask for a testimonial.

The client just had a great experience getting the system set up... and often we get great testimonials at that point.

At the cabinet company, we do things a bit different...

When a new cabinet package is installed, we coordinate with the homeowner to meet us onsite. We do the walk through, showing all the features, opening all the doors and drawers... and really show off their beautiful new cabinet package.

We also send a photographer along...

Very few homeowners object to being photographed in their new beautiful kitchen. And it's a great time to get testimonials.

We have a series of questions we ask about the process and how the installation went. And those questions elicit a great response.

Right now, we write down their answers and confirm their comments with an email follow-up later. That's also when we ask for permission to use the comments in our marketing.

In the future I'd love to have the photographer VIDEO the homeowners during the delivery and at the Q&A... it would be a great way to get more testimonials.

What About Case Studies?

Case studies are some of the most powerful proof elements you can use in marketing... they're also some of the hardest to get.

Here's how we do it at Betwext.com...

First we screen our list of users. We're focusing on either high volume, or high frequency super users of the system... OR longevity... someone who is using the system consistently week after week.

We pull a handful of those names, and Tiffany on our customer support team reaches out.

Her email is drop dead simple... this is what we say:

Case Study Email #1

Subject: About your free Betwext texting credits

Hi [Person's Name]

Can you help us?

We see you've been using Betwext.com for your text marketing recently. We'd love to do a quick 15 minute interview with you about the system... what's good, what's bad, and where we can improve.

And if you're willing we'd love to turn this interview into a case study for our blog. We'll of course provide you with links back to your website, \$20 in free texting credit, plus... we'll do all the work.

Might you have 15 minutes for a quick call Tuesday at 10 am, or might 11 am be better.

Thanks,
Tiffany

See what I mean... Simple.

We'll send out about a dozen emails like this and get 3 or 4 people who reply that they're willing to help. Tiffany schedules a time for the call... and then asks a series of simple questions to get the customer talking.

Here's a sample of some of the questions we ask:

- Tell me about your business?
- How are you using text marketing?
- Have you seen anyone use texting in a creative way?
- What kinds of messages do you send? How frequently?
- How did you find Betwext.com?
- What made you pick Betwext instead of a competitor?
- Have you used other texting services? How do we compare?
- What would you say to another business owner about Text marketing?
- Does it work, and would you recommend texting / Betwext?
- Can we use graphics from your website in the case study?

These questions are designed to get the customer talking about Betwext.com and how the system is used.

We're looking for honest feedback, and Tiffany takes extensive notes. I suppose we could start recording these phone interviews... but for now, simply taking notes is good enough.

After the call, Tiffany immediately writes up her notes into a blog post. She follows a rough format we've developed, so the actual writing process goes fast.

We then forward the post back to our customer asking them for changes, and edits, and for a link to add going to their website. After the draft is approved, we get email verification the case study is ok to use, and we publish it.

We try to do all the work...

Funny thing, often these case studies take months to complete.

Sometimes people miss calls, or it takes them weeks to turn around the draft. One customer took 3 months to send us final verification that everything was approved!

Like anything in life, being persistent is important!

Oh, as you no doubt noticed, we offered \$20 in texting credit for every case study we complete... we make sure to disclose that in the case study... and we've found some customers jump at the opportunity to make \$20 for a 15 minute phone call.

If you can't offer credit, try something else, a starbucks gift card, maybe a coffee mug, or a sticker. *Yes - I once did a customer survey for a sticker...*

Ok, now you have a few secrets to get case studies and testimonials.

Let's jump to the next stage of the customer cycle. If you sell a software product, or something that takes training, or setting up, I highly recommend you...

Design A Customer Onboarding Process

If you sell a physical product, or something that's consumed, you can skip to the next section... but if you sell software, or any product that has a complex setup process, you need onboarding.

I'll admit it... I fought onboarding for a long time.

My Initial thought was "Our system is so simple, we don't need onboarding."



Yep - I was wrong.

When we looked at the data, when we explored why customers left, we noticed something curious... Some of our customers never got past the setup stage.

They gave us a credit card, but never went any further. Many never sent a single message... cancelling their subscription a short time later.

When you combine that information with our interviews... We discovered something shocking.

NOBODY read our getting started guide.

I was crushed. I'd spent days working on that document. Adding screenshots, descriptions of how to set up the system, things to think about...

Yet, when we interviewed customers... not a single one used the guide. Not new people, not old people, not low volume senders, not high volume senders.

More than half didn't know the guide existed.

See how tracking the numbers, looking at the data, AND talking to customers gave us the knowledge to change our business?

Anyway, this is when we decided to add an onboarding process. Forget the setup guide... that went in the trash.

Now, we simply work with customers to get the basics of their system set up the right way... then give them a bit of direction, or ideas on how to best start text marketing.

It's a new process for us, so I don't have hard data on the direct business impact, but let me tell you, I know from listening to a few calls, our customers are happier than ever before.

One more quick story about onboarding.

I recently bought a new Truck.

I got the Ram 1500, with the V8 engine, the tow package, and I upgraded to the leather interior and the big 12 inch display.

It's a beautiful truck.

But you know what happened?

I filled out the paperwork, and when that was done, 20 minutes later, a very nice gentleman drove up with my (newly washed) truck. He parked it and handed me the keys.

I was grinning from ear to ear.

He told me to climb in. He then adjusted the seats and the mirrors for me. He showed me how to set the climate control system... *73 degrees please.*

Then we went through and set up my radio stations.

10 minutes later he pointed out the gas tank was full and showed me a few of the safety features. He explained all of the alerts, the "Truck monitoring" system for gas mileage, and oil changes...

He showed me how to use the back-up cam, and some tips on using the trailer towing package.

Funny thing, this guy showed me more of the features on the truck than the salesperson did. I had no ideas about a bunch of the stuff I just got!

I was blown away.

On the drive home, I called Linda to share my experience. Of course he'd synced by phone to the truck, so calling her was as simple as hitting a button.

That's onboarding at it's best.

How many people did I share this experience with over the next week? Dozens.

Here we are 2 months later, and I'm still smiling over the purchase of that truck. I've forgotten more than half of what this guy taught me... but I don't care, the truck is set up and ready for me to drive, and I didn't have to struggle with it or think about it!

If you're not using onboarding in your business... look to add it right now!

Other Reasons To Check in With Customers

I've seen the power of the personal touch...

And we're trying to implement that at Betwext.com. Starting this year, we're now giving our Customer support team (Jackie & Tiffany) some added responsibility.

- We're going to do customer outreach on a regular basis.

- We're going to check in with active clients more frequently, and share tips, tricks and ideas.
- We're going to educate and inform about new features, and design changes.
- We're going to share more real world examples with our customers to keep them engaged.

But that's not all...

We're going to try and save our customers money.

STOP THE PRESSES!

When was the last time your cable company or phone provider called up and said, "Let me save you some money!"

NEVER.

We'll It's something we're going to start doing this year. You see, for high volume users, upgrading to our premium packages will actually save customers money.

But sometimes our clients don't realize they're eligible for the savings.

Now, when we talk to someone about their account, one of our top talking points is to see if we can save them money or improve their service.

Is this an upsell/downsell... sure it is. But it's always going to be in the best interest of our customer.

Might that cut into our profits - you bet. But I'm hoping the goodwill we build will create better customer relationships, and encourage people to use our service MORE, and longer...

In the long run I think that will make us more money.

I know of one customer retention activity that really caught my eye.

It was by a company called thehoth.com.

A few years ago we used their services for SEO purposes. At the 6 month mark, a Fedex truck showed up with a box... addressed to me.

I started opening it... then I grabbed my camera and took pictures!

It was a swag box full of cool stuff. A stress ball, a pen, some hot sauce, a t-shirt, a coffee mug, a mouse pad.

It looked like thehoth.com had thrown-up all over my desk (In a good way!)

But that wasn't all..

In the box was a handwritten note from my client advisor... and then a few days later an email and a call.

Note: I'm impressed with their followup!

On the call, the advisor simply expressed his thanks, and asked what else they could help with. Needless to say, I fell for the goods, and eventually spent even more money with them.



Will bribes like this always work?

No - but that time... It did!

Before we move onto the next topic, I want to point out something important. Reaching out and connecting with customers won't do you any good if you have a crappy product or service.

I'd have never spent more money with theHoth.com if their services didn't deliver. Customers at Betwext.com won't upgrade if text marketing isn't working.

So, don't use swag and giveaways as a coverup for a problem product or service.

Why else might you reach out to customers...

Celebrate the Holidays with Customer Outreach

I personally think the holidays are a great time to reach out to customers. It's a season where people share their experiences, their traditions... and your follow-up can be something other than business.

But be careful, you can do damage too with your outreach.

Here's a story... Every year during the holidays, I get a holiday card from [Name deleted to protect the guilty!].

But he doesn't sign the card, it's not personalized, there's no note or anything in the card. As a matter of fact, the only reason I know it's from him is because of the return address on the envelope.

