



# Sales'd It!

Outside the Circle

Volume 1

The Beginnings

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**@Sales'd It! 2019**

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## **Dedication:**

This book is dedicated to my amazing wife, the one who continues to push me every day to be the best I can ever be and further my drive to share my thoughts on sales overall, and specifically within the amazing event industry.

Thank you for being my light, my rock, my inspiration, and my muse. Your love and dedication drive me to be better each day. Volim te bas moja Lepa.

My son, at 19 months old, you have warmed my heart every day with your smile. Never let that tenacity and drive I see in you already go. Be happy in life as you are now. Enjoy and make it what you wish. Reality is what you believe it to be.

## **Appreciations**

Mom & Dad, who since I was a young boy, encouraged me to pursue my writing. Thank you for always believing in me and instilling a sense of hard work and responsibility in me. Thank you for showing me what it means to be a good man, a great father, and an amazing husband.

The Joe for being my brother, my sounding board, my boy and helping me to understand the meaning of taking a breath.

Mama i Tata i Mina (moja sestra, hvala puno za svu podrsku i pomoc. Volim te bas!

I say thank you to my entire family for showing me the meaning of family. This means more to me than I can ever truly express.

Angi and Harley, your friendship, your guidance, and of course, our long rides home together gave me immeasurable learnings.

Josh & Arina, thank you for showing me family extends beyond blood and that no matter the distance or the time, true friendship never falters.

Uncle Hank, thank you for instilling a sense of rationality in me. As a scientist, you taught me to listen to the facts before making a decision. As a businessman, you showed me the meaning of dedication and perseverance.

Rajiv, you taught me more than I will ever truly understand. Your life and business wisdom spanned well beyond my conception of reality and the event industry. I wish you all the best on 4.0.

Brandon, for giving me my start and believing in a kid with passion and excitement, and always pointing that young kid in the right direction. I will never forget the time you spent to teach me and help push me to be me.

Terence, you showed me the meaning of life. Thank you for your smile that brightened every room. Thank you for showing that there is still good in humanity. Shine bright on us buddy!

Alex, keep being the most honest, decent, compassionate human being ever. You keep showing all of us how to be a better version of ourselves.

Chris, thank you for helping me keep life light-hearted. Let your smartass wisdom shine buddy. Your masterful dad jokes will serve you well as you welcome your new daughter into the world.

Andy, Greg, Tom, Scott, Debbie, Karen, Amy, Jen, B,  
John, Rich, Kristie, Laura, Dom, Ashish, Claudia, Pat,  
and so many more that I am missing. You have all taught  
me so much over the years and continue to teach me new  
things each day. Thank you for allowing me to be a part  
of your lives.

## Intro: Short & Sweet

There you go. Off on another business trip after landing around 24 hours ago. That is sometimes the life of those within the event industry. Globe Trotters...or preferably America Trotters? On the seemingly endless road, going on site visits, attending events, and of course, putting on **your** event. The travels never quite stop, and many wonder when they could possibly have time to themselves, to finish a long and tedious business book which would help them grow personally and grow their event or organization. Between the draining travel and workload, and the “I finally have time for a glass of wine with friends,” it's tough to take time to learn and as well help improve yourself to help improve your event.

I make this promise to you, I will keep this book very short and sweet, so that you can finish it within a short plane ride to your next travel destination. I also promise that you will come away with at least one nugget of goodness that will spark an idea within your mind. I do not pretend to be an expert with forty years of experience. I am a catalyst, I will spark all sorts of ideas that might be dormant in your own mind, and I will also help bring them to life. In fact, if you have ideas that you would like to talk through, connect with me and I will be more than happy to talk through them all with you.

Lastly, many of the “sales” talk, techniques, and lingo within this book are meant for the event industry. However, that does not mean you cannot apply many of these techniques across all sorts of businesses. In fact, there are parts of this book that would serve as a perfect education for your exhibitors and attendees. A part of selling and growing your event is educating everyone involved. Only then, in my opinion, will your event grow to its fullest potential.

Alright! Let's get started so you can Sales'd It! and grow!

## Sales is for everyone...or isn't it?

I cannot tell you how many times I've heard the line "sales is for everyone." After a decade in sales, I beg to differ. Sales is **not** for everyone! In fact, scream it out loud in order for it to sink-in to everyone around you. Maybe then, it will catch on.

Not everyone likes to make cold calls or talk to a random stranger on the phone. Not everyone enjoys asking those they have finally made a relationship with for more money. In fact, most people fear it. It's not easy asking a customer to spend money on a sponsorship or to upgrade their booth space. You know what, take the other side as well. It's not easy to do a personal reach to attendees and ask them to spend money on your educational sessions. It's a fact...indisputable...it's gut wrenchingly, fear ridden, downright hard to ask people for money. It's not

for everyone and not everyone can do it...and that's actually fine.

If you are reading this, you are most likely in sales and you enjoy it, or you're in sales and pretty much putting up with it or looking for a way to make it better. Guess what, you can make it better and you can also **Feel** better about it. The key is...have fun and put your own personal touch in your sales. If there is one thing you should learn from reading this book, it's this. No one likes boring, drone like, robot salespeople. They enjoy jovial people; they enjoy talking through their business roadblocks and having a shoulder to lean on. You know what else they enjoy? A well thought out, clever sales and marketing approach.

**Nugget #1: Have fun, be clever, and make it personal.**

If by now, within your career, you have not realized that sales and marketing need to be in unison and working in harmony...then continue reading on. If you do realize this already...continue reading on. This is because, it's

easier said than done to be fun, clever, and personal in a sales marketing approach. We will revisit this a little later in the book.

## Robots? No, we are humans

Robots are sexy, incredibly intelligent, fast... and only exist in the movies. At least, for now. Some will argue that computers are robots and the fact that we can send mass email after mass email means we can automate everything...including sales. Good luck with that. Don't get me wrong, mass emails can sell, but they can't sell everything. There is only so much a mass email can do. Eventually, you are going to need a human touch, a phone call, or in this case, a “personal” email. Now, can this be accomplished through segmented drop campaigns? Yes, if carried out correctly.

If you want to truly sell your solutions, your booths, and your sponsorships, you need to add a personal touch to your emails. Also, you need to spend time to send

**REAL** personal emails. Yup, that means you must actually rack your brain and type something coherent. What's the best way to write a personal email? That's easy...get to know your audience! We are so stuck in a digital world that we forget we are all humans. Humans who need an emotional connection. Computers lack empathy and emotion...well, some humans do as well, but we won't go there.

It is essential for humans to connect with each other. It is this connection that can help us build those relationships and as well drive sales. Even to this day, scientists, engineers, and computer wizards are attempting to get AI to learn emotions and connections.

The question remains, how do we insert this personal touch via an email? How do we get someone we've never met before to connect with us through an emotionless system? I wish I had the ultimate answer for you, but the truth is there is no particular answer. Since all humans are unique, everyone has a variety of characteristics, it is hard to have one simple way to connect with someone

over email. It is only through research and relationships that you can find this answer. That is why, especially in the event industry, it is paramount that you attend events and conferences, and connect with others. Through these connections, you will build relationships and from these relationships, you'll have your answer for the personal emails. It is through these relationships that you will begin to form personas. These personas are the embodiment of your audience. This is the start to your personalization.

Let's shift focus to something that has lost steam in the last decade but is now picking up again within sales. More and more people will initiate contact through email, because those that are being contacted do not want to be bothered with a phone call or a voicemail. Let's be honest, I hate listening to voicemails, in fact, I loathe it. Why go through the hassle of listening to a voicemail when you could have easily emailed me with either the question or your phone number for me to call you back? The reason why we all despise phone calls is because we are all busy in this digital age. We all have

something to do, somewhere to go, and someone to see. The last thing that we want to be bothered with is a random phone call, especially one that is offering them a solution or service.

This does not mean that we should completely forget about phone calls. Phone calls are really great after the initial contact is made. They help to solve and to also answer any question quickly, rather than a back-and-forth email chain that could go on and on. Some people forget that this phone call puts a voice to an email, and therefore creates another connection. Use phone calls to your advantage, so as to further the connection to the prospect or client. **DO NOT** send out blast automated calls. If you really want to piss off your target audience, send them an automated call. Let's hope they're lucky enough not to pick up the phone and it immediately goes straight to voicemail.

We've covered the personal side of reaching out to your audience. Nonetheless, what about the fun and clever ideas that you can utilize to attract them? One thing I've

heard and seen recently is companies sending out faxes. That's right someone is using a fax machine and actually knows how to use it. Why does this work? People are not used to receiving faxes anymore, so, anything they do pick up, they read, and it draws their attention. Have you ever heard of a rolodex? I spoke to a large group of millennials one time and only three of them raised their hand. Back in the day, you were the coolest if you had the biggest and baddest rolodex. So, where am I going with this? A clever way to draw your audience into a conversation is to say you are updating your rolodex. Well, maybe records or database these days. It's a clever way of getting through the figurative door and starting a conversation.

Now, I know what you must be thinking. I can easily set up an email blast to do this for me and make it look personal, because technology is great and all powerful. No arguments here...you can utilize robots for this, and it should help in opening some doors.

**Nugget #2: Humans crave connection, however, using technology for some instances can get you through the door.**

The point here is that using a clever and funny approach can help create a connection with your audience. It gives them a personal insight to your own character, and therefore, it is a personal touch. Not all the emails have to be personal. There are multiple approaches to sending these emails. There is the 10-80-10 approach, as well as the 20-80 approach. Now, in the first approach that's 10% personal, 80% automated and 10% personal wrapping it up, the reason why some individuals have success with this approach is because many people will read the first 10%, skip the middle and read the final 10%. This came from the same principles of those that read the first sentence of the paragraph and the last, and that is what they remember the most. The 20-80 approach is 20% personal and 80% automated. The reason this approach works is because by incorporating more personal information in the beginning, the thought is that it will entice the reader to continue onto the 80%

which is automated. Lastly, figure out which approach works best for you and which approach works best for bringing in your audience. My approach, you ask...20%. Yup, not 100%, only 20%. The rest of your email is useless. I prefer to get straight to the point and set a follow up call right from the get-go. My approach is to be very direct. It's not for everyone, but I appreciate it and I'm cognizant of my time, and more importantly, my audiences' time.

Developing the right cadence for your reach outs is key, as every industry and every audience is different. Some say seven touchpoints, others say eight or even ten!

Truly, it is up to your research to find the correct number of reach outs and the time in between those reach outs that will be effective for you.

Let's "rap" this up. Connections are key in the event industry. Automation is cool, but not always the best tool. If you want the sale, make a personal email. Be clever and funny, you'll bring in the money.

