

Guerrilla Marketing for Health Clubs

A Comprehensive Guide



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Introduction

How to Double, Triple Even Quadruple Your Current Marketing Results and Dramatically Grow Your Business

If you own or manage a health club, you are most likely doing one of two things:

- Either you're spending a lot more money on gaining new members than you need to - money you don't have to spend - money that could be used to grow your business even faster - or money that could go straight to the bottom line of your balance sheet and into your personal checking account to be used as you wish – or...
- You're not really doing much marketing at all.

Either way, you're not realizing your health club's full potential.

But it doesn't have to be that way. There are better, more effective marketing methods than what most clubs are using. Here's a simple little test that can give you an idea of how you're doing. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What marketing methods are you currently using to acquire new prospects?
- How do they differ from what you used when you first started your club?
- How do they differ from what was used by gyms 5 years ago? 10 years ago?
- Do your advertising or direct mail campaigns produce a sizable profit for you every time you run them?
- Do you have an ongoing marketing system in place that produces consistent, measurable and predictable results, month after month after month?
- What kind of response rates are you getting from your marketing efforts?
- Are you satisfied with those response rates?

The fact is most health clubs are still attempting to market their services the same way they've always done and just mimicking what every other club is currently doing.

Remember the definition of "Insanity?"

Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result.

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Well that's exactly the way most gyms are operating today. They continue doing the same things the same way they've always done them and exactly the way their competitors are doing it, and somehow still expecting their business to be better.

Here's an interesting corollary: If you do what everyone else in your marketplace is doing, what makes you think for a minute, that you can get any better results than they're getting?

You can't. It's impossible.

The industry you find yourself working in is myopic - they only see things a certain way. They reason: "I use sound marketing principles. If I built my business to the size it is today using these principles, why should I change? After all, they've been proven to work."

Maybe so, but at what cost?

If you really want your business to be successful you must step out of the box and look at the way other businesses in other industries market themselves and operate their enterprises. By adopting certain strategies - then adapting them to your business you can take your business light years ahead of your competition and literally leave them in the dust.

The Best Marketer Wins

If you don't have members, it really doesn't matter how good your club is. The expertise and reputation of your personal trainers don't really amount to much when you get right down to it either. And location...your studio doesn't even have to be in a highly visible high traffic area to be successful.

What really matters - what really counts - what really makes the difference is getting members. That's it. How you let others know the benefits and advantages they'll gain from doing business with you as well as what they'll lose if they don't do business with you.

The plain and simple fact is. ACQUIRING MEMBERS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITY in your business, by far. Everything else in your business can be the best in the world. You can have great service, the best staff, a wonderful reputation, good name recognition - but if you don't have anyone to serve - what good are these things?

On the other hand, even if you don't rate number one in all those categories, but you have a steady stream of qualified prospects seeking you out, wanting to know more about how you operate and nearly standing in line to do business with you, it's nearly impossible for you to fail.

If you were to list everything you could think of that could contribute to the success of your business and rank them in order of importance, the number one item on your list would have to be...

How To Cost-Effectively Get A Consistent And Never-Ending Stream Of Qualified Prospects Wanting To Do Business With You.

Let's take a closer look at that statement because it is very powerful.

Question: Who do you want to do business with?

Answer: Qualified prospects, of course. You don't want to waste your time with a prospect you'll never close. You're not in this business for the practice. Your time is valuable. So attracting and dealing with qualified prospects will increase your efficiency and profitability.

Next, you must get a consistent and never-ending stream of these prospects. You don't want your source to dry up. You want to be able to turn on your system any time you need additional business and then turn it off (or pause it) when you get too busy.

To acquire a never-ending stream of qualified prospects you first need to demolish a marketing myth that will stand in your way. It's the myth of the importance of "Branding." Branding simply means establishing your business or your name as a recognizable brand so when people think of personal training, they automatically think of you.

As it is defined, it sounds good, doesn't it? But "sounds good" doesn't pay the bills. You need more. As a small business person with a limited amount of money to spend, and an urgent need for business, you can't afford to take on the task of branding like the corporate giants do.

Instead, you need hot, qualified prospects who seek you out wanting to know more about the benefits and advantages of doing business with you - and you need them now!

Branding forces you to send a generic marketing message to the masses hoping someone will respond. To implement effective branding, a business engages in "image advertising." This type of marketing is also called a "shotgun approach." Image advertising is expensive and marginally effective (unless you have a massive marketing budget to throw at it).

The opposite type of marketing is called "direct response" marketing. Direct response marketing will help you acquire members at the least cost and highest response rate, allowing you a strong return on marketing investments. Many so called health club "experts" insist on building your brand...and of course paying them a hefty fee to help you do that. But the reality of our industry is that branding is too difficult and too expensive for independent health clubs to afford. Once you get a solid base of members and you

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have consistent monthly revenues, then you can begin the arduous task of building your brand. If you are a start up gym, or an established club that is struggling or experiencing increased competition in your market, you simply must focus on consistently getting members in one by one until you find some breathing room. And you must do this by spending as little money as possible.

The manual you are now in possession of will show you exactly, step by step, how to get qualified prospects using direct response lead generation. It outlines the most powerful lead generation systems in use in our industry today. Every strategy outlined in this resource has been tested at hundreds of health clubs nationwide. Vitality Marketing Group (VMG) has been implementing these guerrilla marketing strategies for the better part of a decade with great success.

Once you put these systems in place in your health club business, you will attract more highly qualified prospects than any system you have ever used before. And the best part is that it will cost you pennies compared to what you are currently paying for your marketing efforts. And if you haven't been marketing at all, this resource will give you the most effective, efficient approach to generating new business.

So, if you're ready to begin turning your training business into a "Member Magnet," turn the page and let's get started!

Chapter One

The Two Types of Marketing

As was mentioned in the introduction, there are two types of marketing strategies - "image" marketing and "direct response" marketing. Image marketing is meant to remind consumers of your brand and the services you offer. You've seen countless Nike and Pepsi commercials. That's image marketing. 95% of all advertising you see on television and in print is image marketing.

Direct response marketing is meant to evoke an immediate response and compel the consumer to take action. If you have ever seen an infomercial such as those for "Tae Bo" or for one of the "No money down" real estate guys, you've seen a direct response advertisement.

Independently owned gyms, unless they have a very large marketing budget, should never use the "image" advertising or marketing approach. (*If you had a large marketing budget, you likely wouldn't be reading this book!*) Image ads are effective at building a brand but to do that, your target market must see your ad 12 to 15 times or more. How many times would you have to run your ad for your target market to be able to see it that many times – 100, 200, 300 times?

Most independent clubs aren't big enough to afford that kind of advertising budget. It's just not feasible. Perhaps you are part of a franchise. Hopefully your franchisor is doing their fair share of branding on your behalf. But that still doesn't mean that branding will be enough to get people walking through your door. As a small business person you need to have a quick response to your ads so that you can receive a quick return on your investment.

What Makes an Ad or Marketing Piece Direct Response?

Direct response ads have several distinguishable characteristics that make them unique compared to image ads. First, they're trackable. That is, when someone contacts you for information or to become a member, you are able to determine exactly which ad in which media they responded to.

Second, they're measurable. Since you know which ads or marketing pieces are being responded to and how many contacts you receive from each one, you can measure which are the most effective and which ads need to be changed or dropped.

Third, direct response ads are accountable. Your ads are very similar to employees. In fact advertising can really be considered "salesmanship in print". It's like having a sales person that is accountable to you for what they do and how they produce.

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If an ad or marketing campaign isn't producing, you want to know so that you can make intelligent decisions as to whether to continue running it as is, make changes to it, or discontinue it all altogether.

A fourth characteristic of direct response ads is that they give you immediate feedback. Because your ads have a built-in response mechanism you can determine very quickly how effective they are. Image ads, on the other hand, don't allow for this valuable information and most often you'll never know whether or not an inquiry or purchase was made as a result of someone seeing your ad or marketing material. About the only way you can determine this is by asking each prospect or member who buys how they heard about you.

Some additional distinctive characteristics of direct response ads and marketing pieces are that they:

- Use attention getting headlines
- Tell the prospect what's in it for them
- Make an irresistible offer
- Provide a simple method of taking advantage of the offer
- Place a time or quantity limit on the offer
- Use tracking codes to determine the response rate of the ad

The Two Biggest Problems with Most Marketing Pieces

If you're operating like most clubs, you're either doing image advertising and marketing – or you're not marketing at all.

Once again, one of the biggest problems with image ads (aside from their inability to provide you with instantaneous results or feedback) is that for them to work effectively they must be run a large number of times, and can end up costing you a enormous amount of money.

A second major problem with image ads is that in most cases they give the reader absolutely no reason, benefit or advantage to contact the person that ran the ad to either gain more information or to do business with them.

All you need to do is open the Yellow Pages to the fitness or health club section and look at the ads. Most of them are carbon copies of each other and the most profound thing you will find on them is “Large selection of free weights and treadmills”. Not very compelling.

If you want your business to stand out and get more than your fair share of calls - calls from interested and qualified prospects you've got to make your ads very clearly scream to the readers that you are different than all the rest - that you are special - that there is benefit and advantage to contacting you. And you must do it in a non-threatening manner.

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Later in this manual, we will give you the specifics of what you should do to lay the groundwork for successful guerrilla marketing. Everything you need to turn your business into a marketing machine is right here, so let's get going.

Chapter Two

Common Problems of Owning a Gym or Health Club

Lots of people dream of having their own business. Why work for someone else when there is less job security and they are expecting more and more work from you?

However it is overlooked that to run a successful health club business, or any small business for that matter, especially in the early years you need...

- Motivation
- Focus
- A willingness to work hard
- Self Reliance
- Support from your family
- The ability to deliver results

Starting your own gym business takes determination, perseverance and self-discipline. Beware if you are starting for negative reasons, perhaps just because you dislike your boss or you're breaking away to compete directly with your former gym, or you don't want to have to answer to someone every day. Running your own business is a big step. Take time to consider and plan.

Owning your business is not playing golf when you want and taking vacations when you want. There is a good chance you will actually make less money the first few years than you were making in your previous career. There is a lot of administrative work and added responsibilities when you own your own business. And in case you didn't realize it - the member now becomes your boss and they pay your wages when you own your own club!

It requires a different mindset and that's what you're going to need if you're going to be a six-figure earning club owner. Just look at the following statistics.

Of all the thousands of people who start service businesses in the U.S....

- By the end of the first year, 40% will have failed.
- Within 3 years, 56% will have failed.
- Within 5 years, 76% will have failed.

Of those who go past 5 years, there's no guarantee they will survive the next 5 years.

There are many common problems experienced by most all small businesses:

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- The owners work too hard and for too many hours.
- Personal objectives of the owners such as hobbies and spending time with their family end up low down on the list of priorities.
- The owners spend too much time doing the day-to-day technical work rather than planning and managing the business.
- The owners don't understand the 'behind the scenes' work associated with running the business.
- The owners don't understand that in order for a business to have a good resale value it must work without them.
- Many owners get frustrated and simply give up and go back to being an employee.
- The rewards don't match the effort.

Club owners often face common problems in managing their business...

- No consistency in delivery of their services if they have more than one person delivering them.
- Can't depend on their employees to get it right.
- They focus on people rather than systems, which creates problems when the people leave.
- Systems that are in place are not documented, rather kept in the mind of a manager who may leave.
- The owner ends up doing everything.
- Employees are not as diligent as the owners.
- The owner spends too much time on other people's problems and administration.
- The owner always has to supervise and guide employees.
- They have no idea how they compare with other similar businesses and competitors with respect to financial performance or non-financial areas such as human

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recourses, production, marketing, etc. They therefore don't know where there are areas for improvement.

- No system for projecting income and expenditure.
- No system for measuring key financial indicators against their business plan.

With regard to Marketing efforts, there are common problems for small businesses...

- It's done haphazardly rather than in a systematized way.
- They don't know what works.
- They don't fully understand why their members buy.
- They don't know who their most profitable members are.
- They don't measure their marketing results against costs.
- They lose sight of marketing to their existing members.
- They only market when they need new members.
- They forget the fundamental truth that “it is irrelevant how good you are at providing a service if you don't have members”.

The Fundamental Cause Of Small Business Problems

Michael Gerber in his book, *E-Myth*, disproves an often misunderstood myth. The myth is that entrepreneurs “start businesses” - It isn't true!

The beginning of all these problems is the very fact that often the business isn't started by an entrepreneur, but by a technician who has an entrepreneurial moment, perhaps caused by a bad day at work, a lousy boss, a thought you're doing most of the work but only get paid \$15 / hr., etc. Or perhaps an aspiring club owner is a strong personal trainer with a solid fitness education. Not good enough. It takes a true entrepreneur, who is willing to sacrifice, to make a gym successful.

Whatever the reason, it's then likely that the person starts a business because they're a good technician. But what do they do know about running a business?

Very little.

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And the technical work of a business is very different to running a business that does technical work. Think about that for a moment.

The technician is very good at what he does, but for the business to succeed, he needs to be the technician doing the technical work, the manager organizing everything and the entrepreneur with the vision to take the business forward. However he has a tendency towards the technical work as this is where he feels most comfortable.

In the beginning, killing yourself doing all of the technical work might keep you afloat, but as the business grows a little it becomes harder to keep everything moving forward. As a fitness enthusiast, or perhaps a former personal trainer, you want to focus on getting people in shape. Unfortunately, it's not that simple. Your business success depends on you. If you're spending all of your time performing the technical work, you will never be able to effectively manage your club and you certainly will not be able to improve the business and take it to the next level.

All you've done is swap one job for another, only now you're working twice as hard with extra responsibilities, and likely less pay! All aspects of your life suffer and it would have been much simpler to keep a "real" job.

Eventually you can't cope and you get some help, perhaps someone to manage the appointments, deal with accounting and billing, etc. However, one day they move on to another job or they don't do it as well as you and you end up trying to do more yourself.

Employees will probably never do the job as well as you. They don't have the same attention to detail, skills, passion or enthusiasm for the job as you. And in reality, they probably never will. So we have to find another way.

However, some health club businesses are successful without their owners doing all the tasks. They are successful in marketing and increasing sales, they deliver results to their members and create raving fans. They can manage the growth and they manage the money successfully.

So, why are we mentioning this in a marketing book?

Simple – To keep you from creating a success that makes you miserable.

If you apply the things that you learn in this book, you'll definitely get more members and make more money. But if you don't have the systems in place to handle it, then all you're doing is insuring that you'll be working from 5 a.m. until 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and most of Saturday. The hours you aren't selling and providing customer service will be consumed with administrative work and "putting out fires".

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So do yourself a favor and build the infrastructure of your business now so it can accommodate the growth you're about to experience. Some resources that we recommend to help you in that process are:

Fitness Sales Training Association Certification – This certification will provide you the selling skills you will need once you have your steady flow of prospects coming through your door.

www.FSTAcertified.com

E-Myth – The definitive guide on how to go from a technician to an entrepreneur.

<http://www.e-myth.com>

Vitality Marketing Group Inner Circle – If you need more specific information on building your business or if you want someone to guide you through the transition from technician to entrepreneur, we accept a limited number of club owners and managers into our coaching program.

www.GymMarketing.com

Chapter Three

Systematizing All Processes in Your Health Club

Wouldn't it be great if your health club...

- Ran at peak efficiency without you.
- Delivered great service consistently time and time again to your members.
- Had staff that performed tasks the same way, and the best way, every time.

If you're going to learn from a business that successfully does this, let's take a look at the 'arch rival' of most health club businesses, McDonalds. Even if you don't like what McDonald's sells, there is no denying it is a hugely successful business – and besides – we need to know what we're up against.

At McDonald's...

- The owners don't work in the business flipping burgers.
- You know when you visit McDonalds you're going to get the same consistent burger every time, with the same customer experience every single time, which is why people go there. They give the customer exactly what they are expecting every single time, there is no disappointment and so the customers return.
- The burgers are what McDonald's has found customers will buy. They've found their best formula and they use it consistently, only changing it when they find an even better formula. And that is true for every part of the McDonalds experience from the food, to the greeting, to the cleanliness, to the kids meals, etc.

Everything works and is done the same way until they find a better way to do it. It doesn't matter who does a task, they always follow a system, so that it's then done the same way every single time and the customer gets the same experience every time they go back.

- They have systems in place that don't require people with extensive foodservice backgrounds to deliver the same product as people who've worked in foodservice for years.

When one person leaves and another is hired, the job still gets done exactly the same way.

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Although McDonald's provides a seemingly low quality product, it is an extremely high quality business which customers value and have great loyalty to.

McDonald's attracts the entrepreneurs with the vision to move the business forward, the managers who manage the franchise locations and the technicians who work in the stores and they all work together seamlessly.

Of course, it's because they have an organizational strategy and a system for everything they do. It is the ultimate systematized business that runs just like clockwork.

Just because your health club business isn't McDonalds, doesn't mean you can't learn from them. It is what is known as a franchise format. This is the type of approach that works throughout the world across all industries and it's no surprise that franchises and licensed systems are far more likely to succeed than any other start up business. But as an independently owned and operated club, you can still establish the systems similar to those of a franchise.

When a McDonalds franchise is taken, the franchisee gets far more than a brand name. They get a whole system of doing things that work. Not until they have learned the way things are done, do they get the keys to the door.

Just because you are not going to franchise your business doesn't mean you can't learn from how they make everything inside the business run consistently and smoothly. If that happened just inside your one business unit, without you working in it, wouldn't your business be a great place to go to work, or not work if you so chose?

When Ray Kroc took the McDonald brothers burger business in 1954 and set about figuring out how he could make it work, he set about working ON the business and not IN the business. The business became the product to him, not the burgers and it was the business he worked on.

The key is to work ON the business, not IN the business. If you are a one-man company, not wanting to grow, this perhaps isn't true to the same extent, although certain things can still be learned about consistent delivery to your members. A one-man operation may not really have a business; they have a job, possibly a well paid one, with members as their boss. This doesn't mean there is anything wrong with the one-man operation (I.e. a personal training studio). The world is reliant on many one-man operations; it's just that some of these principles apply less to them.

For every other gym business that wants to develop, you'll only do so if you get to work ON your business and stop working IN it. As an extreme, you can imagine that you are going to franchise or replicate 100 gyms just like your first one. What would you have to do to achieve this? You would have to completely systematize your business.

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An analogy that can help with the understanding of working on, rather than in your business, is a game of monopoly. If you are a piece in the game, you are simply a token and you don't make the decisions, you can't influence the game at all. However, by being a player in the game and being able to see the whole board, you can start to put strategies into place that will have far more of an influence. You are now working on the game rather than being in it. It's exactly the same for your business; you can have far more effect by working on it.

Before we get carried away, a word of warning. Some health club businesses and franchises have tried to systematize their business and have gotten so carried away with it that they spent all of their time on it. This too will cause you to fail before you really are able to even begin implementing the systems.

You have to operate your business and generate enough income to put food on the table, pay the mortgage, etc. This has to be the first priority. As some revenues start coming in, begin working on the systems for your business that will...

- Give consistency to everyone - your members, prospects, and employees.
- Be operated by people with the lowest possible training skill level. This enables you to find staff when you need them at the lowest possible price and focus on hiring people with strong work ethics, good personalities and a passion for helping people. You don't want systems that can be operated by only elite salespeople, marketers, trainers, etc; because when that person leaves, you will have trouble finding a replacement.

Sure, you say McDonalds is not like your health club business. So let's take a health club with elite caliber personal trainers. If a training business was to employ only the trainers with Master's degrees in Exercise Phys. it would be extremely difficult to consistently offer their level of expertise, as it becomes very difficult to find a replacement should they leave, be ill, etc. However, if you were to develop systems to provide elite services that could be delivered by anyone with an average training skill level and standard of education, they would be able to grow and leverage the business far more.

- Enable you to eventually not work in the business at all if you choose.

Even if you just focus on the most critical things you do in your health club and systematize these, your business will be far better for it.

So what you need is a systems-dependent rather than a people-dependent health club. The systems run the business and your staff runs the systems. You can't work ON the business without help from staff, but the more you systematize, the less time you spend making sure your staff does things the way you need them to be done

Organizational Strategy

If you are going to develop a business that is not initially dependent upon staff filling every role, you need to have an organizational chart that starts not with staff names on it, but with the positions / roles that need filling.

It helps to draw an organization chart based on what you want your business to look like rather than how it is at present. Once you read *E-Myth*, you will understand this further.

The positions on the chart should relate to employee functions (marketing coordinator, sales director, program design coordinator, billing coordinator, etc) rather than named people. This ensures it's the system that you're concentrating on.

Once you've decided the functions you need in each box, then you can allocate people to fit those functions.

Let's say there are three established trainers in your business but there is only one position for head trainer. Instead of having 3 trainers all trying to be the head trainer and create conflict, duplication of resources and nobody knowing what their responsibilities are, you agree who is likely to be best suited to that position and put them into it. The other two, take other positions. They still all play equally important roles – perhaps one heads up sales and one heads up marketing - but now they are starting to organize the business far more effectively.

To start with, you may be the only one in the business. That doesn't matter - just put your name in each box. As the business grows you move out of some boxes and get other people to move into the box. However, in the box will be a system for them to follow so that they do it the same as you. Now you're starting to build a club business that works.

Systems

Each box on the organizational chart needs a system. In reality, there will be many systems that go into one box.

A system needs...

- Creation - the starting point is the development of a system that will allow you to overcome what needs to be done, provide what the member wants, and do it in the best possible way. So you need to create a system.
- Measurement - once you've created a system you can only know if it is the best system by measuring the results of the system, so you must measure how the system performs.

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- Consistent Implementation - the system must be implemented so that it is done the same way every time.

For example, when you take phone inquiries, you would create a system for answering the phone and dealing with the inquiries. You would then measure how successful this was in comparison to other ways of answering the phone.

Once you have measured and found the best way, you then consistently implement this system until you find a system that is better. You only know if the new system is better by measuring it.

You'll need systems for all aspects of your health club business; here are just a few...

- Generating leads through marketing
- Converting leads into members
- Following up with missed guests
- Member referrals
- Designing programs for your members
- Implementing programs effectively
- Managing personal training
- Measuring member satisfaction
- Managing payment collection
- Measuring marketing performance
- Tracking attendance and usage
- Staff development
- Cleaning schedules for the club
- Compensation of staff
- Etc.

When one employee leaves, if the system is properly documented, it's a lot easier for someone else to take over the system.

A system can't be in someone's head, otherwise when they're ill or leave, you have no system and your business is people-dependent.

In designing a system it helps to specify the result you want and draw the system in a flow chart or completion plan to document it. The completion plan or flow chart helps to ensure you don't miss any stages.

The full logical process to design a system is as follows...