This is NOT good customer service.

This is just being lazy at life... it would be better (and cheaper) to send nothing at all.

Look, I don't need a 40 page mission statement, or the family letter that goes on for 3 pages about the most recent Doctors visit for a bunion... (You all know what I'm talking about)!

Just a simple note that says happy holidays, I'm thinking of you.

I know some of you are sitting back saying, this is crap. You think Christmas cards won't generate any additional business. Well, you're wrong and I can prove it.

I was speaking with a salesperson the other day about her marketing and sales efforts. Last Christmas she decided to send out small gifts to her top 40 clients (I think it was a bottle of wine). Nothing crazy expensive, like \$15 bucks.

Since there were only 40 people, she emailed and called each of her contacts to connect, and to verify their mailing address. No sense sending a gift to a bad address... right.

Well something strange happened.

A handful of people that were almost impossible to connect with, they responded immediately. And a few others, updated their mailing address, then casually mentioned they were planning on placing an order, but they just dropped the ball on reaching out.

The act of reaching out to verify a mailing address resulted in over \$23,000 in sales.

For those of you on the ROI side of analysis... 40 clients at \$15 = \$600 spent, plus a bit more for shipping. Her product has a profit margin of over 50%... so that's roughly a 1,916% return.

Not too shabby.

Ok, two more things about connecting with customers and then I'm done...

Customer Exit Interviews...

If you have the ability to speak with customers who are cancelling their service, or returning an item... or simply not ordering your product any more... Don't miss that chance.

These are very hard customer interviews to do... and you need to remember, you're not trying to save an order... you just want to know what went wrong.

If you get the opportunity for a call like this, don't waste it. Make sure you find out why they're leaving you, where they're going, and what they're replacing your product with.

This could be valuable information about your competition and changes in the business landscape.

OK, one last topic about Connecting with customers...

Do Stuff that Doesn't Scale

I know in the startup world, a lot of business gurus and consultants say you need to reach scale.

If you really want your business to grow, you've got to set it up to scale. You've got to operate as efficiently at 100 customers as you do 1,000 customers...

I agree 100%... BUT...

But sometimes you've got to do things that don't scale... like customer phone calls.

You can't possibly speak with every single customer... but if your business is that big, you should try to speak with a sampling of customers.

You should target high value customers and encourage 1 on 1 interaction from everyone on your team... It's these personal connections, and ideas, and information that will help you grow to become a bigger business that serves more and more customers.

And who knows, some of these ideas might help you double your business.

Oh, I forgot. One last... last... thing.

We use texting to communicate with many of our clients... and we get great responses. If you haven't tried connecting that way... give it a shot! [You'll be surprised how well texting with customers works.](#)

Up next... being a great leader!

Grow Your Business by Being a Great Leader

In the last article, we discussed customer outreach and what you can learn by listening to your customers comments and concerns.

We even discussed doing regular outreach, having an onboarding plan, and how to generate testimonials and case studies.

Some of these tactics and strategies and the knowledge you'll gain could significantly grow your business... and double the size of your business.

While engaging with customers can help grow your business... Leadership will help you grow your team.

I don't know a single business leader who's not struggling with leadership.

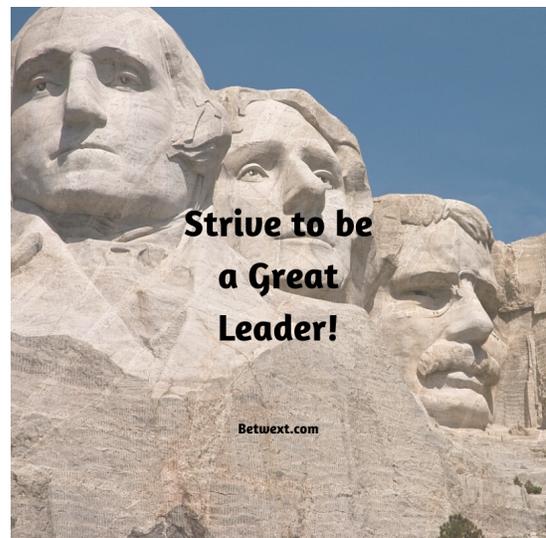
I know I have, and do every day. But I'm constantly learning and trying new things... and trying to be the best leader I can be.

I'm learning every single day. Are you?

Today, I'm going to share some ideas and unique experiences. But first...

What's a Good Leader?

Let's start with a simple question... What's a good leader?



Was Winston Churchill a good leader? What about Alexander the Great? What do you think about Steve Jobs, or Abraham Lincoln?

Each of these men had very different leadership styles. Each of them faced big problems, and came up with big solutions. Each of them is recognized differently by history.

They're all different... and they're all good leaders.

What makes a good leader... a good leader?

One leader I've looked up to my whole life is my father. He's had the biggest impact on me, and influenced me. (As it should be!)

My father has a very strong set of skills and for better or worse, he's the leader I compare all others.

My father is strong, confident, has a willingness to change, is kind and charitable, yet also provides tough love. He's one of the hardest working people I know, and he always has a vision for what needs to be done.

Is he the greatest leader of all time... probably not.

But he's been a damn good role model for me.

I've met with hundreds of business owners and they all exhibit some level of leadership. And I've noticed certain strengths in some, and weaknesses in others.

Over time, I've seen seven different leadership qualities that seem to reappear over and over again.

Here's what I observed... which of these are you strong, or weak in?

As a Business Owner and Leader you Need to...

There are seven qualities that I see in a leader, and I try to keep them in mind as I run my businesses. As a business owner and leader, you need to:

- 1) Be ruthless with your time.
- 2) Develop a bigger goal!
- 3) Create healthy rituals.
- 4) Embrace change.
- 5) Keep learning

- 6) Communicate constantly
- 7) Work harder than everyone.

Let's look at each of these individually.

Be Ruthless with Your Time.

This, above all else is critical for a leader to understand. Time vampires are everywhere.

Getting sucked into long pointless conversations that don't move the ball forward is not only a waste... it drains your enthusiasm.

It's hard to have excitement and energy when people are sucking up your time.

That's why I focus on setting my needs FIRST.

I know it sounds selfish, but if you don't accomplish a bare minimum of your objectives, you will never find success.

One thing that's critical for every owner - and it's often the most overlooked is the personal time.

Seriously, don't make the mistake I did... don't sacrifice your health for your business. Schedule mental down time... schedule time for exercise every day... get outdoors... get a massage... read a book for fun.

If you're not healthy, positive, and energized, your workers will see it!

Nothing is a blow to employee morale more than an exhausted, wiped out leader.

OK, you've focused on your needs (personal and business), what's next?

The next step is looking to see what I can do to keep my employees marching forward... maybe giving out new projects, or advising on current work strategies. Maybe you need to help them get "unstuck"... or just help them balance things.

After that comes everything else!

Here's another way to look at measuring time...

Full disclosure, this is not my idea... I read it somewhere, and I can't remember who wrote / said it.

When I work with business partners, I always share the idea of “10, 100, 1,000”.

Ten, one hundred, one thousand...

What's 10, 100, 1,000?

It's a way I look at what owners need to be focused on.

It's a way of looking at YOUR EMPLOYEES and making sure they're doing the right things.

Here it is in real life...

Cleaning the office and taking out the trash... YES as an owner, you can do it. BUT, is that the most valuable use of your time?

Of course not. You can hire someone for \$10 an hour to do that.

What about bookkeeping, or legal contract reviews... You can hire a professional for \$100 an hour (Give or take).

Is that worth it?

You bet it is!

The other option is spending days and weeks learning the nuances of Accounting & Law. This is why you have professionals work for you!

What's the \$1,000 an hour work?

- That's you deciding to launch a new product, or service.
- That's you cutting a big JV deal with another company.
- That's you creating a new sales funnel.
- That's you creating a special offer.

Your janitor can't cut big deals... your staff bookkeeper can't structure a marketing and sales funnel. Your assistant isn't going to bring a new product or service from inception to mainstream.

Those are JOBS only you can do... and that's what you need to spend your time doing.

Those are jobs that are worth \$1,000 or even \$10,000 an hour!

So when it comes to work... think about the 10, 100, 1,000 rule. Outsource the \$10 and \$100 an hour jobs... and you need to focus on the \$1,000 an hour jobs that can have a major impact on the business.

Oh, and don't forget to use this with your employees too.

You don't want your top salesperson pulling reports and worrying about office supplies or expense accounts... they need to be selling!

Going hand in hand with monitoring work loads is the idea of a bigger goal. As a leader you need to...

Develop a BIGGER Goal.

As a leader, you've got to have the future in mind. You need to paint a vision of the future. You need to set goals for people to reach.

Just showing up to work is not a big goal.

Try to establish something bigger than your business. Develop that reason WHY... and as you march down the path to reaching a bigger goal remember to celebrate the little wins!

At betwext, our bigger goal is to help other business owners grow and find success. When we hear of text marketing making a big impact on one of our customers, we celebrate those wins!