## Hold My Hand...

There are several thoughts that sales and marketing are the same. In some instances, maybe, however, they are not. They are two completely different departments in any company. Let's not misconstrue that last sentence, they are different, yet, they need to work hand in hand in order to accomplish the goals of any organization. It is essential that these two departments align. Both help each other in accomplishing the organization's goals, as well as each department's individual goals.

Let's take a look at how they can accomplish each other's goals. On the sales' side, it's easy to see how marketing helps accomplish its goals. Creative marketing drives traffic and inbound leads, giving salespeople more time to focus on warmer leads, rather than cold calls.

Marketing creates collateral used by salespeople to showcase the solution or product. We all know collateral helps showcase the high-level aspects of a solution or product. This helps keep prospects and clients focused

on the main benefits, while salespeople explain the details.

It's easy to see how marketing helps sales. How does sales help marketing? Sales plays an important role. They are out in the field, listening to the objections, the needs, and the wants of the audience. Marketing departments need to listen this feedback and come up with clever ways to better their marketing, and also battle these objections.

Take a sidebar here for a quick minute. Sales is a dreaded field to be a part of. Even those that consider themselves the best of the best in sales, some days are just more difficult than others. The best way I have discovered to overcome these difficult days is to be like the best of the best in sales. Well, that's an odd thing to say. However, it's not. Some of the best salespeople do not call themselves salespeople, they look at themselves as relationship experts. In order to better a relationship, you must go on fact-finding missions. This does not mean to probe and prod a client or prospect to get the

answers you were seeking. The best relationship experts will tell you that not all relationships will last. The key here is to change your mindset and not think of yourself as a salesperson. You are a relationship expert who is figuring out ways to better your current relationships, even if that means that one of your prospects doesn't know you have a relationship yet. That sounds creepy...but shifting your mindset to becoming a relationship expert is the key to winning more sales.

Going back to our previous paragraph on how sales helps marketing, by changing your mindset to be a relationship expert, you are now gaining the necessary words and tools to give marketing the edge. In turn, they will provide you with better collateral that will ultimately help you sell or better that current relationship. By asking the correct questions to further a relationship, you help to define the correct needs and wants, and thereby helping marketing to put together the correct value statement.

The flipside, marketing and sales are on two completely different paths. Neither of them is aligned in its goals and therefore, marketing will create collateral that has nothing to do with what sales needs. Sales will have collateral that they will never use, due to the fact that it does not help. How does this help a company achieve its goals? The answer is, it does not. When they are not aligned, both time and effort in both departments is wasted, and ultimately, the company is doomed. A doomed company has no marketing or sales department...that seems obvious. When you look at the flip side of the coin, it seems like a pretty bleak outlook. How then did companies in previous years and decades survive for so long? Most had some sort of alignment in their sales and marketing efforts, while others had incredibly strong salespeople. Others were either too big to fail or were far too cool to fail. This is evident with the event industry as well. When you look at events that showcase the future of technology, you think to yourself how they could ever fail. Most likely, they will not, unless of course for some huge disaster. What about some events that offer the most mundane products? The

key is to realize who, what, and why. The where and when play a role as well, but we will touch all these points later.

Is your mind racing with thoughts? Ideas about whether or not your marketing and sales teams are truly aligned? Make sure to look deeper. On the surface, most departments seem to be aligned. The saying is “Never judge a book by its cover.” This normally applies to the ugly duckling, but I look at it in a different way. It may appear to be good on the surface, processes working, and all seem dandy. However, when you dig beneath the surface, there are flaws and cracks in the system. No system is perfect. This system I refer to is your sales and marketing alignment. When is the last time you polled your sales team? Have you asked if what they hear on the outside is reflected in your marketing efforts? Do not assume this is always happening behind the scenes. Holding quarterly strategy sessions with the two departments can help keep everyone in the loop, and in-turn, keep the company moving forward toward its goals.

Great! Gave you another task and more meetings. Meetings are ok if they have a purpose and are properly structured. These strategy meetings are important, and they have significant purpose for your company. Don't only take my word for it, try them and see how quarterly meetings can keep your sales and marketing teams aligned.

The focus of these meetings is not to demean or air out grievances from both sides, it should be to encourage open talk in a respectful manner, with the understanding that both sides are speaking their opinions. It is up to the moderator to glean the important facts and propose solutions after the meeting. Questions that need to be answered from both sides are:

- What works?
- What doesn't work?
- How is it working/not working?
- What are clients/prospects' objections?
- What are good responses to these objections?
- What does sales need?
- What does marketing need?

- What are the trends?
- Are any of these trends useful to helping fulfil the company goals?

End with an open discussion on new ideas, where no idea is put down and everything is written on the whiteboard. Choose or vote on one to three of the ideas and have someone from the group put together more details and thoughts on those ideas to improve on.

**Nugget #3: Together forever, Marketing and Sales deliver.**

## Keep it Simple, to the Point

There is a time and a place for fluff within marketing. Adding long intelligent words to make it look better and sound smarter isn't always the best route to take. I am a firm believer in getting to the point. That could be my inner Northern NJ coming out, however, throughout the years, I have mostly gleaned that individuals want you to

get to the point. Your audience understands you are trying to sell them something, they do not need the entire fluff. Go straight to the point and give them the solution/product, the benefits, and features. Most clients/prospects will know if something is right for them within the first 15 seconds of you explaining it to them. If they don't, you can try to sell it to them, but it's going to be harder than you think. The step that many sales professionals skip is the discovery call. This is the step where you can ask questions in order to gather the pain points. It's in the next step that you can deliver the value, the benefits and the vision that will help ease their pain points.

This crosses over to all forms of marketing and sales. This is why infographics are increasingly popular these days. They create a visual representation of data that is straight to the point. There are no additional fluff words to draw attention away from the important facts.

Now we understand most marketing does not need as much fluff as we all believe, it is important to also note

that you should sell to the individual and not provide only the solution/product. Treat it like a really intense poker game. You never play the cards; you play the other players. Same is true for selling in the event industry or sales in general. When you form the relationships and get to truly know your audience, you will know which solution/product is right for them and which isn't. Funny urinal signage sponsorship might not be the best sponsorship for one exhibitor, but it could be amazingly perfect for another.

Ok, ok, but I need to sell slabs of concrete aka booth spaces. How does this help? Keep an open mind, we will touch base on how this approach truly helps sell booth space when we go over a few strategies later in the book. Remember this, individual is not necessarily one person, it's a matter of approach.

**Nugget #4: Know when to fluff. Simple is almost always better.**

## Grammar This

Clearly, we all know that proper grammar and spelling is crucial when it comes to sales, right? Why is it that we see so many mistakes in emails that are sent out, whether mass, individual or personal? How many of you read my last post and noticed all of the purposeful grammatical mistakes I made? I know a few of you emailed or texted me about it, and good on you for noticing!

The fact of the matter is we are always moving so quickly, and we tend to overlook the little mistakes we make that could cost us hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands of dollars. We all understand we live in a fast-paced busy world, nonetheless, those that take the time to slow down and review their work are the ones that will gain the most. It is the little things in sales that often matter in this age. We are all used to the overload of data and reaches from hundreds and thousands of sales professionals. We tend to delete or ignore many of them, but the few that catch our attention, we are hoping are

pristine Michelangelo's works of art. Unfortunately, many a time, they are not.

In this short and sweet section, I urge you to slow down, take a breath and take a step back to review your work before sending it out. This not only applies to sales emails and sales professionals in general, but to everyone in your everyday life decisions. Being healthy, both physically and mentally, is a huge component of being successful in sales. Remove the stress of constant hectic antics and slow down. Make life count. Review your work. Create masterpieces.

## Marketing/Sales Plan

You're probably thinking right now about how your marketing campaign is set up. Are you following the latest trends? Keeping in touch with your audience's wants and needs? Spending too much of your marketing budget on one focus area? These are all great questions to ask once a marketing plan has been set. First of all,

you need to disseminate your data and choose target groups to focus your marketing efforts on. Mass blasting to everyone is a waste of marketing budget dollars. In this day and age, we all need to squeeze the most out of a tight budget, so, let's make sure what we are doing actually works.

You have “clean” data, or as clean as it is going to get for now. Wondering what's next? This whole big data phenomenon is too big for me to handle, isn't it? Big data really isn't anything, unless you do something with the data. So, technically, you have been using big data for years, you might just not have known that. Alright, you have all of this data, what's next? That's the easy part, at least, in my opinion. Once all of your data is properly categorized, which it should be while you are collecting it, it really is a matter of sorting it in a spreadsheet in order to visualize the pieces you want to focus on.

For example, you have collected all of your exhibiting data for the last five years. Included in this spreadsheet is the exhibitor's name, years exhibited, square footage for

each year, revenue, and product category. This is where it gets a little tricky. Many companies will have multiple product categories. You, being the expert of your event and industry, should be able to almost accurately choose which is the exhibitor's main product category. This is important but know you do not have to be one hundred percent accurate. No data is completely accurate, there will always be a variance.

When all of this data is collected, you're set for what's next. Sort the spreadsheet by product category and calculate the percentage by revenue, and by the square footage that each product category is for your event. Wondering why this is important? If you calculate it by year, you can see which product categories have been decreasing and increasing for your event. This gives you an idea of which markets to have targeted campaigns for in your marketing plan. See, big data isn't all that scary. It can truly be used to help grow your event and help you grow as a salesperson. Remember, sales and marketing working together cohesively produces the best

salespeople, and it ultimately helps the company hit its goals.

With this in mind, you now have the knowledge and information needed to create your own marketing/sales plan.

**Nugget #5: Big data is not scary. You are already using it and not knowing it.**

## Social Funtastical Bloopers...or not

Check! Now, you have the data to create targeted campaigns and make them fun, personal, and clever. What's next and how do we use this data? Next thing is to create those targeted campaigns but let us not forget about one aspect of marketing, social media. So much debate around the credibility of social media. It's a mind boggling, real time blooper waiting to happen. It doesn't have to be. Some scary questions like, is it just brand awareness? How do I calculate ROI from social media?

What constitutes as good utilization of social media?  
What in the world do I even post and where? Let's tackle these questions respectively.

Social media, in my opinion, is not just brand awareness. Yes, a majority of social media is based on brand awareness, but it serves more of a purpose than that. Nowadays, individuals are constantly on some form of social media and, many a time, this is where they will get their first impression about your organization. This is true for many other organizations, however, in the event industry where associations have been around for decades, the members and attendees already had their first impression. That's ok. Personally, I'm awful at first impressions, ask my wife. How does an association utilize social media beyond brand awareness? Before we answer that, can you tell me what marketing is? Its purpose? You guessed it, brand awareness. It's a hated phrase, but we all need to face the fact, that's what marketing is.

