



Blind Enthusiasm

Can this be the common denominator for success?

Success comes in many ways. I have seen, heard, and witnessed many success stories and I have been asked why one becomes successful faster than another. Of course there are many factors and many variables but are there any common denominators? Is there a strategy, plan, or something everyone could try? If two businesses had the exact same products, prices, and equipment why wouldn't they both have the same level of success? That question was asked and that made me consider whether there was a common trait that I could hang my hat on that could explain, "Why would one person succeed quicker than another?"

This may be an odd answer but I call it Blind Enthusiasm! Hearing this statement probably sounds more confusing rather than helpful, but let me take you back to when you first bought your equipment. You had dreams of all the things you were going to make with your new toy. There was the anticipation of endless ideas, creations, trial and errors you made when you first started. After each new project or product you made, what did you initially do with it? Didn't you show it to everyone you knew? You showed it to the stranger who happened to be in the shop, the people next door, your neighbors, your friends, and maybe even took it to a meeting. The chamber of commerce got a look and also the local club you belong to and it's also possible you created a specific product, like something to do with firefighters, where you took the sample to the local station and said "Hey guys check this out!" I refer to this as "Blind Enthusiasm".

I coined the phrase, blind enthusiasm, because it is just that. We are so excited about the new products we made we want to show it to everyone and it pays off. Sometimes we may not realize why we are talking to a particular person or why at times we show someone our products. We just blindly show everyone what new products we can make. Blind enthusiasm can result in us getting lucky with an unexpected order. For those lacking this enthusiasm, this may be hard to understand or even imagine. Over time we lose the excitement and thrill of making something new or unique. We may feel some reluctance to be so bold as to approach a stranger and show them a product that might be of interest to them; however, I have seen more success come from this type of enthusiasm/exposure than failure. I have seen big orders come from such tactics that others may see as luck. Is it luck or was it smart to show the products you make to as many people as you can?

Let me tell you some true laser start-up stories and see if you can figure out a common denominator. First subjects: A computer-illiterate person who doesn't even

know how to save a file on his computer or use any software programs. Second subjects: A rug layer (floor installer) and his housewife buying a laser to create a replacement income. Third subjects: A woman who started out doing dye sublimation adds a laser to her arsenal while her husband has a full time job but loves to support his wife's ambitions. What chances do they have of succeeding? What traits do they have in common?

Why do we always seem to hear about those who struggle and fail? Each one of these people I talk about had to go through some struggles, but what made them succeed? Just a quick thought about failure from my perspective. I fear failure, always have, always will. It drives me and it makes me try things that are outside my knowledge or comfort zone. Mistakes are not failures; it is our human way of learning, trying new things, experimenting. I wonder if "I'm experimenting" excuse would work on my wife the next time I make a mistake?

If you have the fear of failure, don't worry. You belong to the club! We all subconsciously are aware of it. I want to make a quick point on failure without dwelling on it. Think about this. What is more embarrassing? Failing with your business or trying something outside your comfort zone? Failure should not cloud your decisions; it should be a driving force to try something new. If what you are making now is not bringing home the bacon, what can we try? Before I get too far off on a tangent, let's get back to the actual stories of people who entered the laser industry.

All three laser entrepreneurs have some things in common; they have never owned a laser before, never operated a laser, and never made products with a laser. Some of them may have more experience with a computer, running a business, or knowing how to use their software. I don't believe that made a difference towards their success, it may have reduced their struggles.

You may be interested in knowing how long these entrepreneurs have been in business. The first subject started about three years ago and he did learn how to operate a computer and a laser, and now has three lasers running daily now. He has a home-based business. The second subjects were so scared going into their adventure they seemed mad, almost defiant at allowing someone to help them. They started their business last year. The wife operates the laser while the husband does the sales. She now gets mad at her husband because he oversells her ability to keep up, I have been told they have just ordered their second laser. They are also a home-based business. UPDATE; just prior to sending this article out this couple called to tell me they have quit their jobs and have gone full time into the laser business, they have never been happier or more excited. I just love hearing about success! The third subject started about five years ago where she opened a retail shop after only two years and has many machines, three of which are lasers. The lasers account for about 70% of her sales.