- Name the system

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- Specify the outcome
- Allocate responsibility for the system
- Set a deadline to implement it
- Identify the time/resources needed to implement it
- Document the system

Operations manuals are a very effective way of documenting the systems. For every system you establish in your club, it needs to be typed out and an operations manual for your club will emerge as you begin adding each system. When you are finished with your operations manual, you will have a roadmap to systematic success that will allow anyone to learn and repeat the processes the same way every time. Think of how valuable this will be if and when you decide to sell your business? If you are asking top dollar for your club, but you provide an operations manual that outlines how to do absolutely everything at the club, your buyer will feel much more confident paying your asking price. If your business is scattered and not systematic, they know their work is cut out for them due to your disorganization.

Really, everything in your business is a system, although they're usually not documented. Begin systematizing everything at your club. Anything you have to do on a daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, document it so that you never again have to explain or retrain someone; allowing you to work ON the business!

Chapter Four

The Lifetime Value Of A Member – Your Marketing Edge

If you know the "Lifetime Value" of your members, you can double your profits almost overnight. It's the "Marketing Edge" that will allow you to know exactly what you can afford to spend to bring in a new member.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with this, let's explain what the Lifetime Value of a Member is...

The Lifetime Value Of A Member Is The Average Monthly Gross Total Of Revenue Per Member, Multiplied By The Number Of Years They Remain Your Member.

For example: Your average member spends \$40 per month with you between their membership and any retail offerings you have. Let's say on average your members stay with you for an average of 1.5 years before moving on.

This makes your average member worth \$720 in gross revenues to your business.

Even if you just approximate the numbers, you'll start to get an idea of what every member is really worth to your business.

Why is it so important to know this? Well, knowing the Lifetime Value of your Members gives you a HUGE "Marketing Edge". Armed with this information, you will now be able to know what you can spend to acquire new members. How much would you spend to get a member who is worth \$720?

Here is a story of a businessman who started a country club-style business:

A gentleman in Australia spent \$1 million on building three tennis courts, swimming pools, game rooms and barbecue facilities. The place was extraordinary. There was only one trouble: He didn't have any customers!

So for one month he advertised in the local newspapers:

*FREE Tennis Lessons, FREE Court Time, FREE Barbecues and Swimming Pool Parties. Guess what happened? The place was packed from 7a.m. till 10 p.m. every day that month. He gave away lots of tennis lessons, food and court time. It cost him a few thousand dollars. But the interesting part is that at the end of the month, **he had a booming business!** The courts were booked solid and have been ever since. Why is that? People got accustomed to playing at his courts instead of someone else's. His complex was impressive and he charged more than the others.*

This man knew the Lifetime Value of a Member.

If you're not sure of some things, just estimate. The key is having an idea of what each member is worth to you. This will be explained more in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

You Buy Your Members

Marketing is simply the process of buying new members.

So, let's establish what it means to buy new members ...

Let's say you launch a direct mail campaign and send a 3 letter sequence to prospects. It costs you \$600 to create and mail the sequence to 400 prospects. You get 6 new members. So, because you invested \$600 to get 6 new members, you paid \$100 to 'buy' each member.

This is the way I want you to think: Whenever you do marketing of any kind, you are doing nothing more than investing money to buy new members.

And before you ever do any marketing, you need to decide how much you're willing to pay for each new member. That's where your Average Lifetime Value of a Member is so valuable. You can be sure that the marketing investment you make is profitable. Let's walk through a process to help you decide how much you can invest to buy a new member.

If you have an average lifetime member value of \$2000 – you need to recognize that this is a gross number. You need to identify what your costs are to service these members. So you should calculate all of the costs incurred to provide the services, rent space, cover expenses, etc.

This will leave you with a net number. For the ease of math, let's say that the Net Lifetime Value of Each Member is \$1000.

If you're spending the \$100 per member alluded to before, then you're getting a true 10 to 1 return on your investment. Now you just have to decide what an acceptable return on your investment is based on your cash flow and the fact that the marketing cost is "up front" while the lifetime value is spread out over the duration of the time you do business with each member. If you have good cash flow and a high volume of existing members, the percentage that you can spend will likely be higher. If your cash flow is poor or you have few members, then you probably can afford less.

Referrals Are One Of The Safest Ways To Invest Your Marketing Dollar ...

Here's another reason to deliver extraordinary service and make referrals the foundation of your business – with referral marketing you can decide exactly how much you are going to spend to acquire a member. You will pay a small fee for all referred prospects – perhaps a thank you card or a small token of your appreciation – but you only pay "full price" when you get a new member.

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This is different than in typical marketing because if you use the example we worked with before, the quality of your letter, the demographics of your list and your ability to close prospects will all factor in to whether the \$600 you spent produced 1 member, 6 members or 10 members. You are spending \$600 no matter what. With referrals, aside from the nominal cost of thank you cards or whatever you deem appropriate, the only way you spend \$600 is for 6 (or whatever number your lifetime value allows) new members.

It's Time To Do Some Calculations ...

So you need to decide how much, in dollar terms, is the maximum you're willing to invest to acquire a new member. Calculate the gross lifetime value of your average member and then the net lifetime value. Then assess the current status of you cash flow and existing member base. Here is a general guideline to start with:

If you have a very healthy business, you can easily spend 20% of net lifetime value to acquire a new member.

If you have a moderately healthy business, you can spend 10-20% of net lifetime value to acquire a new member.

If your business is relatively new or has poor cash flow, spend 5-10% of net lifetime value to acquire a new member.

Remember, these are only guidelines. If you choose to spend less, that is perfectly fine. Consider these the maximum amounts that you're willing to invest.

Chapter Six

The Master Success Formula - How To Grow Exponentially

Understanding the Master Success Formula is critical to building your business. The formula, although known by very few health club owners, has been used to turn around failing business, and spur incredible growth and enormous increases in revenue for already successful businesses.

This formula is the quickest way to boost profits 100% to 500% or more, especially if you have an existing member base.

If you read just a small percentage of the books available on business, it's easy to get confused by all the complicated ideas and theories. But when you boil all those fancy ideas down, there are really only three ways to build your business.

The Business Master Success Formula

1. Get More Members
2. Get More Purchases From Each Member
(Increase your retention rate or increase your member's buying frequency)
3. Get Bigger Purchases From Each Member
(Increase your member's average purchase)

You're probably thinking, "That's too simple!"

It is simple, but watch how it can impact your business. Most fitness professionals spend most of their time, money, and energy on ineffective advertising to try to increase only the first category: Get More Members.

What would happen if you spent equal amounts of time, money, and energy on not only getting more new members, but also on increasing retention, and increasing the amount each member spends with you each month?

You would experience a quantum leap in income!

For example, let's say that you currently have 500 members who stay with your business for 12 months and spend \$40 per month with you.

Using the Master Success Formula, we can calculate how much money you made. Your total revenues would be \$240,000. Here's the formula:

Get More Members +

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Get More Purchases Per Member +

Get Bigger Purchases Per Member =

Greater Total Revenues

500 Members +
12 Months +
\$40 Per Month =

\$240,000

Not bad...but not extraordinary.

Now let's say that after reading this manual you start to apply these secrets to increase your member base, increase your retention rate (the length of time members stay with you), and you are also able to increase your monthly revenues per member by adding more value to your business or more offerings.

Let's be really conservative and say that this manual only brings you a 25% improvement in the number of new members you bring in over the course of a year.

So now instead of 500 members, you now have 625. We're being very conservative here. That's an easily attainable goal using all of the secrets that you'll learn in this manual. It's approximately 2-3 new members each week.

Now, for the sake of our example, let's again be conservative and say you only increase your retention (Get More Purchases) percentage by 25%. In other words, you get your members to stay with your business for 15 months instead of 12 months.

Finally, let's assume that you increase your monthly revenues per member only 25% so instead of \$40 per month, your members now spend \$50.00 per month.

So you've only made 25% improvements in each of the three categories of the Master Success Formula. How much has your business grown? Has it grown by 25%?

No! Your revenues went from \$ 240,000 to \$468,750!

You've nearly doubled your revenues! And you haven't done anything that difficult. You just used the power of multiplication in the Master Success Formula.

Let's take a look:

Get More Members – 125 Additional Members
Get More Purchases – Average Retention Increase of 3 Months
Get Bigger Purchases - \$10.00 Increase Per Month Per Member

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Total Revenue Increase - \$228,750

Let's take this one step further. After you've mastered the techniques in this manual, it's quite possible that you'll be able to double your member base, double your retention rate, and double your monthly revenues per member.

In that scenario, your income would increase to an unbelievable \$1,920,000. Do the math yourself; If you double your membership to 1,000 members, retain those members an average of 2 years, and convince them to purchase \$50 worth of extras each month such as personal training, tanning, group exercise, pro shop items, etc, then you will be earning nearly two million dollars off of these members ($1,000 \times 24 \times \$50$). At first glance, one would think that doubling these areas would simply double your income, when in fact the exponential nature of the formula provides you more than 5 times the revenues! Broken down, that is \$80,000 per month in revenues. Now deduct your monthly expenses (rent, payroll, etc) that you currently owe each month. The profit margin looks pretty nice doesn't it?

Nobody can guarantee that you'll double all of these categories, but you need to be able to visualize the possibilities when you use the Master Success Formula.

Now let's talk about what you need to do to make your business "stand out" in the market place.

Chapter Seven

Why Should They Choose You?

Most health club owners haven't given much thought about who they are, what they are, and why people should choose them as their preferred method of achieving their fitness goals. They have never thought about what their message is to the marketplace. They have no clear and concise answer to the question, "Why should I join your gym over all of the others out there offering the same services?"

Let's do a little exercise together. Go to the Yellow Pages and look at all the ads in the weight loss category. Look at the message of each of those ads.

Do you see any messages that stand out from the rest? More than likely the answer is "No." *Everybody is saying the same thing!*

Dan Kennedy, a direct marketing guru and successful author, calls this "marketing incest". Businesses in a particular industry start saying the same things the same way as other businesses in that industry. They have the mistaken belief that it must be working if other businesses in that industry are doing it.

So then after a while, everybody in that niche is copying everybody else. All the ads and promotions look the same and convey the same basic message.

And "marketing incest" is no different than regular incest. Pretty soon everybody is stupid!

Doing things the same way as everyone else will get you the same results as everyone else!

So the question you need to ask yourself is:

Why would people call you instead of anyone else in the marketplace offering what appears to be exactly the same features and benefits as you?

You must give prospective members a reason to call you that is different than everybody else out there. You need to develop a marketing message that sets you apart from all other health clubs and states clearly and concisely to your prospective members why they should choose you.

This message is called a "**Unique Selling Proposition**" (USP). Your USP is a marketing message that separates you from your competition. Your USP tells people what makes you different and unique from all the other health clubs, and therefore why a potential member should choose you over any and all other options.

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It also announces the main benefits your business has to offer. Your USP should answer this question:

"Why Should A Prospective Member Choose You Versus Any And Every Other Fitness Provider, Health Club or Weight Loss Center... Or Any And All Other Options?"

About 20 years ago, two brothers decided to put themselves through college by starting a small business. They chose a very competitive area, and in a short time the business was unsuccessful and one brother left the business, selling his share to the remaining brother for a used Volkswagen bug. The remaining brother decided to try to make something of the business, and developed a USP that literally revolutionized the industry:

"FRESH, HOT PIZZA DELIVERED IN 30 MINUTES OR LESS, GUARANTEED!"

Do we need to tell you the name of the company? In fact, if you asked ten people to say the first word that popped into their minds when you said "pizza", seven or eight of them would say "Domino's."

At a time when you wouldn't have thought the world had room for another pizza place, Domino's became the most popular of all, due primarily to a simple message that differentiated them from everyone else. This story demonstrates how a powerful USP can make an extraordinary difference! And because it can make so much of a difference, you absolutely must create a strong USP for your club.

Now, if you analyze the Domino's marketing message, you'll notice some very interesting things. First, it doesn't claim to be all things to all people. It doesn't mention Momma's special sauce recipe from the old country. In fact, there's not even any mention of the pizza being good. All it says is that they'll get it to you while it's still hot and it's still fresh, and that they guarantee to do that. It answers the question of *why* you should do business with them. And it built an identity in their marketplace *very quickly*.

Second, it is very specific and meaningful. It doesn't say, "It'll be there soon" or "It'll be really good." It says exactly what it means: FRESH, HOT, IN 30 MINUTES, AND GUARANTEED.

It's a clear, compelling, really great marketing message, and a good model to look at and keep in mind when you start to structure a USP for your business.

Your USP has to convey what is unique to your business. It can't be a boilerplate fill-in-the-blank statement. Here is an example:

"We help the people of Smithville quickly and permanently lose unwanted fat without dangerous drugs, fad diets or ineffective gimmicks with less than 3 hours per week of exercise."

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Guess what the response is to your USP?

"Really? How do you do that?"

That's exactly the response you want! They basically just stood up and raised their hand and said, "I'm interested in what you have to offer!"

They opened the door for you to present what you do. You didn't go chasing them down. They're pursuing you! So your USP should be compelling enough to prompt the prospect to ask for more information.

Now when people ask what you do for a living, if you were to respond with, "I'm a gym owner", or "I'm a personal trainer". . .the prospect's eyes would probably glaze over and their reply would probably be, "Oh, I see" while feigning interest. In that scenario, they has absolutely NO IDEA what sets you apart... and worse yet, they think it's of no interest to them because you haven't told them how what you do can benefit them.

People just don't care until you show them how it benefits them! "What's In It For Me?" (WIIFM)

Now you may stumble upon the rare individual who will say, "Oh really. I've been thinking about working with a trainer." Congratulations! You just lucked out. You just got a prospective member in spite of your feeble USP. Hey, even a blind squirrel finds an acorn every now and then!

But what if you had responded like this:

"I help people achieve the body of their dreams while gaining more energy, living longer and feeling better about themselves while having fun in the process".

How many people do you think are interested in learning how to do that? Quite a few. But many of them have *no idea* that a health club can help them do that. Health clubs aren't for them, or so they thought. Now when they ask, "How do you do *that?*"...*they* have just opened the door for you to present your offer.

Give them an invitation for a free trial week or a free personal training session.

Your USP should go on your business cards and your guest passes. In fact, you should have your USP on all your correspondence, letterheads, print marketing, etc.

Most business cards have about the same impact as your "I'm a gym owner" statement. They show your business' name, address, and phone number, and possibly a web address. Unless you've lucked out and stumbled upon somebody who was just looking for what you offer, people will pitch your business card in the trash as soon as you're out of sight.

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If you don't have a USP that sets you apart from your competition (and all other options), you give your prospect little choice but to base their decision to use you on *price*. That's okay in some respects if your USP is that you are indeed the low cost offering in your community. But in today's competitive health club market, you had better provide some value and some great service, both of which are difficult if you are the low cost competitor in your area.

If you permit yourself, your business, or your services to be perceived as a "commodity", your prospects must choose between you and your competition solely based on "price".

You do not want to compete based on price. It undermines everything you are trying to accomplish. Besides, what kind of message does, "We're the cheapest!" broadcast? It's likely not the image you want for your business.

Almost all clubs who compete on price alone go out of business in a very short period of time. Here's why: There is always another "solution" willing to under-cut your prices in order to steal your members. If you have nothing unique about you and you're competing on price alone...why would your members stay with you? They won't! So you need a strong USP to attract *and keep* members. Plus, if you have monthly dues as low as \$20, rest assured that someone will come in and offer \$19. It happens all the time.

There are five primary ways to differentiate your business, other than just "price":

1. Process
2. Personality
3. Product
4. Service
5. Marketing

Within these five areas you'll find the right one (or ones) on which you can create a powerful USP. The basics for developing a compelling USP:

- 1. It should offer something truly unique that sets your business apart from everyone else.**
- 2. It should be a clear, concise statement with meaningful specifics, not vague generalities.**
- 3. It should convey specific benefits to your members, and you should be able to communicate it in 60 seconds or less.**
- 4. It should communicate an emotional want in a way that makes an emotional connection with people.**

It's important that you dedicate the time to developing your USP now... one that will differentiate you and make a difference in your marketing and your business. And do this before you start implementing any of the strategies in this manual. Because what we're

going to do is position you so you're only talking to highly qualified, interested prospects who are eager to talk to you...rather than prospecting - which is talking to people who really don't want to talk to you and aren't qualified to work with you.

Developing a Great Guarantee as Part of Your USP

In any transaction, someone is taking all or most of the risk. It's either you, or your prospective member. Most businesses make the member take all the risk. The member risks money if the product or service isn't what it's been promised to be. They risk wasting time because they may have to wait much longer than they've been told they will have to wait. And they risk looking stupid if they make a bad purchase.

People like to do what is safest. We don't want to look stupid, waste time, get a bad result, or waste money. This means that ...

When you have a powerful guarantee which protects your prospective member fully from any possible risk, and you clearly communicate that guarantee to your prospective members, they'll be much more likely to trust you and buy.

Address Key Frustrations ...

There are many different types of guarantees. The best guarantee addresses the most common dislikes or hates people have in dealing with you or the fitness / weight loss industry as a whole.

For example, with diets, people hate feeling very restricted. With health clubs they feel as if they're dealing with sleazy sales people and that they're going to be exercising with people who are already in shape.

So choose a guarantee that protects your members from experiencing their biggest frustrations they have when dealing with your businesses or with our industry.

Your business will become a lot more appealing when you do.

For example, you could implement the following guarantee if you found out that a lot of people get very frustrated when your trainers don't listen to their individual needs:

“If you think, at any time, that we haven't fairly addressed your individual needs and preferences about how we go about improving your body and your quality of life, just tell us and your session is free.”

Think about this: If your major hesitation with using a personal trainer is that either you met with one at a health club and they gave you a cookie-cutter program or you worked with a bodybuilder / trainer that had you taking 25 pills a day and eating nothing but egg whites and oatmeal, wouldn't you chose a trainer who promised to base their program

around you, your preferences and your needs? Wouldn't this immediately give such a trainer a competitive advantage in your eyes over all other fitness providers?

Make Sure You Deliver

This is obviously very important. If you have a guarantee and you know that you can't deliver on it, then you're going to lose a lot of money and a lot of credibility. For example, if you don't think it's possible for members never to have to wait for a machine, don't have a no wait guarantee. If you don't think it's possible to continually give uninterrupted service to your member, don't have a no-interruptions guarantee. Have a guarantee that you can deliver on, time and time again.

Why Implementing a Guarantee is a Lot Safer Than You Think ...

The common thought process by gym owners when they consider implementing a guarantee is: "People will try to take advantage of me"

As for the first response: Yes, that is possible, but unlikely and nothing to worry about. Here's why...

We've implemented money-back guarantees in the health clubs of many of our clients and have never heard of anyone asking for a refund. Thousands of members have been offered the guarantee and not a single one has taken them up on the offer.

Not one refund.

People will get results if they do what you tell them. If they don't – they feel at fault and don't feel comfortable asking for a refund.

Even if A Few People Are Unethical, You'll Still Win ...

Even if a few people try to take advantage of your guarantee, they'll be so few compared to the many new members you'll get from having that guarantee. In fact, from all the studies available regarding guarantees, most conclude that a maximum of 1% of people will ask for a refund when the business lives up to its promises.

Though sometimes it may not seem so, the vast majority of people are ethical. Based on that alone, you should give members the added protection of a guarantee because they are honest people. And they far out-number unethical people.

Whenever your members and your sphere of influence interacts with the people in your business, whether it is with you, your staff or even other members, all these people can be marketing for you when they understand, buy into, and communicate your USP.

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The more you educate your member base on the benefits they are getting from you, that they couldn't get from anyone else, the more you'll be building deep rapport and a solid foundation for referrals.

How to easily attract exactly the type of members you want...

The quantity of referrals is important but just as important is the quality. You want to attract people who are kind, courteous, dedicated, and who pay you what you're worth for your services. In other words, you want to attract ideal members to your business.

So, how do you attract ideal members?

Well, it's actually very simple. The first step is to...

1. Determine Exactly Who Your IDEAL Member Is.

You can't attract hordes of ideal members to your business if you don't determine who they are, so who's your ideal member? What characteristics do they have?

Do they always pay on time?

Do they stay with you for an extended period of time?

Do they refer?

Are they on time for appointments?

Are they kind and considerate people?

2. Be Honest With Yourself - Would Your Ideal Member Want To Join Your Club?

Really think about it and don't kid yourself. If you lie to yourself, you won't be able to improve your business to the level you deserve. If you are wanting people with money who recognize and gladly pay for value, but your gym is dilapidated, dirty, and full of meathead personal trainers and staff, what then?

What's the answer?

If your business is exactly what your ideal members are looking for then you're ready to attract them in mass quantities.

But, if your ideal member wouldn't want to join your club at the moment, that's alright too. At least now you're aware of how things really are and you can change them. Sometimes awareness can be enough to cause you to take massive action. When you're honest you can improve the situation.

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So, if your business is not quite there yet in terms of being able to attract your ideal members, then you're sitting on a goldmine.

If you're not certain that your ideal member would want to work with you, then...

What Would Your Business Need To Be Like For Your Ideal Member To Be Drawn To It?

Do you need to hire the best personal trainers around?

Would you and your staff be friendly, helpful and courteous more consistently?

Would you have to overdeliver with thank you cards, more personal attention and a passion for doing the "little things?"

3. Who Do YOU Need To Become To Attract Your Ideal Member?

Do you need to be a person who is continuously thinking of new ways to give more and more benefit to your members? Do you need to be a person who is continually learning more about marketing, member service, leadership and business? Do you need to be a person who is a lot more meticulous about details? Do you need to be a person who loves learning and who is always looking for ways to think differently, improve and take new action?

Rate Your Members

Since most people surround themselves with people who are similar, do you necessarily want to ask your worst members to refer you their friends? Unless you are really struggling for business, that would be a crazy idea! You'd be likely to get more members like them ... terrible members!

So rate your members on a scale of 1-3 with the "one's" being your favorite members...those members that you can't wait to walk through the door.

The "two's" are your average member. They show up, do what you ask of them for the most part and are a solid part of your business.

The "three's" are those members that you want to fire. They complain, show up late and cause 90% of all your headaches.

Now – focus most of your referral efforts on getting your “One’s” to refer to you. Run special referral promotions specifically for them.

Does that mean you don't want your "Two's" to refer. No...you can put effort into getting them to refer as well. But really try to leverage your best members and eventually your business will be virtually all "One's."

Testimonials – The Most Powerful Marketing Asset You Have

If your prospects don't believe you, they aren't going to become members.

This is where the power of testimonials comes in. It's praise from your existing members, the media, other experts or even a celebrity. They are extremely powerful.

The testimonials you collect can be used...