First step is acknowledging your denial err... now, we can move on and we can as well use social media to help define our brand or redefine it if needed. Take for example, you are a medical equipment association. That's pretty much the most glamorous industry ever. Anyways, the dreaded millennials are most likely beginning to take over and they clearly are not like their predecessors. If they are anything like me, they will "like" and "follow" the industry and categories they are working in. Best way to get ahead is to...not going to spill the beans on that one yet. I'm thinking there will be a book on a numbered step program on how to get ahead in the event industry.

Back to social media. Even if you aren't in the most glamorous of industries, the upcoming professionals are looking up to social media for expert advice, and to share their own thoughts. This generation has been raised to not be afraid to post your thoughts on social media. Therefore, you now have your answer on 'is social media just brand awareness'. It's not. You got the answer, right? If you haven't, that's ok. Social media can

be used to educate your members. Can't quite figure out how? Go ahead, you know you want to. Skip to the back of the book for some examples.

Education is a key to the success of social media. Remember, make it fun and enticing. Your members are going to be on social media already, so, make sure they are reading your educational material. If you can, give them materials that are quick and easy to take-in and comprehend.

Previously, we mentioned the question, what makes social media good? Let's tackle that by continuing along the lines of educational materials. You might be thinking, how is that good social media? I mean, people go on social media to read crazy articles and see what their friends and business associates are up to. They couldn't possibly want to read an educational article, could they? See, that is where I think you are off. Many go getters have their feeds set up with news media, business magazines, etc. Not all your members are go getters, but I am still willing to bet they would follow

your organization if you post interesting facts. Try it out, let's see the worst that could happen.

Videos. I am a huge proponent of videos. They can create excitement, get your point across, and sell your booth space, sponsorships, or solutions all under a minute. Yup, under a minute. Anything more than that and you lose interest from most individuals. Now, your videos do not have to sell. They can be educational and fun. They can be about your organization or the people within it. Remember, creating that personal connection will get clients/prospects to trust you more and from there, they can do more business with you. Don't have time or the budget for videos? That's fine! Try out Gifs or memes. Trust me, you and your audience will thank me later. It doesn't matter whether your audience is mostly baby boomers or toddlers just out of diapers, fun and educational pieces resonate with everyone.

How do I calculate ROI from Social media? That's a really tough cookie to crack. In fact, there are rare instances that an organization makes a profit from social

media. Of course, you could purchase social media ads and from there, receive business and make a profit. However, what about the free posting? Can you make a profit from them? I think you can. You must change your mindset a bit when thinking about profit and social media. Here is how I look at it. If you are creating a content that your audience loves and they are engaged continually with, they are more likely to stay with you as clients or do business with you if they are prospects. The ROI might not be immediately present, but in the long run, keeping and retaining your clients is a huge ROI. Additionally, if your clients begin to share your posts, they are referring your business and marketing for you. That right there, is the best type of marketing there is.

What makes social media good? Who knows! Just kidding. Good social media is what your audience wants to read, see and listen to. Remember, it is not what you think they want. You must do some research into your audience and truly figure out what it is that engages them. Hint: In the event industry, posts about wine and health are a pretty good start, but make sure to go further

and tie it into something meaningful. It's tough to know what really works with your audience. You must perform a lot of A/B testing, and also post a bunch of content at first, in order to see what engages them. Good luck! If you find the secret sauce, let us all know.

Where and when do I post? This comes along with the testing you are doing on the content. Test different times of the day on all of the social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Messenger (Facebook), heck even tik tok now). Once you start testing it all, you will figure out what is working, when it is working, and where it is working. Make sure to start a YouTube page in order to host all your videos. You want to make sure all of them are in a centralized location for your audience to access. Make it stupidly easy for your audience. That is the best practice. If your audience does not have to think in the slightest way to view all of your content, in this case, your videos, it will make it super simple for them to click on multiple videos and watch more and more of your content. Your relationship builds even stronger with them and from there poof, like magic,

your organization begins to grow. Facebook Live is another great option to utilize. Here, you can showcase the hardworking team you have behind the scenes for your members or the volunteer work your team and organization is doing. So many opportunities to create fun, clever, and unique content.

Each of them has their own unique characteristics and demographic. Perhaps, you could use them all and also create different content for each platform...time consuming, YES, but completely worth it. No one ever said selling and marketing was going to be easy and relaxing. Many of this is at first going to seem like an additional 3-person job, but that is where technology comes into play. There are platforms out there to help you schedule and automate social media. Worth taking a look into!

Have you ever heard of an animated GIF or a Meme? If you haven't, you should look into them. I have yet to see the event industry utilize them effectively, minus a few clever organizations out there, and I have a strange

inkling that they will be a bigger force in sales and marketing in the coming years(written two years ago and now, they are used in sales quite effectively). Very easy to make and can go viral in an instant. Check them out, you will not be disappointed and states above, you will thank me later for them!

**Nugget #6: Social media is a tough cookie to crack but be consistent and create engaging content for your audience.**

Social media is all about engaging content but remember to continually test other content on your audience. You never know what works until you try it, so, don't be fearful. Push through, keep trying your weird and crazy ideas. One of them is bound to make a drastic impact for good.

## Tradeshows & Conferences...the Money Makers

Imagine this: Eighty percent of your key buyers viewing, experiencing, and asking questions about your products or solutions...face-to-face...all in a few days. Sounds like the best opportunity ever, am I right? These types of opportunities are all around you, year after year, and yet, many companies do not take advantage of them. The smart ones do! I'm talking about trade shows, events, conferences, these are the places to be in order to meet your key buyers in one central location.

Now, I get and fully understand that budget may play a role in attending/exhibiting at these events. Why do I get this? I have been on both sides of the coin, the table, or whatever figurative piece you would like to call it. Selling exhibit space, I heard the budget excuse way too often and quite honestly, it is downright the wrong excuse to use. If you do not have the budget to attend the top event in your industry to be face-to-face with your key, and I mean top notch check on your britches buyers, then you probably did not do your budget correctly. At least, one event a year should be in your budget.

If you are an association or organization that holds the top-notch events, do not let the budget excuse slide. Always, always, and always have a good response lined up for this particular excuse. In the examples section at the end of this book, I will even provide some verbiage you can use, because that is how emphatic I am about this excuse.

Let's discuss the elephant in the room. You surpassed the budget objection, they arrived at your event, it was an ok event for them, but they didn't see any ROI/ROO from the event. They will not be returning next year. Excuse me?

For those of you that know me, know that I am a fan of saying 'repeat business is the best business and the only true way to grow'. This is especially true for events. If a dollar goes much further on retained attendees/exhibitors, then it does for recruiting new ones. Ask anyone and they will tell you the same.

In the case of this exhibitor, who had the so-so event and couldn't justify the ROI, I dare you to ask them if they had any goal set in place beforehand? Any pre-event marketing? Any onsite draws?

Tackle all of these objections head on. Develop a pre-event checklist in order to help new exhibitors understand the best route to take to have a successful event. Don't leave it to fate either. Having it on your website for them to randomly stumble upon is like hoping to find the sock that randomly disappears in the wash. We all know it can't be found...except half a year later when it randomly pops up. No, don't be that sock, be proactive. Reach out to your new exhibitors and show them that you care about their success. Shh...they don't know you have a template ready to go waiting for them once they sign the agreement. Remember, 20% personal.

**Nugget #7: Retention is king. Keep your exhibitors returning year after year by being proactive.**

## We Don't Need No Edumacation...

Ah yes. Remember when all of those exhibitors on the survey responded about wanting more education? Don't worry, it's a common ask at every event. In fact, your exhibitors attend multiple events and most likely, probably if not always, say the exact same thing at every event they attend. "We want more best practices, tips, education on how to be better exhibitors and attract more leads." What happens when you provide education for them? Do they show up? Some do, but for the most part, most do not.

Don't worry. We learned the best practice is to be proactive. With that, it's a must to provide the exhibitors with education. It does not mean we have to provide them with the education they think they want. Sometimes, as well as you should, your organization knows what's best for its members. When it comes to exhibitors, you are the expert, not them. They may exhibit at multiple events throughout the year, but that

doesn't mean they are exhibiting correctly. We all know and understand that bad habits can easily form, even to the best of the best.

If you want to educate exhibitors, take them on their journey. Start from the beginning, the signing of the booth agreement, and take them all the way up to and even after the event. Here... we...go...

## Booth Agreement

Leaving the success of the event in someone else's control is one of the many things that need to change within the industry. A wise mentor once told me, "control your own success." That is applicable both personally and also in business practices.

If we leave the success of the event in the experiences of the exhibitors, we leave ourselves open to a slew of complaints and experiences that do not drive the value

and ROI needed for a success. What is it, you say, that we should change?

Look outside the industry. Many SaaS organizations are now requiring onboarding and training to be completed before you receive the full feature set, they paid for. It gives them the opportunity to showcase the true deeper value for the client, and also ensures the solution is well configured and not customized to the client's business processes. Their business processes are not always the best practice which gives the onboarding team a leg up to help guide and fine tune the processes for them.

Why can't we force exhibitors to take training? What? They paid thousands of dollars to exhibit at your event and you fully believe they know what they are doing? It's time to face reality and stop letting exhibitors exhibit poorly. By poorly, I mean the no-good terrible sitting at your booth, staring at your phone and not engaging the audience walking the floor.

Ok, ok. So, maybe we can't force them (still think we can and should), and we know that adds another difficult layer to selling the space. Let's put it in a way that will make them want to take the education you provide.

Example 1: Your booth agreement will spell out variable pricing. Pricing becomes lower or the exhibitor is incentivized to take part in the education, in order to pay the lower price point. This is pretty easy to keep track.

Example 2: Any exhibitor who becomes educated will receive 5 matched leads and appointments at the event. Event tech these days can easily support this. With this method, you can easily put a value behind the leads, so that they'll understand the monetary value as well as the dedicated and guaranteed appointments. They need to remember that leads in general are not guaranteed by exhibiting, and it is what and how you exhibit that drives that value.

Two great booth agreement ideas to help push your exhibitor education to the next level and also begin to take control of the success of your event.

**Nugget #8: Force or no force, educate we must.**

As you embark on the storytelling journey of your exhibitors, make sure to provide them with the best and worst journeys that provide those outcomes. It is very important they understand the various paths they can take, and what those potential outcomes will look like. Take the omni-channel approach for this journey. Use video as well as a series of posts, all of which are shared within your email newsletters and social media channels. Remember, make social media fun. You can easily add your flair to these educational posts.

