

ae ASSOCIATION FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP USA

Success by Association

JANUARY 2020



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WHO WE ARE ...

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PRESIDENT'S Letter

Happy New Year, Entrepreneurs!

As we close the door on 2019, a new door opens to opportunity, adventure, and new successes! By now, your plans for the new year should have been identified, and you can start to implement those actions to bring you closer to your goals. Realize that defining goals should be an ongoing process, so it's okay if you find yourself making adjustments along the way.

This is a reminder that the Member's Open Forum is available to all AFEUSA members and offers YOU an opportunity to post questions, challenges, and concerns regarding your entrepreneurial tasks. And other members can feel free to provide answers, suggestions, and guidance to help. One person's challenge can be another person's past achievement. I've posted a few questions to help start the process. Let's all see what type of comments can be shared.

I attended the NAIC conference in Austin this past December and had the opportunity to meet with various state insurance regulators. Health, dental, vision, and life insurance options are being added to satisfy our members' needs. In addition, many noninsurance-based lifestyle and business discounts are also available. Be sure to log in and view membership benefits.

We're looking for small entrepreneurs with BIG stories! In the past, we have featured a few successful entrepreneurs and would like to continue into 2020. If you feel you have a story to share, send me a note. We would enjoy hearing from you and sharing with others. Remember, with AFEUSA, there is success by Association!



Charles Jackson
President

THE ENTREPRENEUR'S RESOLUTION

GAIN THE INSIGHT THAT WILL HELP YOU THRIVE IN 2020



Entrepreneurs are the kings and queens of insight. Odds are, you've built your business on anticipating client needs, but are you using those insights for your marketing campaign? If not, it could be a game-changer for you in the new year. This year could be stressful for your consumers with the election coming up and a new decade beginning. While your competitors are focusing on their personal New Year's resolutions, concentrate on integrating your client insights into your marketing strategy for 2020. This way, you can grow your company despite the year's challenges.

You have a knack for insights, but like any tool you utilize, you need to keep it sharp. By continuing to refresh the techniques you use to understand your target market, you can satisfy their needs better than your competition can. To do this, put yourself in your customers' shoes. What are their needs? Does your product satisfy those needs? Is there an external force changing those needs? For instance, low quarter one sales could force a customer's company to be cost-sensitive with resources.

Start gathering your insight by connecting with your current customers. Depending on your industry, a personal call might work best. It's essential to have a genuine and frank conversation. Ask them how business is going and if your product or service is satisfying their needs. Let them know you're trying to improve your product or service. Even if they don't have feedback, it will mean the world to them that you're actively trying to meet their needs. This is crucial because if they're trying to cut costs or scale their business, they will see more value in retaining your business relationship.

If a call doesn't suffice, utilize the other tools at your disposal. A Google form sent through your email management program is an effective way to gain information. You won't hear from everyone, but it will show how many customers are highly engaged. This, in turn, provides you with more characteristics of your "ideal consumer profile" and a new segment to upsell.

For companies selling to consumers, email is a great tool, but chatbots can be just as effective, if not more so. Chatbots are a computer program that mimics human conversation through text chats on websites and popular social media platforms. They're great for multiple-choice and some open-ended questions. With predetermined responses to the multiple-choice questions, you can build a personality for your brand. When this is done, your customers feel recognized, which helps build brand loyalty.

“START GATHERING YOUR INSIGHT BY CONNECTING WITH YOUR CURRENT CUSTOMERS. DEPENDING ON YOUR INDUSTRY, A PERSONAL CALL MIGHT WORK BEST.”

The downside to chatbots and Google forms is that any open-ended questions you ask will have to be categorized by hand. This entails lumping certain types of responses to those questions into categories when you analyze them. It takes time to categorize and analyze these responses, but it sets you ahead of the competition. For gaining consumer insights moving forward, tailor how you connect with your audience to their preferred channel. Schedule routine consumer insight reviews either quarterly, biquarterly, or yearly.

Navigating consumer insights is challenging, so remember the resources you have through the AFEUSA membership portal. With our discussion boards, you can find a wealth of information on customer success to get you on track in 2020.

