

# Build A Business, Not Just A Practice

By Peggy Champlin

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So, you're an independent professional and you either have or are working toward a successful practice. What would you say if I told you that you could build a business, not just a practice? That you could develop multiple streams of income - some of them passive?

Well, you can!

I've created a 5-step system that will teach you how to go from square one all the way to more profits and more spare time.

## Step 1: Design Your Business

Step one is the most important part of the system - and the one where many people get stuck. Or worse yet, skip over. You need to take some time to design your business.

You need to get very clear about what it is that you have to offer that others value and understand your target market. Many of my clients and prospective clients think they know this until we hone it even sharper. Take some time with this so you're very, very clear. Everything else will be much harder, if not impossible, if you're not crystal clear on what value you offer and to whom.

You need to select initial products and services to create and put together packages and pricing. A little research will help you pick affiliate programs and partners to fill out your portfolio.

By laying out your business plan in detail and with great clarity, you will have taken a huge leap forward and have a wonderful advantage in creating a successful business.

## Step 2: Develop Your Website

Your next step is to create a website for your business. It will be all about your business theme that you clarified in step one. You will lay out the navigation of pages, fashion a signature look and feel for your site, and write the text, or copy, that will attract the target

market you identified in step one. Of course, you will have your products and services available for sale on your site!

Whether you build your site yourself or hire someone to do it for you, make sure that you focus on all the following areas:

- The overall look and feel of the site. Make sure it reflects your business.
- Ease of navigation. You want your visitors to be able to find what they're looking for. Also, you want to lead them through your site. Tell them what page to look at next!
- Marketing orientation. Remember that your visitors first arrive wanting to know what's in it for them to even read more than you home page! Make sure you're laying out the benefits of working with you or buying your product on every page. Too many site start talking about the business itself or the process it provides and not enough about the benefits to the customer.
- Maintainability. Make sure yoursite is designed so that changes are as easy as possible and so that you can make simple changes yourself.

### Step 3: Publish Your Ezine

Now that you have things to sell and a place for people to buy, you need to draw people to your site after building a relationship with them so they understand and trust the value you offer. So step three is to start publishing your own ezine, or email newsletter. By giving your subscribers valuable content in each issue, they will get to know you and what your business can do for them.

An ezine is one of the most effective ways to build relationships with people interested in what you offer. The people on your list have given you permission to get in front of them periodically to share a bit of your knowledge in your articles and to promote your services and products to them. They asked for the information! What better audience to present your portfolio to?

### Step 4: Build Your List

So far, so good. But step four is the truly powerful one. Here's where we build your list. As those who know me have heard me say many times, the one with the biggest list wins. If you have many people on your list, you will make more sales with the same conversion ratio. Put in English, if you send out a mailing about a new product and 2% of the people who receive it buy the product, you will sell more product and make more money the larger your list is.

There are dozens of ways to build your list - many of them absolutely free. Some include getting listed on ezine directories and announcement lists, putting a link to sign up for your ezine in the signature block of your email software, and putting a signup form on every page of your website.

These are some of the simplest steps and there are many more. One

that's very effective that I recommend to all my clients is to submit articles you've written to article banks on the web and other ezine publishers. Get your articles onto as many websites and into as many ezines as possible - all with your website link in them, of course! - and you'll see more website traffic and more ezine signups.

#### Step 5: Profit From Your List

The last step is where it starts getting good - really good! You learn how to profit from your list. Having put all this effort into your business, it's time to start making that extra money!

Before you have a large list - and after - joint ventures can be very useful. They allow you to get in front of someone else's list to promote your products and services. When you don't have a list of your own, this can be a powerful way to start making money.

Even when you do have a list, sharing your list with your partner while you get access to his list is a terrific way to get more exposure. And you'll usually get affiliate fees from anything people on your list buy from your joint venture partner!

Just be sure to pick joint venture partners who have the same target market as you, but don't compete with you.

There are two other ways to make money from your list. First, of course, market your portfolio to your list, in your ezine and occasionally in a solo mailing.

Second, you may choose to sell advertising space in your ezine. This is most effective when you have a fairly good list.

This is an overview of a process you can use to start building an online business. The irony is that through implementing this process, not only will you develop additional product-based streams of income. You will also attract more clients for your existing services!

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