## For Exhibitor Eyes Only

Cheeky title, but this is to grab the attention of any non-show organizers perusing this amazing knowledge share.

In this section, I'll walk you through a few items to help exhibiting organizations gain further value from an event.

## Perfectly Imperfect Booth Staff

It's often thought that sales personnel are the best individuals for events. Honestly, it really depends on the event. I firmly believe that you should never have only one individual staffing the booth. Yes, yes. Sometimes, it's unavoidable, but the few extra dollars you spend on sending that extra person will reap benefits. Ideally, a mix of sales and product experts or specialists are the way to go. Your clients and future clients need to understand the team and the service behind them. When sales sell a product, it's up to the specialists to field any incoming service requests, and to help with any training. Ensuring that your clients understand their journey with you is a key to exhibiting and thus, it really does require more than one individual.

Here, we start with the obvious don'ts. It's really awesome sitting at your booth and falling asleep, said no one ever. You might be an Instagram star by the end of the event. Who knows! Maybe that was your strategy all along, to go viral. This is a bad way to go viral and it paints a very no good awful picture of how your organization operates. There have been numerous times I've heard friends within the industry have exhibitor organizations complain that they had no leads from the event, only to show them that they're viral on social media for sleeping. Yea...we are going to go with a big fat no for this booth staffing technique.

It's ok to be assertive but remember where that line is drawn. Overly aggressive sales individuals can turn away shy attendees, and they may be the super buyers you were looking for. Let the design of your booth do its job and entice those attendees to enter or come close to your area. Ask them for help or ask to help them. It's not often that people will reject helping you for a small favour, even at events.

Anyone who has ever attended an event understands you, the exhibitor, are there to sell and also gain new business. However, the most successful exhibitors know when to have inquisitive conversations in order to help with market research and when to go for the sell. Often times, it truly is not all about the sell. A majority of attendees want to see new products and also learn as much as they can about the products they are interested in or have a need for. Let your products do the selling and have your sales team be the backups to your awesome products.

We mentioned previously that you should allow your engaging booth design do the dirty work. Get creative. Do something that will leave a lasting impression and cause a huge line of attendees who want to see your awesome idea come to life. Gone are the days of the traditional booth designs. In order to cater to the imagination of those catered to by the digital world, we must expand our minds and also bring the experience to life.

Call to arms...I mean, call to action! No no, not like light's camera action. I mean a true call to action, the same as you all have in your digital marketing materials. What is the point of marketing or selling your product if you don't end with an action to help get you to the next step? Even a simple, "I will follow up with you today, recapping our conversation and sending over further clarifications to your questions." That's a simple call to action at the end of the conversation. They say yes, that's great and mic drop, then you are onto the next step. Now, make sure you have another next step action in your follow up email.

What are some other call to actions? Schedule a demo. Look at each other's calendar right then and there, and schedule it. Send them a sample of the product or give it to them there if possible. Ask them to meet up for drinks or dinner later, so as to finish the conversation. Whatever the action is, ensure that it gets you to the next step.

For a moment, let's discuss etiquette. I've been in this industry long enough to have my own pain points. One

of them is the time spent talking to attendees and vice versa. All too often, we see attendees or buyers linger and wanting to continue a long drawn out conversation, even though they know they received the answers to their questions. This is an extremely poor etiquette in my opinion and overall, just a poor taste. We will talk more on this within the attendee section.

## Giveaway the Contestant

Oh, just kidding. Yes, we all want giveaways to take home for ourselves or children, but that honestly in this day and age is not a must. Gone are the days of stop by my booth to get \$100 gift card or an awesome water bottle. I mentioned earlier, experience is the key. If you can put together a contest that is experience driven and the final giveaway is a token to remember that experience, then you have the winning formula. I am not talking about trivia or passport stamps. I am talking about a true experience. Think about what it is you offer to your customers. What is it they value from you the

most? Which, of your product or service, can allow them to interact with you, your product, and their peers. You ever wonder why escape rooms or breakout rooms are so popular? It teaches them history, allows them to use their knowledge and skills, gets them to interact with the environment, and lastly, it allows them to interact and collaborate with their peers. Use your customers to your advantage.

## I Can't Even...Marketing, Stop Wasting Your Money!

All too often, I continue to hear that an exhibitors job is to show up and let the leads come to them. Cue eye roll. You have to be kidding! No, absolutely not. What a spoiled and no good rotten comment to say.

What happened to accountability? It's as if that word is completely misunderstood these days. You have a job. Your company has a role in this industry. Your company wants to sell more and grow. Therefore, whose

responsibility is it to ensure that the leads are coming to your booth? I can't wait for the days of augmented reality in books, which you can say the answer to questions and the author or teacher can reach through the book and give a good whack on the side of the head. It's time to wake up and get a huge dose of reality. You make your own success.

So, with that, let's discuss marketing. We break this down to three moments in time. Pre-event, onsite, and post-event.

## Pre-Event

What's the saying, "You have to spend money to make money?" Something along those lines or at least, that's what's been passed down for generations. This holds true for the most part, and there are great onsite sponsorships from your event organizer that you should absolutely participate in. If they don't have what you are looking for, ask them to customize one.

The good news. Pre-event marketing can be done by your own email campaigns and your own social media campaigns, and these can cost you very little. The most expensive piece, your time. What can you do?

Put together an engagement campaign for your current customer list and your current prospect list. You can have multiple campaigns, with various content and ideas for each. One in particular that I enjoy is the referral campaign. Ask your customers to refer you. You have provided them the best product and service. They are happy with you (hopefully), so, it is perfectly ok to ask them to refer you and make an introduction. In fact, with today's technology, it is so simple for you to have them click on a hyperlink in your email that has an email already written out for them. All they have to do is enter an email address, and also ensure to copy you and press send.

Ask your event organizer, if they have any tools to help with pre-event marketing. Some offer widgets to place

on your website which help with retargeting. Some offer referral programs and others offer email campaigns on your behalf. Of course, some of these will have a price tag to them. In the end, you have to decide what you are willing to spend. Keep in mind that you are spending a good amount of money to exhibit and showcase your booth. You need to ensure that it's a success, so, spend the additional mula to make sure it is.

## Pre-Event Social Media

If you aren't on social media these days, it's really as if you don't exist. Good or bad, social media can help you organically reach your current customers, as well as new ones. It is a must that you put together a social campaign that includes amazing content, offers, and of course, letting them know they have to retrieve those offers onsite at the event. Please, don't forget to say your booth number. That is the absolute number 1 mistake exhibitors make.

You can obviously use paid ads in social media as well. There are multiple options and look-a-like audiences that you can create in order to grow your reach. The best piece is that you don't have to spend too much money on ads to increase your exposure. \$100 and the right content, an ad will do the trick.

## Onsite Marketing

Please tell me, how does the event audience know you are even there? Oh! You did your pre-event marketing. Great! Now, you are onsite, and the attendees are overwhelmed from the sheer size of the event. Even if it is only 100 exhibitors or thousands, attendees become overwhelmed when they enter the show floor. It's human behaviour to become overwhelmed when entering a large area that is full of new people, and that is buzzing along with excitement. Your job is to attract them to your booth. Sponsorships are key to this. I am not persuading you or asking you to spend more money. I am merely stating from experience what is needed to

make a successful event. One that will produce 5x for you and also deliver the ROI you need to propel your company to the next step.

Take a look at the onsite sponsorships that will help draw attendees toward your booth. Look at your location and make sure that you are near where attendees should or would be going to; food, bathrooms, learning areas, etc. How about pre-made appointments? Does your event organizer offer matched meetings? If so, trust me that they are worth the squeeze. Whatever they are asking for, pay them. Even if you only have five set meetings, those will probably be the best meetings of your event, and they will deliver the ROI you need and want.

## Post-Event Follow-Up

You saw that, right? I said follow-up, not marketing. The first 24 hours to 3 months after the event are critical for exhibitors. A very high number of exhibitors fail to

follow-up or fail to follow up correctly. One email and one phone call aren't going to cut it. Do you think that attendee stopped by only your booth? Where's that smack of reality?

You need to put them on a nurturing campaign, and you need to do it quickly. In fact, before you show up onsite, you better have a plan in place for follow-ups. Feel free to reach out to me, I am more than willing to help you put together a nurture campaign. It's a must, not a nice thing to do, an absolute must. Do it correctly and you will stand out above all others.

Bottom line here, exhibitors, stop wasting your money. I don't mean stop wasting it on frivolous things. I mean, stop spending money and waiting for fate to step in and spoon feed you success. Be accountable for your own success.

**Nugget #9: Introduce, Ask, Engage, Exit.**

- ***Introduce:*** *Introduce yourself to the buyer.*
- ***Ask:*** *Ask the questions needed to gauge interest from the buyer.*
- ***Engage:*** *Engage those questions with answers or deepening questions to further develop interest or disinterest.*
- ***Exit:*** *Once interest or disinterest has been established, politely exit the conversation and be sure to let the buyer know that you will be following up after the event, regardless of interest or disinterest.*

## Buy, Buy, Buyers

Yea...there are the do's and don'ts for you all as well. The red carpet might be rolled out and you may prance in on the white horse, wearing the crown jewels, but you still have etiquette as well.

Be respectful. Yes, some exhibitors are sketchy (sorry exhibitors), but you, as well as everyone, should rise up

and be the better person. “Hi, no thank you. I am not looking for your product or service.” Ha! Just kidding, that is a little too respectful, but a wave and a small facial gesture of no thanks is still good. You could always take the, “Thanks, but no thanks. Your sketchy attempt to gain my attention is so off putting.” Please don't say this...I beg of you. We may all be thinking it alas, it is still not the right approach.

What about that sudo gut feeling you get when an exhibitor does approach you as you walk by? You get that feeling that you should talk to them. I have been pleasantly surprised by those conversations and some have led to us moving forward together. Keep in mind that you don't know what you don't know. You are there to find your needs, but you are also there to find new things.

Either way, being respectful to the exhibitors is paramount. Call out the ones that are being too aggressive but note that they all spent a lot of money to get in front of you and gain your attention. In a way,

that's the ultimate flattery. You are so very important. Know that and you know the power behind that, so, use it wisely.

Be open minded. You may come in with a plan and an agenda but open your mind to seeing new products or services. Allow yourself to be enlightened. I relate this to walking your dog. Excuse me, if you don't have a dog...you should.