- In most marketing pieces.
- In the front desk or waiting area of your club. You can use a “wall of fame” with before and after pictures as well as specifics about the program and supplements that helped the member being profiled.
- In a presentation book.
- As a way of overcoming objections to specific points in sales consultations.

So how do you get testimonials?

- You ask your members for them particularly at the time they are most likely to be positive about your service, like during an assessment in which they've met specific goals.
- At the 'graduation' point of a short term program.
- Write them for the member if they aren't comfortable doing the writing themselves. It's best if you get the member to tell you a few things in their own words about working with you and then write it for them.
- When members say something positive just ask if you can quote them on what they said.
- Contests - offer a prize to your members for the best letter of "why I work with..." in 100 words or less.
- Feedback forms - with open-ended questions.
- Offer a free gift in exchange for testimonials.

Any testimonial is better than none but these are the golden rules of increasing their effectiveness...

- Get different testimonials to cover different aspects of your offerings.
- Identify the person giving the testimonial. This could be their name, business, age, location, etc.
- Get permission to use the testimonial.
- Try to make them specific. I lost 27 pounds of fat is better than I lost over 25 pounds. It's more credible.
- "Put quotation marks around your testimonials"
- Get testimonials from different demographics.

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- A photo of the person giving the testimonial would make it even more powerful. The before and after photos being used in weight loss commercials are extremely powerful.
- Use as many testimonials as possible.
- You can get testimonials other than on paper. Think how powerful a video testimonial on your website or an audio CD to pass out to prospects would be.

NutriSystem has become a weight loss industry powerhouse through the use of effective testimonials. They have even tapped into the men's weight loss market – previously thought to be a wasteland – by using testimonials from professional athletes. Learn from their success.

Chapter Eight

Automated Lead Generation

Follow this simple formula and you can develop your own business “Member Attraction System.” Each step is significant, so take the time necessary to do it right.

STEP 1: Find Out Why Members Join Your Health Club

List the three most compelling reasons why your members choose to become a member. Take the time to ask your members why they chose you over the other fitness solutions available to them and what problems they are trying to solve when they come to you.

STEP 2: Create a Special Report

This book contains an entire chapter on special reports, but in a nutshell, your special report should provide “insider” information that the average prospective member would not know. It should be highly educational and should NOT just be a sales letter for you. Your special report could be a written report, a CD, or a DVD.

Create a compelling title for your report. The best pulling titles (as our research has shown) start with “How To”, they indicate a specific number of points, and are framed to avoid the fear of loss. For instance, *“How to Avoid the Six Costly Mistakes that are Stopping You from Reaching Your Fat Loss Goals.”*

STEP 3: Develop automated lead generating systems

Start with a small ad that looks just like a newspaper article that includes the following elements:

Element # 1: A strong compelling headline. Hint: Use the same headline as your special report.

Element # 2: Identify the problem in the first sentence. For instance, *“85% of Jacksonville’s Women are failing to reach their weight loss goals by making six crucial mistakes...”*

Element # 3. Announce the solution to their problems by offering your special report. You might say, “Recently a new special report was released that identifies what these mistakes are and gives a simple step-by-step explanation about how to avoid them.

Element # 4. Tell people how to get your report and what benefits they’ll receive by acting immediately. For example, “Stop making these mistakes and lose unwanted fat FAST by going to www.yourwebsite.com to receive your special report right

now.” On your website you’ll have a download page for your free report. In addition, you can have a pop up window appear prompting the visitor to download the free report.

You can replicate this formula with Postcards, Newspaper, Local Publication Ads, Yellow Page ads, a One Page Web Site, Val-Paks, Lead Boxes, Endorsed Mailings, Regular Direct Response Mail - even TV and Radio if these mediums are appropriate for your market.

STEP 4: Develop Your Response System

You can use a website to capture names and contact information from those people who want your report. This method makes it easy for your prospect to respond and lowers the risk of loss for the prospect. It also allows you to handle inquiries without actually taking calls yourself – important since you have plenty to do already and are seeking to automate everything.

STEP 5: Set Up a Follow-Up System

Suppose you’ve run your lead generation ad, and inquiries are coming in requesting your free report. How do you manage all your new prospects? Imagine if you are going to send them three to five follow-up marketing pieces? It will soon become a nightmare if you’re not careful.

If you haven’t already done so, you need to set up a system to manage your leads. We would suggest doing this on some kind of database program on your computer. There are a couple of free Customer Relationship Management (CRM) options available to you that will work perfectly with the systems in this manual. One is found at www.freecrm.com and the other is found at www.crm.zoho.com. Both are very powerful programs and can help you track results from your marketing, and both are very easy to learn and simple to use. Explore both options to see which one you like better. Some Club Management Software systems have a limited database feature, but we have found a separate CRM system works best.

You can set up a calendar for a series of marketing activities performed at specific times. For instance, after you have received a lead you will send out your special report immediately. You might call the prospect in two days. You then might send a follow-up postcard in five days and finally send a sales letter with a spectacular offer in ten days. An effective CRM system will provide you a dashboard to view all upcoming events and even send you reminders to make sure nothing slips through the cracks.

Once you have your system in place, you can either choose to manage the process yourself or you can delegate the follow-up responsibilities to a manager or your front desk staff for them to manage.

The Magic Is In The Follow Up

In the system that I have just presented to you, generating leads is the easy part. Converting the leads to members is a bit tougher – but still easy if you have a system.

You must follow up immediately, persistently, consistently, and persuasively. DON'T set up and kick off your lead generation system without first putting some real thought into your follow-up marketing system.

Use phone calls, postcards, letters, email, and voice broadcasting coupled with strong offers in order to persuade your prospect to become a member.

You must test everything you do on a small scale before investing a lot of money on any one strategy.

1. You must begin monitoring everything you do. Keep track of how many prospects each of your marketing strategies attracts. Feel free to email us at info@GymMarketing.com to request a copy of our “Business Advertising & Promotions Results Analysis Form” that we use to track our marketing efforts
2. Every time you run an ad, send a letter or do any kind of promotion, place a copy of the promotion in a folder with the form along with your record keeping of how many people responded to that marketing medium.
3. Make it a habit to do this every time you do any kind of promotion for your business.

Monitor everything you do and you will at least double your results within 6 months!

When you start monitoring all your promotions with the “Business Advertising & Promotions Results Analysis Form”, you'll discover some interesting information. If you did seven different ads or promotions in the past 6 months, the top one or two of those seven promotions have gotten much better results than the others. All you have to do is keep using the top one or two and dump the rest. It's as simple as that!

Just stick a copy of your promotional piece, direct mail, or ad in the folder and fill in the blanks on the “Business Advertising & Promotions Results Analysis Form”.

The information you'll gain from this simple procedure can be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to you.

Chapter Nine

Create A Cash Flow Surge With Member Reactivation

If you've been in business for a while and already have a member base, before you spend a dime on any external marketing, your first priority should be to focus on internal marketing. That means marketing to and maximizing the value of your existing and past members. Your internal marketing should include offers to reactivate past and inactive members, as well as offers for up sells and campaigns to stimulate referrals from your existing member base.

It seems as if most health club salespeople are anxious to get started on their external marketing systems and bringing in new members. After reading this manual, you'll have a better understanding of how to effectively and efficiently do that than any other club in your market. But if you have a list of current and former members, you're sitting on a gold mine that can bring in new members immediately and without tapping into your precious marketing budget.

Why should you start with marketing to your list of past and current members first?

First of all, it is the least expensive group that you can market to. Marketing to past members is five times more cost effective than marketing to the mass market where you're trying to compete with all the other marketing messages vying for your prospect's attention. It only costs the price of a stamp or phone call to contact a prospect on your member list.

Many clubs' profits have grown 10%, 20%, even 50% or more in a few months simply by systematically marketing to their existing and past member base through a system of carefully planned sequenced mailings. (We'll talk more about sequenced mailing later in the course.)

The second reason you should start with marketing to your list of past and current members is that they are already qualified members. You know they can afford your prices and have an interest in health and fitness. They're more likely to respond to an offer from you because they have done business with you in the past and they know you, like, you, and trust you. That is, if their previous experience with you was a satisfactory one.

The third reason you should start with marketing to your list of past and current members is that they are a prime source of referrals, which we will discuss in another section.

So your first step is to implement a program to re-activate former members.

If you haven't already done so, you need to compile a Master List of all your past and present members. If your Club Management System (CMS) or billing/check in system

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you use is unable to compile this, you need to create a database program on your computer. Again, one of the best programs that works perfectly with the systems in this manual is called “Free CRM.” It’s a very powerful program and can help you track results from your marketing, and is very easy to learn and simple to use. If you would like more information about “Free CRM” just go to <http://www.freecrm.com>.

Once you have this Master List in the computer, you need to continually update it. Create a list for all of your new members and one for the names of your prospective members or “leads”. This is crucial in order to properly use the powerful follow-up strategies that we will teach you later. In a very short time you’ll realize that this list is the key to continually making a lot of money. It is definitely one of your most valuable assets.

Focus on your list of your former and inactive members for now. Marketing to this group can create a pretty substantial cash flow surge in a short period of time. Most fitness professionals do a very poor job of keeping in contact with their members. Getting a new member is one of the most expensive processes you encounter. Once you get a new member you want to keep them as a member for as long as possible. The “Lifetime Value of a Member” can add up to really big money over time.

One of the most important things you can do to keep a member’s business is to simply treat them well, show them you care, and keep in regular contact with them.

According to statistics, businesses lose members for these reasons:

1% die. There’s nothing you can do about that one!

3% move away. If they move out of the market area, there’s not a whole lot you can do about that either.

5% take a friend or relative’s advice and switch to someone they recommend. Some people think this one’s not really within your control either. Not true. If you’re doing your job, why isn’t your member pulling their friend or relative to your studio instead?

9% switch due to price or a better product or service. Sometimes this can be prevented, sometimes not. Remember what we talked about in the “USP” section? You need to be unique so that you don’t have to compete on price. As long as value is worth more than the cost, your members will stay with you regardless of the price.

14% switch due to product or service dissatisfaction. We know that you can’t please everybody all the time, so some of this is unavoidable but most health clubs don’t pay nearly enough attention to this.

A whopping 68% leave because of what they perceive and describe as “indifference” from the business or someone in the business. They were never made to feel valued and appreciated because they were not communicated with and were taken for granted. Regardless of price, you must maintain a high level of value.

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One of the most important things we can do to keep our new members and “Re-Activate” past ones is to make them feel important, appreciated, and respected.

One of the best ways to do that is with a letter sent to your list of past members called the “We Miss You!” letter. It’s designed to make an emotional impact on the past members who have “fallen by the wayside”, and get them to schedule an immediate appointment.

Direct Response Marketing is designed to produce immediate and measurable results. The “We Miss You!” letter is a direct response medium called “direct mail”. The most effective direct mail letters are not written in an impersonal, business-like, stuffy, “King’s English” style. The most effective direct mail letters are written in a conversational, one-on-one tone.

Even though this letter may be going out to hundreds or thousands of your past members, it’s written as if you’re talking to just one person.

Don’t worry about being grammatically perfect. Write the way that you talk. This personal style of writing has been proven to produce the best results in direct mail.

Below is an example of the letter. Feel free to tweak as necessary.

Member Re-Activation Letter:

“We Miss You!”

Dear <member name>,

I’m very concerned.

You were a valued member of mine and I haven’t seen you for many months. I would genuinely like to know the reason why. I hope that you weren’t unhappy in any way with our service or made to feel uncomfortable working with us.

Or maybe you were concerned about the cost of our services and didn’t think you could afford to continue.

I can only guess at why you haven’t continued to be a member with us but I’m concerned that the goals you had when joining us are going to go unfulfilled.

I want you to know that if there is anything we’ve done that has kept you from continuing, I want to make it right.

If that means I need to give you a free month of membership or some personal training for free; whatever it takes to regain your confidence, I’m willing.

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And if you're concerned about the cost or don't have the money right now, that's O.K. too. If necessary, I'll make a special financing plan available to you.

Why would I do that?

Because I'm concerned about you. I value you as a member and would like you to come back. So, I'd like to offer you a one-time "Former Member Special", just for you.

First of all, I want you to call my office and talk to me when you get this letter. My number is (333) 444-5555.

When you call, schedule a time to come in as soon as possible so we can discuss your goals.

I'll be sure to free up my schedule so that we can meet as soon as possible. I'm really concerned about you and don't want you to wait!

But you need to call me right away to get your free month and your free personal training..

This offer is only good for the next 10 days. Once again, my number is (333) 444-5555.

I hope to hear from you in the next few days, and I look forward to seeing you very soon.

Sincerely,

Your Name

You might wonder why you should use an approach that implies that you were the reason that they didn't continue to work with you. But how do you think people will react to it?

Even though you haven't done anything wrong, the letter is sincere and shows that your members are important to you. Obviously this letter can be changed and adapted to whatever works better for you or your past members. The headline could be, "Where Have You Been?", "What Happened?", "I'm Puzzled", etc. You know your members better than we do so make any changes that you think would make it better.

You may want to change the special offer to whatever is economically feasible for you. But whatever changes you make to the letter, don't make it sound sterile or "business-like". Test mailing it to a small list of former members and evaluate the results.

The whole point to this entire section is that the only reason many of your former members haven't stayed with you is because you haven't communicated with them.

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The purpose of this Member Re-Activation promotion is to spend as little money as possible, and get the greatest return possible. It should only cost approximately .03 to .05 per page to make copies of this letter and you don't have to mail them all at once. You may want to mail 100 or so as a small test and then evaluate the response before mailing the rest.

If you have some computer skills, you should try to personalize the mailing. In other words, use the person's name in the salutation. If that's not possible, just use "Dear Friend". One of the biggest challenges in using direct mail is simply getting the envelope opened. People sort their mail over the wastebasket.

Gary Halbert, who was a very successful (and expensive) marketing consultant, talked about "A" pile mail and "B" pile mail.

"A" pile mail is important stuff that you open and look at right away. Things like a personal letter from your Mom. "B" pile mail is mail that is obviously unsolicited "junk mail", addressed to "Occupant" and with a bulk mail indicia instead of a live stamp.

You want your direct mail to look as much like "A" pile mail as possible. It's best to hand write the person's name on the envelope. You want it to look like a personal letter. If hand writing the name and address on the envelope is not possible, the next best option would be to use your computer and printer to direct print the address on the envelope using a "Courier font".

And you want to use a first class stamp, just like you would use to send your mom a Mother's Day card.

The least favorable option, a label stuck on the envelope, screams "junk mail".

Also, don't put the letter on your business letterhead. Just use a plain white sheet of paper. You want the letter to look as personal as possible.

This style of direct mail has proven time and time again as being the most effective low cost formula, but can produce a high potential return in a very short period of time. There's no need to reinvent the wheel. Adapt the letter to your needs but don't deviate from the personal, one-on-one style of the letter.

Chapter Ten

Tapping Into Your Referral Goldmine

Referral marketing is one of the most effective and lucrative strategies for creating steady streams of prospects and members. Referrals are more valuable than typical prospects because:

- Referral-generated members are the most cost-efficient, profitable, and the most loyal source of new business you could ever dream of acquiring.
- Referral-generated members are pre-sold so they commit quicker and for larger programs, negotiate less, stay longer, and refer more business to you.
- Referrals are generally better members. People typically surround themselves with similar people – so if you have great members referring prospects to you, you'll typically end up with more great members.
- They save you time. If your “sales force” is feeding you a steady diet of new prospects, you can spend less time on lead generation.
- You can easily set up referral systems that are fool-proof strategies for dramatically increasing your member base and your income!

The philosophy of referrals:

Your referral systems leverage all of your marketing tactics by getting others to be your “sales force.”

We are not suggesting that your business should move to being a 100% referral-generated enterprise - although many health clubs depend on this for nearly all of their new members. They have benefited spectacularly from referral marketing, and so should you. What we are suggesting is that you find / create 3-5 easy to use referral systems that will each generate a 20%, 30%, 40% (or more) increase in members and profits for you.

If you were to consistently use 3-5 referral systems, they could quite literally bring you profound and ongoing growth in both increased members and profits!

So what are the keys to developing a referral driven business? And why do so few clubs get the number and quality of referrals they could?

Read on and by the end of this section you'll not only have the answers but you'll know exactly how to turn your member base and sphere of influence into a highly successful sales force for you and your business.

Why Should People Refer To You?

All around the world people are tuned into a unique radio station. It's called **WIIFM**. This radio station is on a very narrow and selective frequency.

In order to get the maximum number and quality of referrals, you need to broadcast your message to your members on this radio station. In other words, you need to learn how to broadcast all your messages through **WIIFM**'s very selective and narrow frequency.

Fortunately, the **WIIFM** frequency is fairly predictable. In fact the name **WIIFM** describes all you need to know to broadcast your message on **WIIFM**. The special frequency used on **WIIFM** is very straight forward. It is...

“WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME”

This means that when you ask your members or friends to give you referrals, they are silently asking “*What’s In It For Me?*” You need to start communicating to your members and friends in a way that makes it plainly obvious, to them, exactly how they will benefit by giving you referrals.

Your members and friends are silently asking:

“How will I benefit by referring people to you?”

No benefit to them = No referral for you.

Most health clubs have unsuccessful approaches to generating referrals because they ignore **WIIFM**. In other words, they don't give their members or sphere of influence a compelling enough, self-serving set of reasons, to give referrals.

So, you need to specifically tell people what **THEY** will get out of helping **YOU**.

So prior to asking for referrals, decide how you to ensure the referrer will benefit from sending business your way.

And it doesn't need to cost you anything.

The First 3 Answers to WIIFM

No matter what, you should give such extraordinary service that your members feel indebted to you and want the satisfaction of helping you grow your business.

Extraordinary service also means that new members will be incredibly appreciative to their friends for introducing them to you. If your current members can see how much **their friends will be thankful** for being referred to you, then they'll give you a lot of referrals.

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Two Additional Reasons Why Your Members Will Benefit When They Refer People To You:

1. You'll have more time available to focus on your members and on improving your service because you won't have to spend as much time doing other types of marketing.
2. You won't have to spend as much money on other forms of marketing. This means that you can either pass the savings onto your members or offer an even higher level of service.

Be honest with your members. Tell them that by referring people to you, they'll be helping you save marketing dollars and time doing marketing. Then tell them what this means for them. Say *"This means that I'll be able to keep your rates from going up and I'll be able to put my entire focus on continually getting you your desired results instead of dividing my attention between your success and my need to get more members."*

Using Ethical 'Bribes' ...

You can also offer what we call an "ethical bribe". This is where you ethically bribe your members or your sphere of influence to give you referrals by giving them incentives in return for referrals.

You make it so irresistible for them that they feel compelled to refer people to you.

Between giving your members a quality of service that they'd want those close to them to benefit from and by giving them incentives, you've created a culture that ensures referrals.

In your bonus report, *"The Best Damn Health Club Referral Systems Ever"*, you'll notice that they all have one thing in common; they all provide the referrer with a self-serving benefit for giving referrals.

The Basis Of All Referrals

Just as all referrers tune into the station WIIFM, all successful referral systems have a foundation as well. That foundation is a simple 3 step progression.

1. **Earn**
2. **Ask**
3. **Reward**

The first step in this progression is to **Earn** the referral. One thing is for certain...

Satisfied Members Do Not Refer!

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It's not enough to have satisfied members. You need to go way beyond that. To receive a flood of referrals you must have...

Raving Fans!

This all gets back to providing extraordinary service. You need to earn your referrals. You can't expect your members to refer their friends, co-workers and family members to you if you don't over-deliver on what they've purchased from you.

It just won't happen.

In fact, the most compelling referral system will not persuade unhappy members to give you referrals. Nobody wants to look bad among their peers.

Your first step is to give outstanding... over-the-top service. A question that Walt Disney used to ask himself all the time, which helped make Disneyland so successful, was...

“How Can We Do What We Do So Well, That Our Customers Can't Help But Tell Their Friends About Us?”

You want to make the process of doing business with you... so enjoyable... so much of a joy; that members can't help but tell their friends.

Notice we're not even speaking about your services. We're talking about the interaction... the human interaction members have with you and your staff. We're talking about making the act of doing business itself so pleasurable that it leaves a mark on your member.

It all gets back to the Golden Rule – Treat others as you want to be treated.

Sounds simple, but do you or your staff do it?

How would you treat your members if you imagined they were family? Would you treat your members with a different level of respect?

Always approach every transaction in your business as an act of giving... not receiving. Extend yourself over and beyond the member's expectation levels. This is so important. Don't overextend too far however, otherwise you may not be able to sustain that level. Extend just enough so your member says “Wow... I wish every business treated me that!”

The 2nd Step Is To Ask For Referrals.

I know this sounds simplistic, and it is. But it's amazing how many health clubs simply do not ask for referrals.

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Maybe you're uncomfortable asking for help.

Maybe you're embarrassed.

Maybe you feel as if you don't deserve them.

If you're not asking for referrals on a consistent basis, you're really missing out.

Think about how much you improve the quality of your members' lives. You improve their health, their self-esteem, their relationships, their energy levels not to mention the physical changes that you help them achieve.

You Deserve Referrals!

When is the best time to ask for referrals? The ultimate time to ask for a referral is at the time when your member praises you for your work... or... when you've completed their program and the results are in.

If you don't get an automatic praise, you'll need to ask for their opinion. At this stage, if you have done a great job (not a good one), it's the perfect time to ask for referrals.

How do you ask for referrals? Well, there are tons of ways. Here's a simple example of a way you could ask a member that just thanked you for your help.

That's when you say...

"Thanks for your kind words. Listen... we're trying to grow our business... and instead of spending lots of money on advertising, we've decided to invest back into our members. If you have any friends, family or co-workers that would enjoy making the same type of improvements in their body and their health that you have, you can introduce them to us and we'll give them FREE Week to try us out and a Complimentary Personal Training Session. They just need to present this letter discreetly when they come in, as this offer is unavailable to the general public."

Can you see how simple this is? People appreciate when you go that extra little more for them. At this stage, you can either ask for the referee's name and address and enter it into your database... or... you can give your member a gift certificate for the services (with the referee's name on it)... or... hand them a letter which explains the offer which they give to the referee.

Also, you'll want to jog their memory. In the initial stages of the script you could say...

"Thanks for your kind words. Listen... we're trying to grow our business... and instead of spending lots of money on advertising, we've decided to invest back into our members. When you're at home, at work... or... even at church or your daughter's soccer game,

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you may think of people you care for that could benefit from making the improvements that you have. When you do please hand them one of these vouchers..."

And you'd go into the rest of the script. This is what's called a 'posthypnotic command'. You need to jog your member's memory, and give them a focus. You can't just say, 'give this to people who would like to lose weight'. That's way too broad. You need to say, 'who out of your immediate family would like to make the same improvements that you have?'... "Who in your extended family... cousins, uncles or aunts could benefit from making the improvements that you've made?"... 'Who do you know at work that would like to make the same improvements that you have?'... 'Who in your close circle of friends would like to make the same improvement that you have?'... and so forth.