[\(Betwext is the best when it comes to text marketing... learn more here\)](#)

When a customer finds success, everyone in the company should be excited!

What's the bigger goal for your business? As a leader you need to decide that, and rally people around it...

But that's not all,

To be a great leader you need to create healthy rituals.

What do I mean by rituals?



Rituals are things you always do the same way to add stability to the day.

One of the bigger trends in entrepreneurship is setting up your morning rituals. It ensures your day starts off great.

For some that means getting up and drinking a bottle of water, doing exercise, then getting ready for the day.

For others, it's coffee with the wife and breakfast with the kids before going into the office.

For others, it's a long elaborate drawn out plan to get your morning going.

I realized I had set up an unintentional ritual every morning. I roll out of bed and the first thing I do is grab a cup of coffee. I love coffee, so no surprise there.

Most days I step out onto the patio, often before the sun rises... and watch Linda feed the horses... and I watch the dogs play in the yard.

I take a few moments to enjoy the day.

Then I watch about 20 minutes of the morning news, either local news, or the BBC... then I get ready for the day.

NO MATTER WHAT I'm sitting at my desk at 7am ready to start the work day.

This ritual has made my mornings the most productive ever. Often I accomplish before noon many of the projects I have scheduled.

That's just one example...

We've also created rituals inside the business.

Weekly rituals with how we do our updates. Monthly rituals where we go over numbers and KPIs. Semi-Annual celebrations where we get together to celebrate the good things we are accomplishing.

As a leader, you should be establishing rituals to add a sense of purpose and stability to the business.

There are thousands of rituals out there... regardless of what you pick, consistency is critical. The key, in my opinion, is working with something that fits your lifestyle style and business persona.

I've leaned heavily on rituals and goals, but all good leaders also...

Good Leaders Embrace Change.

Think of all the things that have changed in the last 10 years...

Heck, I remember speaking with my grandfather who reached the ripe old age of 99.

To hear him talk about his memories was crazy... that was before TV... before the internet... before phones... before many had electricity. He told a story of walking to the local pub for his father at 7 years old to get a bucket of beer. (*SAY WHAT!*)

In my own life, I've seen the rise of the internet. It's been a global game changer. I was lucky enough to see it from the beginning.

It's a wave that's changed my life.

As a leader, seeing change is important. But it's not just seeing change, it's making a change, and taking action.

Sometimes the changes are easy... other times they're very difficult.

For example, in one of my businesses, my partner and I realized the tide was changing. The industry was getting more crowded. The barriers to entry weren't as great. Costs were rising, and sales were falling.

Did we run and hide... nope.

We stopped what we were doing and took a day off. We redesigned the business from top to bottom... and then we took action. We rolled out changes over the next 2 months to change the company.

We fired people. We changed job titles. We closed an office. We outsourced workloads. We cut products. We launched new products.

Nowadays, they'd say we made a PIVOT with the business.

It was not easy. As a matter of fact, it was difficult. Employees were upset, even mad. People lost their jobs. Friends dropped out of our lives because of the changes we made.

But in the end the pivot was critical to our survival.

We accepted change... will you be able to?

As a leader, seeing change is often difficult... but if you're a leader it becomes easier if you're...

Constantly Learning.

I don't know a good leader who doesn't see learning as a key part of their job.

Learning is critical.

I love to learn new things, and I'm always reading books and studying how people did things.

It could be how Churchill led England through World War 2... or about new techniques for cooking omelets... or the latest tweak to make Facebook ads a success.

As a leader, you must be constantly learning about the inside operations of your business... and learning about the outside threats in the industry.

You need to be learning about your customers... and their changing needs. Plus you need to keep on top of business changes (like tax and law).

One of the biggest groups you'll want to inspire is your workers. Your employees...

And to inspire your need to communicate constantly!

You are not a good leader if you can't communicate!

I learned this very early in my career.

One of my first "official" jobs was as a marketing intern for a very big company.

I was shocked when one day the CEO of this large telecom company called a meeting. It was "Grill Bill". He stood on stage in front of hundreds of employees and they could ask him anything.

This was a crazy experience for me as a young intern.

I watched this CEO field tough, and not so tough questions about the business, their future, workers pay, promotions, layoffs... I was shocked how up front he was.

But what I remember most... was his employees respected him. The chatter in the lunch room was positive... even when he delivered bad news.

Not everyone agreed with what he said, but to my eyes, he was laying the cards on the table. The idea of a hidden agenda just didn't exist.

How do I deploy this idea in my own businesses?

Every Friday I do company wide calls.

On Fridays I do calls with everyone who works for me. It takes a long time... most of the day in fact. And every call is different. Some calls last 10 minutes... others take an hour. I jump on the call and I ask a few simple questions...

- What went right or wrong this week?
- What did you accomplish this week?
- What do I need to do to help you?

Those three questions really get the ball moving. Often times, our conversations take off in many different directions. Most of it is focused on work, but we also talk about life. I'll go from giving sales advice, or motivating someone... to sharing how I'd get the best deal on a car.

No, it's not always 100% business... and that's OK.

I want my employees to call me for anything... and so should you.

I want to be a cheerleader and supporter, and most of all I want to be a trusted advisor.

It takes a lot of work, but the payoff is huge.

This leads me to my final view of a good leader...

Good Leaders Work Harder than Everyone Else.

This is a shock to many business owners... the reality of the world is... **Employees will never care for a business as much as the owner does.**

You as the business owner should have the biggest burning passion for your business... and that's a light you need to share with your employees. Regardless of your passion...

You need to realize at 5 o'clock, many people check out.

They don't check email at 10pm. They won't jump on support calls on weekends. They won't spend extra time meeting with customers, and updating websites!

But good leaders do all those things... and much much more.

And the best one's don't complain either.

I know it sucks. But realize you are trading your employee money for time. They have very little incentive to work harder, or weekends. And what that means is simple... when you find an employee who is working harder than others - It's on you to reward them!

There you go. Seven keys to being a great leader. It's often I'm asked, where to find good leaders for an organization...

Where do you find good leaders?

When you hire new employees, you want leaders.

Fundamentally, I believe great leaders are MADE, not born... and as a business owner you need to show leadership skills each and every day.

You need to be strong and supportive, honest and passionate. You need to work hard and set a vision.

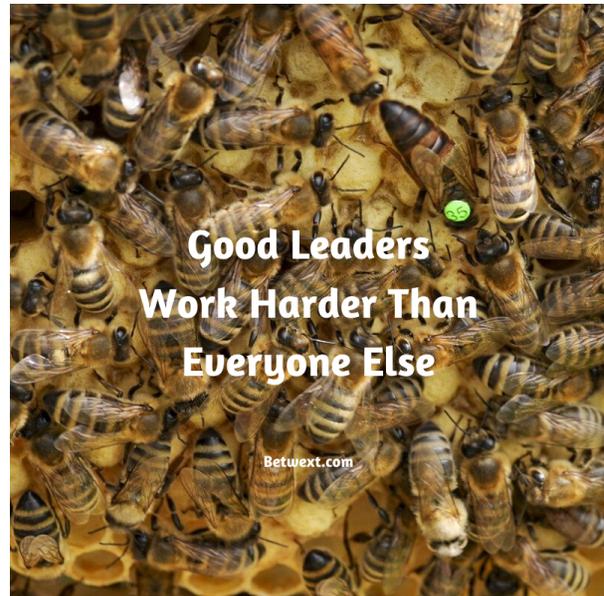
That's what makes a good leader.

And these are the same talents you should seek out in employees - especially in management positions.

One other thing... I'm always learning about leadership.

One of the best resources is biographies.

I'm always reading biographies of great men and women... Pick up those books and read! You'll learn things that will amaze you. Leaders are far from perfect... and we all have our strengths and weaknesses.



Learning about other leaders will make you a better leader.

What do you think?

What makes a great leader? Email me at brian@betwext.com and tell me your thoughts.

In the next article, we're going to cover lessons learned from text message marketing.

We're going to go deep, because marketing is a critical component of every business... and one that's often ignored.

[One final note... To learn more about Betwext.com... and how it can help your business grow, click here.](#)

Easily Double Your Business... Spend your time on Marketing!

In my last article, I talked about being a great leader. I hope you learned a ton. As a leader you often need to jump in and take the reins... and nowhere is that more true than in marketing.

When it comes to marketing, I believe one big thing:

Without Marketing and Sales, you don't have a Business.

It all starts with sales and marketing.

At the end of the day, you can have the world's greatest product or service, but if you don't have marketing to let the world know about your product... you're dead in the water.

Straight up, there are millions of websites sharing information about marketing.

There are millions of hours of podcasts talking about marketing. Facebook marketing, twitter marketing, email marketing, online marketing, offline marketing... it goes on and on.

I know a ton about marketing... but I don't call myself an expert. But, I do know what's working in my business. I also more importantly know what has NOT worked!