Sometimes, you walk your dog with a purpose. Get some exercise, have them do their business, have some fun and play fetch. Other times, you let your dog walk you. I don't mean this in that they are pulling you all over the place. I mean, you enjoy the experience. You open yourself up and allow your dog to sniff wherever it wants. To walk and enjoy itself. There is a sense of peace, calmness, and tranquillity in letting your dog walk you. Try it if you haven't, it is truly enjoyable.

The reason this is equivalent to you walking the show floor is this. So many times, we have plans. So many

times, we say we are not going to deter from what is scheduled. Yet, sometimes, the most enlightening life moments are when we open ourselves to deter from the path. To take a detour and see what else is it that we don't know.

Enjoy your path and your schedule, but enjoy the freedom of wandering, learning and exploring. Find what's new on the show floor and allow yourself to be more enlightened.

**Nugget #10: Introduce, Ask, Engage, Exit.**

- ***Introduce:*** Introduce yourself to the exhibitor.
- ***Ask:*** Ask the questions needed to gather if your needs will be met.
- ***Engage:*** Engage those questions with more questions or answers from the exhibitor.
- ***Exit:*** Once interest or disinterest has been established, politely exit the conversation and be sure to thank the exhibitor for their time.

**Nugget #11 (you get two nuggets in a section): Be open minded. Be enlightened by allowing yourself to let go of your schedule and your plan and seek what is new.**

## Strategy

It's very important to have a plan, a strategy going into your entire show or even when you are trying to start an event. You could wing it. I mean, I like to wing it all the time. It doesn't mean it's the correct way to go about it to ensure success. Remember, we are trying to ensure success, not leave it up to chance.

Processes are your friend. When you have a process in place, or guidelines, they can ensure that you are able to scale what it is you are trying to accomplish. What do you mean scale? I don't mean take your business from \$1,000 to \$100,000. I mean, take your approach to your main event, your main annual tradeshow and also scale it

to more regionalized events. We will get into this a bit later, so, hold tight.

In business, leaving things up to chance can really come back to bite you. Playing the if this and if that, then this and that game is one of the most effective, in my mind, routes to take in order to get your process down on paper. If your marketing doesn't perform by this date, then the process outlines this.

Why process? Because it means you collaborated, or should have, with your team. It means you thought through scenarios, good or bad, and came up with a unified action to overcome the not so good outcomes. It means that your team moving forward has the full buy in your need to make plan b happen if plan a of the process isn't working.

This does not mean you need a plan c-z. You could! I don't recommend it, but you all don't have to be crazy like me. Those that say they wing it, know this. We actually don't wing it. We have rehearsed these scenarios

in our heads so many times that we know the path we want to take and what alternate paths there are. We are overthinkers and over analysers, but when the time comes, we look as if we are winging it, because we take immediate action.

Believe it or not, everyone has a strategy. If they say they don't, don't listen to them. The process and the strategy you put into place is going to help define your success. The metrics you put behind and around the strategy is what defines your overall achievements, and what it is you want to happen.

## How Do I Strategize?

When putting together your strategy, be yourself. Be the organization you currently are and picture the organization you want to be. You now have your starting and end points. Work together with your team. This is not a lone wolf exercise. This is not a lone wolf plan.

To change an organization, you must first change yourselves. If you are a lone wolf, be more of a team player. If you are a team player, don't compromise or avoid conflict on the things you are not 100% bought into. Everyone leaving the room needs to be in support of the strategy.

Take for example, raising a child. If you and your partner are not together and in sync on how to raise your child, you have two parents performing two different strategies. Instead of being unified and on the same path, they are separate and therefore, the child becomes confused and eventually ends up being smart enough to “play” both parents.

Your children are your customers or your audience. If your team is performing different and separate strategies, then your audience will be confused and will eventually outsmart you. Customers can help guide and provide feedback, but they shouldn't dictate your organization's strategies. You don't know what you don't know. This applies to you and your audience.

Give them what they need, not what they want. At the time of wanting, it's urgent and a must. Immediate gratification. At the time of need, the want has been thought through.

Flush through the wants of your audience. Ask them WHY they want it. Get to the root. Get to the underlying cause.

With your team, you utilize divergent thinking, better known as brainstorming. No idea is a bad idea. Every thought gets thrown on the white board. Every thought! Once divergence is completed, for the ideas that still hold question marks, ask those team members to help you understand. It goes back to; you don't know what you don't know. Don't assume anything in divergent thinking.

At this point, you should see that many of the ideas are similar or at least, can fit into categories. Organize the ideas into those categories in order to help get a more

focused outlook. Once into the categories, it's time to choose the ones that can be implemented with the current team. Then the ones that will need outsourcing, and then the ones that you have no idea how to implement.

- Current team ideas
  - Have you done them before?
  - Do they move the needle toward your main goal?
  - Does it really help you achieve the goal of the organization you want to achieve?
  - Who among the team can implement and continue its execution?
  - Is it something you are all on board with?
  
- Outsourcing Ideas
  - Do they need to be truly outsourced?
  - Can you hire?
  - Is there a team member internally who can start it and test it?

- Does it move the needle toward your main goal?

## **No Idea How to Implement Ideas**

- Do you have a mentor in the industry that you can ask?
- Message boards?
- Communities?
- Consultants?
- Remember to always ask, does it move the needle toward the organization you want to be?

## **Don't Sales Me!**

Where's the sales in all of this? It's everywhere! You should see that by now. Selling your team on your ideas. Selling them on coming up with a strategy in the first place. Selling them on moving toward the organization you want to be.

You don't have to be in the sales department to sell. The entire organization should be selling. By that, I mean they should have passion and 100% buy into the organization's ideals and actions toward moving forward. Once they have that, they can speak with enthusiasm, and that enthusiasm and passion will sell more than outreach campaign.

That passion should flow into your sales campaign as well. Obviously, you need one of these to help sell more exhibit space or bring in more attendees or sell widgets. Bringing this passion into your sales campaign will help you come up with content for emails, which will project your personal connection and emotion, and therefore help create a connection through a digital platform.

It's so hard to emit emotion from email, but there are ways through storytelling. Your sales campaign and strategy should be a series, a funnel that takes them along a journey. I'll go into this more when we go through the basics of the methodical approach.

# Trash to Treasure

What you think may be trash, someone else will see that as a treasure. Age old saying, not meant for sales, yet holds true in the sales world. If you are a “T” on the Meyers Briggs, bringing out a little “F” can produce treasure for your audience. Vice versa if you are an “F.”

Don't assume your audience's thoughts. Perform tests to help figure them out. Find your key members from both exhibitor and attendee's side, and work with them. Ask them what you have done in the past that has encouraged them to purchase or attend your event. What you learn should be put into campaign. What works on them may not work on all, but it will give you your starting point.

Seeing a theme? Stop Assuming! Assumptions are the crutch of all. Assumptions can not only hinder but derail the entire campaign and the entire organization. It's better to ask than to assume. Fear of asking questions is a real thing. This fear can consume you, don't give it the

chance to. You will be pleasantly surprised when you begin asking questions. People like to answer, and people do, believe it or not, like to help.

## Thou Must Sayeth This and Only This

Forget that! I've never been a fan of scripts. You get locked into a drone like a state of repeating the same words over and over again. It sucks the life out of you, and you lose passion. Scripts take the fun out of sales. Scripts take the fun out of everything. Imagine me saying that your life is scripted, and you can't change anything, ever. That better be one heck of a script, because I will have none of that.

Choice is the best gift given to humanity. Choice is what gives us hope and allows us to live the life we...choose. In sales, we need choice. We need the ability to use the skills we have honed or are learning in order to exude passion for what we are selling. This choice helps keep

the game alive. It makes it exciting to win, to get to that finish line, to get the sale and yell out Sales'd It!

Ok, maybe you won't yell that last part, but you should get it. Choice gives us all the drive we need. Of course, there are some that refuse to make choices or try to over analyse situations to make the “right” choice. What is a right choice? Excluding morally wrong decisions, aka murder or hurting someone, how at that moment do you know it's the right or wrong decision?

Talking points, bullet points, guidelines. Those should be in place and present or memorized. They help you guide conversations while allowing you to choose the direction you would like the “sale” to move toward. Human behaviour is fickle. All data on that person can point you toward a decision, but at that moment in time and on that day, that particular person could be that 2% variance the data takes into account. This is why having talking points is better. A script will drag on a conversation or end it quickly, whereas, talking points allow you to adapt to the fickle human behaviour. Your talking points

should clearly outline what you need to do in order to move to the next step, but they should also outline how you will connect with that person. The connection is the key. I've said it over and over again, people do business with those they trust. Trust comes from creating a connection.

## Act Your Weird

Throughout this book, I have mentioned to be yourself and embrace your weird. Now is the time I say, act your weird.

No longer are you in the embracing stage. It's **Time** to take what you have learned and act upon it. Talk is cheap. The time to execute the strategy you have diligently thought through, is now. In that strategy, it is prudent to act yourself. Don't try and sell the way your mentor sells. Leave those attitudes at the door. Take their

examples from experience and learnings from their failures and apply them in your own weird way.

You cannot effectively implement a strategy if it does not have your own uniqueness. That gets you bought in. Drives your passion and also pushes you to execute, pivot, and execute some more.

Pivot. Such a cliché consulting term, which is wildly overused to sell innocent individuals on sometimes crappy strategies. Yet, sadly, it's a word that must be ingrained in the very depths of every strategy.

Understand pivot in this way. I am not here to sell a strategy to you. I am here to help you embrace the sales that is and always was present within yourself. By taking a calculated and methodical approach to sales, you can succeed. With that, no strategy is perfect. No execution is perfect. You must have your pivot routes and then learn to pivot with the tide. Industry knowledge might be off base, and you may come into new learnings. Therefore, you must pivot and adapt to these new learnings.

**Nugget #12: Pivot before you divot. Don't get stuck with pride, understand that you may not know everything, but you can plan and be flexible.**

Flexibility not part of your core nature? Need to have a plan and stick to it every moment of the way? Let me know how that works for you. I am yet to see one strategy from start to finish being implemented with the original strategy set in motion. It's ok to be different, not only from everyone else, but also yourself. Embrace change. Sometimes, resisting change can be your downfall. It really all depends on what that change is.

Whatever you do, whatever job you have, ensure that you are passionate about it. Not all of it, but at least parts of it. That passion will drive you when things aren't great, and it will drive you even harder when they are going really well.

We are all human. We all have emotions that play into everything we do. Therefore, it's a deterrent to think of

sales in a completely rational way. The rational way can be the strategy and the approach. The irrational is your own emotions and the emotions of others that you put into the campaign.