Or, you can approach it from this angle:

"Thanks for your kind words, I really appreciate it. Listen, I'd like to give you these (hand over gift certificates). They are FREE Comprehensive Fitness Assessments. We normally don't do any free assessments at all because we're so busy... but...as a service to you, if you have any friends, family or co-workers that would like to make the same improvement that you have? You can give them these gift certificates and they're welcome to come and receive a very thorough Fitness Assessment. This way we can advise them about the best course of action to take to achieve their fitness goals. These gift certificates expire on the 31st of November, and they must bring it in receive their assessment.

Or you can send a letter. The following is a simple example:

Dear Ms. Jones,

I'm writing to you today to let you know about a new service we're offering as a courtesy to our members. For quite a while, our members have been asking us to assist friends, acquaintances and family members who felt they could benefit from the services that we provide.

*We've decided to offer for the next month, a "**Friends and Family are Free on Wednesdays**" each Wednesday in September. This is an opportunity for loyal members like you to refer people you know who would like to improve their health and fitness, but who are also skeptical of fitness facilities. This will be at absolutely no cost to your valued friends and family members.*

In addition, every one of your friends and family that come try out the facility will receive, free of charge, a fitness assessment with one of our personal trainers.

So through the month of September, every Wednesday you can bring in as many friends and family as you want, as your guest, and they will also receive a Free Fitness Assessment.

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If they decide they like it and want to join, we will pay you \$50 for the referral as well as give your guest the rest of the month of September for Free! There are no limits...refer 5 people, receive \$250 in cold hard cash. But of course, if your friends simply want to workout each Wednesday with you and decide not to join, that's okay too. We just want them to be able to experience how you live your healthy lifestyle and to see that not all health clubs are intimidating.

Simply, have them contact me directly at (123) 555-1234 or at joe@joesclub.com and mention your name.

Sincerely,

Joe Friend

P.S. Remember, this is only for a limited time.

The most important factor in this letter is the offer. What you offer your member, and/or their friend is what is going to determine the amount of referrals you receive (outside of your WOW service, of course). So you'll want to experiment and test many, many referral concepts.

The third step is to Reward referrals.

Let me ask you: how do you feel when you do a favor for a friend... you've extended yourself... and... you DON'T receive a thank you in return?

You feel resentful don't you? Sort of like you wasted your time... and... regret putting yourself out.

Isn't that true?

Well, the same applies with referrals. If any of your members give you a referral...

You MUST Reward Them!

Remember, anything you reinforce, you get more of. When you reward the behavior of referrals... you get more in turn!

And how do you reward referrals?

Oh, I don't know... can you pick up a phone and say...

Thank You?

Can you drop a letter in the mail and say you appreciate their kind assistance and that you'll do your best to help their friend out with their problem? Can you send a gift?

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What you give is a decision for you. Remember, you need to first GIVE... in order to RECEIVE.

Above all though...

Remember that you're rewarding the behavior of referring – not the act of the referred prospect purchasing your services. Reward the behavior if you want your member to repeat it.

Help Them Help You

Many times when you ask people for referrals, you will receive a quick response such as "I don't know anybody who really wants to join a club right now." Most of the time this isn't a maneuver to avoid your question. They honestly may not know of anyone when you ask such a generalized question.

To help them remember you should quickly educate them. Give them reasons why someone would want to do business with you.

Here are two quick methods to educate them:

First: give them your "elevator pitch" – a short description of your business and your Unique Selling Proposition, why someone would need to work with you, and a profile of your "ideal member."

Second: Remind them of people who may fit in the following categories:

- Employees and Colleagues
- Family, Friends, and Neighbors
- Others they may do business with
- Members of Associations, Churches, and Special Interest Groups

Third: Remind them of people they may know because of specific events. Use the following categories to jog their memories. You too can use the following categories to find more people you know whom you may want to solicit referrals.

People:

- Who have had a child
- Who have recently married
- Who have recently had a baby

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- Who have recently moved to the area
- Who came to their office
- Who are their colleagues

We provided the bonus report, “*The Best Damn Health Club Referral Systems Ever*” for you to use, model or manipulate into your own personalized approach for getting a steady stream of pre-qualified, high-quality prospects. Obviously, you don’t need all of these systems, so pick 2-5 that you think will be a good fit for you and your business and test them for 4-8 weeks. If you’re happy with the results, continue on – constantly seeking ways to incrementally improve the systems that you’ve chosen.

Chapter Eleven

How To Use FREE Reports To Get Prospects Calling You

By now you've figured out that a FREE Report is one of the tools you'll use to motivate prospects to call you. It will be the focal point of most of your lead generation ads and marketing pieces. Most people don't want to talk to a salesperson, but they will go to a website to access a free report.

The purpose of your FREE Report is to educate people and to start building a psychological relationship and rapport with the prospect.

Your report is a non-threatening, non-salesy message that provides enough helpful advice to show that you offer solutions to your prospect's problems and wants, and that they would benefit from joining your health club.

The reports are written in a friendly conversational style. Don't worry about violating all the rules that you learned in English class. Write like you talk. This has proven to be the most successful style for your free report.

Your FREE Reports are not going to get every single prospect to become your member. You will, however, get some new members fairly soon. You'll get others over time if you follow up correctly (more about that in the next section). But your free reports aren't magic. They won't cast a hypnotic spell on your prospects and suck every one of them into your club immediately.

If you decide to do a phone call follow up after sending the report (if you've collected a phone number), you'll find that it has helped to break the ice. Your prospect feels like they already know you. Think about it. They have already had several contacts with you even though it was without your direct involvement! They read your ad or letter. They read your report. And now they get a phone call from you that goes something like this:

YOU:

"Hi, John. This is (your name). You asked for my free report a few weeks ago. It was the one on the ugly goldenrod paper called, '5 Secrets Every Person Must Know About Fat Loss,' I just wanted to check and make sure you got it."

PROSPECT:

"Oh, yeah, yeah. Hi, (you). Thanks a lot. I got it on Friday." (Their response will usually be positive. They most likely will act like they know you!)

Then they'll say something like:

PROSPECT:

“I haven’t had a chance to read it yet.”

YOU:

“No problem. If you have any questions after reading it or need any more information, just give me a call. My number is at the end of my report. By the way, I think you’re really going to like secret #3 in my report. I look forward to talking to you soon.”

Hopefully that last statement will get him curious and he’ll go read your report as soon as he hangs up the phone.

If you do a phone call follow up after sending the report, don’t be surprised if people haven’t read it. It may not be urgent for them at this particular time.

But if you make this quick follow up call, 99% of the time, your prospect’s response is going to be positive. First of all, they contacted you. So that puts you in an entirely different position. You’re not approaching them and begging for their business. They came to you for information.

This is not anything like cold calling. If you have ever done any kind of cold calling then you know how miserable that can be. You’re pestering people. They didn’t ask for you to contact them and they can get pretty nasty.

When you do a phone call follow up to your free report you might find that they have already read it and have a few questions. That’s great! Answer their questions and be as non-salesy as possible. You want to position yourself as a trusted advisor, not a salesperson.

If they seem open to it, invite them to a free personal training session.

Whatever you do, don’t try to use any kind of hard “close” on them.

It’s not absolutely necessary to do a phone call follow up after sending your report as you might not have captured the prospect’s phone number – so at least follow up with an autoresponder series through a service such as www.Aweber.com, www.ConstantContact.com, etc).

Here’s The Formula For Writing Compelling FREE Reports:

1. Use An Attention-Getting Title.

The titles of free reports should always be enticing.

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Which sounds more exciting?

“Fitness For Women” or...

“The Seven Secrets Every Woman Must Know About Losing Fat Forever”

Which title would be more compelling to entice the prospect to read the report?

Just like a headline, the title of your report should instantly let the reader know exactly whom the message is targeted to.

Also, your title should state a benefit to the reader.

You can test different titles to see what gets a better response. You can keep the body copy of your report exactly the same but have different titles. That way you can have several different reports without having to write entirely new ones.

2. You Have To Tell The Reader What’s In It For Them.

Follow the WIIFM formula we spoke about earlier. Your title should tell your prospects the benefit(s) they will get from taking the time to read your report...and the potential loss they may incur by NOT reading it.

In a later section you’ll learn a little known technique of using “grabbers” to get your prospects attention and motivate them to read your report immediately.

Your report must talk about, and to, your prospects. It must not talk about YOU. No one cares how long you’ve been in business, what professional associations you belong to, or your list of certifications...or anything about you. The only person who cares about all that stuff is YOU.

If you talk about your prospect and their wants and concerns in a conversational style they can relate to, you’ll make a psychological “connection” with them.

3. Use Stories To Build Interest And Empathy.

Facts and figures are boring! Most people won’t read them. But stories capture your prospect’s interest and emotions.

If you tell the story about Ms. Jones, who had no self esteem and was 60 pounds overweight. When she came to you she was so timid that she just looked down at the floor and she was miserable.

But after only 12 weeks, her self-esteem was drastically improved, her blood pressure dropped and she had already lost 34 pounds and dropped 4 dress sizes.

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You may have a whole bunch of successful “transformation” stories.

Stories are so much more effective than just cold, boring facts and figures. “We’ve helped 127 people lose fat and...lowered 254 people’s cholesterol, yadda yadda yadda.”

But the “transformation” story is interesting and gets your prospect emotionally involved.

Who wouldn’t find the “transformation” story interesting and compelling? If they are suffering from the same problems, they probably can’t pick up the phone and call you fast enough.

Remember, buying decisions are made based on emotion, not logic. Stories get the reader emotionally involved.

4. Your Report Must Hit Their “Hot Buttons”.

You’ve got to push buttons that arouse emotions to motivate your prospects to take action.

You should inject a little fear, too. Maybe tell of how yo-yo diets make people more susceptible to heart disease. You decide.

Your report should tell people how to avoid these mistakes and how to take advantage of little known opportunities and techniques.

We know we sound like a broken record, but your report has to tell them “WIIFM”.

5. You Must Make People Curious To Want To Find Out More.

If you want people to respond, you can’t tell them everything. You should only tell enough information to show that you’re an expert in what you’re talking about.

You’ve got to spark a curiosity so they want to find out more. You want your report to compel the reader to call you and be open to talking to you.

That is the only purpose of your free report...to get the prospect to call you. Don’t try to make your report do more than it’s supposed to do. Its only job is to prompt people to call you.

Remember...the call to action in your report should be to have your prospect call you for more information or schedule an appointment to come in and see if your club is right for them.

So now you might be thinking: “But I don’t write...”

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Here are several options for you to consider if you're not confident in your writing ability:

- Keep in mind that nobody can tell your story better than you. Nobody knows what you offer people better than you. Nobody knows your prospects and members better than you. There are probably very few people who are as passionate about your success stories as you. So write your report modeling some of the others already out there but adding your own unique twist.
- If you think you can't write, dictate your free report into a recorder and pay somebody to have it transcribed. Edit it, clean it up, and format it like the examples given...and with just a little effort you have your free report.
- Hire a ghostwriter at www.elance.com to put something together for you based on your style, your prospects and your business. It will likely cost less than \$100

Let us kill a popular misconception right now. Some people say (people, by the way, who know NOTHING about direct response marketing) that prospects won't read long copy in a sales letter or free report.

That's true...if your copy is BORING!!!

But if you follow the formula that we've given you, your free report can be as long as you need it to be to tell your story.

It has been proven for over 100 years by all the direct response gurus...

The More You Tell, The More You Sell!

Trust us on this.

Your ads and free reports are "Salesmanship in Print".

If you had a salesperson who you were sending out to sign up members, would you tell them this:

"Go tell all those prospects about how fitness can benefit them and change their lives...but don't say more than 300 words."

That would be stupid. You'd be shooting yourself in the foot. You might as well not even waste the time and money in going to talk to your prospects!

There is a great story from Dan Kennedy about a client of his.

This client paid Dan big bucks to write a sales letter. It was originally eight pages. It did OK and made a small profit for the client.

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So Dan added to it and bumped it up to 12 pages. It pulled better and made an even better profit.

Then he bumped it up to 24 pages and it worked even better.

They just kept adding to it and it eventually wound up being a 64 page sales letter! It out-pulled all the other shorter versions and made tons of money!

We'll say it again...

The More You Tell, The More You Sell!

One more thing about your free reports:

Yellow colored paper works best. Why? We don't really know...and we don't care. We want to use every option available to us to increase response, and yellow just works.

Jeff Paul, who we talked about earlier, has done extensive testing on this. It's proven that any ugly colored paper increases response over plain white paper.

The most commonly used colors are goldenrod, canary, pastel pink, and pastel green. Goldenrod and Canary seem to be the most popular for your main report. You can use other colors for your testimonials sheet or other inserts.

You should use either a "Times Roman" or "Courier" style font for your free reports.

"Times Roman" font is the most widely used font in 99% of newspapers. Therefore it will be the most familiar to your reader. You want them to be focused on the content of your report, not distracted by some unusual font.

And black ink works best for your reports. You can test using blue or red ink for your title and sub-heads but black ink is the easiest to read.

Chapter Twelve

Direct Mail Success

Mailing Lists

The mailing list is the most important element of your direct mail campaign. The best mailing list you can get your hands on is your own mailing list! It's the list you've been compiling since the first day you began doing business. Be certain it is kept up to date. There is a direct correlation between the number of times to send to your mailing list and the size of your bank account.

Get Your Letter Opened

Most people stand over a trash can when they open their mail, so you need to make sure your letters don't get trashed. Here are a couple of hints:

- Use stamps, preferably not 'flag stamps.'
- Have letters hand addressed.
- Don't include your business name on the return address.

Keep in mind - you can now buy fonts that mimic actual handwriting. All you have to do is send them through the printer and you can't tell the difference between hand addressing and computer addressing.

The Headline

Once a piece of mail is opened you have about five to eight seconds to overcome the next obstacle — getting it read. To do this you have to have a powerful headline, with possibly a good supporting graphic. Every direct mail piece, whether it be a Val-Pak ad, a postcard, or a letter, should have an attention-grabbing headline.

Your headline can include your biggest benefit or ask a provocative question that makes the reader want to keep reading. Do not put the name of your business at the top of the letter. At this point, your reader couldn't care less about the name of your company. They're too busy asking themselves, "What's in it for me?"

"What's In It For Me?"

Remember, everyone has their own interests at heart and asks the question "What's in it for me?" Write with the understanding that people are constantly asking themselves that question. Your reader has problems, and all they care about is how you will solve their problems for them.

Your copy should be full of benefit. It should be all about them and very little about you. It should tell the story about why their life would be so much better off by exercising, losing weight and being part of your group of members.

Write Like You Talk

People don't like read cold, formal, stuffy writing. They would rather read writing that is warm, real, believable, and down-to-earth. They want to have a personal conversation with you. This means you can break all the grammar rules you want, as long as you are communicating on a personal level and you're building your case for taking action.

Don't write long sentences or paragraphs either. They are far too difficult to read. Break up what you say into small chunks of information that are easily digestible. Don't worry too much about grammar. Your reader isn't. They just want something that is easy and interesting to read.

Remember, never forget the goal of your letter. It's not going to be graded by an English professor, only by the ROI. Write like you speak.

Don't Be Afraid of Long Copy

Here are some important statistics about reading copy. Readership of advertising falls off at two critical points: once at around 350 words, and not again until over 10,000 words. This reveals an important point. If you can get your prospect to read past the first 350 words, you can keep them reading for many more pages.

There is a saying in direct marketing that you can never write copy that is too long — just too boring.

Use Advertorial Style

If you are doing a newspaper ad or a Val-Pak type of mailing, use advertorial style copy. The term "advertorial" means a combination of editorial and advertisement. It is the art of making a mail piece look like an article. Research shows that editorial articles get read 5 to 6 times more often than advertisements that look like typical ads. Take advantage of this and write you ads accordingly.

Use Sub-Headlines

People tend to skim through letters to look for something that interests them before they read them in their entirety. You should give them a way to skim through your letter and get the message at the same time. To do this use sub-headlines. A reader should be able to skim through the letter and get a pretty good understanding of what you're talking about.

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Sub-headlines also break up your paragraphs and make it easier and more inviting to read your copy. Each headline should pull you into the next paragraph. This is how you keep your reader interested and reading.

Use Non-Round Numbers

Studies have shown that people believe copy more when non-round numbers are used. Non-round numbers just sound more believable. In fact, according to the Wall Street Journal the number seven (7) has been found to be a number in which more people respond to. So try to end your numbers with a seven.

Guarantees

The more powerful the guarantee the lower the risk you put in your offer. Health club owners fear guarantees because they think that people will quit coming and ask for their money back. While this might happen every once in a while, the number of refunds will be insignificant in comparison to the amount of new business your guarantee will generate.

Use a Two-Step Process

Never try to sell a high-priced service in one step. Big purchases require more information and a sense of trust in you and your offerings. Your primary objective is to get your reader to request more information or come for a 'test drive' of your services. It must be a risk-free action on their part.

People are naturally skeptical. They need to make small steps. Convincing people to go to your website is a non-threatening step that your prospect may be willing to make.

Write to One Person

When you write your letter you need to mentally block out you, your business, your friends, your prospect's friends, and everything else. You should just write to a single person as if they were the only person with whom you are talking. Focus on what problems you need to address in order to get the person to respond.

One Objective Only

It's easy for a prospect to get sidetracked and confused. There should only be one central objective of your direct mail piece. You need to determine this objective before you start writing your copy for your report. If you are trying to get people to visit your website to request the free report, don't confuse them by asking them to come in for a free session, and vice versa.

Test and Improve

Sometimes you don't know if you have a bomb on your hands or a true winner. The only way you'll know is if you test. Your first test mailing should always be small. Measure your response rate to determine its successfulness. If you're getting well below a 1% then you should alter something and then test again.

The P.S.

Every letter should have a P.S. It is the second-most read item on any direct mail. Make your P.S. a restatement of your offer, your prime benefit, your main idea, and a request to order right now.

Why are postscripts so important? Because normally a person will read the top headline and the bottom of the letter, even if they choose to only skim the bulk of the letter.

Track Everything

For you to run profitable marketing campaigns, you need to track your response rates and the value of each of those responses. This is the only way you can effectively manage the campaign. Otherwise you are merely guessing.

Chapter Thirteen

Yellow Page Ads

A lot of the so called marketing "experts" are claiming that yellow pages are no longer effective or all you get are people who are price shopping. This is simply not true.

The problem is not with yellow page advertising; the problem is that everyone's ads look exactly the same. In any given category all the ads are saying the exact same things and making the exact same offers. And therefore, the prospect price shops because she considers the businesses with that category a commodity. And when people are shopping for something they perceive to be a commodity, they want to get the lowest price.

The yellow pages can work extremely well, if you have a proper strategy and if your ad doesn't look like everybody else's ad.

If you look through your phone book you'll see that virtually all fitness related ads look similar and do nothing but talk of features – not benefits.

You never want to let the yellow page representative tell you how to market yourself. They are not marketing experts. They are salespeople. If they were marketing experts, they'd be marketing their own business and not selling you yellow pages advertising.

The style of direct response ad we recommend will have your yellow page representative, your graphic designer and your friends all saying: 'it's too ugly, it's too crowded, the print is too small, there isn't enough white space and it's not good for your image.'

They are all dead wrong.

Here are some real insider direct marketing principles that go against conventional wisdom before we discuss the yellow page ads.

The first principle is this: The more you tell, the more you sell. You want to have lots of copy. You want to have lots of information in your ad.

The ad agency types try to create ads with a lot of 'white space' to make them look pretty. This is absolutely insane. It's absolutely stupid and it absolutely does not work.

You're paying for the space, whether it's on a coupon, in a newspaper ad or in the yellow pages. You want to use that space to sell!

White space does not sell. The copy, what you write, sells.

One of the key phrases in marketing is, and you've got to remember this, is "The more you tell, the more you sell". The more exciting information you can give to your potential

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member about your services, the more excited they will be about taking advantage of your services.

When your copy hits the core emotions of your prospect, they're going to read every single little bit of your advertisement.

You do not - let me repeat - do not want to have pretty-looking ads that don't get results.

Let me tell you something: Image is nothing, unless you've got people actually hiring you. Having an ad that promotes your image won't put food on the table for your family. Using direct response marketing will give you and your family a much better income and eliminate those sleepless night worrying about how you're going to make your mortgage payment.

Please burn this into your brain: People will read every single word of your ad if they are interested in what you're telling them. If someone is not going to read what you've written, they are not a real prospect.

Someone who's going to the yellow pages to look for a particular service is obviously is interested in hiring someone, right?

So if they're interested in the message you present them, they'll digest everything that you write. But remember, your copy must be compelling.

You see, it's not the length of the copy. It's not whether the copy is too long or too short. It's not whether the printing is too small. It's a matter of being boring.

The number one marketing sin is being boring. If you're boring, if you're only talking about yourself, if you're only talking about the features of your business and the different services you offer, then you're boring.

You need to write with emotion and talk about the benefits of your service. People will read every single word of that.

Again, your ad rep is going to try and convince you that this type of ad is not going to work because it doesn't look like all the other ads.

And that's the whole point. You do NOT want your ad to look like all the other ads. You want your ad to stand up and jump out, to grab your prospect by the throat and draw them in.

Here's a good rule of thumb. You know your advertising's on track when your yellow page representative tells you that what you're doing isn't going to work.

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The second principle is NEVER send out any marketing piece that does not have a compelling headline. Everything that you put together - including your business card, yellow page ad, newspaper ads MUST have a compelling headline.

The third principle is that there also has to be a call to action. "Go to www.mysite.com for this free report"... "Call to make an appointment for your FREE training session"... "Call for a Free Consultation". There has to be a definite call to action. Think of it as instructions - if you don't tell your prospects what you want them to do, most of them won't do anything.

Testimonials are also very important to include in your ads whenever possible.

A couple of final things to remember about Yellow Page ads:

- A higher proportion of people who look in the Yellow Pages are more likely to make an immediate purchase as they are specifically looking for a product or service. They are already interested in what you have to offer so you don't need to convince them that they need what you offer, but that they need to choose you to provide it. This means they need information so the more copy the better so long as it remains readable.
- Studies have shown that the average consumer looks at 5.3 ads in a Yellow Page directory. You therefore need to grab attention and give them a reason to choose you. Don't forget all your competitors' are in the same place and this is where competition is strongest.
- With most Yellow Page directories they allow you to spread the cost of the payment over 10 or 12 months. Because the ad goes in for a year it is harder to test and you need to make sure you've got the best ad possible and spend more time getting it right and planning it.
- Prospects may call more than one fitness provider listed and your job is to make sure they call you whether it is just one they are calling or five. You need the best ad, not the second best.
- Your ad needs to have one main objective and be focused on this and this only. It could be to get the prospect to call, to get them to come in for a session, but whatever it is, focus on that only. That way you get the result you want. As they are already interested in your service this is a time where it might be more appropriate to go straight to a hard offer such as a free consultation rather than a soft offer like a free special report.