That's what I'm going to share with you today.

First, I'm going to share a few general lessons about marketing. **Then I'll dive into some specifics around text message marketing.**

So let's get going...

Small Business Advantages In Marketing

As a business owner, you have a major advantage in marketing.



You can change your marketing on a dime.

If you're running marketing for Coca Cola... it can take years to change messaging, content, ideas, and graphics!

As a small business owner, if your marketing isn't working on Friday, you can spend the weekend and re-create your message... rework your ads... make a new offer... create new content... design new graphics... and re-launch everything on monday.

And if that doesn't work, you can do it again.

This is a huge advantage many small business owners overlook!

It leads me to the first rule of successful marketing...

Constantly Test Your Marketing.

Always be looking for something better.

Be thinking about new ways to offer your product or service... What new deals can you create? What pricing changes can you make?

Always be looking for new reasons someone will buy.

Always be testing... testing... testing!

Once you find something that works, roll it out. If your Facebook ad is working, test the message on twitter and google.

Modify it to test on email campaigns and in banner ads. Test it on radio, TV, direct mail.

Just remember to test, test, and test some more.

Here's a great story about WHY you need to keep testing.



This happened a few years back. At the publishing company, I ran an ad and after a dozen or so variations, it started to really work.

I was getting newsletter signups for less than a \$1 a name.

Keep in mind, my target goal was \$4.

It was amazing... I kept ramping and ramping up my spending. At one point we were spending \$1,000 a day on Facebook ads. Crazy right!

Well, it didn't last.

The ad ran for a few months, and like an idiot I stopped testing. The Ad was working... Why test anything new? This one ad was killing it!

Well, you don't need to be a genius to know what happened next.

One day, Facebook woke up in a grumpy mood and decided my ad wasn't good. They banned my ad. I objected. I emailed. I called. No one at Facebook would tell me why the ad was banned, or what I was doing wrong...

Three weeks later I started testing again. (It was a big mistake to wait by the way)

Here was the problem... because I stopped testing other ads, I had no idea what to do next. I didn't have a backup ad.

I had to start from square one - all over again. And that was painful.

Finally, I got out of my funk and tweaked the original ad a bit. Then I hit the publish button.

I couldn't even get the ad to run.

Facebook banned that ad too.

And the next one I tested ran... **but my lead costs jumped by 1,900%**

The golden goose was roasted.

Don't make my mistake... always be testing your ads.

So, testing is rule number one. Rule number two is...

Plan Out Your Marketing Strategy

I meet with business owners all the time. And I'm shocked at how few spend any time focused on marketing.

Many haven't even spent 10 minutes on a marketing plan...

It makes me sick.

Remember marketing is the most important part of any business. This biggest mistake owners make is not making time for it... Often, it's passed over for much less important activities... like sweeping the floor or emptying the trash.

Seriously, if you haven't thought about your business marketing for 20 minutes this week, stop what you're doing right now and focus on marketing.

It's not hard.

Think about these three things:

- What is your offer?
- Why should they buy from you?
- What questions do customers have?

Why these three?

Because they will help you put together a great strategy to market your products. By the way, you should be able to answer these questions for each and every product you have.

Think about these three topics and use your ideas to come up with advertisements to market your product.

For example, if you sell a product that's more expensive, but of better quality... then you know what your marketing message needs to be... Quality over price.

Focus on your quality.

Answer questions by customers about your quality. Highlight your better quality, above average return / warranty offering. Make your product look different from your competition.

Some call this your Unique Selling Proposition... or USP.

Build your marketing around your USP... and turn this into a strategy.

Use this throughout your customers entire buying journey.

What do I mean by this?

If your selling point is quality... make sure your ads focus on quality. Your Website should focus on quality, your educational content should focus on quality. Your price should focus on quality... your packaging should focus on quality. Your follow-up should represent quality... your warranty should scream quality!

You get to craft the entire message... so make it consistent and impactful.

I'll give you a real world example in a moment.

Just realize, having a strategy isn't enough.

Once the strategy is outlined, you need to put it in place... take action and do it!

Then we get to Marketing Rule #3...

Expand Your Marketing Strategy

Once you find a marketing strategy that works, why would you expand it?

Because just ONE of anything is dangerous.

If you're running Facebook ads... run some ads in Google, and Twitter, and learn to buy banner ads too.

If you communicate with people over email mix it up. Call them, use text messages, use physical mail.

If you have an ad that offers a free report, offer a checklist, a how to video, offer a free sample... expand what you offer!

If you promote yourself with blog articles, start making videos, and do podcasts. Expand your marketing.



The reason?

If you rely too heavily on one advertising platform, they can shut you down, or disappear at any time. You don't want to show up one day and learn your entire business has been destroyed because Facebook cancelled your ads!

Speaking of ads... this brings us to marketing rule #4...

Educate, Don't Sell...

This marketing rule took me a long time to learn.

Just realize, nobody likes to be sold.

Imagine stepping onto a used car lot. Do you want to talk to the salesman? Of course not! Nobody does.

Pushy sales people are hated the world over.

So, when you look at your own marketing don't be pushy.

Work hard to educate your customers and prospects.

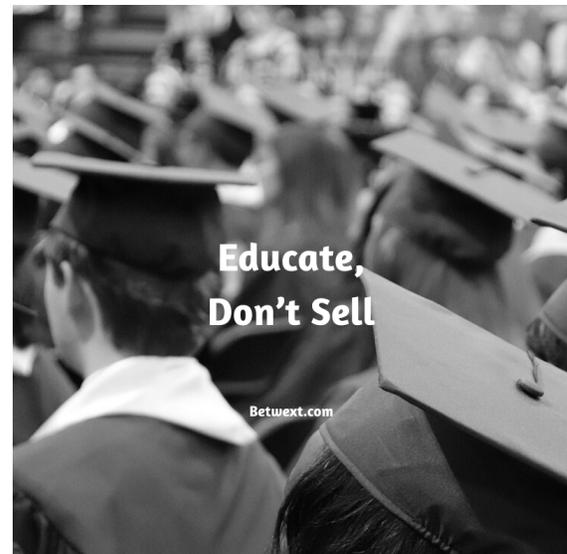
Teach people about your features and benefits. Share examples and ideas. Use case studies to show what results they might get!

Keep positive, and get people excited about your product.

So, what's next?

We've covered the 4 keys to successful marketing... Now I want to pick one small part of marketing and really drill down on it.

What are we going to discuss text marketing of course....



Text Marketing for Your Business.

As an owner of Betwext.com I'm 100% biased, but I think texting is a critical part of very marketing strategy.

The sad part is, text marketing is often overlooked by many marketing teams.

Why do I love text marketing?

Because text marketing is not only easy, it's very effective.

Consider this... Text messages are read 90% of the time. Email gets read 10%... maybe 20% of the time.

Social media gets seen even less... by some measures as little as 1% to 3%!

At the end of the day, texting is my favorite way to connect and communicate.

[\(I'm biased, but I think Betwext.com is the best text messaging platform for businesses... Learn more here...\)](#)

Maybe you're already using texting in your business... or you're brand new to text marketing. Either way, here's a handful of best practices for you to focus on.

First, make sure you gather names and contact info in the right way.

I see so many businesses that don't know the rules about text marketing... They just text anyone... at any time. It's going to bite them in the ass.

Here's the number one thing to remember... ONLY text people who have given you permission to text them... it's that simple. And keep a record of who gave you permission (it's the law).

Don't buy a list. Don't use a list that's not yours. And, never text someone who hasn't asked for your messaging.

Follow those simple rules and you'll be just fine.

Second, once you get people on your list, SEGMENT!

Remember, everyone is different... so you don't want to send the same message to everyone.

You want to segment your messages and segment the people on your list.

For example, you probably have very different messages to send to customers and prospects. And I can guarantee you want different messages for your VIPs too.

Don't forget, you can segment your employees too.

I know one business who sends their employees regular messages about operating the business.... And the results have never been better!

So, segment, segment, segment.

Another best practice...

Be consistent with your messages.

Plan to send regular messages to people on your list. The reason is simple, you don't want them to forget who you are!

Now, there's a fine line here... you don't want to annoy your prospects and customers either.

A good rule of thumb I like to use is weekly messages. Send a message once a week... maybe more, maybe less depending on your business.

But don't just send any message...

Best practice number four...

Don't send crap messages.

This is a big pet peeve of mine... please, please, please don't send horrible messages.

Your text messages need to have a purpose... they need to be educational, informational, or entertaining.

This isn't Twitter!

Only send a message when you have something good to say.

So, how do you make sure you have great messages...

Five, have a strategy for your text marketing.

Before you start sending text messages, you need to set up a strategy.

Remember, you want to educate, inform, and entertain.

That means sharing different types of content. One day share a video, another day share a blog post. Share a great offer, or an inspirational quote. Share things that will resonate with your subscribers.

If you're running a restaurant, send coupons, deals, opening times, specials... maybe have a secret menu item only texting people know about!