So we have some background and my reason for telling these three stories is that I hope you may relate to one of them. Each had a different circumstance, different level of knowledge, but similar personalities in they were all excited about what they were going

to create with their new laser and wanted to show it to everyone they saw! That got me thinking there was a common denominator to their success and I believe it was exposure. They had blind enthusiasm. I've heard that they carried samples in their vehicles at all times in case they run into someone they want to show their products too.

The first person says if he saw a guy wearing a military cap he would give them one of his ornaments with their military branch on it. He lives in horse country and he has given out many samples of his horse ornaments. These items cost him about five cents in material but always brought a smile to the recipients face and resulted in new contacts and orders. He does things for his church and other organizations. He seems to always look for an opportunity to show his products. Does this work? I am told he made over \$250K last year. I should mention he only does wholesale sales with no retail, until recently. He has just started a new adventure that has brought him many new accounts along with some retail sales. He has maintained his excitement!

The second people get their sales from the most unusual source. They like to travel and own a motor home. They belong to a club that meets at RV parks and that is where they show their latest products. From there they have been able to get sales and increase their business to the point they need (have bought) a second laser to keep up. Wholesale and retail has been their target. I guess many business owners travel on the weekend and they get exposure to them and their businesses. What a unique fun way to market!

The third couple started out doing art & craft shows. While doing these shows they pushed the fact they were open to wholesale and offered quantity discounts, and were available for special projects. Many attendees to these shows owned shops, ran corporate businesses, and came from all walks of life. They would receive request for specific items and soon they had enough exposure/sales to open a retail location. They still use local craft shows to promote their retail location and this has worked for them with great results!

The more people that see what you make, the more opportunities for sales, which can lead to being asked to experiment with new products and new ideas to snowball the businesses towards markets you never identified originally.

Here is my point; Success doesn't come directly from the machines we buy or the knowledge we have in operating them. Success can only come from the exposure we get from what we make on those machines. Marketing is exposure. It takes exposure to get sales and if you are enthusiastic about what you are doing you end up showing to many more people. In other words, "Blind Enthusiasm" can help you succeed!

Reflection (think can I?); I think I could give away an ornament now or then to bring a smile. I know I could do art & craft shows and market to a broader base rather than just the cash & carry customers. I do get excited about the new products I make, so I would want to show them to everyone, even my fellow church members or the business group I belong to. I don't do camping, but what are my other hobbies or interests? What

products could I make for that and who could I show them too? Producing ideas, having fun, bringing a smile to someone... it's started to generate some excitement! I am started to feel an enthusiastic moment coming on. I hope this has for you!

Product idea below:

It only takes one good idea to get sales rolling, especially if it something you have a passion for or interest in. If I can put together a brand new product for each city in less than 3 hrs, just think what you could do for your business in a year's time? Our print product video has infinite possibilities for new ideas, OK so once in a while I have to plug some of our products for sale... www.laserbuzzstore.com

For the Fort Worth show I had someone in the office find five pictures of sites I remember when visiting. Of course one was the convention hall, the water fall park downtown, a picture of that magnificent building with the trumpet players on the side, of course something showing the stock yards, and a Texas car with horns mounted on the hood. Oh and a picture of the sky line of Fort Worth.



Pictures never do your products justice, but I will have the samples at the show so people can touch and feel. This product is 3 dimensional; I call it a desktop product, knickknacks, or a souvenir. Once the collage is made our video will show you how to use the same artwork to make several more products at different price points.

What is the material cost for a product like this? I have .60 cents of wood, a single sheet of paper printed on my inkjet printer .10,? .20,? .30 cents? Both paper and wood are cut on the laser and then glued together. (I know a high school kid can glue more than 40 of these an hour) If we took the high amount of .90 cents material cost, what could we sell these for? There are a couple of other companies out there that make a similar type product using screen printing (no layers) and they sell for \$29.95. At \$19.95 retail that

would be more than 2000% mark up over material cost. Could you mark up only 1000% and wholesale to gift shops in the area? What other areas could use a product?

Thanks,

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