Chapter Fourteen

How To Use Two-Step Classified & Small Display Ads

Small display ads in your local newspaper are a very effective and affordable way to generate a continual flow of potential members for your business.

These ads, called ‘Lead Generation Ads’ (or LGA, for short) are the first part of what is called a ‘two-step’ sales strategy.

In Lead Generation Advertising, you do not advertise your business. Instead, you advertise for exactly the type of person you want to respond. You advertise for your ‘target market’. The only job of LGA is to produce leads. It’s not to pre-sell your services, build name recognition, or anything else. It’s one and only job is to get the people most likely to become a member, to raise their hands and identify themselves as someone who is interested in what you have to offer.

Lead Generation Advertising allows you to invest most of your time and money talking only to qualified prospects. It’s a tool that effectively and affordably replaces all that “grunt work” prospecting at health fairs and at chamber meetings.

The beauty of LGA is you won’t have to chase prospects. They will chase you!

That is, if your ads do two things:

1. Grab the attention of your prospects, and
2. Make them curious enough to respond!

The difference between emotional direct response advertising and ‘image advertising’ is that with emotional direct response advertising you identify with your prospect’s wants. Your ads are written so people feel you’re tuned into them as individuals.

Your ads are emotion-based, tapping into commonly held human desires for things like acceptance, status, love, and independence.

Don’t think we’re getting all ‘touchy-feely’ when we say “emotion-based”. It’s a psychological fact that all buying decisions are made based on emotion. After the decision is made, you may use logic to back up the reasons why you made that decision, but the actual buying decision is made based on emotions.

This type of emotional direct response marketing works in any field, any business, any service, and any profession, business to business, consumer products...ANYTHING!

In order for your ads to be effective, they should follow this proven five-step formula:

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1. Get Attention!
2. Arouse interest and emotion
3. Tell an interesting story in a believable way
4. Offer an incentive to take action NOW!
5. Ask for action and make it easy for your prospect to take that action.

The first and most important step is to get people's attention. You won't get any responses to your ad unless it gets read. And it won't get read unless it gets noticed.

So how do you get your ad noticed? With a headline. Yes, a headline just like the newspapers use on all their articles.

It's Proven That 80 To 90% Of The Success Of Any Ad Is The Direct Result Of How Well The Headline Gets Attention!

The biggest mistake you can make in your marketing is to use a straightforward approach that attempts to appeal to people's sensibilities. Logical advertising is dead advertising! Emotions are what motivate people to respond! Most fitness professionals and health clubs are running ads that look alike. No curiosity is aroused, no emotions, no attention-getting headline...basically just a big business card.

For example:

(It's no wonder that ads like these never get much response.)

Local Health Club
(large logo is usually here)
• In business since 1984
• Free Weights
• 24 Pieces of Cardio
345 Main Street
Your Town, CA 55666
(000) 000-0000

Local Fitness Professional
(picture of trainer here)
• ACE Certified
• Fully Insured
• Offering 1 on 1 and semi-private training
Call (000) 000-0000 for your assessment today!

Every day your prospects' minds are bombarded with thousands of advertising messages.

- Television commercials
- Radio commercials

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- Billboards
- Newspaper ads
- Magazine ads
- Direct mail
- Ads on buses, trucks, and taxicabs
- Posters
- You'll even find ads on the bathroom walls of restaurants!

People have learned to “tune out” advertising messages. The biggest lie about advertising is the idea that “good advertising” should have pretty pictures, slogans, logos, and plenty of white space.

The problem with this is that you could change the names and pictures and nobody would know the difference. Everybody's ads are the same!

And if everybody's ads are saying the same things, there is nothing that instantly shows how you are different. Why should people respond to your ad over all the other “me too” ads for health clubs and other fitness and weight loss services?

Forget advertising that “looks professional”! Don't spend any money on advertising that isn't designed to get immediate responses.

The only thing that matters is to get back more from your marketing than you spend on it. How it “looks” is totally irrelevant.

Looks And Image Have Nothing To Do With Successful Advertising. The Best Advertising Is Advertising That Works!

Here's a secret that even most of the big companies don't know...

News-Style Advertising Gets Up To 500% Greater Response Than Image Advertising!

News style advertising doesn't look like advertising. It looks like news!

Very few people read advertising...but a lot of people read news stories.

Remember how I said people have conditioned themselves to “tune out” the thousands of advertising messages that are assaulting their senses? If it looks like advertising, most people will pass right by it without reading it.

This is exactly why the best marketing approach is to do everything you possibly can to make sure your advertising does not look like advertising!

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The secret to getting your advertising noticed and read is to make it look like a newspaper story. People don't trust advertising. But we have been conditioned since we were children to trust and accept what is written in the newspaper!

News-style advertising has been proven for more than 100 years to get 500% more responses than advertising that looks like advertising!
Look at this sample ad and you'll see what I'm talking about:

(This ad is only one of many in this manual that you can adapt and use.)

Let's examine this ad. It has:

- No graphics
- No pictures
- No slogans
- No logos

*Warning! Do Not Join Any Health Club
Until You Read This FREE Report!*

Quick "circuit clubs" are rapidly becoming one of the most popular forms of exercise in the country. And it's not surprising. Who wouldn't want to lose weight, tone up, look and feel great, while having fun and making new friends in a relaxed welcoming atmosphere while exercising only 90 minutes a week.

But if the business has only hydraulic equipment, you could be in for serious trouble. If you're only training on a fixed plane (like those offered on hydraulic machines), you run a very high risk of getting a debilitating knee, back, shoulder, or elbow injury. Many of these "circuit facilities" are making osteopathic doctors a lot of money!

Don't join any business without getting a copy of this FREE REPORT that reveals the secrets of staying injury-free while losing all your excess bodyfat. Go to www.yoursqueezepage.com for a FREE SPECIAL REPORT to find out what the health clubs don't want you to know!

No "keep-the-name-before-the people" image stuff.

All it has is a headline, copy, and a non-threatening response device (a recorded message which we'll cover later).

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A truly fatal mistake in advertising is to think your prospects and members think like you do...and like the same things you do.

They don't give a hoot about your business name, logo, fancy-looking ad, or any of the stuff that you may think is important.

The only thing your prospect cares about is WIIFM, remember? How will doing business with you benefit them.

So like we discussed before, Lead Generation Advertising is a two step process:

1. The first step is when your prospect raises their hand and responds to your ad by asking for more information about fitness.
2. The second step is when you send the prospect your full sales letter package, also known as a "FREE report". In your package is your sales letter and a coupon or some kind of invitation to come into your studio for a free session. Or some kind of offer to make an appointment with you.

You can also include a page or two of testimonials, or an audio recording with testimonials from some of your members talking about how your services have benefited them.

You might even want to format your free report into a book and test charging a small fee for it. Maybe charge between \$3 and \$10. You'll probably get fewer people asking for this report, but they'll be a much better qualified prospect.

This is called "self-liquidating" advertising. The sale of your book helps pay for your ad costs and the costs of sending the information to the prospect. If they become your member after that, it's pure profit since the sales of your book paid all the costs of your marketing.

Jeff Paul, a great direct response marketer, used the "self liquidating" advertising model to sell millions of dollars worth of his mail order course. His ads sold a little yellow booklet for \$14.95. The booklet had some basic information in it, but it didn't "give away the farm". It was basically a sales letter for his big course that sold for \$500.

From what we're told, at least 10% of everyone who bought the little yellow book also bought his \$500 course. And the 90% who only bought the little yellow book basically covered all his advertising and marketing expenses. Pretty smart, huh?

You'll have to test and see what is the most cost effective way to do it in any particular publication.

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You also may want to test running display ads against classifieds. Most often, display ads generate more inquiries than classified ads.

Sometimes the opposite may be true since classifieds are cheaper to run and newspapers usually offer specials like “Buy 5 days get 2 FREE”.

A majority of your prospects may not see your’ classified ad in the newspaper unless they happen to stumble across it while looking for something else. Most people reading the classified section are looking to buy a car or something. But since classified ads are so cheap it may be something you want to test. If it were our choice, we would start with a small display ad.

According to some of the direct response-marketing experts, the best place for your ad is as close to the front of the newspaper as you can get it. If your ad is effective (and direct response ads offering a FREE report usually are), you want it to be seen by as many people as possible. Having your ad as close to the front of the newspaper as possible will help expose it to as many people as possible.

The ideal situation would be to have your ad on the front page of the paper, but that would be very expensive and probably not possible...or is it? If you play your cards right, you can have the equivalent of an ad on the front page of the newspaper and it won’t cost you a dime. But we’ll be talking about that in another section.

Another ‘trick’ is to test running your ad in different sections of the newspaper and also different days. Since not everybody reads the paper every day this will also have an effect on results. Tuesday usually seems to be a good day.

The following pages have some examples of classified and display ads you can use as idea starters. Make changes if needed to adapt them to your particular type of niche club, market, or geographic area.

Because conditions are continually changing, no ad can be guaranteed to consistently perform miracles, or to remain effective for any set period of time.

That’s why testing is so important.

Sample Classified Ads

FREE Special Report reveals How to yadda yadda yadda...

Go to www.yoursqueezepage.com to get your copy.

FREE Report: How to lose weight, increase your self-esteem, and get in great shape.

Go to www.yoursqueezepage.com for your copy.

“How to save money on home exercise equipment.”

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Grab your FREE report and audio CD at www.yoursqueezepage.com.

FREE Info for new mothers: “Secrets Of Losing Your Baby Weight.” Get your FREE report at www.yoursqueezepage.com.

FREE report reveals how only 30 minutes of exercise sessions three times a week can help you lose weight, tone up, look and feel great.
For FREE info go to www.yoursqueezepage.com.

FREE report for Business Owners.
Discover how to reduce your businesses health care costs by 30% or more. FREE Report reveals all the details.
Go to www.yoursqueezepage.com.

Because all these ads are pretty short, it shouldn't cost you much to run these ads. Just one new member and you'll probably recoup your investment and be into profit.

You can use these ads as templates to come up with your own ads. You may need to adapt them to your particular type of club.

Test targeting the ads to different groups and people with your headline. This may bring better results than the general ads.

For example... Attention Business Owners... Women... Parents... Mothers... Diabetics... Seniors...etc.

You'll also need to test running the ads in different sections of the classifieds in your local paper.

Check out the following examples of display ads that you can use as idea starters and can also customize to fit your business and market.

*“Here's A Quick Way To Lose Weight, Feel Great,
And Be Remarkably Healthy In Just 30 Minutes, Three Times A
Week...100% Guaranteed Or You Pay Nothing!”*

*(Our business) can do all that and more!
It's not just about running on a treadmill and lifting a few weights.*

*Only three 30 minute sessions a week will help you get in shape
and look & feel great.*

You can totally change your life in less time each week than it takes to watch a movie.

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Go to www.yoursqueezepage.com for a free information pack and a gift certificate good for a FREE personal training session.

This ad has one of the most powerful attention-getting words right in the headline... "FREE".

"FREE Report Reveals A Quick Way To Lose Weight, Feel Great, And Be Remarkably Healthy In Just 30 Minutes, Three Times A Week!"

*(Our business) can do all that and more!
It's not just about running on a treadmill
and lifting a few weights.*

*Only three 30 minute sessions a week will
help you get in shape and look & feel great.*

*You can totally change your life in less
time each week than it takes to watch a movie.*

Go to www.yoursqueezepage.com to get
your FREE report about how to get in
the best shape of your life in 90 minutes a week.

Feel free to customize and adapt these ads. You may want create your own LGA display ad by cutting and pasting. Use the headline from one example but the body copy from another.

Chapter Fifteen

Member Attracting Business Cards

Most people's business cards are boring, and quite frankly, they suck. They make absolutely no impact.

The business cards I'm going to tell you about are powerful direct response marketing tools that get results. You want to hand out your business cards to everybody. Hand them out at restaurants, at social gatherings, in doctor's offices, and of course at networking events.

You want to hand them to every single person you meet BUT not the same business card to everyone you meet. And you want to give a special business card to your members and another one to your prospects. Each of these business cards is going to have an offer on it. And here's a big rule of thumb, not just with business cards but with everything: never hand out a business card or any other marketing item that does not have an offer on it.

The two types of cards that you should have are referral cards and prospect cards. You use the referral cards for your existing members and when you hand out these special referral cards to your members and it shows them that you expect them to refer.

On the front of your business card is your USP and your contact information Now, on the back of this business card, is written, "We love referrals!" "We are fortunate to get the majority of our new members from referrals. This card has been given to you by one of our very special members".

"This card is good for two weeks of FREE unlimited membership". Notice that you are not bribing your members into giving you referrals but rather giving people who they refer a special offer. Of course, you will definitely reward your member for referrals as well.

Tell your member not only will their friends get two weeks of free membership or whatever incentive you decide upon, but that if the referrer goes ahead and invests in your service, that the person who referred them will also get a nice gift, a discount off their next package, cash, entry into a drawing, a gift certificate, free personal training, or whatever else you choose to offer. This will be discussed in detail in the referral section of this book. Make sure you send a smaller gift to your member if the person who they referred does not invest in your service. They did their part, you just couldn't close the deal with the person they referred.

The second business card is one that you hand out to prospects. The front of this card is exactly the same as the same as one you hand out to your current members. The back of the card also includes an offer but this time it is for a free report that has direct interest to your prospects.

It could be "**The 7 Biggest Mistake People Make When Choosing to Join a Health Club - And How To Avoid Them**" or "**The 7 Secrets To Fat Loss The 100 Billion Dollar Weight Loss Industry Doesn't Want You To Know**" or some other compelling title.

Just a reminder - in this report, you will give actual tips that your prospect can use but equally as important, is that you're setting the buying criteria for your prospect. You could be telling them what to look for when hiring a trainer, while also telling them that you are the only one who can actually meet all of the criteria. This is an extremely powerful technique. Creating this report should be a top priority for you because you are going to use it in many different marketing applications.

One final note about business cards – without an offer they are a waste of your money. If you don't give a compelling reason for the prospect to follow up the card will end up in the trash.

Chapter Sixteen

The Multi-Step Follow Up Sequence

By now, you should understand how to use the two-step process. First you generate interested, qualified leads from display ads, classified, postcards, direct mail, referrals and other sources.

Then you send your FREE Report to get the prospect to call and schedule an appointment. (The purpose of the two-step process is to generate the lead or identify a prospect and follow up with a free report or a phone call, or both.)

However, this is only the beginning of the process.

It's a proven fact that if you send a series of letters, postcards, newsletters, personal visits, e-mails and telephone follow-ups, your conversion rate from prospect to member increases dramatically.

The best timing of these follow up letters, calls and other steps is between 10 to 14 days apart. This is because you frequently get more responses on the third or fourth follow-up letter. Remember, even though a prospect is interested in your service or responds to your offer for your free report, they may not be ready to act right away.

Maybe they're broke right now. Or maybe because they aren't familiar with you, they don't trust your first offer. Maybe they want to compare what your competitors offer.

Who knows? It's been proven time and again that you can double or triple your sales with multiple follow ups to each of your prospects.

In fact, you should never even bother sending you're free report to a prospect unless you're prepared to mail to them a minimum of three times. Why? Because only your hottest prospects will act right away.

Others will act on your second mailing. And the ones who are interested but not ready, or the timing is wrong for them right now, will act only after a series of mailings. You'll start with your initial mailing of your free report. Then you'll send a minimum of two follow up mailings with your free report included again in each follow up mailing.

Each of your follow up mailings should be spaced 10 to 14 days apart. In your follow up mailings you can use the same report that you sent initially. But the second time you send it, stamp "COPY" in red ink at the top. The third or maybe fourth time you send it stamp "FINAL NOTICE" at the top of the report.

On the second and third mailings, it's a good idea to include a separate cover letter. Remember, the first three letters should be spaced 10 to 14 days apart. After that a once a

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month follow up will do. For your monthly follow ups, you can send postcards or greeting cards like the ones we discuss in the postcard section of this book or simply send emails.

When should you stop following up on your leads? Don't stop until it stops being profitable. This will take some testing on your part. In some cases, you can mail 10 or 11 or more follow up pieces and it still be profitable.

This is another reason for knowing the lifetime value of a member. Many times, letters 3 and 4 in a series will out-perform letters 1 and 2 and bring in as much as 50% of your overall response.

Now do you see why you don't want to mail to your leads just once? The follow up mailings can be combined with phone follow up to improve your response even more.

One question many club owners ask is, "Do I have to spend all that time making follow up phone calls? I'm so busy already running my club and/or training members. When am I going to find time to make these calls? Prime calling time is from 4 PM to 8PM and that's when I'm busiest with members!"

Well, no...phone follow ups aren't absolutely necessary, but they certainly can be responsible for bringing in a lot more business. Perhaps you could consider hiring a telemarketer to do some of your follow up or better yet, utilize your front desk staff! You just give them a script and some FAQ's and watch your response rates climb. Another option is following up with voice broadcasts where you record a message that is left on prospects voicemail – like the politicians use during elections.

It's definitely something that you'll want to test. See if your follow up sequence works better with or without phone follow up. But let's get to the real issue here. If you respond with the "When am I going to find time to make these calls?" tirade...then you have an internal problem. What do we mean by that? Most people are working IN their business and not ON their business. You need to sit down and figure out what your highest pay-off activities are. And the low pay-off activities that you're spending so much time on should all be delegated.

What's more important...doing \$6 to \$10 an hour activities, or getting new members? That topic is beyond the scope of this manual. How to manage your business and life would be a separate topic in itself.

But at some point you'll probably have to make a "paradigm shift" if you really want to be more successful, make more money, and have more freedom. It probably won't be easy either.

If you're going to tie yourself up with the \$9 an hour stuff, you might as well just have a JOB! You can pay somebody to do the \$9 hour stuff but you're the only one who can implement the things necessary to bring in more business.

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You didn't start your own businesses so that you could have another JOB! You started your own business so that you could have FREEDOM!

As stated before, you need to read the book, "The E-Myth" or "The E-Myth Revisited" by Michael Gerber if you really want to get an understanding of how to work ON your business and not IN your business.

If you can't afford to delegate some of those low pay-off activities, and then implement as many strategies as you can from this book so you can start making enough money to delegate that \$9 per hour stuff. But also keep in mind that it's a double edged sword.

You think you can't afford to delegate some of that stuff, but if your time was freed up to concentrate solely on the highest payoff activities, then you could easily afford to pay someone to do the other stuff. Another great book on this topic is "*The 4-Hour Workweek*" by Timothy Ferriss.

OK, back to the three letter sequence. Where did this three letter sequence come from? This formula has been used successfully for years by debt collection companies. You've probably even seen a sequence of letters like this. You're late on a bill and you get a friendly "first notice" reminder letter.

The second letter comes about 21 to 30 days later. It refers to the first letter and the fact that you ignored their notice.

Now the message is "send your payment in immediately".

They may even supplement their letters with a little "follow up" phone call. A forceful telemarketer calls and firmly warns you of the consequences of not sending in your payment.

Then about 21 to 30 days later, you receive the "FINAL NOTICE" letter.

I think it was Dan Kennedy who had the idea that if it worked so well in collecting debts, it would work as a marketing technique, too.

The rest, as they say, is history.

This technique alone has been used to turn around thousands of failing businesses. Let us give you an example of the multi-step follow up technique.

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Sample Sequence	Action Time between Steps
Free Report Marketing Piece	Immediately
FREE Report	Sent Immediately (via mail or email)
Follow up phone call	3 to 5 days after mailing report
Letter #2	14 Days after Letter #1
Follow up phone call	3 to 5 days after mailing Letter #2
Letter #3	14 to 30 days after Letter #2
Follow up phone call	3 to 5 days after mailing Letter #3
Postcard	30 days after Letter #3
Current monthly newsletter	30 days after postcard
Current monthly newsletter	30 days after first newsletter
Phone call	3 to 5 days after 2nd newsletter
Postcard offering a different FREE Report	30 days after 2nd newsletter
Postcard offering a seminar	30 days after previous postcard

This is just an example of how to use a multi-step follow up campaign. It will be up to you to test how many steps are profitable for your particular business and market.

Remember, you can also use e-mails and autoresponders for a cost effective alternative for some of the steps and to automate the process. The entire sequence above can be completely automated. The problem is that people receive more junk email than they do junk mail (believe it or not), and your follow ups can automatically end up in the spam folder, and ultimately in the trash folder.

This is one of the most powerful secrets that you'll learn... repetitive marketing to leads who have already expressed an interest in what you offer! You can't just mail once or twice and expect miracles.

You have to work your leads! But repetitive mailings, e-mails and/or phone calls can double or triple your business in two to three months...or less!

Chapter Seventeen

The Little Known Direct Marketing Secret That Increases Response From Untested Mailing Lists While Reducing Costs

One of the best ways to cut costs and increase the response from “cold” or untested mailing lists is a little known direct marketing secret that can generate a ton of leads. It can also be used to send other offers to your “house list”. Once you know the profile of your typical member, you can rent mailing lists of people in the area of your business who match that profile.

Let’s suppose that a majority of your prospects are professionals that have an average yearly household income between \$75,000 to \$125,000 per year and live in a home valued between \$150,000 and \$300,000 located in a suburb that is within 7 miles of your club.

This, of course, is just an example. You probably know the profile of your members. If not, you should definitely figure it out.

Knowing that information could help you make a lot of money. So now you have a profile of your average member. You can now call a list broker and ask to rent a mailing list of people matching that profile. It usually costs \$100 per thousand names to rent a list like that with a minimum quantity of 5,000 names (if there are 5,000 available matching your criteria).

New resident lists are a great place to begin as well. Some list providers can even automatically send you mailing labels for all of the new residents in your area each month. Then you just stuff your letter, stamp it, and mail it!

The details of renting lists are beyond the scope of this manual. We suggest that you find a good list broker and let him do the work of selecting lists for you. He doesn’t charge you anything for this work. He gets paid a commission from the rental of the list.

You can look in the Yellow Pages under “Mailing Lists” and find List Brokers there or go online and search for “list brokers.” If you’re attempting to mail your complete info package or FREE Report “cold” (the people on the list didn’t request the information), rented lists can sometimes be unresponsive and a total waste of money. That’s why you should narrow your search as much as possible. I.e. People who have moved within a 3 mile radius of your club within the past 6 months, who own a home, earn at least 75k per year.