If you're selling software... link to how-to videos, or articles about the topic at hand... or your own blog posts (because you only produce great content there... right!).

Six, always identify yourself and use a call to action in text messages.

These are easy to follow - but a ton of people forget the basics.

First identify yourself in every message.

Every Message!

I get so many messages every day, it's easy to lose track of who said what. And I'm not alone. Make sure you identify yourself in every message.

The other thing you should do is include a call to action (CTA) in every text message.

What's a call to action?

It's you calling out what you want the person to do next.

Examples include: Click here to keep reading, Download this now, Watch this great video and Click here!

There are dozens more... just remember you need to include an action that you want the reader to take.

One more thing...

Always give people a way to unsubscribe from your list.

Remind people they can text "Stop to End". In every message... you should include that little phrase.

It's like the unsubscribe button on email... stop to end unsubscribes people from your texting list. So, don't forget to include it.

Here's the seventh and final best practice for text message marketing...

Always follow-up with other types of messaging.

This is so easy, I can't believe people forget.

Text message marketing is great. But it's not meant to replace all of your other marketing channels.

When you text people, follow-up with an email too. Maybe pick up the phone and do outbound calls to your VIPs. Send physical mail. Keep up your social media marketing efforts...

DON'T BE SHY, and for goodness sake, don't send just one text message and expect the world to beat a path to your business door!

Ok, that was a lightning fast rundown of how best to use text marketing.

I know I went fast.

[If you want more... go to our website... www.betewxt.com we have an ultimate guide to text message marketing... It's an ebook - 48 pages - of examples and ideas of how to use texting for every business.](http://www.betewxt.com)

Just remember, Marketing is **CRITICAL** in business, and it needs to get a big chunk of your focus and time.

What's up next?

In our next article we're going to discuss, documenting your business. While it's not sexy, and it won't make you a millionaire, it might save your business from destruction.

Document Your Business... it Could Save you from Bankruptcy.

In the last article we went a bit deep on marketing. I shared 4 different marketing strategies that every business owner should be focused on. Then I drilled down on text message marketing specifically... and I gave out 7 best practices to use with your text message marketing efforts.

Today, I want to talk about a very boring topic... Documentation.

Wait, wait, don't go.

I'm going to show you how this simple step can mean FEWER Hours in the office. (As much as 20% fewer hours!)

Seriously!

Look, Documentation is boring. Nobody talks about it... but there are two reasons I think it's critical to growing your business.

First - proper business documentation can literally save your business from bankruptcy.

Second - Documenting your business will enable you to work at least 20% less!

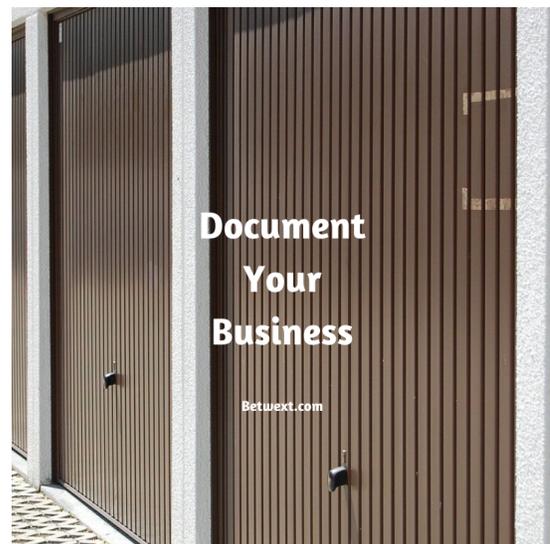
How's that for a promise?

Ok, hold on to your hats... Here we go...

Why You MUST Document Your Business

Let's start with a true story...

One day I got a phone call... It could have spelled the end of my business. What had happened was shocking.



A key employee of mine - she handled ALL the billing process for the company - was in the Intensive Care Unit of the hospital. A drunk driver had fallen asleep at the wheel, crossed over the freeway median, and hit her car head on.

It was a freak accident you hear about on the news, but never expect to experience.

Not only was I worried about my friend, my employee, I was also worried about my business.

We were rapidly growing... and had just added 2 new people to the staff... 10 people looked to me for their livelihood.

Now the one person who handled all of our revenue processing was in the ICU... in a coma.

Without payments being properly processed, we were suddenly at risk of running out of cash... It's every business owner's nightmare.

Luckily, the month before the accident, we'd made an effort to document our entire business. To be honest, we never thought we'd need the documentation for these reasons.

We'd asked everyone to document their business process so we could cross train staff, and make it easier to hire more people.

The unexpected benefit... we had the process documented for something catastrophic.

Within 48 hours of the accident, we'd moved people internally to cover the missing employee. Staff stepped up and took on extra work to cover the hole.

What made it possible was the 40 pages of detailed process steps (with screenshots) so anyone could step in and process payments.

A few things happened very quickly... We brought on an additional staff member to help those taking on extra work.

We immediately made "Process Sheets" and their regular update a mission critical focus of our business.

Finally, we started looking at key members of our team in very different ways... from additional bonuses and better pay, to top of the line health insurance.

At the end of the day, this horrible situation ended up roses and sunshine.

My employee left the ICU after 3 months, and a few months later, was, as she put it... "Back to 99%!"

Better still, we started documenting every part of our business, and it gave us a huge benefit that we didn't expect.

Unintended Benefits to Business Process Documentation

First, let me say this...

I honestly believe without these process sheets, my business was days away from serious trouble.

10 years ago, the complex process of processing payments would have taken weeks for us to document from scratch. The cash flow impact would have dropped like a lead balloon on our head.

So, the first obvious benefit of having our business process documented is comfort. Being able to sleep better at night, knowing it's all documented.

The Second benefit... training and new employees.

Another benefit of having your business process documented is training employees, cross training employees... and onboarding new employees.

It's so much easier to teach an employee how to do something, when it's documented... I don't care if they've been with you for 3 days or 3 years, having documentation makes everyone's life easier.

Many times training people now involves sharing the appropriate "How-to" videos and letting employees learn at their own pace. Most employees, I've found, use the videos as a reference resource!

The third benefit is for owners.

I personally discovered that many employees get upset about creating these "process sheets" or how to videos. The excuses run from... "creating process sheets take too long"... to "are you going to use this to replace me?" Fear is very powerful.

So, I stepped up and told everyone, I was going to document everything I did too.

This helped eliminate the complainers and those fearful for their jobs. I guess knowing the boss was doing this too gave them some comfort?

Better still, I actually sat down and documented everything I did on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

I documented how I check ad runs daily... how I test new ads weekly... how I close out my finances monthly... how I put together numbers quarterly... how I review metrics and goals quarterly... and how every 6 months we do a full marketing revamp. I also outlined my regular follow-up with employees.

This was the crazy thing...

As I documented some of the work I was doing... Like posting blog content, or preparing emails to send... I realized I wasn't adding value. I could outsource those processes to other people.

That's exactly what I did... I outsourced a whole bunch of stuff.

I used the very process documents I put together... and immediately cut my workload by at least 20%... if not more!

Look, I know it sounds crazy... but document your business... and see what you can outsource. I guarantee it will make your job 20% easier!

Now I know what you're thinking...

What should I Document... and HOW?

Let's start with the easiest question first...

How to document things.

Here's what I do... I plug in my head set, and record the screen and voice over what I'm doing.

Yep - that's it.

One take, mistakes and all. I save the file and name it something obvious like "How to do whatever."

Then I save it to a folder we have on our shared drive for training videos.

No scripting, no editing, no second takes. I simply say what I'm doing and why, and I make sure I record the whole process step by step.

See simple.

Now the bigger question... What should you document?

One word: EVERYTHING.

The more you document the better off you'll be.

Document things like Advertising... Sales processes... Customer follow-up... onboarding... Retention processes... Billing. Monthly settle up... Software upgrades... Answer every question you can think of... How to publish stuff on the website... How to hire people... How to use your shared drives, how to send emails...

EVERYTHING.

Yes it's that simple... document everything you can. After that, I'm going to give you one more task...

Document Now... and Work Less Later

Here's your final task with documentation...

Once you finish a video, I want you to ask yourself a question... are you the best person to be doing that process?

This simple question will help you work less.

After you're done answering that question for yourself... do something even more crazy... ask that question about each and every one of your employees.

For example, my head salesperson did a training video on how to pull advertising statistics for clients.

It took 30 minutes to pull that data and put it into a spreadsheet. The process wasn't hard... but it took time... and it had to be done several times a week.

I quickly realized my best sales person was spending several hours a week just pulling numbers. **Not an ideal situation.**

The training video was quickly passed to an intern who now does the heavy lifting of getting results into a spreadsheet... and my salesperson just found 4 extra hours a week to sell!

Here's one more thought... When a process is documented, ask yourself WHY you're doing this work? Do you really need to do that process? Could it be handled in an easier way?

One more example.