Use your passion. Use your emotion. Utilize the emotions given back to you from customers during the campaign. Take calculated risks with your approach, and watch yourself embrace sales and the sales revenues flow in.

**Nugget #13: Be the association you want to be.  
Project what you want your entire audience to be.  
Act how you want them to act. It will not be  
overnight, but you will see the change from your  
audience, and it will fuel your growth.**

## Basic Level Strategerie

Let's say your marketing department does not have a marketing automation system yet. I say yet, because you

need one if you want to remain relevant or have an event in the years to come. No automation tool, cool. This will be a fun manual project for you.

We have all heard of mass blasting our attendees and exhibitors. Your audience doesn't really respond to that anymore. Why? Because in the B2C world, they receive a much more personalized approach when it comes to marketing. At first, you don't need to go to the depth of personalization that is seen on the B2C side, you will eventually gain the engagement needed for sustainable growth, but you do need to add a little level of personalization that makes the emails feel like they are directed at the individual or rather, the individual “group.”

What do I mean by group? Hyper-personalization is the ultimate goal. A great way to start toward that goal is to personalize based on groups or interests. These can be vertical based, or interest based. First step is to poll your audience and of course, add in some sort of giveaway, so that they can take your survey.

Survey questions:

- What verticals interest you from our event? (list out your verticals)
- What outside work activities do you wish could be part of the events? (list a few to get started)
- Would you like to meet individuals interested in your interests?
- What style of education suits you? (list out a few)
- How likely are you to refer our event? (always end with NPS question).

What's NPS? Net Promoter Score. The score that measures customer's satisfaction and ultimately determines growth of your event...or so they say.

Now that you have interests, you can start with interest-based marketing toward your attendees, so as to drive engagement on your emails. Make sure that you have a call to action on each of these. Start small and start with small favours. Micro-favours will lead to the ultimate favour, which is obviously to attend the event.

Now, break out into vertical marketing. Take the companies that are interested in certain verticals and use that for your exhibitor marketing. You should already know which markets your exhibitors serve or prospective exhibitors serve. Use that information to your advantage. Show them the title of the attendee and the company name that is attending your event that are interested in their specific vertical.

Not done yet! Utilize opens, clicks and un-opens. You should be using an email system that can give you this information. If not, skip this section, go find a system like mail chimp, and get it done. Then come back.

Still with your interests and verticals as the main focus, turn your messaging around and create drip campaigns, obviously manual at this time, since you do not have an automation system. These drip campaigns will revolve around opens, but not registered or purchased, clicks but not registered or purchased, and un-opens. You now have 3 drip campaigns...for each of your interests. This could be quite a lot, which is why we recommend an

automation tool. It's so incredibly worth it though. You begin to create content, which engages your audience and entices them to be a part of your event. This engagement helps in building strong and sustainable growth for your event.

**Nugget #14: Hyper-speed your personalization through interests and verticals.**

## Ice Ice Baby

The dreaded cold call. The infamous wolf on the wall street style dial for dollars. The part of sales that gives it its bad name. Are calls cold these days? With so many solutions out there to receive introductions and referrals, and AI solutions to gather the correct contact and contact information, it's hard to make cold calls...cold.

Most of the time, an email is sent first, followed by a call a day or a few days later, followed by email, followed by

call and so on. So, is a cold call still cold? Not in my eyes. These calls are essential in the sales process. Not everyone responds via email, and that very first time your voice is heard, a connection is made. We touched on connections and how important they are. This is that start that is needed to build the relationship. Calls are the foundation. Emails are the supports. Above all, face-to-face.

What can you do with calls? A lot. It's important to have a correct cadence between emails and calls. There is a line that has too much contact, and it will ruin the buyer's journey. Every industry is different when it comes to cadence, so, there really isn't a true sure thing as major win-win cadence. You will have to experiment.

What is known, is the fact that you must have at least seven reach outs to a prospect that has never heard of you, in order to receive a response. Obviously, this isn't 100%, but so many sales individuals quit after two or three reach outs. Some are after one! That's absurd and downright cocky. Pick up the phone and send that follow

up email until you get a response. If after the seven-cadence process you have not received a reply, then kick them back to the marketing machine.

**Nugget #15: With the correct cadence, you can become famous. Don't be jaded, don't be complacent, pick up the phone and make that acquaintance.**

## Target Locked

Develop target accounts and schedule visits to their office. The end.

Let's get real for a hot second here. If you are a show organizer and do not have target accounts, whether they are your anchor exhibitors or even prospective accounts, you are doing something wrong. That may sound blunt, but all of what you have read so far is a culmination of facts and ideas useful for you to grow your event. What is the best way to grow your event? Retain your exhibitors.

I can't take credit for this idea and thought. Not in the slightest. Dozens of show organizers do this on a regular basis. I learned it from an esteemed industry colleague, John Toner. Let me go into some of the aspects he explained to me that I completely agree with.

There are research articles out there, take a look at CEIR, that talk about exhibitors wanting the booth fees to be cheaper. That doesn't mean your booth square footage rate has to be less, but ultimately the entirety of exhibiting at a trade show is expensive. Still, it is the best marketing tool every business has in its arsenal.

Understanding your audience is the key and understanding that your event could possibly be the largest budget item for them in the year is HUGE. Taking a page out of Mr. Toner's book, he sets up yearly visits with his top exhibitors and rotates through other exhibitors as well. Put simply, this is amazing. Why?

1. It shows that you understand and value them as a key exhibitor to your event.
2. This meeting is more than a meet, greet and take me out to lunch. It's about getting to their why and developing the how. Understand their viewpoint and goals and see if there is a way to help them achieve it.
3. If you promote face-to-face as that is what your event is, then it (big word coming) behaves you to do the same.

Take a look at your budget and put something in there to visit your exhibitors. Start small. You don't have to pick twenty exhibitors for the first year. If you can, great, but don't feel that it is necessary to jump into the deep end with this approach.

There are other benefits in speaking face-to-face with your exhibitors as well. Sometimes, it is not about what you can do for them, but what they can do for you. Your give was to come see them, and the ultimate get is to exhibit at your event.

However, there are little gets you can achieve from these meetings that also give, give, and give to your exhibitor. Once the conversation starts to flow, ensure that you get to their target audience or any new audiences they are looking to target. These are potentially new verticals of attendees (and maybe more exhibitors).

If this is a new target audience for them, how are they going about acquiring them? How can you hop on that train and help them acquire their new target audience and also bring them to your event?

These conversations can open a lot of doors and also be a catalyst for new verticals which can help organically grow your event. Go out there and select some target accounts to visit.

I will say this. There are organizations that will not have the budget to do this and that, it is ok. Not visiting them is not the end of the world, but not talking to them and taking the time to understand their why is the end of the

world. That is how to stay a stagnant event and clearly, if you are reading this, you do not want to be a stagnant event any longer.

Set up conference calls via video with your targets, so that they can see you. It adds more to the conversation if they can see you, as it involves another sense for them to use. If you can, send them some food to invoke another sense. The more senses you can get them to utilize during their conversation with you, the more they are likely to open up and trust that you are the one to help them in moving forward. That is the goal of every Association, right? To help their constituents. Their members.

**Nugget #16: Get to the why of your target exhibitors through F2F meetings and/or video conference calls.**

## Narrow Focus

What is the WIG of your organization? The Wildly Important Goal. Is it to grow your event by x%? Sounds familiar as it's pretty much every show organizer's goal.

I spoke at a conference and asked why growing the entire event was the goal. I received baffled looks as if I were the crazy one. Let me tell you why I am certainly not the crazy one here.

We as humans are not capable of understanding the vastness. You ever ask yourself, what is the meaning of life? Or, where and how did the stars come about? Of course, we have scientists that rationalize it, but we do not have the innate capability to understand and more importantly, tackle the vastness. Let's relate that to revenue goals.

You have this goal to increase the entirety of your event by x%. That event makes up x% of your total organization's revenue. That is the vastness. How many verticals or product categories make up your event? How do you intend to grow your event exactly?

The saying, “Aim small, hit big,” applies to your revenue goals, and most importantly, in the event industry.

Growth from generality is not sustainable and your goal should not only be to grow your event. It should be to increase your event revenue while maintaining a stable and sustainable growth trajectory.

This is where data comes into play. You need to collect the correct data and then analyse that data. Start with your product categories. Easy peasy to understand which have grown or declined over the past few years. Delve into them a little deeper and see if the growth categories have experienced sustainable growth. Look into the behaviour of the selected, deselected, new, and cancelled. Your event technology should be able to do this for you. If not, you need a new platform.

Now that you know which ones are hot growth categories and are also sustainable, make your WIG to grow those categories by x%. Now, you have a goal to not only grow your event, but also to create a solid base

that will keep your event stable. The following event cycle choose another category to grow and so on.

This isn't limited to the trade show floor. You can do this with your attendee demographics, as well as conference sessions. Understanding the behaviour is the key to this success.

Earlier, I mentioned that we do not have the innate ability to tackle the vastness. However, what we do possess as humans is the tenacity to tackle little goals that add up and eventually equal the vastness.

**Nugget #17: Narrow focus can help drive growth to specific categories, creating a more stable and sustainable event.**

## Preparation is Key

Ok, I'll go cliché here for a hot second. If you are not prepared, you will have a much harder time achieving

and succeeding. Notice, I did not say you will not achieve and succeed, but rather, you will have a harder time.

Don't get me wrong, there are great minds out there who can improvise and also read a crowd better than anyone. They are far and few between, and I can say with a fair amount of certainty, you are not one of them. If you are, good on you! That does not mean you should not prepare, and it also means you should not seek to become like the improvisers.

Preparation is different for every form of sales, even in the event industry. We will tackle few of those avenues here while keeping in mind that portions of all of these preparation tactics are useful for any type of sales.

## Event Booth Sales

The core of your event, blocks of concrete that you must sell. It's hard to tackle the concept that show organizers

sell blocks of concrete, but that is exactly what it is. First step is to admit it and move past the denial. The next step is to change your mindset.

Every show organizer's mindset should not be 'let me sell you this space'. It should be, 'let me sell you the vision of what you can accomplish with this space'. How does preparation come into play? Let's understand that every event has a percent of their booth space renewed each year. It's a matter of getting back the remainder of them, as well as new exhibitors or suppliers.

To be prepared for the “softer” sales of those that have exhibited before or what I call non-selects, you must understand why they have not renewed their space already. This goes back to having conversations and truly understanding the reason they have or will not exhibit at your event. Sounds so easy! It's not easy at all. These non-selects are guarded, but they do reveal why they did not have a good show, and that is the information you need to help get them back and even use that for others. It's reasonable to assume...wait wait wait!

