

Business Growth = Accelerators

For SPECTACULAR business growth!

Business growth strategies for business owners... in 60 seconds or less!

Recession? Grow Your Business Anyway! – Part 6 March 2009

Well, March came in like a lion with the Siberian Express arriving right on time again this year! But the moderating weather is beginning to bring out the redbud trees in the deep south and the dogwoods can't be far behind. Despite the woeful economic news, enjoy the moderating weather and the low heating bills. ☺

I'm pleased to share that I'll be presenting the 3 hour interactive workshop **How to Instantly Increase Your Sales Revenue! Effective Strategies Designed to Increase the Money Coming Into Your Business, Even in the Worst Economic Conditions** in Pooler Georgia on the 24th of this month. Check out the bottom of this letter for more on how to register. Hope to see you there.

On the economic front, at this point the market has lost about half of its value from its peak a year or so ago. A lot of wealth has simply evaporated. However, the market can't go to "zero", so we're surely close to the market bottom and can look forward to the economic benefits that a rising market will bring. OK? So let's move forward!

Recapping

It's worth bearing in mind that even though economic activity may be down by 5% or even 10%, 90% of that economic activity is still going on! Business is still being conducted and money is still being spent!

Before we tackle new material, let's do a little review from my previous newsletters in this series (previous newsletters are available on the BGA free resources page at www.bgaccelerators.com/freeresources.html). Recall:

Important Guiding Principle #1

***** Your service goal MUST BE to make your customer feel successful with EVERY contact and interaction (s)he has with your business, regardless of whether a purchase is made! *****

And, by the way, it's YOUR responsibility (not the customer's) to make sure it happens!

Important Guiding Principle #2

***** Never make the customer wrong! *****

Approach his or her problems using the tact of "How can we make this right?"

Important Guiding Principle #3

***** Making your business customer-friendly costs very little and reaps HUGE returns. *****

There is no silver bullet! The reality is that making your business customer-friendly is actually making many small things work together that combined produce big results.

Examples I used to illustrate these principles from my previous issues:

Example #1, Customer Parking, and the subliminal messages that you send your customers and prospects through your parking lot.

Example #2 – Your Business Façade

The first impression your façade creates will either help you make the sale or create a negative impression that you'll have to work long and hard to overcome.

Example #3 – Your Entrance Doors

Have both doors unlocked and make it obvious which way they swing.

Example #4 – Answering the Phone

Your phone greeting is your customer's first audio impression of your business. It's literally your "audio façade", so how your business answers their phone call is important.

Here are some more concrete ideas to grow YOUR business in a recession.

Example #5 – The Receptionist

The poor implementation of the receptionist or floor sales position is so common that it's become the butt of jokes in the national media. For example, the back page column, "While You Were Out", in the January 19, 2009, issue of *Fortune* magazine recounted the author's efforts to get his Bluetooth headset serviced.

"My trip to Verizon was very nice. I only had to wait 10 minutes until the guys behind the desk completed their conversation with each other.." before he was waited on.

This is no laughing matter. Is this how your receptionist, office manager, or floor salesperson is treating your patrons? Be sure your patrons are welcomed properly by routinely monitoring your staff!

Let's talk first about receptionists in a professional practice - Most professional practices or service businesses make the mistake of making an entry level, minimum wage employee create the first impression a customer has of their business. Many times their reasoning is, "*Well, (s)he doesn't know anything yet and I'm not sure if he/she will work out, so at least I can get him/her to answer the phone and greet the customers as they come in.*"

Treating your receptionist as just a minimum wage phone answerer, will guarantee that your customers' first impression will be that your customer service is poor.

Observe for yourself! Does your receptionist:

- Transfer calls with introductions.. or simply "dump" calls to the next department, forcing the customer to repeatedly explain why they called?
- Warmly greet prospects and customers when they come to spend their money.. or simply hold up an index finger without looking up and continue her personal cell phone conversation?
- Suggest people to talk with that can address the customer's needs.. or say "I just work here. You'll have to talk with Jack."?
- Offer your patrons a cup of coffee, tea, or water.. or expect them to figure out where to find a seat on the Naugahyde couch next to the plastic fern?