In my software business, when a customer cancels their service, we have a checklist of things that need to be done. The customer needs to be removed from our internal marketing lists, the account needs to be re-coded for access and archiving data... and a bunch of other stuff.

Right now, our support team has to push those buttons and make those updates.

But they really shouldn't be doing this backend processing... Support needs to be on the phone and on email helping customers.

So, we're working with the IT team to change our technology... so that the entire process can be handled by software. Eliminating work for our employees.

This feeds into an Idea that I share with all of my business partners... **The idea of working yourself out of a job.**

Yep - this is the goal of every astute business owner I know.

You want to pass off everything possible to other people. Once you've done that, you get to sit back and collect a paycheck for doing almost nothing.

If you want to double your business... here's one crazy way... make the same amount of money, **but work half as hard**. You doubled your business in that situation too!

How's it possible to work less?

Document everything... then find other people to do it!

I told you I'm full of crazy ideas.

What's up next?

Documentation will take some time... Start today and do it little by little. Before long, you'll have tons of documentation made, and you'll start finding areas you can cut back on!

Just remember, when it comes to making your life easy - that's what we're all about here at Betwext. [Cut back on your overly complicated email marketing and start deploying text message marketing.](#)

Fewer messages, better responses... that's what you'll see with Betwext.com.

In our next article we're going to discuss the best ways to inspire your employees!

How to Inspire Your Employees.

In the last article we talked all about documenting your business. I told you about a business's near death experience... and how documentation could save you from bankruptcy... and how it can help you work less too.

We even talked about the best and easiest way to do the documentation - so it's as painless as possible.

Documenting your business is one thing... getting employees to follow the documentation is something else entirely.

To get the best possible performance from your employees I think leaders need to be inspirational.

No - I'm not talking Tony Robbins style, jumping around and yelling inspiration. I mean a solid leadership role, one that instills confidence and respect... and inspires others to work towards a bigger goal.

Make no mistake about it... You - as the leader of your organization - need to INSPIRE your employees.

It's not easy.

But today, I'm going to share some ideas on how you can inspire others.

What Drives Inspiration?

In my mind there are 4 things that make leaders inspirational...

- Communication
- Company Culture
- Employee Support, and
- Employee Freedom

Maybe I'm right... maybe I'm wrong... but as I look at the people who work for me, and I look back at when I was an employee, this is what stands out.



Let's touch on each one of these quickly.

Communication

The worst thing a leader can do is disappear or go dark.

As a leader you need to be seen and heard. And you can't disappear - especially when times get tough, or there's a problem.

That's why communication is so critical.

You need to communicate a number of things to your team... you need to share with them goals and objectives... and how they fit into the bigger picture.

You need to share regular updates of how you're achieving the goals you've set.

And if you decide to, you need to share the financial numbers... if for no other reason to give confidence to your employees the future looks bright.

As a side note, it's interesting to discuss financial numbers with business owners. I find most people fall into two camps... those that share everything... and those that share nothing.

I'm squarely in the camp of sharing financials with employees.

I share our revenue numbers, our profitability, and do go into some detail about our growth and margins. I think it helps all around with comfort about the business.

And, sometimes I get really good questions from people about the business.

One more note on communication... I know one business who communicates DAILY with their managers via text message. By texting everyone, they are able to send a condensed message and make sure all of their employees see the critical information they need.

[If you need texting for your business remember to check out betwext.com!](http://www.betwext.com)

Of course communicating and sharing information lays the groundwork for your company culture.

Company Culture

I know this seems to be a bit of a cleshay, but company culture is important. And as the leader of your organization you'll go a long way in helping build and establish the culture.

Just realize company culture isn't about putting in a foosball table in the break room.

Company culture is about how you treat the people you work with... and how they treat each other.

It starts with you at the top and what kind of role you set.

Do you teach, or scream and yell. Do you lead by fear... or are you a team?

One big thing with culture is establishing events for you to celebrate. For example, do you celebrate people's birthdays? Do you give them the day off... or take everyone out to lunch?

Do you have holiday parties? What about happy hour celebrations? What about conferences and client meetings and dinners?

Setting standards for these types of events sets a tone in the office.

You also set a tone with how you react when things go wrong.

I remember one boss of mine used to throw reports across the room when he was frustrated. He was also notorious for walking into the office on a friday afternoon and dropping a massive project that had to be done by monday.

He destroyed so many weekends it became a sad joke.

That was not a supportive company culture.

I think communication is a great foundation for the company culture... and also setting high standards for your employees is critical. And finally, being able to discuss the vision for the future... and what it means for the organization!

All of these little things add to company culture. And a positive company culture helps drive inspired employees.

But that's not all, you need to give employees support and freedom. Let's look at those next.

Employee Support

What do I mean by employee support?

I mean simply giving your employees support in every way possible. That might mean being a sounding board when they're struggling with a family issue... or having empathy when you are discussing a tough topic... like not making quota.

You also need to give employees support by getting back to them quickly when they have questions.

You need to keep your employees moving forward in their job. There's nothing worse than being stuck in a holding pattern waiting for an answer.

I'll give you one more bit of feedback on inspiring and supporting your employees... **It's NOT always about money.**

Many business owners assume that the only way they can motivate employees is with more and more money.

Don't get me wrong, more money is always good.

But sometimes there's a bigger issue.

One of my key employees confessed they'd never leave their job, despite offers of higher compensation... because we gave her the freedom to take their kid to and from school every day.

We didn't require her to punch a clock and sign in and sign out every day. We didn't monitor how long she was gone... and track every second.

We trusted her to do the right thing... and she values that "Perk" of the job more than anything else.

Another employee told me she loved her job because she got to see and be involved in other parts of the business.

She wasn't pigeonholed into one job type... she got to see other parts of the business and work in other areas... which made her job much more enjoyable.

See, supporting your employees isn't always about money.

And this leads to the last aspect of inspiring your employees...

Employee Freedom

For me, employee freedom can be focused on one thing - freedom from being micromanaged.

If you need things done in a certain way, say so, and train your employees to do it. But if you have employees working for you, and you need them to think for themselves, the worst thing is trying to micromanage them.

Give your employees the freedom to do their job. Give them a task and a goal... and then let them do their job.

Resist the urge to micromanage.

Another aspect to freedom is getting and giving regular feedback... Having regular structured follow-up blocks of time can be critical to giving good feedback.

Feel free to give feedback, but you need to give it in a structured way. Nobody likes having someone look over their shoulder every day!

I like to give weekly feedback... that works for me, and my organization is small... Sometimes quarterly or semi-annual feedback is important as your organization grows.

Inspiring Employees All Around...

Look, inspiring employees is an art, not a science.

Everyone responds to incentives in different ways. Some are super competitive, others will crumble under competitive situations. Some employees work better with lots of structure... others just need to be given the boundaries and cut loose.

As a leader, you'll spend your entire career focused on inspiring your employees. It's a critical part to your business, and one you need to work at.

Take some of these suggestions, and see how they might impact your business.

What's up next?

Up next is one of the most fun articles ever... Once you make your money, how do you spend it?

Making Money? - Here's How to Grow it!

The last article we focused on inspiring employees. We touched on 4 things that you, as a leader, need to do to motivate your employees. What's great is by empowering and motivating your employees you're sure to see your business grow.

Remember, with business growth comes profits... and if you've been focused on your business... **profits should be climbing.**

You should be hauling in buckets of money.

Remember - way back at the beginning of this series I said "**THE FIRST THING IS PROFITS!**"

If you're in business and not generating profits something is wrong.

If your business isn't throwing off profits, go back and review chapter 2 where we talk about tracking your numbers.

I'm going to assume your business is starting to throw off cash. And that brings up a big question... What do you do with that cash?



What Most Business Gurus NEVER cover.

I follow a lot of business gurus.. And I'm shocked most never cover this topic.

They're all focused on growing a business, expansion, getting bigger... They'll talk for hours about your business and processes and marketing... but they never cover what to do with the money after you earn it.

It seems to me they're so focused on business they don't understand the end goal of business is making money.

Today, I'm going to answer that question for you!

What should you do with your PROFITS?

Seriously, what do you do with your money?

Do you spend it? Save it? Invest it?

Do you let it build up in little piles under your mattress?

Do you hoard it like Scrooge McDuck (anyone up for a swim in their money vault)?

The way I see it, as a business owner you have 4 choices. You can:

- Reinvest in your business
- Spend your profits
- Invest it for the future
- Give It all away!

I want to look at each one of these in depth and give you my thoughts. Keep reading and you'll probably learn something interesting!

One Overriding Idea about CASH...

Before I get into my ideas about spending your cash... let me make one thing clear... This decision needs to be unique to you.

For example, if you're 70 years old and don't have any retirement savings... for gosh sakes, put some money away for retirement.

If you're 23, single, and are focused on growing your business... still put some money away for retirement... but you don't need to save as much as a 70 year old!

If you're in your 40s and you've got kids expecting you to pay for college... Well, I know where you'll be spending your money (Build that college savings account!).

