

A SPECIAL SOUL PROPRIETOR GUIDE

12 Marketing Ideas & Tools *for 2008*

A Guide for Soul Proprietors
Projects for Every Month to Make
2008 Your Best Business Year Yet

by Marty Marsh
SOUL PROPRIETOR



Make 2008 Your Best Business Year Yet!

Soul Proprietors tell me all the time that they just don't seem to have the time to market their business or practice. We all make the time to do what's important to us, and marketing is one of the most important activities you can do in your business.

My guess is that the real problem for most Soul Proprietors is in not knowing what kinds of marketing activities to do, or what to do first. Well, that problem is now solved.

In the pages that follow, you'll discover some simple and basic marketing activities that every Soul Proprietor can utilize to get into marketing action.

Action is the key word here. Until you start doing something, you'll never see any results. Read this special guide, choose an activity that's doable for you, and then get busy. Then do another activity. Just implementing these basic ideas over the next year will increase your chances for more success. Then, as your marketing confidence grows, you can start doing even more creative things.

Throughout the year, avail yourself of the many resources — including teleclasses, ebooks, seminars, and graphic design services — that we offer at the Successful Soul Proprietor website and as a member of the Soul Proprietor Success Center.

All of our programs are designed with you in mind to teach you what to do, how to do it, how to get yourself into action, and how to keep yourself motivated throughout the year.

Only you know the kind of success you're looking for, and we stand at the ready to help you achieve it.

Marty Marsh
THE SUCCESSFUL SOUL PROPRIETOR



**"Success
is the sum of
small efforts,
repeated,
day in and
day out."**

— Robert Collier —

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Create a Marketing Plan for the Year

At the beginning of the year, take a look at all the various marketing strategies, methods, and activities that have worked successfully for you in the past — the ones that generated the most revenue for your business. Decide which ones you want to employ again during 2008. Also, look at any other marketing strategies that you want to try out this coming year.

Steps:

- Write everything down that you'd like to do.
- Determine which month of the year you want to perform each activity.
- Determine the approximate cost involved.
- Determine how much time is needed to put the activity into action.
- Segment your marketing plan into weekly action items.
- Refer to your plan every day so that you'll stay on track.

Planning ahead for the entire year allows you to make smart decisions about the marketing you want to do throughout the year. Keep your plan flexible so that, as new opportunities arise, you can make an intelligent decision about what actions to take.

Track the responses and the results you get from every marketing activity. If you discover that a marketing strategy or activity is not working the way you had hoped, try something else, or change one thing and try that strategy again. Testing of all your ideas is crucial.

Include one or more marketing activities in your daily schedule so that you get in the habit of continually being in a marketing mindset.

Be sure to choose only those marketing activities that you enjoy and that are profitable for you so that you will be inspired to market your business all year long.

2

Ask your clients and potential clients what they want.

Create a survey that will enable you to find out from your current clients, as well as your potential clients, what it is that they need or want most from you.

Use a survey tool, such as SurveyMonkey.com or Zoomerang.com, to create surveys that can be completed anonymously.

Keep these tips in mind when creating your survey (*courtesy of eHow.com — Clear Instructions on How to Do (just about) Everything, <http://www.eHow.com>*):

- Know up front what you want to accomplish with your survey.
- Keep the survey as short as possible, asking only those questions that will provide the information you need.
- Use a casual, conversational style; make the questions easy for almost anyone to understand. Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Structure the survey so that the questions follow a logical order and evolve from general to specific.
- Use multiple-choice questions whenever possible. This helps the respondent to better understand the purpose of your question and will reduce the time it takes to complete the questionnaire.
- Avoid leading questions that might generate false positive responses. For example, the question “How great was the service provided by our excellent waiters?” should be “How was the service provided by our waiters?”
- Use the same rating scale throughout your survey for questions requiring the respondent to rate items. For example, if the scale is from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most positive, keep that same scale for all of the questions requiring a rating.
- Test the survey on several people before you produce it for mass distribution. Conduct an interview with each of those respondents after he or she completes the survey to determine if your questions were easily understood and easy to answer.

3

Start an eZine.

An eZine is a great way to stay in touch with your existing clients and build a relationship with potential clients.

Put a sign-up box in a prominent place on every page of your website. Ask for their name and email address only. Asking for too much information scares people off.

Offer something of value in exchange for the visitor’s contact information, such as a special report, an eCourse, or a free gift.

Use an online email marketing tool, such as Aweber.com or ConstantContact.com, to make it easier to manage your growing list and to ensure that you meet all the legal requirements for sending bulk mail. The cost is extremely low.

Use “double-opt-in” for collecting names and email addresses. This means that to get on your list requires a two-step process. After signing-up for your list, the person receives an email immediately which asks them to confirm that they want to be on your list. Once they’ve confirmed, then they are automatically added to your list.

The double opt-in procedure protects you from unwittingly sending spam — unwanted email — to people.