Actually your receptionist is really a member of the sales staff and holds the position of director of first impressions. You should consider putting her on commission.

"Baloney!" you say? Well consider this. Your receptionist is a live voice that can convey welcome, sympathy, or concern to first time callers. (S)he can recognize a repeat or familiar customer and can convey acceptance, warmth, and gratitude. (S)he can effectively translate customer questions and needs into your specific "business speak" and can guide the customer through the company organization to the department to address their need.. and can be a customer advocate when necessary. By creating a positive first impression, (s)he CAN MAKE THE SALE!

Where Would You Rather Shop?

All things being equal between competing businesses, if you were treated like royalty by the director of first impressions in one of them, which would you patronize?

Flourishing in a Recession

Seize the opportunity to make your business customer friendly and stand out in a crowd that features the same poor customer service as everyone else does! As we've seen, making your business customer friendly is doing lots of no-cost, low-cost things right and doing them right consistently. Being customer friendly is more about treating your customers as people who have the ability to choose where they spend their money so well, that they'll consistently choose to spend their money with you...even if your prices are higher than the big boxes!

March Speaking Engagements

On March 24, I'll be presenting the 3 hour interactive workshop

"How to Instantly Increase Your Sales Revenue!

Effective Strategies Designed to Increase the Money Coming Into Your Business, Even in the Worst Economic Conditions!"

This timely workshop topic was selected by popular demand, features an executive lunch included in the price, and is open to the public. It's sponsored by the **Pooler Chamber of Commerce** and **Paul Kennedy Catering**. Networking begins at 10:45 AM with the workshop beginning promptly at 11:00 AM and concluding by 2:00 PM.

Learn more from the article in the Savannah Business Report:

<http://savdailynews.com/main.asp?SectionID=14&SubSectionID=159&ArticleID=22501>. Registration is \$75 for Pooler Chamber members and \$100 for non-members. Seating is limited to the capacity of the caterer's dining room, so invest in growing your business and register today!

Call the Chamber at **(912) 313-4417** or send an email to marketing@poolercrossroads.com to register. I'll look forward to meeting you there! ☺

***** More Help for Business Owners *****

Introducing our brand new seminar album

"How to Immediately Improve Your Cash Flow!

Over Two Dozen Specific Ways to Quickly Raise Cash and Control Your Business Costs!"

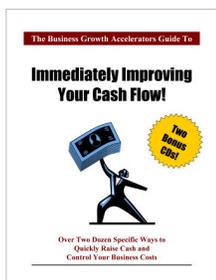
This is the album from my interactive workshops by the same name!

If you haven't been able to participate in one of my live workshops, this album is the answer! It contains the full-sized workshop workbook

PLUS a 60 minute audio book CD with the author's additional commentary and insight from his 30 years of experience

PLUS a 20 minute interview CD in the series **Lessons From the School of Hard Knocks: Interviews with the Experts** with experienced CEOs

PLUS an Action Planner, calculator, ways to monitor your cash flow, formula sheet, and more! Read more and get it today on Amazon.com !



Now It's Your Turn

Let me hear your thoughts on what I've shared this month at results@bgaccelerators.com or via one of the ways you feel comfortable with, below.

Tired of participating in the recession? We can help! Get growing again! **Call us today at 912.538.0746** for a discreet, confidential consultation at no charge, if you really want to flourish. Be sure to ask about our complimentary marketing and sales effectiveness assessment when you call. Our proprietary business growth calculator will show you how to grow in a recession and double your profits in the next 12 months. You'll be glad you did.

Warmest regards, ☺

Dan Elder, principal consultant
Business Growth Accelerators

Author of:

Spectacular Business Growth!*

**...Without Spending the Fortune You Hoped To Earn!*

— and —

Dramatic Business Growth!*

**...In The Face Of Fierce Competition!*

Dramatically improving our clients' condition through:

- Business growth coaching
- Skilled facilitation
- On-location business growth consulting
- Performance improvement speaking/seminars/workshops

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