So, just remember as I discuss the 4 options you have on spending your profits, you've got to take your own life situation into the decision.

Alright, let's jump in...

Reinvest in Your Business

This is one of the biggest ways to grow your business... take the profits you earn, and reinvest them in the business.

Maybe you bring on more employees, spend more on marketing... or buy needed capital equipment.

Maybe you stash a little extra in the bank account for a rainy day.

Here's another big idea... Maybe you buy a competitor.

Don't laugh, I see it all the time.

You already know who your competitors are... maybe one is struggling. You can swoop in and buy their customer base for pennies on the dollar.

It's an amazing way to grow your business with minimal investment.

I love reinvesting in my business... However, sometimes the business throws off cash, and you really don't have a great way to reinvest. Don't worry, that's fine.

Just don't force a bad decision.

Instead, take your money and do this...

Spend Your Profits

Yep, you heard me right.

You've worked hard to make money... take some of it (not all of it) and spend it on something that makes you happy.

Maybe it's a week in Europe, or a vacation to the beach... or a new sports car.



Maybe you splurge and buy tickets to the SuperBowl... or a new wardrobe.

If you're really making money, look at buying a new house, or a vacation home.

Spending your profits is the easy part... but just show some self control.

One thing I've learned is that company profits are often volatile. One month you'll be rolling in it... and the next, you'll be wondering how to make payroll.

And that's why this next idea is so critical.

Invest it for the Future

Not many people know this, but I used to work on Wall Street.

I've seen the richest of the rich, and had dinners with Billionaires!

And, let me tell you, having money is much better than being broke. That's why I always put aside money for the future.

Since I've started my working career, I've always put aside some of my earnings to invest for the future.

There's a few reasons why this has been a priority...

First, I love stability.

Knowing that I have a chunk of cash and investments sitting aside, gives me comfort when running my business. I know if we hit a rough spot, I'm OK financially, and it gives me the strength to make decisions for the long term.

Second, I know retirement will be here quickly.

It's a fact of life. If you don't die early, you'll need to pay for your retirement. And the sooner you start saving, the easier it will be. Money will grow money... and retirement can be soft and cushy.

Third, I've got the ultimate parachute.

This sounds crazy, but I know by putting money aside... It allows me to really enjoy life. I know I could never work another day in my life, and I'd be OK. This allows me to invest in riskier things, spend money in ways others can't, and help others. (More on that last point in a bit).

Alright, I've convinced you to set aside money for the future... if you want to invest the way I do, here's what I've done.

How to invest for the future.

Here's the first rule... you can't ever save enough. So start by maxing out your retirement plan. Don't have one? Call your accountant right now and figure out how to jam as much money into your retirement plan as possible.

MAX. IT. OUT.

Then take some extra money and start investing it too. Think of these other accounts as retirement accounts...

What to invest in?

This is what I buy... Dividend stocks, Real estate, and I invest in businesses I own.

It's that simple.

I started buying big name, well run businesses, that trade on the US exchanges. I took all the dividends I earned and bought more of these stocks. I took extra money I made and bought still more stock.

What's the secret I used to pick these stocks?

I looked at them and said, do I want to own this company in 40 years. Do I think they'll still be around and paying dividends. When I found those companies I bought.

After a few years, I had a nice portfolio.

That's when I expanded into real estate. I simply bought a small home in a good neighborhood and found a property manager to manage the tenants for me.

Then I bought another rental... then another...

Here we are years later and while I have not “Made” much money from the rentals, the cash they throw off has been used to pay down the mortgage.

Now I’m about to own these houses free and clear. Amazing right!

I’m working my way up the food chain... After finding success with these rental homes, I recently invested in a hotel. A crazy thought right!

I started small and now my portfolio is growing and growing. You can do the same thing... And I think you should!

After you’ve put aside a nice big nest egg... you’ll start to see things in this world that need to be fixed.

And that brings us to the fourth and final way to spend your profits...

Give It ALL Away!

This will be controversial, but I do think giving away some of your money is important.

No, you don’t just need to give it to any charity... I recommend you look for an organization you believe in and support.

Find an organization that you can get behind and support not only with your MONEY but also your TIME.

I recently joined the Board of a non-profit... and now I’m the Chairman. I not only get to make a difference, but I see that my donations are going the right people, for the right reasons.

Don’t underestimate the impact you can have by donating your time too!

This role is not only a good one, but it also is emotionally filling too.

You’ll feel a warmth inside when you donate your money and time, and frankly, it becomes addicting.



to

Oh, here's a crazy bit of Data... did you know Betwext.com is used by a ton of nonprofits?

They use texting to communicate with donors, their volunteers, to raise money, and to promote their organization. [If you know a non-profit who could use text marketing, have them contact us, we offer special non-profit rates!](#)

Putting it all together.

Remember, running a business is all about profits. The green dollar bills you can take to the store and spend.

I've given you 4 ways to spend your profits... Reinvesting in the business, buying stuff, Investing for the future, and supporting charities!

As you make more and more money, you'll start splitting your profits between these 4 groups... and at the end of the day, remember - spending your profits needs to be adjusted for your own life circumstances!

Now, what's next?

Next, I'm going to slay a sacred cow when it comes to work life balance.

I'm going to tell you the truth about how you can achieve balance in all things.

[One final note... To learn more about Betwext.com and our text marketing services... and how it can help your business, click here.](#)

The Biggest Joke of all time - Work Life Balance...

In my last article we discussed what to do with all the profits you're making... We talked about investing in your business, spending profits, investing profits, and even giving your money away!

Plus, I shared my three favorite ways to Invest my profits.

Today, I want to shift gears and share with you the biggest fraud that's been hoisted on the minds of many business owners.

What's the FRAUD?

It's the idea of work life balance.

All I hear, all day long... from wellness gurus... and self help counselors... and every business consultant you meet... all they talk about is achieving work life balance.

I just shake my head in disbelief.

The self appointed gurus will tell you to take time off... go get a hobby they say... spend more time with the family they say... take a vacation they demand.

All great suggestions... but they are solving the wrong problem.

First, let me serve up a steaming pile of truth... for a business owner THERE IS NO WORK LIFE BALANCE.

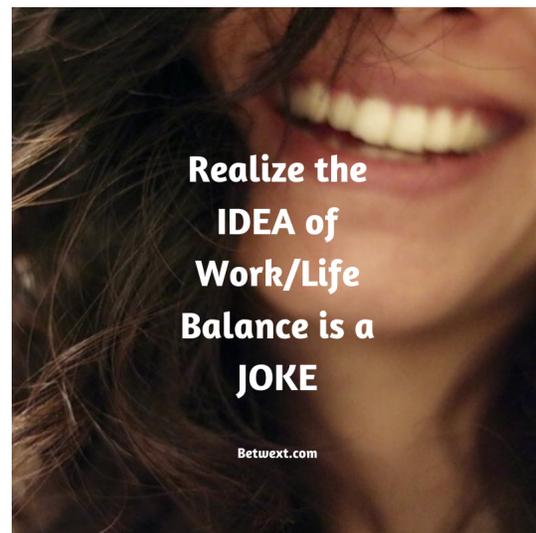
Let me say that again.

THERE IS NO WORK LIFE BALANCE.

If you're a real entrepreneur, you'll never find work life balance no matter how hard you try.

As a business owner, you'll find your business is an obsession.

You'll be thinking about it while you work out.



You'll obsess over it in the shower.

Spending time with the family, great, but your mind will be on the business.

Heck, I've found myself on vacation thinking about my business.

Business is an obsession, it's a desire, it's a piece of you, and it will suck up all your time if you let it.

Just get over it.

Don't be weak. Use this focus to your advantage...

Work hard to grow your business... and if that means putting in 20 hour days, then so be it. Trust me, over time your passion and focus will shift.

I used to work 20 hour days on one of my businesses. Now the business is lucky if I focus on it for 20 hours a month!

Seriously.

Focus and obsession are great for growing a business. And a few months (or years) of hard work won't kill you.

Here's how to do obsession right...

How to Take a Vacation

If you're running a new business, here's how to take a vacation... DON'T.

Seriously. If you're starting a business and feel like you can't pull yourself away... if you feel like the business will implode because it's so new... then make a tough decision and don't go.

Build your business. Make a sacrifice.

See, tough love.



That said, if you've been hustling for the last few years and are ready to take a vacation... if you feel like you need a vacation... then take one!

But let me give you some education on how to do it right.

3 months before you start your vacation, start looking with a critical eye at your business.

Look at everything that's going on and every step of the process... and ask yourself if it needs to be done. Ruthlessly cut out anything that's not a fit.

Kill the busy work.

Kill the activities that take hours and hours of time, but produce very little.

These should be easy to identify. Just ask yourself, Why are we doing this... and what would happen if we didn't do this anymore. You'll find a shocking amount of busy work has developed for you and your team.

Then when you've cut your process to the bone... you have to move onto step #2...