Create an editorial calendar where you write down ideas you have for articles for your eZine. Write about what you know and what your clients and prospects are interested in learning more about. This is a great way for potential clients to “hear your voice” so that they get to know, like, and trust you. You need these three crucial elements before anyone will buy from you.

Use your eZine to promote your services as well as educate, but do so sparingly. Be sure that the value quotient of informational content exceeds the selling content in your eZine.

Publish your eZine as often as you can, at least once a month. The idea is to keep your name in front of your prospects as often as possible. Then they’ll think of you when they’re ready to buy.

4

Write a Special Report.

You have specialized knowledge about your field of expertise that clients and prospects will want to know about. Writing a Special Report gives you instant credibility in the eyes of the reader.

Use your Special Report as a premium gift to give to prospects in exchange for their email contact information.

Be sure it contains good information of high value. Don’t be afraid to tell too much or to give too much away. When prospects see the value in what you give away for free, they’ll know that whatever you charge for is going to be even better.

Publish your Special Report so that it can be either emailed or printed out so you can mail it to prospects. Use Microsoft Word or create a PDF document, as these both offer cross-platform compatibility so that just about anyone will be able to open and read what you’ve written.

Use your Special Report as a follow-up tool. When you meet someone who expresses interest in whatever you’re offering, send them your special report later as a way to make additional follow-up contact with them. You can then call them on the phone to see if they’ve received it and, if they have questions, to open the door for further contact if they are a good prospect for you.

You want your words, as well as how they are presented, to both show value. Make your special report look professional (like this one). If necessary, hire the services of a creative graphic designer like Marty Marsh to help you.

5

Mail a postcard.

It's important that you employ offline means of reaching your potential clients.

Using direct mail — such as postcards — is an effective way to reach people, in addition to your online efforts. Direct mail, however, will usually cost more than online means of contact, but the payoff can be great if done well.

Mailing a postcard is a relatively inexpensive way to get into direct mail. Bear in mind that the larger the postcard you mail the more likely you are to draw the attention of your prospect to it.

Use appropriate, colorful artwork, and write an attention-grabbing headline for the front side; write short, but compelling action copy on the back, or “mailing” side. Use bullet points to make for easy reading. Be sure to include a call to action of some kind, such as “Visit our website” or “Call us today.”

The biggest advantage to mailing a postcard is that the recipient sees what you have to say without having to be convinced to open an envelope.

Larger postcards make excellent newsletters.

A good source for postcard printing is OvernightPrints.com

6

Start a Newsletter.

Publishing a print newsletter is an ideal way to pave the way for later selling efforts. A regularly published newsletter shows off your expertise, is a soft-sell approach, and it helps you build that all-important relationship with prospects.

Like an eZine, a newsletter should contain a lot of value for recipients without overwhelming them with promotional or selling copy. Write articles about what you know and what your readers will want to learn.

A newsletter is a low-key way to introduce yourself, your services, special offers, new people, and new ideas to your current clients as well as to prospects.

It doesn't have to be long. A single letter-size sheet of paper, printed front and back and folded for mailing, may be all you need to get your message across. People appreciate brevity, so use lots of short tips and brief tidbits to entice people to read.

You can print a short newsletter on a larger size postcard, which will surely be noticed. Your writing must be concise, but clear. Use color for emphasis. Be sure to include all of your contact information in any newsletter you publish. Remember to include your web address and all pertinent phone numbers and email addresses.

Publish as often as you can afford to do so but no less than once per quarter. Any less frequently than that and people won't remember you as well.

7

Make a “New Client Welcome Kit.”

Put together a package to send to all new clients to make them feel welcome and a part of your community as they come on board with you.

Inside a customized pocket folder — printed with your business name and contact information — place these items:

- A welcome letter from you;
- Contracts and forms that your client might need;
- Information they might need, such as instructions for working with you or on how to access the services you offer;
- A checklist of things they need to do;
- A custom-printed notepad and pen or some other premium item you can include that has your contact information on it; and
- Be sure to include your business card and a brochure.

The kit should contain items useful to your new clients so that they will want to save it and refer to it as they work with you

8

Bundle your services or create value packages.

As a selling tool, you can bundle a variety of the services that you might otherwise offer separately into value packages that offer a discount to your clients.

Package A would contain X number of items for one price, and Package B would contain Y number of items for a higher price, and so on. Be sure that your packages each offer high value for the money and offer some kind of overall savings to the purchaser.

Be sure that your highest priced bundle offers the most value.

By giving prospects two (or more) options, you make it easy to say “yes” to at least one of them. It’s harder to say “no” when you offer several options.

9

Get some referral partners.

Knowing who your perfect client is allows you to pick and choose the people you want to work with. Those who are not a good fit for you can be referred on to someone else who offers similar services, if you’ve taken the time to get to know other

“referral partners” and to understand what kind of perfect client they are looking for. They, in turn, will be happy to refer clients to you who you can serve better than they can.