Never assume in sales. Assumptions are the death of salespeople. With that, there are generalities and commonalities between why exhibitors do not return, and you can also use them to come up with your objection rebuttals and create an email as well as call campaign around them.

Being prepared in this case is getting to the why with at least one non-select, and also using that information to help win back the others.

The “harder” sale is the prospective exhibitor, the one that has never heard of or been to your event. There is a learning curve involved in getting them to engage with your emails or calls. They need to understand the value of your event before they can remotely begin to consider your event.

To be prepared for the prospective exhibitor, you must have your event’s value pitch for each of your verticals. Be specific to the vertical in order to personalize it to

that organization. Although the value may be similar, this little touch of personalization will go a long way.

## Sponsors

One of the best methods for determining sponsorships was taught to me by one of my many mentors years ago. The age-old method of going onsite. Earth shattering, isn't it?

At least, for me, the creative juices flowed while I was onsite. Walking along as if I were an attendee helped me to see what they could see and what could be potential sponsorships. I was able to come up with some truly crazy ideas that I could personalize for the sponsor when pitching to them. One of the few ideas I was never able to implement was some sort of sponsorship on the ceilings. To this day, I wish there was a cost-effective sponsorship that could draw the attention from the ground up to the ceiling. That way, the attendees could walk tall and gaze in wonderment.

Enough reminiscing. Being onsite clearly has its value. Sometimes, budgets are not suited to allow onsite visits. That's ok. Ask your center to help you out with videos, pictures, and yes, even video conferencing to walk as if you were an attendee.

Your vendors and partners are willing to help you. Afterall, if your event grows, you will need more space, and that means more business for the center as well as the city.

What all this means is that you have to do your homework. Put in the time for research and understanding in order to truly gain the massive benefits. Think of it this way.

If you were to start a business that began to grow and you wanted to grow it even more, would you not invest not only your time, but also resources to help further the growth? It's not enough these days to go in half-cocked and expect that by pulling the trigger, you are going to

hit the target. You need to take a step back, compose, take a deep breath, and then, when you have fully collected yourself and the details, pounce at full speed.

**Nugget #18: Homework sucked while growing up, but in the adult world, it is worth every penny. Be prepared, do the work, push hard.**

## Rejection...No Means Not Yet (Only in Sales)

I wasn't sure if I wanted to include that title, but it really is true. No Means Not Yet was coined by my good friend, Chris. When this was first said, we all laughed and gave him the 'oh crap, did he really say that' look. He meant it strictly for sales and not in any malice whatsoever. I am 100% behind him on this one. In sales, I repeat, in only sales, No Means Not Yet.

Countless times, there have been targets lost only to have a few more follow ups that help push it across the finish

line. Persistence in sales is key and understanding what is a “hard no” and a “no not yet” is critical.

What this all comes down to is having your objection rebuttals ready. You will never know all of them. You do know a lot of them. Budget has been set? It’s too expensive? I have an event at that time already? We don't serve that part of the country?

Does any of this sound familiar? All of these have rebuttals.

Budget has been set: “Prospect” I hear that a lot and more often than not, the following year, that prospect comes back and says, “we missed sales target, I wish we were at your event.” If you can, see if you have any budget to move around from somewhere else. After all the leads you can gain from our event, it will help you push toward your sales goal.

It’s too expensive: “Prospect” the best sales lead generators are expensive. However, it is proven that

being F2F with hundreds, if not thousands of leads at your fingertips, can help move the lead along faster in your sales stages. Ask your marketing person how they feel about F2F. I would love the chance to speak with them and you if you are willing to make an introduction.

I have an event at that time already: “Prospect” do you mind me asking which event?

Once you receive the event's information, there are a few different avenues you can chase. First of all, acknowledge the event and give them every detail you know. If you don't know any, ask them and dig deeper in order to gain what you can out of the prospect. The objection rebuttal here is getting competitive information, then utilizing that prospect's help to understand why that event is better suited for x vertical. This will lead to even more leads for you. Now, that's what I call an awesome return on rebuttal.

We don't serve that part of the country: “Prospect” can you help clarify for me so I can update our records, and

if we ever have an event in the area you serve, I can reach out. Do you not serve that area at this time, do you not have the desire to serve that area?

This will help you get to the meaning of that objection, that is the idea behind all rebuttals. This one in particular is what you can come back with, let me help you break into this area if they say there is a desire.

Objection rebuttals are key to overcoming sales droughts. Collect your objections and work with your organization in collaboration efforts, so as to help come up with responses to overcome them. Have a few and test them to see which works best for you. Make it fun, remember that from the beginning. Sales can be fun if you make it fun.

**Nugget #19: Overcome objections through preparation and collaboration. Make it fun and test your rebuttals in order to get the right fit for your organization and vertical.**

## What If?

Part of what I do to help me get prepared is to play the what if, then this game. If you are an overthinker like me, your mind is always going, thinking about every scenario and never shutting off. It's not a good thing...trust me! You should turn yourself off once a day, so as to rest your mind, but this section is not about mental health, we will get to that later.

Playing the what if game helps you to strategize and also think through possible scenarios and come up with the solutions for them. You probably must have done this before but never called it the what if game. Have you ever had a big meeting with your boss, not knowing what it's about, and thought about what your boss would say and what your response would be? Or even in preparing for interviews, you play the game too. There are always situations where you must have some scenarios thought out.

Survivalists are renowned for this. They think through almost every possible scenario that could cause them harm, and they also come up with a way to counteract it. For example, and I am going to an extreme here.

You happen to be in Kansas for a trip and you decide to stop in at a convenience store. Knowing that Kansas is in the middle of tornado season, you enter the building and immediately come up with the 'what if a tornado strikes', and then the solution. Let's be honest with ourselves, you are most likely thinking about it subconsciously, because your brain is trained to. You may never bring it to the forefront of your brain, but it's there.

Bring it forward. When it comes to driving growth for your organization, you need to bring forth your innate capabilities. Let your mind wander off into the vastness of scenarios and come up with the solutions. The best ideas come when you are not trying to come up with them. Focus on the what ifs, and watch the magic happen.

**Nugget #20: What if, then this is a powerful tool in your belt. Utilize it effectively in order to gain an edge on quick responses and solutions.**

## It's Not Personal

Often times, those starting out and even those in the industry for a while, take sales too seriously. My current leader at the organization I work for, Personify, always puts in a plug that it should always be fun, and you should be having fun. We take sales too seriously and sometimes, we shouldn't. Don't get me wrong. We have quotas, targets and goals to hit, but his point is to make it fun getting there.

This reminds me that it truly is all about the journey, no matter what it is. The destination is your target and your goal, but that journey of getting there is what you will always remember. To this day, I remember back in 2008 when the economic downturn happened, we had a booth sales goal that was re-forecasted and lowered because of

the current economic situation. That did not stop me from not only crushing that goal, but also within one percent of the original goal. How did I get there? By utilizing most of the strategies in this book. I can't say that I implemented and learned all of these back in 2008 as I have learned a lot along the way, but I can say that I was given the freedom to sell my way. That freedom went a long way, and it so happened to work out.

When I received the “no, the economy sucks right now” line, I didn't take it personal. I continued on. There were thousands of other leads, and I made sure I contacted all of them. I gathered the objections and used them to come up with rebuttals for the other leads that were yet to give me objections. Then, I continued on, even after getting hundreds of “no's.” The “no's” were not personal. They had nothing to do with me or my ability to sell. They had everything to do with the fear of the economy. So, what did I do? I used that to my advantage. I took their fear and helped put a worse fear in their minds. What if the economy stayed like this for an extended period of time? Do you have enough leads in your pipeline to stay in

business? Maybe it sounds harsh, but the reality is that it's true. None of them did. They came to this show to get the leads they needed for the following year. That line alone was enough to convince many prospects on phone calls, so I used versions of it in emails and all from that, hit a goal.

If you begin to take sales personal, it will weigh you down, beat you up, and spit you out. Sylvester Stalone said it best in Rocky Balboa, "It's not how hard you get hit, it's how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward." So, every time you hear that 'no' fly off the prospects mouth, play the Rocky theme song in your head and remember that you can overcome it and stand tall.

**Nugget #21: Sales life can hit you hard, you hit back harder, stand tall, and get that yes.**

## How Not to Go Mental in Sales

It happened. That one moment you wish you could take back. The one memory you want to wipe away. That lasting weight on your shoulders that you will always carry with you everywhere. It stinks, but it happens to even the best of us. You lost your cool in front of a prospect or client. You told them off and ruined that relationship for good.

Now, they may have deserved it, but being a sales professional requires you to be calm, cool, and collected at all times. You could say sales professionals are like secret service agents...or not. Either way, you need to keep your wits about you.

How does one accomplish this? It's not easy, but it's also not impossible. Here are some of the mental health tricks I use to keep a fresh mind and also keep myself from going mental, even in some of the worst situations.

## Fresh 20

No matter what time of day it is, where or when, take 20 minutes to sit or walk outside. Fresh air helps to clear your mind and also collect your thoughts. Besides the physical benefits of fresh air, we have to keep in mind that the greatest minds of all history always took time to be outside. If they did it, so can you.

## Hobby it up!

Having a hobby can greatly reduce your stress level, of course, that is if your hobby is a non-stressful one.

Getting into a nice routine calms the mind, and it's even better if you have a hobby that is a passion of yours.

Doing things that you love, things that make you happy, is what makes life all worthwhile. So, in a profound way, make sure to pursue what you love and also take time to do the things that make you happy.

## Write it down

As a writer, I am very fond of writing things down. In this day and age, it's best to start a blog about it. Heck, that's why this book was started. One of my passions is writing, so, why not write about something that I do well and for a living. We are all unique and we all have something special to share with the world. Figure that out and write about it.

## Indulge in life's pleasures

This sounds a bit odd, but it's absolutely necessary. Think about it...even on the strictest of diet plans, they allow you to have cheat days. So, in life, why would you not want to indulge in the simple pleasures that make you happy? That delicious oaky scotch or chocolate blackberry flavoured wine...mmm, sounds amazing. Many of us are price conscious and that \$5 dollar a day coffee budget went away. I say bring it back for one or two days. If you deprive yourself of everything, you will never be fully happy, and you will lose the battle to stress.