Make sure the right people are working on the right things.

Review what everyone on your team is doing... and make sure the right people are doing the right things.

Have a tier 1 sales person? Make sure they're not spending hours pulling performance data, or dealing with invoicing.

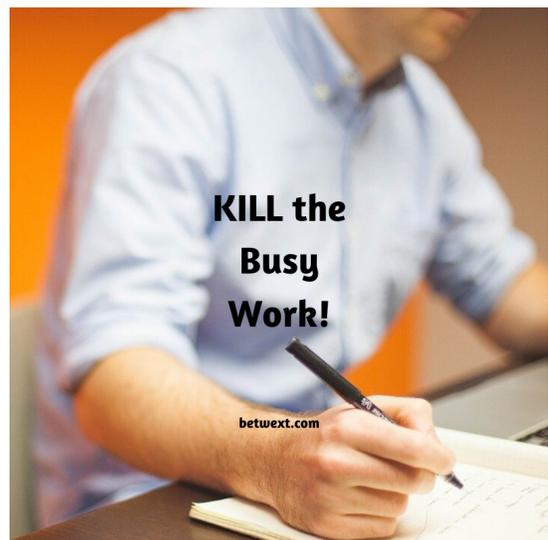
Have a technical person on staff? Make sure they're not doing assistant level projects.

Don't have an assistant to take on those roles... get one.

The hardest part of this analysis will be when you look at your own workload.

Remember, you want to take a damn vacation and not be overwhelmed by the process. You don't want to be crushed by your workload.

So, take a critical look at everything you do. Analyze every process... review every step you take. Then ask yourself, why can't someone else do this???



Earlier I mentioned the true goal of an owner is to work themselves out of a job.

You need to find good people to do everything you do.

Take your current work activities and break them down into detailed parts, and start training someone to take each and every project over.

As an owner you can't be doing customer support, product delivery, shipping, and financials... at scale, your business will collapse.

You need to start outsourcing work... and start outsourcing ASAP!

I hear from business owners all the time... no one can do as good a job as I can.

Know what... you're right.

But, many times, you need others to do a "Good Enough Job".

If you don't start thinking like a business owner... you'll never get out from under your current workload... and you'll never be able to take a vacation.

But your work doesn't stop there.

The third step is to ACTUALLY outsource your work.

It's one thing to analyze your processes. It's one thing to identify where you can pass along the workload...

It's something entirely different to actually sit down and do it.

How can you accomplish this seemingly impossible feat?

Like Nike says: "Just do it"

Here are a few simple steps...

First identify what process you want to outsource.

Be specific... really specific. If you try to outsource a 3 month long process you follow to do something and it has over 1,000 steps... well, you're headed for failure. Remember, you can only eat an elephant one bite at a time!

Break down into small chunks what you want to process.

Then document the crap out of it.

Maybe you want to produce written documentation... maybe you want to produce how-to videos (my favorite).

Regardless of what route you go, remember these things...

Document each and every step. Assume the person knows nothing! Go into incredible detail. Remember to explain not only WHAT to do, but WHY. Finally, include a way to verify that the person has been successful.

Is that all?

NOPE.

Now that you have the process documented... pass it along to someone, and WATCH THEM DO IT! Seriously, take some time and watch them do it. Then have them do it three more times.

Then you can assume they'll be at least competent at what they do.

Then the final step - Check up on them every so often.

Make sure they're following the steps and doing everything right. Guess what, if they can't do the job in the right way, either you need to change and improve your training and documentation... Or you need to find a more competent person to do the work.

Harsh, yes... but true.

Alright, enough for today. I know you want to find balance in life... but the reality is, Balance is an illusion. And you'll realize it while you're sitting on the beach NOT thinking about your business.

What's up next?

Knowing work life balance is impossible, you'll start being laser focused on what's in front of you.

Let me help you get laser focused on your marketing... Nothing is better than text marketing. Imagine refining down your entire message into a single sentence.

That's text marketing, and it's powerful!

[To learn more about text marketing with Betwext, check out this webpage for more details.](#)

In our next article we're going to wrap up this whole guide by discussing the future.

Always Think of the Future!

In my last article I blew up the stupid idea of a work life balance. I pointed out why it's crazy (and impossible) to try to achieve balance.

Plus, I talked about how entrepreneurs can have time to take a vacation... and exactly what they need to do to disconnect.

We started this entire series of articles about growing your business this year. We've loaded the entire sequence and packed them full of business ideas, tips, and tricks.

We've discussed topics like knowing your numbers, becoming a leader, and inspiring your employees.

We've talked systems, documentation, and the key idea of being more profitable not only with your business, but also with your time.

This is the last topic.

And, it's probably the most important.

This topic can make or break your business... and it's a topic that many business people ignore.

Why?

Because it's Difficult.

You actually need to use brain cells and sit down and think.

Now tell me, **when was the last time you sat down and thought about your life and your business 5 years from now?**

I mean honestly thought about it.

- What did you see in your mind's eye?
- What did you focus on?



- What did you feel?

In business we're pulled into the day to day nuances. But great leaders and successful business owners schedule time to think long term.

They block out the day to day noise and focus on the future.

Try it. *It's not easy.*

That's why many business owners don't do it.

This is exactly the reason you **MUST** pause and think. You must sit down and think about the future.

That's how the best business leaders plan, grow and reach levels of success many will only dream of.

But don't just dream.

This isn't about thinking about beach time for your next vacation...

This is about analyzing your life and projecting your day. It's about where you are in life, what you are doing, and how you do it.

The best thinkers visualize the future in great detail.

They think about where they live, what they do, how their house is decorated... plus where they vacation... even who they vacation with. What do they do with their free time? They answer a million questions in detail.

But that's not all.

If you're going to succeed, you need to visualize your key milestones and accomplishments... and how you're going to reach them.

Then, look at your business the same way.

Visualize it in detail. What are you selling? Who are your customers? Why do they buy from you?



What changes between today and five years from now?

Think about the threats that can hobble your business... and the tailwinds that can propel it forward.

Really analyze everything!

Then what?

Well, if you want to take these visualizations and turn them into something you need to follow...

The number one secret to long term thinking.

Here's the secret to long term thinking...

You need to write your thoughts down.

Every last one of them.

Document it.

This process will help you solidify your thoughts. Better still, it will help expose what actions you need to take to make these images become real!

As you make a regular practice of thinking about the future, you'll start to see your visions and desires change over time.

As a business owner, looking into the future is like staring at thunderclouds... do they bring destruction and chaos, or do they bring refreshing rain showers?

This is the difference between being reactive and proactive.

And that's the difference between long term success and failure in business.

Sitting down and thinking about the future is difficult. It's not something many business owners do... but if you want to find ever greater success with your business, take some time out and really truly think about the future.

The impact will be AMAZING!

What's next?

This is the end of a long journey.

We've jumped in and discussed dozens of ways to improve your business, make it more efficient, and grow it.

What's next?

Actually put into motion some of these suggestions.

If you work on only 10% of what we've discussed, I'm positive you'll see your business grow, and your profits explode. If you do 50% of what we discussed, you'll remake your business.

It's that simple.

Take ACTION and make some CHANGES!

Remember the whole reason I put this report together is to help you grow your business.

Now I'm going to leave you with one last shameless plug... if you're looking for great business marketing advice... or you're wondering how you can deploy text message marketing to grow your business... then sign up for my email or text marketing lists.

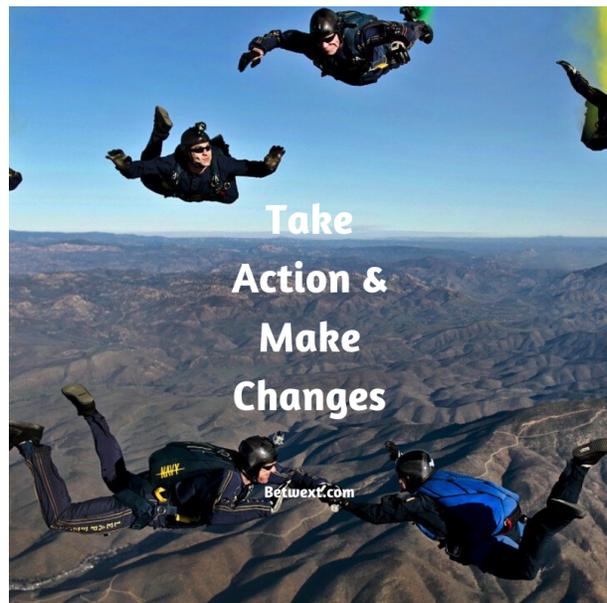
To sign up via text message, text **"LEARN" to 480-508-9444**

[Remember, betwext.com is the best text marketing service out there for small business owners. Check it out, you won't be disappointed.](#)

I hope you found this report helpful. If you want to connect, learn more, or share your story, email me at Brian@betwext.com... or text me at 480-508-9444.

To your business success!

BRIAN



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