MEET JONATHAN MESSINGER AND THE MESSINGER INSTITUTE

Embracing a Mindset of Success

If you're an entrepreneur who's looking to reinvigorate your mentality and scale your business to new heights, you need to meet Jonathan Messinger. Jon and his company, The Messenger Institute, have created educational offerings that develop authentic, congruent, and bold entrepreneurs for a brighter future. They do this by expanding awareness, igniting passion, and unleashing power using their unique Life Fusion Methodology.

Jon and The Messenger Institute have developed these techniques over 20 years, resulting in numerous world-first innovations from course participants. Their unique approach balances mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual elements and aligns the "Inner Game" of thoughts and beliefs with the "Outer Game" of actions and behaviors.

Jonah Larkin, co-founder and chief vitality officer of warrior energy at How Humans Work, found valuable insights into the mentality of an entrepreneur.

"I've learned when to use intuition, when to ask for help, how to ask for the type of help I need, and how to use my thinking to manifest the things I am trying to create in the world. I am being trained in a new way to use thinking."

The Messenger Institute can develop your "Inner Game" impact, defined by a fearless, innovative, and inspirational entrepreneur who is fueled by passion and dares to shatter limiting beliefs and blaze a trail that creates an attractive resonance, as well as your "Outer Game" impact, defined by a life balanced with success and fulfillment.

Calling the new breed of future leaders! At a time filled with great division, we need leaders who inspire hope, not fear; leaders who promote unity, not division; and leaders who recognize that what binds is far greater than what divides.

Visit their offerings at TheMessengerInstitute.com, and they will help you imagine, embrace, and embark on an exciting journey to tap into your unlimited potential! For more information, please contact us at TMIHelp@TheMessengerGrp.com.



THIS MONTH'S Featured Organization

HIGHLIGHTING THE MONTANA WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER LEARN MORE ABOUT A PREMIER MONTANA RESOURCE

As entrepreneurs, we experience an assortment of roadblocks that hinder our success. Those hurdles include the questions and concerns we all have when we first start out. Luckily, if you're a woman in Montana looking to start your business, then you have resources that can help remove those roadblocks!

Montana Women's Business Center (WBC), a program from Prospera Business Network, is a nonprofit organization supporting community-centered economic development of women in southwest Montana. They offer several programs to ensure participants are on track with their business, including no-cost business counseling, low-cost business training, mentorship, financing, and more!

Before starting their journey with the center, every client is asked to go through the "Power-Up: Create Your Business, Financial, and Marketing Plans" class, which covers small-business basics as you build a business plan and financial projections. From there, you and your advisor will craft a plan of success that guides you through their courses.

WBC's offerings are a la carte services that allows you to tailor your business development to only the crucial information you need to succeed. Some of the popular programs offered include "Accounting Fundamentals" and "Intro to QuickBooks." The online courses suit even the most hectic of lifestyles and are led by nationally recognized authors who are experts in their fields.

Through WBC's leadership mentoring events and matchmaking services, they facilitate mentorship to guide the next generation of entrepreneurs. The organization understands that, along with knowledge, you also need resources to succeed. That's why they partner with local banks to provide small-business loans up to \$500,000. If you need a 504 loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration, WBC can ensure you need just 10% of owner equity. If you don't know where to start, don't worry. They provide you a full listing of everything you need before filing your loan application.

Regardless of your business or passion, the Montana Women's Business Center can help you realize your dreams. If you feel they're the right fit for your budding business, give them a call at 406-587-3113 or visit their website at ProsperaMT.org/womens-business-center/overview.



MEET THE NEWSLETTER PRO

SCALE YOUR BUSINESS TO NEW HEIGHTS WITH CUSTOM NEWSLETTERS

Creating an effective marketing campaign can be challenging. One technique that is proven to make an impact on AFEUSA's audience is newsletters. Newsletters provide a means to showcase the services you provide and enable your audience to identify with you through every segment of the publication.

The team behind The Newsletter Pro recognizes how vital customer relationships are to a company as it grows. Thanks to this, AFEUSA members can receive Shaun Buck's book "The Ultimate Guide to Newsletters" and \$1,000 off setup fees for a custom newsletter. The book will walk you through how to boost retention rates, increase referrals, and instantly build long-lasting relationships with clients.

A custom newsletter is a great way to maintain a channel of communication between you and your customer. Through this communication, your business will build brand loyalty, which is an essential leg up when competitors compete for your customer's attention. In addition to brand loyalty, those who already buy from you have a higher chance of spending more money with your business thanks to a custom newsletter. Plus, readers can easily pass it along to other potential referrals, which will increase



THE NewsletterPro

your reach. A newsletter educates your prospects and helps them feel comfortable when they approach you.