There can also be a lot of undeliverable names in these lists with incorrect addresses, moved and left no forwarding address, etc. When using unproven lists, the best thing to do is to use a two step Direct Mail technique. I.e. Send a postcard to the list letting them

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know about your free report. For those that opt in, don't stop your follow up efforts. Remember, they may not respond until the 5th or 6th time you contact them. This technique is similar to running small display ads to generate leads.

Here's how it's done...

1. Create a small display ad that will fit on a postcard sized card. Or use some of the sample display ads in this manual and put them on a postcard. You can usually fit four of these postcards on a 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper or card stock laid out "Landscape" style (horizontally). The job of the postcard is to get your prospects to request more information.
2. The second step is to send your FREE Report only to those people who respond to your "free information" postcard mailing. This saves you a lot of money on printing and postage costs rather than just mailing your entire free report package "cold". By sending out a postcard first, you save money and find out exactly who your prospects in any list really are.

Never Mail Your Free Report Package To An Unproven List of Names.

Don't mail a complete sales letter package to anyone except your current list of members and prospects, or a joint venture partner's list of members. (More about Joint Ventures later) The cost is too high for a risk like that. If you think you must mail a complete free report package to an unproven list, test only 100 to 200 letters first. If you get a good response, mail another 300-500 letters. Then, if it's still profitable, mail in batches of 500. That way you'll never lose all the money you invested in printing and postage because of an unexpected poor response.

Another way to use postcards is to let your existing members know about any new programs, products, or special discounts. You can also use postcards as part of your follow up sequence. For your existing and past members (in other words, those who have proven they will spend money on your services), an automated greeting card, as discussed in future chapters, will also work very well.

What kind of postcards produce the best response? Ones with an attention-grabbing headline and lots of copy that look like a "news story"; the same format that has proven successful for display ads. Here are some examples of postcards that you can use as templates. Some are to generate leads and some can be used as part of your follow up sequence.

Here's what the front of the postcard might look like:

“Do You Know the 10 Secrets Any Woman Can Instantly Use To Lose That Unwanted Fat?”

Are you tired of not being able to lose weight?

Would you like to double your energy levels with little effort?

Many (your town) residents are turning to us for all of their fitness goals and questions.

Go to www.yoursqueezepage.com to get your FREE report entitled,

“The 10 Secrets any Woman can Instantly use to Lose that Unwanted Fat”

CLUB
LOGO

Or:

“FREE Report Reveals A Quick Way to Lose Weight, Feel Great and Be Remarkably Healthy In Just 30 Minutes, Three Times a Week...100% Guaranteed or You Pay Nothing!”

(Your Club Name) Fitness Coaching can do all that and more!

It's not just about lifting weights and counting reps; it's so much more than that. Each session is designed based on your individual goals, health history and starting statistics after a comprehensive assessment has been conducted to design the perfect plan for you, no cookie cutter programs here!

Programs are available for teenagers, adults, and seniors living in the “your town” area.

Go to www.yoursqueezepage.com to immediately receive our FREE Report that explains our unique method to help you learn how to get in shape fast!

A postcard like this can be used as part of your follow up sequence and can also be mailed to your inactive members. The purpose of the postcard is to get them to your free report. At the end of the report, you can present your program and offer some kind of special “freebie” or discount only good for a limited time after they receive the report.

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But don't stop there. Once they have opted to receive your report, you now have their email address, home address, and likely their phone number. You will want to follow up in as many ways as possible, following a systematic sequence similar to the one presented earlier in the book. And remember, they expressed interest in your offering. That is a much easier call to make than cold calling someone with whom you've never had any communication.

Chapter Eighteen

Oversized Postcards

The oversized postcard is 8 ½ by 5 ½ or 11 ½ by 5 ½ and should be printed on on yellow or goldenrod postcard stock.

Here's how you want to lay your postcard out.

The first thing you want is a strong, bold headline. The headline will make or break the postcard – just like your ads.

Right under your headline, you're going to include testimonials. If you're sending the postcard to women, all of the testimonials that you list must be from women. If you're sending this to athletes, then all of the testimonials should come from athletes.

On the right hand side, it will say, "First class mail." Under the address, you have a call to action right on the front, "To get more exciting details," followed by the number that they can call or your squeeze page address.

You want a call to action right on the front. If somebody glances at that postcard, just from the front and they don't even read the back, your offer is right there. In fact, you can probably just place that as an ad, and people would call.

Let's move to the back of the postcard.

On the back of the postcard, you'll basically have a full-page ad, laid out. The first thing is you'll have is the pre-head. *"Who else wants to lose unwanted bodyfat?"* or something similar.

Below that will be the standard, ***"How To Lose 20 lbs. Of Ugly Fat In The Next 12 Weeks, Guaranteed!"*** or whatever you choose to substitute. Then, you add a sub-head just below that.

This is written like it's an article to be placed in the paper. Again, you could use this as an article in the paper.

(That brings up another point: you can recycle your material. If you've got a solid yellow page ad that works or a newspaper ad that works, you can test it as a postcard. If you've got a full-size postcard that works, you can test it as a big ad. All of this stuff is interchangeable.)

Follow up with something like: "If you want to lose weight, have a flatter stomach and get back in those 'skinny jeans' easily and quickly, this is the most important message you'll read all year. Here's why."

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That's a very standard template that you can follow for almost anything that you write. Fill in the blanks and adjust the copy to fit your business.

"If you truly want to have all that and more, your best bet is to become a member of our club." And then you go on to explain, "Here are 3 powerful reasons why you should let us help you reach your goals." And then you give 3 powerful reasons.

Those power reasons need to be feature-benefit oriented. List the feature first, followed with how that will benefit them (WIIFM).

For example, no one cares that you have the newest equipment in town, unless you also let them know that it is specially designed for them to get fit in less time.

No one cares that you have the largest selection of cardio, unless you also let them know that they won't have to wait for a machine.

No one cares that you have televisions on each piece of equipment, unless you also let them know that it will make their time spent exercising more enjoyable.

See the difference?

Next, make an offer. Perhaps it's a free session, perhaps it's "*Visit www.mysqueezepage.com to download your free report. And as a bonus, you will receive a coupon for a complimentary 2 week membership!*" Just be sure to give the prospect specific directions as to what they're to do next.

Then close with a deadline that will cause your prospect to act now and that's it.

A postcard is a very cost effective way to test a list or stay in touch with a prospect that you've already mailed to – so don't ignore this valuable tool.

Chapter Nineteen

Generating Business Through Seminars and Presentations

Why Seminars Work

Seminars can be a great way of attracting new members. Giving a seminar or presentation:

- ✓ Can show your staff as experts and builds credibility for your business.
- ✓ Enables you to present your offerings to many prospects at one time.
- ✓ Enables you to meet prospects face to face where there is no commitment required from them.
- ✓ You can qualify prospects.
- ✓ Once you've put the work into developing a seminar, you can run the same one over and over again.
- ✓ Not only will there be prospects in the room, but presentations may also lead to referrals.

However the downside is they require a lot of work to prepare. If they are done badly they will do you more harm than good and many people don't like public speaking. Research shows that Public Speaking is society's number one fear (FYI – death is number six!)

But don't underestimate your expertise. Just because something is obvious and well known to you, it's not to everyone else.

Again you need to target the right audience (your niche) and it needs to be helpful and relevant to them. If it's a subject you are passionate about this will show through at the seminar.

Seminars can also be used for existing members to introduce new products and services or to generate more personal training clients.

Finding Your Audience

Ways you may be able to find the right audience are as follows...

- ✓ Conduct an in-house seminar for your own members, allowing them to bring all of their friends and family to the event. If only your members show up, the prevailing message will be how personal training will help them produce faster results. If there are some prospects there, the message can include the importance of taking that first choice to join.

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- ✓ Associations and other business groups or large companies are often on the look out for speakers to present to their members or employees. If you look in your local Chamber of Commerce Events Directory, you will find that people give presentations on everything imaginable.
- ✓ A joint seminar with another non-competing organization can be a good idea where you have similar member profiles. I.e. A company can offer to pay half of a membership for any of their employees who attend a seminar hosted by your health club.

Promoting Your Seminar

A seminar can be promoted in most ways that you would promote your offerings directly such as:

- ✓ Through direct mail with phone follow up
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Press Release
- ✓ Ads
- ✓ Voice Broadcasts
- ✓ Joint Ventures with relevant groups and businesses
- ✓ Newsletters

Apply all the usual methods when using these mediums. All that has changed is that the offer is now the seminar.

All presentations/seminars require preparation, an introduction, a development and an end.

Preparing Your Seminar

Proper planning is needed. To start with you must know what your objective is from the seminar and focus on that.

Here's what to consider before the presentation...

- ✓ What's the title of the presentation? Treat it like a headline. Since it's just like a headline so follow the rules for creating headlines. "How To..." headlines are often good for seminars.
- ✓ You should write a compelling description of the seminar to use in your marketing material for it. Also make it clear who is going to benefit most so that the right type of prospects attend.
- ✓ Ideally try to keep the seminar to less than 1 hour. Most presentations are too long and the message gets weakened. If it is more than 1 hour, have a break in the

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- middle. Breaks are a great opportunity to network and meet your prospects. You must make sure the seminar keeps to time. Practice will help do this but you can also have filler sections to put in or take out depending on time.
- ✓ Arrange the seminar for a time when your prospects are most likely to attend. Avoid business hours if possible unless you're giving that talk to a business. Perhaps lunch time or at 5:00 are good times for seminars given onsite at area businesses.
 - ✓ Research your audience - know how many, where they are from, what they expect, etc.
 - ✓ You'll need to think about and have a checklist for what you'll need with you on the day...
 - Directions to venue
 - A means of capturing leads
 - Business Cards
 - Water bottle
 - Equipment / props
 - Pens to fill out contact forms
 - Contact / entry forms
 - Prizes for lead capture contest
 - Stop Watch or small clock
 - List of attendees if possible
 - Any handouts that you will use
 - Have an agenda to give out to everyone
 - What time do you need to arrive? Arrive early.
 - How will you be introduced?
 - Is there any information you need to send out prior to the presentation?
 - ✓ Prepare answers to likely questions.
 - ✓ Check out the venue before you go or at least phone to find out about:
 - How large is the room?
 - How far will you be from the audience? Will you need a microphone?
 - The climate – is it typically hot? Cold?
 - How many chairs & what layout do you want - theatre, boardroom, etc.
 - ✓ Practice your presentation beforehand. The opening and closing in particular are very important. You should do this out loud and in front of the mirror. Even try a video camera or tape recorder.
 - ✓ On the day...

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- Check all equipment before you start.
 - Check appearance.
 - Eat beforehand.
 - Use restroom beforehand.
 - Set up the room.
-
- ✓ You will need a plan of what you are going to say, but don't script it.
 - ✓ With all aids, make sure they are legible and the background is not distracting.
 - ✓ If you use technological aids, have a plan for what to do if they don't work for any reason. Whatever you do, don't panic. The audience will be on your side and want you to recover.

Don't Let Your Nerves Get The Best Of You

Nerves are natural and every public speaker gets them, no matter how experienced they are. Here are some quick tips for controlling nerves:

- ✓ Visualize in your mind what you are going to do and go over it in detail many times so that on the day you know what to do.
- ✓ Positive self-talk.
- ✓ Remember the audience wants your knowledge so they will forgive any presentation flaws.
- ✓ The audience knows public speaking can be nerve wracking and will be on your side.
- ✓ Proper preparation.
- ✓ Get there in plenty of time.
- ✓ Get good nights sleep the night before.
- ✓ The more seminars you do, the less nervous you will be. Even then you'll still probably be nervous for the first few minutes.
- ✓ Circulate and get to meet your audience beforehand.

Your Introduction

It can help to make a great impression by having someone else introduce you. It's helpful to give them a script so that they get introduce you in a fashion that will enhance your credibility.

However, don't overdo it 😊

It should not be too long and just explain why you are qualified to talk on the subject, what they are going to learn and of your special accomplishments.

- ✓ If giving handouts at the start, put them on the chairs before the audience arrive. It can help to leave handouts until the end as they can be distracting to the audience.

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- ✓ You need a positive opening to get the seminar off onto the right track. Good openings might be:
 - A relevant story
 - A compelling question with a show of hands
 - Attention grabbing statistics or facts
 - A quote or challenging statement
 - A statement of your objectives
- ✓ If it is a small group of say 10 or less, get the audience to introduce themselves as an icebreaker.
- ✓ Get your body language right - no hands in pockets or arms crossed and make sure you smile when first introduced.
- ✓ Don't hold a pen or chew gum...anything that might be distracting.
- ✓ Don't use a monotone voice; don't speak too quickly, too slowly, too loud or too soft.
- ✓ Aim for about 125 words per minute in an average talk but always speak at a pace to suit the audience. You'll find your pace increases the more stressed you are.

The Core of Your Talk

- ✓ This typically needs to be written down in bullet point fashion but it might help if you've written it out fully first so that you know what you are going to say and haven't missed anything.
- ✓ Use at least an 18-point font for your notes with underline, bold symbols, etc for important points and words.
- ✓ Put time checks on the notes so that you can make sure you run to time.
- ✓ Don't overload your audience with information, you want to leave your audience wanting more – and knowing how to find you to get it.
- ✓ Summarize your main points as you go through.
- ✓ To help build credibility, you can mention names of important members or display testimonials. Keep your integrity at all times.
- ✓ Avoid terminology that is not understood by your audience.

Asking Questions

- ✓ In a small group setting asking questions can help engage the audience. Use names wherever possible.
- ✓ Listen carefully and clarify any response before replying. Make sure the whole audience heard the question.
- ✓ If you get the audience starting to ask questions of their own accord it shows you have engaged them. Answering a question with a question is good way of getting the audience involved.
- ✓ When answering a question look at the person who asked it 20% of the time and the audience 80% of the time. Attempt to look at everyone throughout the presentation but if the audience is too large choose a person mid-way on the left, someone in the middle and someone on the right to look at.

The Close

- ✓ End with a summary of your main points and a call to action. It should be related to your opening objectives.
- ✓ Always end on a happy point and thank the audience. If you have particularly enjoyed them let them know.
- ✓ The end of the seminar is when to make your sales pitch. Although the seminar is a tool to gain new members, be careful not to over promote as this can turn prospects off. You have by now built credibility. Let them know you would like to work with them and explain what it is you are offering and what the next step is for them to do to become a member.
- ✓ Make sure there is a handout that describes what you offer with your contact details and a business card.
- ✓ Ensure all handouts are professional looking and are of benefit to the attendees. Put your contact details on all these.
- ✓ Make sure you are around after the seminar to deal with any of your prospects questions.
- ✓ Use feedback forms to evaluate the seminar. Then you can take action to improve the next one. The feedback form must provide for their name and contact details. You will need these especially if it wasn't you arranging the seminar. Have a space to ask for the most important things they learned and a release to use any comments in marketing.

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- ✓ Other ways to capture contact info:
 - A prize drawing
 - A list from the seminar organizer
 - Collect on check in.
- ✓ Offer a free next step such as a free consultation, discount offer for limited time, etc.

Follow Up

- ✓ Start by reading the feedback forms.
- ✓ In small groups, try to contact all attendees after the seminar with a note or e-mail. Thank them for coming, ask them if they have any questions or make them a special offer.
- ✓ You can also send follow up sales letters, e-mails, newsletters, etc. Ensure you keep in contact.
- ✓ Why not make a video of the seminar to send to other prospects or give to a first time guest at your club.

Chapter Twenty

Joint Ventures – Partnering For Profit

One of the best techniques to get new members is to find out who has already done your work for you. What that means is that some other business, or some other professional practice, has already spent a lot of time, effort and advertising dollars to get members, patients or customers that can now be yours for little more than just asking. We're talking about gaining access to new members with the express permission and enthusiastic cooperation of the business that acquired those members in the first place. This process is known as setting up a "joint venture" and is also known as a "Host/Beneficiary relationship."

Company A (the Host) agrees to let Company B (the Beneficiary) deliver a sales message to people who are Company A's customers. If you are the Beneficiary in this unique arrangement, it will bring you new members and more money quickly. And it will also help you if you are the Host in the process, because your members will respect you for helping them learn of a new value available to them. The best part is that it's relatively easy to create profitable Joint Venture relationships.

This is all you have to do:

1. Ask yourself, "Who already has a strong relationship with people to whom I might be able to offer my noncompetitive service?"
2. Once you've made a list, visit those non-competing businesses and ask their owners to introduce your service to their customer list. When you go to see them, take along plenty of information about what you do, and some powerful testimonials. As an incentive, offer the prospective "Hosts" reverse access to your member, or offer them some percentage of any sales that you make to their list. Let the prospective Host know that at the very minimum their clients will thank them for introducing you to them and helping them gain information about your business.

Here's an example of this secret in action:

A chiropractor writes a letter to his patients and, in the "P.S.", tells them they might want to go to a special squeeze page that his personal trainer (you) has created to download a free report revealing "The 7 Secrets To Losing Stubborn Fat And Keeping It Off Forever." This gives you a list of new prospects to promote your offering to and also allows you to track the members that come to you from the chiropractor so that he can be compensated appropriately. With this approach the introduction itself doesn't have to be a formal "endorsement" letter (although that is an effective technique.)

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Maybe you're still not sure if the Joint Venture technique will work for you. If so, let's run through the steps one more time. First, figure out who already sells to and has strong relationships with people in your target market. Once you identify who those businesses are, then start making a list. Use either the Yellow Pages or a business directory and locate every business matching your profile in the geographic area you're targeting.

Now it's time to contact them. You can contact them by letter, in person, by phone, or all three.

When you contact them, you might tell them this:

- A. I own (your club's name) health club in your community.
- B. I would like to form a strategic alliance with you.
- C. I realize that you have spent an enormous amount of time, effort, emotion, energy and expense building goodwill with your clients.
- D. Those clients, when they're done doing business with you, may not do any new business for months or years. But there's a way you could regain the time, effort and expense that you invested in that relationship and do your customer an incredible service.

That should keep them open-minded to listening to your proposition.

Offer the Host (and the Host's clients) whatever is appropriate in your situation.

It might be 50% off the normal monthly rate for the first three months or some special bonus or incentive exclusively for them. The key is to offer a preferential advantage to the Host's clients. Something they wouldn't get on their own if they walked in off the street. Special treatment is crucial to the success of a joint venture.

Why?

Because it's critically important that the client feel that the Host has gone to bat for them and negotiated a below market price or an above-market benefit or bonus or guarantee that gives them extra value. It's important that anybody you get to endorse you and your business distinguishes their clients as being special, important and unique. You've got to show the Host that by teaming up with you they have an opportunity to bring a great benefit, advantage, or superior value to their clients that they would have never thought about before.

If the business you approach has an ongoing selling relationship with their clients, then you may approach the joint venture arrangement a little differently. Explain to the Host that you're not going to take any money away from him. Show him that there's no conflict at all. There's only a complementing connection between what they do and what you do.

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It's important that you make your offer economically appealing enough to get the Host excited about the possibilities. Show them that because you expect the marketing costs to be lower and the response rate to be higher, you feel very comfortable offering to share a generous percentage of all new sales resulting from their endorsement of your business. You can offer a few different options. It can be a share of the profit. It can be a fixed amount per new member. It can be X amount per prospect or lead or inquiry. It could be a fixed fee for doing the whole joint venture or any combination of those.

You could even offer to give them a very large percentage per sale if they agree to pay for all the printing and postage costs. All you can do is ask. They might agree to this. And you can afford to give them a large percentage. After all, you would have never gotten these members without their help, and the marketing is costing you nothing! The Host is paying for it.

Once you've told the Host what the financial incentive is to them, put it into terms the Host can get enthusiastic about. For example, if you are planning on sharing 10 percent of the membership fees with the Host, you could say: "Let me tell you what I think that means, Mr. Host. The worst case scenario, if my projections are correct, I expect to be giving you a check for \$500 two months from now!" That lump-sum figure gets people excited. After all, they're getting money for doing nothing but making their list available to you!

And of course, never forget a club's most powerful bartering tool, free membership to your club! In exchange for promoting your club to their clients, you can offer the business owner a free one year membership, or whatever amount of time you choose. It is also likely that you have more members than they have clients. Meaning if you simply do the same for them and promote their services to your members, it is a win/win situation.

They can't lose!

That's a powerful offer, isn't it?

If you make use of this powerful secret often enough with businesses in your market, it will help you build a profitable business very quickly.

Chapter Twenty-One

The Secret Of Successfully Handling Phone Inquiries

The key to successfully handling phone inquiries lies in a little known study that revealed only 10% To 20% of people will buy on “Price” alone. The other 80% to 90% are looking for value. What the majority of people want is a product or service that will solve their problems at the best possible price. The best way to handle phone inquiries and make sure that you do everything possible to get their business is simple...

You need a system to find out what is important to prospective members before you give out any price or package cost information.

It's important that you show your prospects empathy...that you understand their needs. Then you can show them how you and your business will meet their needs. This way your prospect will be assured that your services will be worth their money. It's pretty easy to find out what benefits or solutions your prospect wants.

Ask!

To gather this information successfully, you and your staff must have a system. It should be in the form of a written qualifying questionnaire or phone script. Don't rely on “winging it”. Asking structured, relevant questions will show your prospect that you care about their situation and get you around the “How much is your...” question. If you give your prices without showing the prospect the value of it and the benefits she gets, most of the time you're dead in the water. You've given them nothing but price to base a decision on. In response to the “How much is it?” question, you could say, “(Prospect's name), before I can answer that I need to ask you a few questions so I can understand your needs and goals a little better. Once I understand what you're looking for, if I'm able to help you, I'll give you a price for a program specific to you.”

After all, in some cases, you may not be able to help them achieve what they want. It's probably best if you do not give your fees out over the phone. The best thing would be to schedule them for an assessment or complimentary training session. So what questions should you be asking your phone inquiries? The following are a few that you can use as idea generators. You may need to add or delete some questions to fit your particular situation.

1. Are you inquiring for yourself or for other family members as well?
2. Have you been a member of a health club previously? How did you hear about us?
3. What are your fitness goals?
4. What's your time frame to achieve this? How soon do you want it?
5. How much time did you plan to commit each week to achieving these goals?
6. What other options have you been considering to help you achieve your fitness goals?

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Adapt these questions to your business and personality style as needed. Here's another secret to selling your service at higher prices...

Don't ever just give a price and details of your service without explaining what it will do for your prospect, and why they should work with you.

Does that sound familiar? If you developed your USP like we spoke about in one of the earlier chapters, you should be able to do that easily. If you need sample telephone inquiry scripts, simply send an email to us at info@GymMarketing.com and we will send a few your direction.

Remember, after using these questions to find out what your prospect wants, it's simply a matter of showing them how you can help them achieve those things.