It’s also a good idea to find referral partners who offer complementary services to yours. You can engage them to give you referrals, and, of course, you will give referrals back to them. For example, a chiropractor might refer his patients to the neighborhood gym, and the personnel at the gym might refer potential patients to the chiropractor. A spa operator might refer her clients to a beauty salon, and the beauty salon would then refer clients to the spa.

Put together a plan for how your referral program will work, and then approach people who are in businesses complementary to yours. Ask around, and then interview each other to find out if you are a good fit for each other.

10

Teach a Teleclass.

Teleclasses are a great way to build relationships with potential clients. All you need is a bridge line, valuable content, and a telephone. They get to hear your voice, interact with you, and learn about your expertise with only a small investment or even none at all.

Offering free teleclasses is a great way to impart some valuable information and, meanwhile, give you a chance to sell participants on buying a larger, paid program or to showcase your services.

As in anything else you might give away, a free teleclass must have lots of value to the participants so they can see the value in what you are selling.

You can teach a teleclass without any training, but you’ll be far more effective as a teleclass leader if you learn about the many ways to make distance learning most effective for your participants. A good place to start is at the Soul Proprietor Success Center, where you can take a teleclass on teaching teleclasses.

A tip on teleclasses — you only need about 30 minutes of good content to fill a one-hour teleclass. Introductions, Q & A, and discussion will take the rest of the time.

There are many bridge line services available; the one I like the most is freeconferencecall.com.

11

Write an eBook.

People are hungry for information, and you have something worthwhile to say. You gain instant credibility when you become a published author.

While it may look like a daunting task, writing an eBook can be as simple as collecting together a number of articles that you’ve previously written, or you could compile a number of articles that others have written (with their permission, of course).

If you’re not comfortable in writing an eBook yourself, you can always hire a ghostwriter to do it

for you. Just make sure they understand your “voice” so that the eBook represents who you are and what you’re all about.

Like everything else, the eBook should contain high value and very little selling (if any). If you’re charging for your eBook, like my “Law of Attraction for Everyday Living” eBook, you want to make sure that it is all information and of good value, just like any other book you might buy.

An eBook is a fast and economical way to get your expertise into the marketplace.



Build a Website or Update the One You Already Have.

These days your website is probably the most important marketing tool you can use. Everyone expects you to have a web presence of some kind.

If you’re not comfortable in the world of html and graphic design, you might want to hire the services of a professional web designer and webmaster.

Just be sure to write the copy yourself. Rarely do graphic designers and webmasters have a marketing background, and your website is for one purpose only — to move prospects into becoming paying clients. So every word counts.

Every website — at a minimum — should have these main pages:

Sound like you? page

How we work page

Sign up page (for eZines and email)

About us page

Contact page

Home page

Use the word “you” a lot on your website. You want site visitors to know immediately that they’ve arrived at the right place to get their particular problems solved. Every page should do or say something that lets the visitor know what benefits await them when they choose to work with you instead of someone else.

If you built your website a while ago and haven’t updated it lately, you might want to revisit it and bring it up-to-date. The easiest way to keep a website updated consistently is to write and post articles at least once a month.

Posting to your blog is also another way to keep fresh content on your website.



BONUS Tip **Create a brochure.**

While your website is the most important marketing tool you can employ in 2008, a brochure is still a good tool to have out there working for you when you can't be around yourself.

The most important element in a brochure is the headline you use. People who see your brochure must have some reason to want to pick it up, open it, and read it. The headline pulls them in.

Put the headline high on the front page, keeping in mind that many brochures are put into a rack where only the top 2 to 3 inches will show. Put your headline in that space. Put your company logo elsewhere unless you are already so well known that your company name alone would make someone want to pick up your brochure.

Write with the reader in mind, and use your brochure to sell your services by expressing the benefits your clients receive when working with you. Use only appropriate artwork and photographs, and use lots of color.

Before printing your brochures, think about how you will distribute them. How will they get into the hands of your prospects? Will you pass them out at trade shows? Place them in racks? Ask others to pass them out for you? Mail them?

If you're going to mail your brochures, use the back outside panel for a mailing panel. This way, you save money on envelopes, plus nothing has to be opened except the brochure itself.

Keep in mind that your brochure must look good, too, because it will be representing you and your company when you're not around. It must be an accurate reflection of the image you want to project to prospects and to current clients, too. A good brochure will serve to reassure current clients that they've made the right choice in working with you, as well as to recruit new clients. So always include current clients on your distribution list.

Your current clients will also use your brochure to tell others about you and to give you referrals. Make sure they have plenty of them to pass out, and ask them to pass them along.

**Find the support, information, ideas, and motivation
to make 2008 Your Best Business Year Yet at
www.soulproprietorsuccesscenter.com**





**This is not the end, it is only the beginning.
The beginning of success for your business.
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numerous free resources and to learn more about the
many business and marketing programs being offered:**

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*“Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness
is the key to success. If you love what you
are doing, you will be successful.”*

Albert Schweitzer

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Written & Published by Marty Marsh • Edited by W. T. Harrison, Ph.D.