The best part about The Newsletter Pro? Everything is done in-house. Writing, editing, designing, producing, and mailing is taken care of for you. They manage your entire campaign from concept to delivery to ensure the highest quality is delivered to your demographic's doorstep.

Is there something specific you want covered in your newsletter, or do you have a particular design choice you'd like to see realized? The expert writers and designers will work with you to ensure all your needs are met. Go to your AFEUSA membership portal today to utilize your exclusive discount with The Newsletter Pro.

TAKE A BREAK



EXCLUSIVE BENEFIT AFEUSA Member's Forum

- ✓ QUESTIONS
- ✓ CHALLENGES
- ✓ QUERIES



Open only to AFEUSA members, this platform allows AFEUSA members to post various issues related to their business or idea and allows other members to comment or give advice/suggestions on how best to resolve those challenges.

To get started, login to AFEUSA, select membership benefits, and click on the link to the Member's Open Forum. Be sure to read the Code of Conduct prior to posting any question or answer. Let's start posting!

OLD DOGS AND NEW TRICKS

HOW TO STAY YOUNG DESPITE YOUR AGE

They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks. But what do you think about that? Is improving and growing a trick? No! And people aren't dogs!

People can continue to learn and improve regardless of the dates on their birth certificates because age is determined by how they think, not by how long they've been alive.

You might be old chronologically yet youthful and full of vigor. That's because youth is a state of mind, not a time of life. Nobody grows old by living a certain number of years. They only grow old when they lose their enthusiasm. Years might wrinkle your skin, but it's only the loss of your enthusiasm that can wrinkle your soul.

Jim Cain of Maryland Heights, Missouri, was asked how he felt about his age. To celebrate his 100th birthday, Jim joined a health club and began working out! During his initial endurance test, the best he could do was walk one-fourth the way around the running track. Soon he could do 20 laps and ride the stationary exercise bike nonstop for 17 minutes — and he did it every day!

"I feel like a new man!" Jim exclaimed.



Ruth Rothfarb of Cambridge, Massachusetts celebrated her finish in the Bonne Bell 10K race by dancing all night at the race party that evening. She finished the race in 1 hour 4 minutes — not a distinguishing time except for the fact that Ruth is 82.

She began running when she was 72, and competed in three marathons after she turned 80, running 6-10 miles a day!

Old dogs? New tricks? No! These are just people who understand the timeless truth that you can stay young despite your age!

*-Joel Weldon
Inspirational Writer of Wisdom*



AND MAKE 2020 YOUR BEST YEAR YET

No matter what industry you are in, you can't build a successful business without sales. Making a sale establishes a relationship, almost always yields a profit, and lays the foundation for future growth. When your sales fall flat and you fail to meet goals — or even set them — your business suffers negative consequences. As we head into a new decade, follow these suggestions for short- and long-term goals to guarantee your sales success.

Think Like Goldilocks

The problem with goal-setting is many people aim too low or shoot too high. Instead, you need your sales goals to be just right. The key is to find a goal that is challenging for your team to reach, but also attainable. Here's one way to go about creating that Goldilocks goal: Look at the number of sales you made each month for the past two years. Identify the

months with the highest and lowest sales and find the average of those numbers. Use this figure as the starting point.

Keep It Personal

There's no hard-and-fast rule on setting sales goals other than this: The goals need to fit *your* business. For car dealerships, for example, setting individual goals for your employees may be ideal. For physical therapy clinics and chiropractors, however, it may be best to develop company-wide goals. Regardless of your industry, you must make sure sales goals support the overall growth goal of your business and keep employees engaged and challenged.

Shift, Shift, Shift

Think about the beginning of 2010. Were you the same person then as you are today? There's a good chance you are not, which means you've set different goals for yourself each year to reflect your growth. The same principle applies to business. It's perfectly okay to shift your sales expectations and end results to better suit your current success and what you need — no matter what you did in previous years.

Be flexible and make changes in your sales goals as you see fit.

To start off the 2020s strong, you need to create attainable goals that improve your business. Don't model your goals after another business that seems to be thriving; focus on what *you* need to achieve success! It all starts with setting the right goals to get there.