Your prospect is still listening to that radio station...WIIFM: What's In It For Me? When you show your prospect all the benefits she'll get and how you'll provide her with the solution to her problems...what you have to offer immediately has a higher perceived value in the prospect's eyes. Set up a time for them to come take a look and tell them you look forward to meeting them. That's all there is to it!

You've now moved from selling your services based on price, like a commodity, to positioning yourself and your business based on value. It's a much more satisfying and profitable way to do business. Plus, after you have this back and forth Q&A session, your prospect will likely have forgotten to ask again for prices!

Chapter Twenty-Two

The Secret Of Getting Publicity To Position Your Club as the “IN Club” And Generate Hot Qualified Leads

Self promotion is a necessary component in order to have the proper “positioning” for success today. The late Gary Halbert, a master at self-promotion, once said this: “Do you want to know how I know I’m the greatest copy writer in the world? It says so every month in my newsletter!” It’s good for a laugh, but there’s a lot of valuable advice there.

So why do you want to promote yourself?

People identify and connect with people. They are not drawn to, and do not develop deep and lasting relationships with a business.

Why do some of the large and successful businesses have a spokesman?

Because people identify and connect with people, not some nameless, faceless corporation. Look at Ronald McDonald and McDonalds or Dave Thomas at Wendy’s. Many of the big companies have understood at one time or another that they need a person or spokesperson that their members can identify with.

When you have a certain level of public visibility doing seminars, speaking to groups, or appearing in almost any kind of media, it creates an aura of celebrity and authority, and positions you as an expert and your club as the place to be to get results. In addition to all of the successful direct response marketing secrets you’re learning in this book, publicity is one more way that you can position yourself so people will call you. Most people perceive someone as an expert if they’re on television, radio, or have an article printed about them in a newspaper or magazine. And better yet, we’ve been conditioned for years to believe that anything we read in a newspaper or magazine is the truth.

In addition to all the other secrets you’re learning to build your business, we would encourage you to reposition yourself and your business as THE source for information about health, fitness, improved quality of life, or whatever niche you have chosen. Producers of local and regional television shows, news programs, and newspapers are always looking for new people who are experts in their fields. Anything that improves peoples’ lives or is controversial is always popular. Here are a few of our fairly easy ways to position yourself as an expert and get free publicity.

Become A Writer

OK, that doesn’t mean that you should quit what you’re doing and make your living at writing. But you should write something! Writing a book (not an e-book) is a powerful way to position yourself as an expert and also get some free publicity. Most people

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believe that a person who writes a book is the ultimate authority on that particular subject.

Now you're saying, "But I'm not a writer. I don't really know how to write and I forgot all that stuff about grammar and punctuation I learned in school."

No problem. There are a couple ways around this. You can hire a "ghost writer" who will write your book for you. There are thousands of starving writers out there who would be thrilled to write your book for you. It might cost you anywhere from a few hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars, depending upon the length of your book and how much research needs to be done. You can find ghost writers at www.guru.com, www.elance.com or at www.craigslist.com. An even cheaper way to do it is to record yourself and have it transcribed. You can find a transcriptionist at the same sites just mentioned. From there, you can clean it up and format it. You could get a book printed and bound in small quantities very inexpensively at www.lulu.com.

Then you have several options:

- You could donate several copies to all of the public libraries in your area and send a press release about this to all the media. (More about press releases later).
- You could ask local bookstores to sell your book on consignment. Or even ask them to give away copies for free. You could also arrange to do a book signing event at your local bookstore and send press releases about it to all the local media.
- If you knew that you were going to be doing a local radio interview, you could tell people to go to the local bookstore and request a free copy.
- You could sell them or give them away as 'prizes' at your speaking engagements to capture the names of the attendees.

If you don't want to write an entire book, you might want to consider writing a few "Special Reports". You could promote these like a book, use them as premiums, or give them away to anyone who visits your club.

You might want to consider writing (or have somebody do it for you) a series of articles. There are usually a lot of newspapers or regional publications who are constantly on the lookout for new and interesting articles to publish. They might even ask you to be a regular contributor or you may even have your own weekly or monthly column. And you can use reprints of these articles in your marketing materials to new members and students.

Press Releases

In his book, "The Art Of The Deal", Donald Trump said, "When you advertise, you 'rent' people's trust. When you're in the newspapers, you 'own' their trust."

Publicity is one of the fastest ways to almost instant credibility. When you tell someone about yourself, they may be skeptical. But when a newspaper or magazine writes an

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article about you or your business, it's almost always perceived as the truth. You gain credibility and put your club on the map!

And if you don't have motivation to do this, it is certain that one of your personal trainers would be interested in becoming a local celebrity by following these steps.

The way to get publicity is to send out press releases about almost everything of importance that you do. Send out a press release when you write a "Secrets to Fat Loss" book. Send out a press release when you offer a "Shortcuts to Fat Loss" seminar. Send out a press release when you can 'piggyback' a national news story.

That's one of the best ways to almost guarantee that your press release will get published or you will be called for an interview. For example: A year or so ago a report came out regarding childhood obesity and how much of an epidemic it had become. Similar reports were published by local and national news everywhere, articles ran in every newspaper, school cafeterias were reported on, parents were interviewed about home eating habits, PE teachers got to throw in their two cents about the lack of activity in children's lives. This still to this day gets its fair share of media attention.

When you see these trends happening, write a mini-book on the topic or hire someone to do it for you. Send out your press release and you'll find your club getting attention on TV and in the local paper.

Just think about it. Your Press Release arrives at the local TV stations, radio stations, and newspapers with a headline that says: "FREE Report (Or Book, Seminar, Etc.) Reveals The 10 Simple Secrets Every Parent Must Know to Stop Childhood Obesity."

You would be swamped with interview requests! Your club will have lots of new prospects, your seminars will be packed, and you can even design group fitness programs around that particular niche group, I.e. After School Fit Kids Program.

So are you capitalizing on other people's misfortunes? Absolutely not! You're teaching them valuable information that could save their lives at a time when they are most receptive to hearing and learning about it.

That's just an example of how to tie your press release to a well-publicized current event. There are many other ways to tie your press release to things that are popular in the media without it being such an emotional situation. In many ways press releases follow the same rules as your direct response ads. You need a catchy headline and it needs to be benefit driven. But in other ways press releases are different than your direct response ads. They should be one to two pages maximum. We have several examples available; just let us know you want them by emailing us at info@GymMarketing.com.

This chapter has only scratched the surface of using free publicity as a tool to let the masses know about you and your club. Entire courses have been written on this valuable tool. There is enough here to get you well on your way to fame in your market.

Chapter Twenty-Three

The Member Newsletter Your Retention & Referral Secret Weapon

The member newsletter is an extremely valuable marketing tool for getting an avalanche of referrals as well as maximizing the Lifetime value of your current members. You can also use it as a passive marketing tool to your list of hot prospects.

You should send this resource at least every month, assuming that you're complementing the print newsletter with an e-mail newsletter. Just remember - a print newsletter has more perceived value, has higher readership and will put more money in your pocket, so don't default to the path of least resistance and only send an e-mail version.

Here are tips for creating and maximizing your own member newsletter.

You are going to mail this newsletter on a monthly basis to your entire list - to your members, to all leads, and to prominent members of your community who are centers of influence.

Your newsletter should be content based and provide valuable information for the reader. You do not want to the newsletter to be completely about the service you're providing.

Your newsletter should reflect your personality. It should look like it's coming from you. It should sound like it's coming from you. Only part of the newsletter should be devoted to promoting you. The rest of the newsletter should be educational and enjoyable for your member to read, so they look forward and anticipate getting your newsletter.

Your newsletter should have a member-of-the-month section. In this section you welcome new members, and recognize and reward your members for referrals.

Here are a few more suggestions:

- Under the headline, put your club name, your street address, your website address, email address and all of your contact information.
- On the first page is your primary content article with a strong headline to keep the reader interested.
- On the second page of the newsletter you might have an exercise of the month, healthy recipes, and shorter fitness-related articles or supplement reviews.
- Page three of your newsletter is going to be about you. This is the page where you're going to promote your services and products through testimonials, case studies, featured programs, etc.

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- Pages 3 or 4 also are a wonderful spot to recognize your referrals by acknowledging the referring party. This will reinforce the referring behavior for the people being recognized and help create a referral culture within your business. I.e. *A huge thank you to Rhonda Smith, Jessica Lewis, and Rod Jacobs for their referrals this past month! They each will be receiving Personal Training Session, on us, for their recruiting efforts!*
- In this section, you also can select a “Member of the Month”. Every single month, you're going to feature one of your members. How you select a member is totally up to you. But you're going to write about this member, their story, including quotes from them.

You should pick a member of the month who's referred a lot of people, attained a specific goal or just re-signed for another year. You want to reward your member of the month with some gift. Maybe a gift certificate for a massage or something similar.

That's the newsletter, in a nutshell. The format is flexible, but the one detailed here works very well. Again, if you need more examples or want to discuss methods for automating your newsletter and other forms of communication with your members, please do not hesitate to email us at info@GymMarketing.com.

The newsletter is the cornerstone of your retention marketing for your current member base – so don't neglect it. These members are far more important than are prospects! Never forget that.

Chapter Twenty-Four

The E-mail Newsletter – The Foundation Of Passive Marketing

How would you like a very inexpensive and almost automated way to stimulate referrals, cultivate leads and increase the lifetime value of your current members?

Well there is no faster, easier and more cost effective way to foster trust among your current members and prospects than with a relationship building online newsletter.

So, how frequently should you send your e-mail newsletter? Weekly or twice monthly, it just depends on your ability to stay on top of delivering it. If you can't commit to producing a solid newsletter each week, start with the twice monthly option. You can always ratchet up the frequency if necessary.

What's the next step? Start collecting the e-mail addresses of all of your members and prospects. If you haven't done so thus far, start doing it immediately. E-mail can be a cornerstone of your marketing efforts for literally pennies a day.

Here are some tips for creating your own e-mail newsletter:

- Personalize your email. The salutation for your newsletter should use your member's name instead of "Dear Friend." In fact, you should never use "Dear Friend" because that phrase triggers spam filters.) It should appear that you are emailing everyone personally.
- You can go with text only or HTML, it's your choice. HTML emails look 'prettier' but they get caught in spam filters and seem less personal. Choose a service that allows you to send both text and HTML versions of your newsletter to ensure high delivery rates.
- If you use text, make sure you insert hard breaks at 65 characters. If you don't have a hard break at 65 characters, your formatting will not look correct when it lands in your reader's inbox. Most autoresponder systems have this step automated.
- Tuesday are typically the best day for getting your e-mails read. A lot of people let their email accumulate over the weekend and therefore their email box is packed full of spam and other email on Monday.
- You want to get an autoresponder that has a broadcast email capability. This way you can send out personalized emails to your entire list with literally one click of a button.

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If you're not familiar (I'm sure you are, but just in case), an autoresponder is a program that can send out a series of pre-programmed e-mails over a certain period of time or you can send a "broadcast" email to your entire list in real time. The broadcast feature is the one we are talking about to send out your email newsletter.

- Offer a fitness tip in each newsletter and a brief promotion for your business – either a direct response offer or a more passive promotion like a testimonial or success story.
- Be sure to remind readers to forward the newsletter along to friends.

So, here's a step-by-step process to follow:

1. Get setup with an autoresponder. Here are some popular options:

<http://www.Aweber.com> (This is the one we use at VMG)

<http://www.ProAutoResponder.com>

<http://www.ConstantContact.com>

<http://www.iContact.com>

2. Upload current list of e-mails.
3. Decide on broadcast schedule and follow it.

These e-mail newsletters work synergistically with your print newsletter to form an effective member satisfaction / passive marketing system.

There are 2 elements to your monthly member newsletter:

1. A personal development, moneymaking, health or business tip.
2. A promotion for your business.

You can set up as many autoresponder systems as you want. Examples include:

- An autoresponder for a free report from your club's website: *"Things to consider before joining a health club"*. This can be a one time report or it can be, say, a 3 part report, with each part sent every day for 3 days.
- An autoresponder for a 7 part ebook written by one of your trainers.
- An autoresponder newsletter once or twice a month (described above)
- Broadcasts for freebies at your club. I.e. *"Bring in this coupon to receive 25% off any item in our pro shop this week only!"*

Chapter Twenty-Five

Internet Marketing For Your Offline Business

It would be impossible to give a comprehensive overview of internet marketing in this book – as the topic merits its own separate book. But this chapter will give you a quick overview of the key points to know when it comes to marketing your health club online.

You must be on the Internet...Period.

The first thing you must understand is how most people use the web. While there are some folks who fire up their computer to go shopping, most people use the Internet as a tool to gather information. They may use that information to make a purchase decision but first they will gather the necessary information.

In fact, statistics show that somewhere in the neighborhood of 69% of households perform some kind of search for a local product or service on a daily basis.

So it stands to reason that as increasing numbers of people turn to their computers for research purposes, the businesses that are ready and waiting to provide that information stand to gain over those who fail to meet this need.

In fact, the internet has replaced the Yellow Pages for many people as it's easier for many to locate a local business or services with a few clicks than to plow through a phone book.

As regional web directories and search portals grow in popularity, gaining listings in them will be more important than a Yellow Page listing.

You should look at your web site as a way to provide information first and as a way to generate leads and perhaps sales second.

A web site will allow you to enhance your advertising efforts by placing free detailed information, reports and beneficial content in a place where anyone can retrieve it.

Getting Found By Your Target Market

You should start off by thinking about your website more like a listing in a phone directory. Focus on building and optimizing your site with the primary intent of being found in your hometown as the leading fitness professional. Someone looking for "Health Club in Jacksonville, FL" will enter just that when performing an online search, right?

You may not have noticed it before, but the first results displayed are actually local directory results complete with a "map it" feature and all. Click on one of the local

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listings displayed, and you get all of the information that's presented. It's almost like a mini web page for that business.

What this means to you and your health club though is that you need to make sure that when someone does a search that you show up in those directory listings and in the normal “organic” search results for local terms.

Here are the major players in local search – you will need to set-up free accounts with each.

Google Local - https://www.google.com/local/add/login?hl=en_US

Yahoo Local - <http://listings.local.yahoo.com/>

Super Pages - http://www.superpages.com/about/new_chg_listing.html

City Search - <https://selfenroll.citysearch.com/>

True Local - <http://www.truelocal.com/getlisted.aspx>

YellowPages.com - <http://www.yellowpages.com/sp/contact/update.jsp>

Local.com - http://advertise.local.com/search_buslisting.aspx

Insider Pages - <http://www.insiderpages.com/>

Judy's Book - <http://www.judysbook.com/merchant/>

In each case, you may have to complete a form and give out details such as business hours, forms of payment and directions. Some of these sites have premium paid listings available as well.

Google and Yahoo both have both caught on to the local search trend so they are now going to make it easier for web surfers that want to find a health club in their home town to do so.

Here's more about local search at these sites.

<http://www.google.com/lochp?output=html>

<http://local.google.com/support/>

<http://local.yahoo.com/>

Now let's talk about "local" search engine optimization (SEO). In one sense, the principles are the same as everyday regular search engine optimization but the way of thinking about them is a bit different.

In the old days, the mindset was to create a website and optimize it for anyone looking for a certain topic.

Local SEO focuses first on being found in your town....for your niche. Geo targeting is the key. When someone is looking for a club to join, they don't search locally (at the moment) for the name of your business. Think in terms of a Yellow Pages directory. They go to city they are looking for and then the category and then the name of the business to call.

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Local search is structured much the same. People who are looking for a health club online will search "Jacksonville health club" In order to win the local search game, you must be able to win that type of search.

There are no hard and fast rules and even if there were, they would change - but here are some things you need to begin to think about to bury your competition in the local search game.

Title Tags - This is probably one of the most important pieces of information on your page anyway, so make sure your title reads something like "YOUR BUSINESS NAME Jacksonville's premier health club.

H1 Tags - Make sure that your keywords for your site and your geography have H1 tags – I.e. The Only Guaranteed Fat Loss Solution in Jacksonville, FL.

Content - Add your address and phone number early and prominently (not a bad thing for every page really).

Meta Tags - Opinions vary on the usefulness of these but there are some tags that may gain usefulness depending on how the search engines refine their methods.

```
meta name="zipcode" content="32099,32201,32203,32204,32205, 32206"  
meta name="city" content="Jacksonville"  
meta name="state" content="FL"
```

Linking - Make your internal links local friendly - Instead of "Metabolism Makeover," use "Jacksonville Metabolism Makeover".

DMOZ - The Open Directory Project is a directory of sites that are listed by human volunteers. It seems that getting listed here gives you high marks with search engines so you need to do it but make sure that you go for the Regional listings all the way down to your town. It is unlikely (and not very useful) that you will get listed for a broad category, particularly if you don't provide world-wide service. Go for the weight loss section of your town, and you will have better luck.

Other Directories - Another good reason to get listed in DMOZ for your town is that other local directories like Verizon's Smart Pages and SBC's Yellow Pages rely on these listing as well. By the way, get listed in as many of these phone book type of directories like Smart Pages as you can. Some are free and there is speculation that initially the big search engines will rely on these already built local directories.

Google AdWords

AdWords is Google's program for advertisers.

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Any site that wishes to participate bids for "keywords" that are relevant to their product, service, or site and then creates ads to attract hits. These ads show up on private websites, and more importantly, on the right side of Google search results. It's pretty simple; when you do a search – you'll receive the content related sites that you searched for, but you also get some related ads that are sponsored.

Now here is where Google is genius. Instead of simply subjecting surfers to any ads that anyone is willing to pay for, they actually police the ads that are running. On some pay per click programs, whoever is willing to pay to most wins. Google uses a performance model. In other words, an ad that is the most relevant and therefore receives the most clicks will move ahead of an ad that may pay more but isn't as effective. This simple philosophy is why Google has quickly dominated the PPC world.

Okay...and now the best part of PPC Ads...

Regional Targeting. A while back Google introduced a system that allows advertisers to target certain markets only. In other words, a health club who only wants to promote to people interested in weight loss in say, Cleveland, can bid on the keyword phrase "weight loss" and only have his ads show up for people who live in and around Cleveland.

The implication this has for health clubs is staggering. In the example above, the health club can now tap into highly targeted web traffic for pennies per lead. We feel that health clubs who learn the ins and outs of this medium will dominate their markets.

The Most Common Health Club Website Mistakes

One of the primary reasons to have a web site is to attract and educate visitors. This obvious concept seems to be lost on many web designers. The way your site is designed, what's there and what's not there can have a great impact on how much traffic your site will generate.

Here's a list of the most common website design "sins" and traffic killers. Use this list as you design your own site, or show it to your web designer. If your web designer doesn't understand these points or dismisses them as unimportant...find another web designer!

Not making the domain name easy to remember - Let's suppose your business name is taken... What will you use? I'd recommend something short and maybe with your community's name in the title. Short and memorable is best.

As a review, when choosing a domain name you should consider the following criteria:

- Is it easy to remember?
- Does it describe the purpose of the site?
- Is it available without hyphens?

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- Is it available with a .com extension?
- Is it somewhat short (less than 15 characters)?
- Does it match the keywords of your site?

Not Using Testimonials - People want to know how you can help them solve their own unique problems. If they see that you've helped someone else out that had the same (or similar) problem with successful results, it proves that you can help them as well.

To provide your visitor with a comfort level sufficient enough to call you or consider you as a potential solution, you need to answer the questions that are being asked in the mind of your prospect. These are...

1. Who are you?
2. Why should I believe you?
3. What are the benefits you will provide me?
4. Exactly what is your offer?
5. How will it solve my problem?
6. Who else has worked with you and what were their results?
7. How do you deliver results to your members?

Answer these questions through the use of testimonials and your chances of moving forward with the prospect will rise dramatically.

Not Focusing On The Prospect - No one cares about you or what you have to say about yourself. All they care about is how you can help them solve their problem. The moment you start to understand that people don't care about you, and that what they really care about is how you can solve their problem, you'll start making more money. Here are some tips to convey this on your site:

- State your prospect's problem then agitate it.
- Address each potential objection in your copy and a FAQ area.
- Use the words you and your instead of I and we.
- Use testimonials.

Not Having An 'About Us' Page Or A Picture Of Your Staff - People buy from people and train with people – not businesses. By letting the prospect get to know you and your staff they'll be more likely to feel good about doing business with you.

Not Having Opt-In Boxes On Every Page And A Pop-Up Box - By placing your opt-in box (a form that captures your customer's email address) on every page, you'll continually remind your visitor to give you their name and email address. As far as a pop-

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up box goes, an exit pop-up might even be a better choice than an entrance pop-up. These tools come with your autoresponder service mentioned earlier. And remember - offer something that your visitor will find valuable. A report, a video clip, or something else of real value. Essentially you are bribing your visitor to give you their contact information. If your bribe is good, you'll receive a lot of email addresses.

Not Using Compelling Headlines and Strong Copy - The trick to getting your visitors to read your copy is to use dynamic, attention-getting headlines and sub-headlines.

The sole purpose of your headline should be to make your visitor want to continue reading the text below it. Each page of your website should start with a headline. You may even want to use a sub-headline to support your main headline.

It's said that people are 8 times more likely to read your content if you have a headline, so also use headlines in your testimonials, with your guarantees and as captions for photos.

Treat your site like sales copy identifying your USP, extolling strong benefits and a specific call to action. Incorporating items such as testimonials and guarantees will dramatically improve your response rates as well.

No Title Tag Or Meaningless Title Tags. – Title tags are part of the HTML structure of every web page. Think of them as the informal name of the page. If you want to understand this better, go to a website and right click your mouse in the page and hit “view source or view page source.” When you do this, you are looking at the HTML code for this page. NOTE: While you are looking at this source code realize that this is what the search engines see. No matter what your page looks like, it won't be found if this code doesn't help you get found.

Your title tags can be a great tool for getting you search engine traffic if they are combined with good page content. This is what appears on the top bar of your page in whatever browser you are using. Most health club websites waste the effectiveness of their title tags by using their club's name. Use title tags and make them part of your site content. Think about what people search for that you would be able to help with (weight loss, fat loss, etc.) and name your pages based on that.

Using “Flash” Intro Pages –Search engines can't tell what flash pages are about – therefore they are pointless.

Contact Information is Hidden – There are some web site owners out there that don't want to be easy to contact, but surely that's not you. Put your address and contact information on every page and do it in regular font, not a graphic. More and more people are turning to their web browser like a phone book. Listing your address multiple times as well as multiple content links throughout your website can make it easier to find you in your own town.

No Use Of Heading Tags – HTML uses a series of H or heading tags to help structure a page like an outline. H1 for the most important headings h2 for subheads and so on. Each of your pages will do well to contain a keyword rich headline, much like an ad for the page. Leave this to whomever creates or maintains your website.

