



## Business Success

### Business Plan? Marketing Plan?

#### Part 10

As I look back on this series of Newsletters, we have covered a lot of information, product creation, emotional products, prideful products, impulsive selling products, marketing ideas, give-to-get methods of sales, “WOW” factor, exposure type sales, ways to get your business known locally, and helped you start thinking about taking your business nationally. Yet, still after 10 parts of this series we have merely touched on a few ways to help you become successful.

Just like there are endless ideas for products, there will be endless ideas on how to market. Everyday I am amazed with all the talented individuals in business that create beautiful products and find their niche in the market place.

For those starting out or struggling I also think it is important to realize many successful individuals were lost at one time on what to do next. The difference is they pushed forward, sought out or changed direction, and made it. Please do not give up hope! Business is like waves, when you’re riding the top of the wave this is the best time to look around for the next wave or determine how to stay on top. Sometimes you can ride a wave all the way into shore, but most times you need to ride several waves to become successful. OK, that’s enough analogy. I’m started to get sea sick from the motion. ☺

What I would like to discuss with you in this Newsletter is about two different people who have caught that wave, who are riding on top, and why they are **just like you!** These two separate individuals I knew when they were just starting out. You know, a small home business, running from their garage or a back room of their house, using the kitchen table as their shipping department and the den as the warehouse, at times.

Of course the only way I know the intimate details of their business is because they are LaserBuzz software owners and we have become friends through conversations. They both said I could use their real names, but I think it is more proper to call them Hansel & Gretel, some will know whom I speak of as they read on. I think this is important to hear because we all start out in business as the newbie. Although some will look up to an individual who has made it (I do), they are still the same person they were before, doubtful of their next step at times, always trying to think of new ideas, and always positive about what the future might bring.

I selected Gretel because she comes from one of the hardest hit areas of the country for downturn. This area has diminished in manufacturing, an area that use to be known as the main source for most vehicle production, yet still she has prospered and grown a successful business. How can this be possible? I have known Gretel for three years and I cannot remember once where she wasn't smiling, upbeat, ready to try something new! In this last year she was able to open a store front location from all the steady business she had created. Gretel has expanded into many other fields to maximize sales for her existing customer base and has bought other equipment besides her 3 lasers. She has become so busy she has had to hire full time staff. Her husband travels a lot for his job and is not home often, so every time he gets a chance he loves being part of her business. He once went with her to do a 17 day art & craft show (I cannot imagine a 17 day show) where she took her laser with her and together they sold just under \$20,000 in products. He was hooked on her success and tried to be part of the business every chance he got! Believe me, Gretel has grown this business from her great personality and hard work. She truly loves what she is doing. Even though she has her own store front now, she still does community events to keep her exposure strong. Art & Craft shows for local schools, organizations, and churches – she still does these! She has a portable booth that is ready when the need arises and she fully understands future sales come from this type of exposure.

Hansel is retired from the service. He was only looking for something to pass the time in retirement and maybe make a little money on the side. Hansel lives in a very remote part of the country, far from the hustle and bustle of downtown; yet, in just three years has grown his business to sales exceeding 7 figures. I'm not kidding. He has actually sent me copies of purchase orders he has received in just the last month. Hansel has never owned his own business before, never held a job selling or marketing anything, and was almost entirely computer illiterate when I first met him. I actually had to explain how to open and save a file on his computer. This is not meant to belittle Hansel in any way, just to point out the simple hurdles he had to overcome.

Hansel started out sending free products over to the soldiers in Iraq (the free Beretta design we give out). He was also part of the group that was sending silly string used by the troops to find trip wires. Hansel received several accolades from high ranking officers thanking him, which he sent the officer's children some toy chest items, (a doll house). He also made items and gave them away at church. Hansel was delighted with getting all the smiles, seeing the joy and thanks that we feel when we give a gift that makes someone else so thrilled.

Then it happened. Someone mentioned, "we have a store, could you make some of those items so we could sell them?" Hansel made his own lazy susan type of rack (now he buys them from another source) to hold his ornament products. He delivered his first wholesale rack of products and the rest has been a fairy tale. The store did so well they told a friend who was in business. Then a service person's family wanted to try them at their store, too. Literally, in just over a year, Hansel's wholesale ornament business grew to over 100 locations.

Hansel is still a home-based business. All the locations together are averaging over \$10,000 a month in sales for him! But the success story doesn't end there. Hansel was asked by a company if he could make a certain product specifically for them. He sent the picture off to his art department (us) and from what I understand he has received exclusive rights and a contract for over 600,000 ornaments for an international show (note: his wholesale price per ornament is \$3.00). To top that, he just signed a contract in September with the U.S. government that has already produced purchase orders totaling \$50,000 in just the first month. He told me he may have to get other laser owners to help him get caught up!

Hansel is in the process of adding more lasers, but still says he will remain a home-based business doing just wholesale work. He now has seven employees and runs multiple shifts. This is a guy that barely knew how to turn on his computer and certainly didn't know much about CorelDraw and was awed by his new laser purchase. If he can do this, you can too!

The purpose in telling these stories is to show you anyone has the ability to become successful. It doesn't matter what part of the country we are from or our gender. Knowledge is helpful, but not always the key to success. If I went through every detail of how these two became successful and tried to come up with the key reason for their success, I would have to say exposure! These two believed in what they were making, loved what they were doing, and showed it to everyone they met! Some might say they were lucky. Ok, if you never show anyone what fantastic, beautiful products you have created, what are your chances to get lucky? Exposure = sales, Sales = success, Buzz = ??? I can't say what my wife said! ☺

I hope you go back and read all 10 parts of this series and find something that will help bring you closer to your goals. I also want to make sure you all see that everyone has a chance at business success as long as we are willing to keep getting exposure for what we make and keep getting knowledge on new ideas to find our product niche. **You do** have the ability to make money. Becoming successful, however, is a mindset most true entrepreneurs will never feel they reach. Entrepreneurs are constantly driven to new levels no matter how much money they have coming in. Those of you who have experienced some success know what I mean. Others will hopefully learn in time. Once we hit one goal we reach for another. That is our life, we are entrepreneurs! So, let's start reaching, let's keep getting exposure, let's keep trying new things and let's help each other along the way! I hope to hear your success story some day!

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