Blogging For Your Business

A blog is really nothing more than a diary uploaded to the Internet and until about the last couple of years was the realm of the individual who saw it as a way to publish their random (and sometimes disturbed) thoughts. The great thing about blogs, and the growing set of software that is being created to publish them, is that they are a tremendous business tool. Not to mention, they are free to create.

Blogs allow you to create content and contact...and that is what your members crave more than anything.

Another great reason to explore the use of blogs is that search engines seem to love them.

So what is it about blogs that those little spiders love so much?

Here's a little secret, search engines crave content. Okay so maybe that's not such a secret but to look at many websites you would think it so. The fact is that too many websites just sit there doing nothing that the search engines admire. Providing content, not to mention fresh content, is one of the toughest chores of anyone who maintains a website. But when it comes to generating traffic it is the most important job.

Blogs, by their very nature, are all about content. In a commercial environment every blog entry is fresh content. Get in the habit of making two, three, even four entries a week and you've got a content-rich 'site' on your hands. Everyone knows you need new content to give visitors a reason to come back; blogs just make the task so much easier.

There are a couple of things you should do to make your blog a traffic magnet. They aren't really that different than tradition SEO tactics but the names and faces are unique to the blogging world.

Use Targeted Keywords On Your Entry Titles

No rocket science here but this tip can't be stated enough. Forget cute...go for titles that fit your targeted keywords and phrases...even if they seem a bit awkward. (You do have targeted keywords and phrases don't you?)

Register with Blog Search Engines like:

<http://www.blogsearchengine.com/>

Register with Tracking Services – These services note when a blog has been updated and publish an ongoing list. They even keep track of the most updated and most visited blogs. Plus you get to learn what pinging is.

<http://blo.gs/>

<http://www.weblogs.com/>

Trade Some Links

You don't need to get out of control on this one but a few "relevant" swapped links to related blogs can boost your traffic.

Syndicate Your Content

This one is way too technical to cover here but do some research on RSS feeds and you may discover ways to have your content and entries fed to sites that are hungry for the type of stuff you write. Many of the popular blog software packages have this capability built right in.

Your Marketing Hub

A well designed website can be your marketing hub – the place that you drive prospects to learn more about you, the spot that your current members look for valuable information and refer friends, and your credibility builder for potential joint ventures, publicity and speaking engagements- so do what's necessary to have a good one. If you like the design elements of our website, www.GymMarketing.com, we can gladly put you in touch with our web developer.

Chapter Twenty-Six

Generating A Steady Flow Of Prospects With Lead Boxes

Using Lead Boxes

Though not nearly as effective as in the 1990's, a lead box program can still help you generate a steady stream of new leads, if run effectively. Here's a strategy to ensure your lead box is a powerful, cost-effective marketing tool.

Starting Your Program

The first step when beginning a lead box program is selecting the type of lead box that you'll use. Many companies sell lead boxes, so comparison shop before choosing one, and don't let price alone be your determining factor. There are many expensive lead boxes that look cheap, and there are inexpensive lead boxes that look professional. A cheap lead box will not generate the same lead traffic as a nice-looking one. www.Future-Fitness.com is our preferred vendor for lead boxes.

The header of the box needs to have the same type of copy that you would use on a postcard offering a free special report to everyone that completes an inquiry form. Remember, you have to have a strong headline and compelling copy to get prospects to request more information.

Site Selection

Once you've decided exactly who your target market is, site selection becomes easy. Box locations need to have good traffic flow to consistently generate enough leads to make a site worth maintaining. They also need to be places where your target market does business. Chiropractor's offices, spas, dry cleaners, salons and other types of businesses that cater to your ideal member are good targets.

Site Procurement

Approach either the owner or the manager and offer a service of benefit in exchange for site procurement. This could be a free membership to your club, a free lunch and learn for the business, \$10 for every membership sold from that particular lead box, or allow them to provide you with marketing pieces to hand out to your members. Don't hesitate to give up something of value so the business owner or manager feels good about the arrangement. This can help the person better promote your lead box.

Then select a high-visibility area for the lead box. The lead box location must not interfere with the owner's business in any way, or negative reactions can occur that will

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reduce your rapport with the business. The importance of maintaining a good relationship with the business is vital.

Lead Box Servicing & Following Up

You need to keep the lead box attractive and well-stocked with lead pads, and have a working pen attached to the box at all times. The impression that the box creates is directly tied to your business. Leads from the lead box must be picked up at least once a week. Once you collect the leads, come back and enter them into your database. Then immediately send out your free report to everyone that requested it.

Once you've sent the report, follow up with your regular sequence of mailings, e-mails and phone calls.

If managed properly, lead boxes can result in a new group of prospective members at a minimal cost so don't ignore this underutilized strategy.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

The Magic Of Greeting Cards

You know what we've found to be the best marketing strategy you could implement?

Newsletters? Nope.

Three letter sequences? Not those either.

Your website? Not that either.

Actually, the secret marketing weapon that will bring you the highest ROI and allow your health club to dominate your market is...Greeting Cards.

Think about it. With a member base that is relatively small, making each member, each prospect and each contact feel important is crucial.

That's why greeting cards have been so successful for us in our business as well.

Pretty much no other business does it – and that allows us to set ourselves apart.

Ideally, you could send handwritten cards, but if you have a decent member base, this could take lots of time and lots of payroll dollars. Instead, you need to utilize an automated approach. There is a company called Send Out Cards who has created software to be able to send greeting card sequences automatically.

There are all kinds of reasons for you to send cards frequently and consistently:

- When someone tours your club, but decides not to join, send a thank you card.
- When you sign up a new member, send a thank you card.
- Send members cards on special occasions like birthdays and holidays.
- Send a card when a member meets a personal fitness goal.
- When a member refers someone, send a card.

By you sending a card, you've shown your member that you care.

There are a number of ways you can integrate greeting cards into your marketing plan.

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Instead of sending a typical direct mail letter when you are doing a reactivation campaign, send a greeting card. It comes across as more personal and is certainly more memorable. Use the same letter, just write the message (or have it written) into a card.

When you want to ask for referrals, send your member a card asking for a referral. The more personalized you can make the relationship – the more you go the extra mile to WOW your members with thoughtfulness – the deeper the relationship will be, and the more you will get in return.

A gift card would be a perfect complement to a mailed greeting card. Think of how powerful the combination of a personalized greeting card, along with a gift card with your club logo on it, for whatever denomination you want. It could be “worth” \$99 and can be given to the people they refer to use toward an enrollment fee. There are many possibilities. The bottom line is that you need to begin doing something. Contact us at info@GymMarketing.com for examples of gift cards you can use in your marketing efforts.

But remember – you must be consistent. Set up a “system” for this – just as you would for any marketing strategy.

If you are going to hand write your cards - hand write at least two cards every day, Monday through Friday. That’s ten a week or 520 a year. That’s a lot of cards and it will do a lot for your business. But that many cards will take quite some time, and if you attempt to send two cards per year to each member, and you have 1,000 members, That is over 40 handwritten greeting cards per week!

If you want to test out an automated approach, contact us at info@GymMarketing.com and we will walk you through the entire process. It will completely change the way you do business. Your members will feel appreciated, your ROI will increase, your lifetime value of your members will improve, your referrals will increase, and more members will reactivate their memberships; all without you putting forth any extra effort, due to the fact that the entire system is automated.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Generating Leads With Door Hangers

Everyday we go through dozens of doors without even thinking about it. How would you like to be able to make people stop and take notice of your marketing message?

The answer is "Door Hangers."

More than likely, you probably want to keep your marketing costs as low as possible. Door hangers definitely fit in the low cost category and are a great lead generation tool.

Here are a few of the advantages of using door hangers:

1. They're inexpensive,
2. They're easy to create and distribute,
3. The response is almost immediate,
4. They help you establish a farming area,
5. They can be targeted to a specific market,
6. You're going to get a lot of exercise.

As noted above...There's lots of very good reasons why you would want to work the door hanger idea into your marketing plan. But, here's the most important reason of all: You'll receive an immediate response using door hangers. If you want immediate leads downloading or calling to request your free report, door hangers can do the trick.

I'm sure you realize that door hangers are meant to be used as the first step in the lead generation process. You won't sell training with a door hanger. The goal of the door hanger is strictly to get the prospect to request your free report. Only when this happens does the sales process begin. Door hangers are meant to get your message out there quickly, efficiently, cheaply, and in great quantity.

So...your door hangers are delivered. What's next and what can you expect?

First, you'll hopefully get immediate inquiries.

Second, you may run across people willing to carry on a conversation with you right on their doorstep. Just be prepared for that.

Third, the life span of your door hanger is short, usually, three or four days at the very most. This is an immediate response idea with no long term residual value.

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Fourth, your response numbers will approximate the response rate of direct mail without the associated costs. Expect about a one to two percent response.

Fifth, you will get complaints. Don't worry about it; just be aware you'll get them. You'll find they're about soliciting. Apologize profusely and move on. Your response is: "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to offend...I've worked with many people in the community and everyone is very well pleased...I do provide a valuable service for your community."

Besides, you're giving something away for free...not selling anything ☺

OK back to basics...Let's pick a target for your door hangers. It needs to be your target market. Look for target communities within 5 miles of your studio.

Mid morning is typically a good time where you can distribute to a significant number of homes or you can have local kids place them on doors in a particular neighborhood on a Saturday morning. If you hire kids...do get the parents permission and supervise the placement of the door hangers. You could even get a local church youth group or boy scout troop to do this on your behalf in exchange for a donation or a pizza lunch.

Finally, bright colored door hangers such as lime green or hunter orange seem to work best, and make sure you have a compelling headline to catch the resident's attention before they toss the hanger in the trash.

Door hangers are great to target a local community that you want to focus on. Use your same lead generation approach that works for postcards, yellow page ads and lead boxes. You'll build your neighborhood list in a hurry – and at a minimal cost.

Bonus Chapter

Turning Up The Profits With Up-Sells, Back End-Sales, and Down-Sells

Most health clubs spend inordinate amounts of time and money trying to increase their profitability by focusing solely on attracting new members when all along they're missing out on a goldmine in their own business.

What is an "Up Sell?"

On each and every transaction, you have the opportunity to increase your margins dramatically with a simple "Up Sell." Up Sells are offers made at the point of sale by giving a simple suggestion.

For instance, if you go to McDonald's and order a regular breakfast, the counter person will ask you if you'd like to have the "big breakfast" instead for only a dollar more. This is an example of an Up Sell.

Although it only amounts to an extra dollar in revenue for that order, on an annual basis McDonald's rakes in millions of dollars based on that one simple suggestion.

You see, an important marketing principle to understand is that when people are in the act of buying something, they are in the buying mood and are highly susceptible to buying more.

This is especially true if you're giving a related offer. Why wouldn't your prospect want to buy more of what they've already decided to buy, especially if they can do so at a significant discount?

Some Simple Ways to Create an Up Sell

There's a up sell for everything – you just have to be creative. The following are eight ways to create an up sell:

Up Sell Suggestion #1: Add a supplement combo pack at the point of sale. The new member can get a discount on your most popular supplements while jump starting their program.

Up Sell Suggestion #2: Offer an introductory personal training package. Something simple such as six 30-minute training sessions for \$199. Give it a catchy name like a "Rapid Results" program, exclusively for new members to jumpstart their results.

Up Sell Suggestion #3: Offer additional tools like a workout log or pedometer to facilitate your member's success.

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Up Sell Suggestion #4: Offer a nutritional coaching program – either in a group setting or one-on-one, at a discount from the normal fee.

Up Sell Suggestion #5: Offer an exclusive towel and locker service to a limited number of members for an additional X amount per month.

Up Sell Suggestion #6: Provide unlimited tanning at your club for X dollars per month. Make the amount lower than what the member would pay if they were to go to a local tanning salon. If you don't have a tanning bed, consider getting one. Preferably a stand-up version, as the footprint is much smaller and will not take up much space in your gym.

Up Sell Suggestion #7: Add on a family member for only X dollars more per month.

Up Sell Suggestion #8: Have your front desk staff consistently ask members after their workout if they would like a refreshing post-workout drink. Though your margins are probably around one dollar on each of these, if 5% of people working out each day purchase a drink, you're likely looking at several thousand dollars in extra revenue per year.

The Importance of Scripts When Up Selling Members

Scripts are essential for Up Selling members. Your script should be a simple suggestion made to the members at the point of sale. After deciding on your Up Sell, create a script for you or your staff members to use.

Make the script simple so that it's seamlessly integrated into your sales system. More than a couple of sentences usually tend to seem too pushy and generate a lower response. I.e. *“Did you want to add our “Rapid Results” program, allowing you six sessions with our amazing personal trainers to help you reach your goals even faster? It's only \$199 for six sessions and is for new members only. May I add this to your membership to help make sure you are headed in the right direction?”*

Now that you have a script and you're comfortable that it's working, integrate it into your business process. Test to see what your conversion rates are and modify it accordingly.

You'll be amazed at the power and the profitability of a simple suggestive Up Sell.

Generating Profits with Back End Sales

Back End Sales are similar to Up-Sells; however, it happens over a longer period of time.

Usually back end selling to your member comes after you have established a relationship with them over a period of time and they have purchased at least one package or program from you already.

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To set up your back end sales system you should start by developing a back end offerings list. This will be a list which identifies all the services and products you can offer that complement (or that someone would be interested in) your core offering.

Examples of Complementary Back-End Offerings:

1. Weight Management Programs
2. Autoship Supplements
3. Retail Supplements
4. Personal Training Programs
5. Pedometers
6. Foam Rollers
7. Videos
8. Online Training
9. Meal Planning
10. Massage Therapy
11. Tanning
12. Special offering classes (spinning, pilates, etc.)

Your members are loyal to you and trust you. They would rather pay for additional products and services from you than from some other person offering the same product or service.

Your relationship with your member has value and that value is called “member equity,” much like the equity you have in your home. Take advantage of it by consistently making complementary offers to your good members.

Down-Selling—The Psychological Secret To Boosting Sales

Down-selling is based on the fact that if people buy respectable amounts of your high priced services, they’ll buy lots of a similar service at a much reduced price.

Haven’t you ever wanted to purchase something but you just couldn’t bring yourself to open your wallet or purse and give up the money? What if at that point you were offered a slimmed down version of that product or service at a much reduced price? The average buyer would jump right on it. That’s the down-selling concept.

Robert Cialdini, Ph.D., in his book, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, noted that people are magnetically attracted to a lower priced version of a product or service (and more willing to purchase it) once they’ve been exposed to a higher priced product or service in which they’ve shown interest as compared to those who were just exposed to the lower priced product or service.

Lower The Barrier To Entry

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The way this strategy is implemented is to always offer the higher priced version of your service first. If your prospect doesn't buy, then present them with a less expensive offer for a scaled down version of your service but that produces the same fundamental benefits.

For instance, if you're selling one-on-one training and the prospect declines, then offer a semi-private or a bootcamp option that has a lower price point and still provides the core benefits that the prospect is looking for.

Up Sells, back-end sales and down-sells can all mean significant additional revenue for your business. In fact, your margins will be significantly higher on sales made using up-sells, and back-end strategies because you didn't have to pay any marketing costs to get the member; they were already yours.

To simplify this marketing strategy you always first want to up-sell. After you've up-sold, then you want to try to make back-end sales to your members for more products and services. If they don't opt for your sales effort, make a down-sell offer.

People like to receive offers on products and services that interest them. Even the affluent want good deals. All you're trying to do when you up-sell, back-sell, and down-sell is make irresistible offers that your prospects and members can't refuse.

Bonus Chapter

The Guerrilla Marketing Two Month Business Quick-Start

Do you ever set specific goals about what you want your business to look like in 3 months, 12 months, even 36 months? When you're caught up in the 'day to day' of things, it's often difficult to pinpoint just what you want for your business and for yourself. But if you want to boost your current income and improve your business, you need to set specific goals.

Here's why:

Different marketing strategies produce different returns, either in more revenue, or more members - depending on your specific circumstances. If you know what your goals are from the beginning, the rest of the 2 Month Turnaround will become much easier to complete.

Another reason to set specific goals is that your brain is "programmed" to achieve goals that you set. In fact, you could say the brain is a goal-seeking mechanism. At any one time, there are about 8 million bits of information streaming into the brain from various sources—most of which you cannot focus on, nor do you need to. There is so much information streaming in, as a matter of fact, that a mechanism in the brain called the *reticular activating system* actually screens out everything *except* those messages you truly need in order to survive or to achieve goals you have set.

In other words, your brain retains certain information, uses it to help you make educated decisions and begins to actually look for ways to achieve the goals you give it.

So by setting specific goals and holding a picture in your mind of meeting those goals — your brain will work day and night to turn that picture into reality.

Obviously, that isn't quite enough so here are the specific steps to take to meet your goals.

Now that you've determined what your goals are, it's time to start looking for the opportunities in your business and in your community to reach them.

Can you entice your existing members to spend more money with you by implementing a weight management program or adding autoship supplements to your business? Are there potential joint-venture partners in your member base or local area? Can you turbo-charge your marketing methods, sales system, or prospecting strategies to bring in more members immediately?

Here's a checklist of ideas to get you started:

- Develop a member / prospect database
- Gather testimonials

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- Create your Free Report
- Upsell at Point of Sale
- Develop and send a compelling press release
- Convert members to a longer term EFT
- Resell members prior to renewal date
- Reactivate old members
- Hold a special discount bootcamp to get more members involved
- Conduct a workshop or seminar
- Create a “your community’s best businesses” group
- Start a Two-Step marketing campaign
- Add a peripheral program like weight management
- Begin selling autoship supplements to current members and prospects
- Place newsletters in other businesses waiting areas
- Run a referral campaign with your members
- Hold a referral campaign with a JV partner
- Use voice broadcasts to offer specials to your members
- Start bundling products & services
- Make specific product & service back-end offers to your members each month
- Create a downsell offer
- Put your special report online behind a squeeze page
- Develop a sales script
- CREATE YOUR OPERATIONS MANUAL
- Sign up for your Free Consultation with a VMG Senior Consultant by visiting www.GymMarketing.com.
- Read this eBook again, and make sure you are subscribed to our powerful Gym Goldmine Newsletter by visiting www.GymMarketing.com.

Up until this point you’ve been reading and brainstorming—and hopefully you’ve expanded your marketing and business growth knowledge.

Now it’s time to decide which strategies you’ll implement over the next 90 days to bring in more members and grow your business. Will you ask your existing members to spend more money with you? Will you do a direct mail postcard using a testimonial from a member? Will you initiate a joint venture with someone who can send you members right away?

Which strategies *should* you execute first?

It is likely best to focus on your ‘in house’ list first and then expand beyond that after you’ve seen a sufficient return. So here are some options:

- Create your print and email newsletters
- Set up your blog and begin blogging (visit www.blogger.com)
- Upsell other products and services at the point of sale
- Create a system to offer Back-end products and services to existing members
- Reactivation of old members with greeting cards and incentives

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- Conduct a powerful referral campaign with existing members
- Come up with a special offer to all of your unclosed prospects

Now, here's where you take action. Pick one strategy and focus on implementing it for the next 2 weeks. Here are some questions to get you started:

1. Which strategy will you execute?
2. What will be sold or promoted? What is the price? Will you sell it to new members, existing members or prospects?
3. What marketing materials, sales scripts, programs or other things will you need to produce?
4. Does any of this material exist already that you could simply reuse or improve upon? If you write new materials, what will the message be? What offer will you make? Be sure to always contact us first if you need a specific document, as it is likely that we have something you can utilize.
5. What is your expected return on investment?

Remember to document everything.

Then, during weeks 3 & 4, pick another strategy and do it again.

Once you get the hang of it, ratchet things up a bit. During weeks 5 - 8 you'll be multi-tasking. During weeks 5 & 6, pick another 'in house' marketing strategy using the same approach that you did before, and implement it. But also, if you're not doing it already – you need to begin a scheduled correspondence with your member and prospect list. Preferably, you'll at least do a monthly e-mail newsletter (twice a month is better) and a quarterly "snail mail" newsletter (monthly is better.) Once you schedule this, you must stick with it.

Review the chapters on newsletters and e-mail newsletters to develop your approach. During this 2 week period I want you to start gathering member testimonials as well. Finally, during weeks 5 & 6, you need to decide what your first external marketing strategy will be. Here are a few ideas:

- Postcards
- Door Hangers
- Lead Boxes
- JV with a local business
- PPC Ads

Notice these are all low-risk options and do not include mailing a sequenced series to a cold list. You need to build up a warm prospect database and all of these approaches will do

just that. Obviously you want some return quickly, so when you give the prospect access to your free report either via mail or online, attach a special offer for your services or a free trial. Use the same questions that you used earlier to formulate your in-house marketing plan.

During weeks 7 & 8 you will be rolling out your first external marketing campaign. Just like with every other campaign that you do – track everything. During weeks 7 & 8 you will also schedule at least 2 presentations with either local affinity groups or local businesses. During these talks you need to have a way to capture prospect information and you should prepare a strong offer to convert some of the attendees into immediate members.

By this point you should have dramatically increased your list of prospects. You should have also implemented several ongoing in-house marketing strategies that you can repeat indefinitely to dramatically improve the lifetime value of your member base. With the feedback you get from your external campaign, you should be able to make any necessary changes and roll out one of the other campaign options. Then (this is the best part) use some of the proceeds from the campaigns you've run to do a sequenced mailing – either with a JV partner, beginning with a postcard or a 3 letter sequence. Now your marketing is self-funded, which means you're generating a steady stream of new prospects and members at no financial risk to you. And remember – this is just the starting point. Marketing is a 12 month-a-year activity that will pay you off with tens of thousands more dollars and revenue and hundreds of new and retained members.

It is impossible for us to present every marketing strategy for your club. Of the strategies discussed in this book, if we were to have gone in as much detail as we wanted, you would be reading a 1,000+ page book right now. The truth is that there are dozens of marketing strategies that will work at your club. You just need to find the right mix. That doesn't mean you have to break the bank to do it either. Nearly all of the marketing strategies presented in this book are free or very inexpensive.

If any of the marketing methods presented in this book are unclear, please feel free to contact us at info@GymMarketing.com, call us toll free at 1-866-273-9217, or simply fill out your club profile by visiting our website www.GymMarketing.com. We will gladly spend 30 minutes on the phone with you at no cost, answering any questions you have and discussing how you can implement all of these strategies at your club. Our website is constantly being updated and our Gym Goldmine Resource is sent out typically twice a week. Much like your Free Report that will convince prospects to become members of your club, we hope this Free eBook has you thinking, "If FMG is giving this much information away for free, think of what I'll get if I hire them!"

We are in business to help health clubs become and remain profitable. We hope this book has helped get your creative juices flowing and you are excited to begin implementing the strategies covered. Never hesitate to contact us if you need any assistance.