**Nugget #22: Keep yourself from making the ultimate mistake of unloading on your prospect or client. Take the time to unwind, go digital free and indulge in life's pleasures. You will thank yourself in the long run when you are sitting blissfully on your rocking chair at 80 years young, telling your future grandchildren about the awesome adventure's life brought you and how you won that life changing big sale.**

## Healthy Sales...

Specifically, a healthy lifestyle and how difficult it is to keep one while in sales. Now, there are great exceptions out there, and good for them for keeping their bodies in shape and also eating those oh so delicious fruits and veggies. However, for most of us, it's just not that easy. Between all those lunches, dinners and snacks from

taking out clients and prospects, it's near impossible to keep the hot bod.

So, how does one keep that healthy lifestyle we all dream of while still enjoying...well life? That's easy...yea, I don't know either and I'm no knight in shining armour. Not sure if I could even fit in the armour. They do say those that can't do, teach. So, here I am, teaching, and with that, I am going to actually do what I am teaching and writing as of right now.

There are multiple studies that state that abs are made in the kitchen, while others say to cut your calorie intake. Truth is, and something I firmly believe in, everyone and every "body" is different, and there is no universal truth. In reality, you are going to have to do both, eat well and exercise.

## Clients/Prospects Meals

It's inevitable for you to be eating out at a restaurant, whether a nice one or not. At this point, you need to realize that you have eaten out 6 times in the last two weeks. So, what do you do to keep healthy? Eat a salad. Not just any salad either. Sadly, the delicious caesar is off the table because it truly is not that good for you. Something with salmon and lots of veggies is what you really want. Not too much dressing, but just enough to make it bearable. It might be tough to eat a salad every time, so, it's ok to spice up lunch with an Arnold Palmer...virgin that is of course.

## Count those steps

So cliché, I know, but it works. I watched a friend who is in sales lose something like 30 pounds by walking to client meetings whenever he could. He started eating right, but the walking really helped. Start by parking a few blocks away and start walking to the restaurant or office. Of course, be cognizant of the weather. It wouldn't be prudent for you to walk in the rain or the

blistering summer sun. Nothing is worse than showing up to a meeting all dishevelled. Pick and choose in the beginning when to take those extra steps, and soon, you will realize that you are taking more than you think.

## Stair Master

No, no, no. You don't have to go to the smelly sweat drenched gym to use the dreaded Stairmaster, only to pour more sweat onto the stained machine. Burn some extra calories and get that heart rate up by taking the stairs whenever you can. I, for one, am guilty of not doing this because it just plain ol' sucks to take the stairs, but by golly am I going to from now on. It makes all the difference to randomly, throughout the day, get your heart rate pumping.

## Stretch a roo

That's right. Stretching burns calories too. Yoga is a really prolonged stretching and look how awesome all

those yogis look. I like the 30 minutes of working productively, and also taking 5 minutes of standing and stretching time. Also, if you are in the office, you won't look too ridiculous doing some stretching. Not only is this healthy for your body, it's healthy for your mind and you will have many more 30-minute productive time slots. Staying limber will help keep those aches and pains away, so that you don't feel like hitting the couch once you get home.

## Water world

We've all heard it, but we never drink enough. Make yourself feel full and hydrated. Drink 8 ounces every hour. Make this part of your 5-minute stretching period. Refill your should be empty water bottle. You may find yourself having to use the restroom more often, and that is ok. It's a good sign that you are flushing out the bad.

## Wine over beer

This is only my opinion and not scientifically proven by any means, but I would say, 'go with wine over beer'. Beer is bloating, yes, even for we guys, and honestly, those lite beers don't taste nearly as good as the delicious full-bodied ones. Wine is proven to be heart healthy for you, with those riboflavins, but of course, all of this is good in moderation.

These are few ways to try and keep a healthy body while in sales. There are also more tips and tricks that you will pick up as you try these, so, please feel free to share your findings and thoughts with everyone, so that we all can be healthy in sales. In this sharing economy, let's try and share the good and leave the nasty to the TV news media.

**Nugget #23: Take the extra step, drink some water, and share the positive in sales.**

## The Real Value of Face-to-Face

With the digital transformation well upon us, many businesses are losing sight of the age secret of face-to-face. The majority of the marketing budget is put into digital assets, which are strangely supposed to increase the awareness of that organization and increase leads. They do, and there's nothing against digital marketing, as it is the current way and foreseeable future.

However, when it comes to cold hard sales, nothing beats face-to-face. Talk to any top-notch marketers out there and they will tell you that they wish they placed more of their budget into events, conferences, visiting prospects, visiting Clients, and also putting together their own prospect events.

Going back to our roots, we are built to interact in person. Everything from our speech patterns to our body language, changes when we interact, whether personal or business in person. It's easier to be someone you are not when you are behind a computer screen. The real you, showcases itself fully when you are in person.

You can't beat that authenticity, no matter how hard you try to showcase it on digital, not even on videos. Why? On videos, you can edit or re-record. In life, there is no rewind or pause button. That is true authentic material. True you, and that is the most powerful tool you have.

When you try to be someone or something you're not, you put more energy into that focus, rather than where the energy should be, which is the task at hand.

So, why, to me, is face-to-face the most powerful and valuable sales and marketing asset out there? So glad you asked.

In person meetings build trust more rapidly or distrust, depending on how the meeting goes. This trust in sales can go a long way, and it can also help further along opportunities stuck in the pipeline. This trust also tags along with the individual wherever they may move on to. No longer do we work forty-two years in the same organization. In fact, the average is around five years in the same organization now. That means that the trust you

forged during that in-person sales meeting, could help you down the line. The best way to build up your rolodex is to build it with in-person meetings, gatherings, events. There simply is no better way.

Beyond trust, with in-person meetings, you can gain the ability that was given to you at birth, to pick up on non-verbal communications and clues. Remember, we didn't always have the ability to understand language, although language has been around for some time, our brains were around first. With that, we started off understanding body language. Trust your instincts and let them catch the subtle body language clues, while you're on an in-person sales meeting.

A minor benefit of in-person meetings is that they show the prospect and Client that you care enough to take the time to visit them. This may be minor, but it goes a long way and that in-person meeting could be the game changer for you over the other vendor that only did a virtual meeting.

You have trust, body language cues and clues, showing care, and finally, you have to wait for it...memory. When you are at an in-person meeting, you can invoke many more of the prospects' senses than you can from a virtual one. This was taught to me by my former CEO, Rajiv Jain. He was huge on invoking as many senses during the sales process as he can. You have a much harder time achieving this through virtual meetings. When in person, you can bring food or something that will help invoke the senses. You have touch, hearing, sight, taste, and smell. You can accomplish all of these with an in-person meeting. That leaves an everlasting memory imprint on that prospect. Think about it. How many times have you passed by a smell that has brought you back to childhood? The same concept applies here in business. It truly is amazing when you can accomplish this.

**Nugget #24: Invoke all the senses by utilizing the true and real raw power of face-to-face meetings.**

## Leaving Revenue on the Table

Sponsorship strategies, nowadays, are a dime in a dozen. Each one unique in its own way, which is based off some learning from sometime and someplace. They can be based on previous experiences or past positions. Others can be a combination of strategies that take the most efficient and effective parts, combining them together for the best strategy.

When incorporating a sponsorship strategy, it's important to keep in mind that you do not want to leave revenue on the table. The goal, after all, is to increase your sponsorship revenue. The goal should also include reducing expenses, so as to maximize your net revenue.

How one goes about this can be drastically different from another. However, few strategies hold true over time and carry over from one organization to another. Here, we will look at three timeless practices to help increase your sponsorship revenue now and later in the future.

## Understanding & Value

One of the most effective practices to increase your sponsorship revenue is to work with your exhibitors in order to understand why they are exhibiting at your event. All too often, we assume it's to showcase their products and also gain further leads. That is always the case, however, there may be an additional value that they are seeking from your event. This value, once known, can be used to create a customized sponsorship package for them. By doing this, you not only further understand your exhibitor, you have shown them you listen, you care, and you also want to help them grow their business at your event. They grow, you grow. It's a simple philosophy, but a time consuming one. Therefore, combining this practice with the time saving practice is necessary.

Often time, show organizers feel the need to be the most creative persons in the world. Coming up with original sponsorships is not easy, and most of the time, it is not

necessary to waste such brain power. Having a conversation with your exhibitor can be the catalyst that is needed to spark the sponsorship idea. Save yourself the brain energy and have an open dialogue with your exhibitors.

## Transparent Cost Cutting

Customized sponsorships can be costly, and many times, they are not as profitable. However, is the goal of your sponsorship program to be profitable or increase revenue? They are not one nor the same. An association may answer this question differently from that of a for profit organization. You may say the margin needs to be 20% while others need it to be at least 50%. Determine that margin and the leeway you have with it before coming up with the customized sponsorships. Once you have a standard percentage, it's very easy for you as the show organizer to put together a package, knowing the costs and coming up with the price. This cuts down most times internally, which quite frankly is one of the main

aspects to consider. Streamlined processes are the best route for any organization. These streamlined processes utilize empowerment based off set standards.

Transparency does not mean being transparent to the exhibitor. That is your choice of how transparent you wish to be. Transparency in this case is internal.

Roadblocks internally are the biggest challenge for any show organizer who is trying to put together a customized package.

## Time Savings

We have eluded to time saving from the first two points. All of it comes together with this practice. The first practice, Understanding & Value, will be the most expensive in terms of time. Transparent Cost Cutting will help alleviate some of the expense of time. Finally, Time Saving will alleviate even more time.

There are many sponsorships that can be self-serve sponsorships. Meaning that you do not have to actively sell them. There needs to be some communication around them. However, these are sponsorships that you can post on your online sponsorship directory, which can lead to self-serve sales. Utilize your event tech that can pull together your gallery of sponsorships and has an ecommerce online contract capability to truly alleviate time from your end. We all know fulfillment will eat into time, but why waste time on items that can be easily marketed through digital campaigns and sold self-serve from your event tech? That was rhetorical.

**Nugget #25: Focus on what the exhibitor truly desires to accomplish at your event in order to develop your sponsorship program. This focus will be the most effective time you'll spend on your event. It will not only increase your sponsorship revenue, but also help you to determine the true desires of your exhibitors that you can ultimately use to bring on new exhibitors as well. This double-edged strategy will help your event grow from multiple angles;**

**exhibitors, sponsorships, attendees, and possibly new verticals. Focus on the desires, to ultimately gain your desired outcome, which is growth.**

## To Sell or to Converse?

To sell or to converse is a tough line many sales professionals cross. Go too strong in the conversation and steer it towards sales, and the prospect is turned off. Go too light in the sales direction and the conversation never gets to the next stage in the cycle.

Those in the event industry have mastered this skill and I dare say the rest of the business world can learn a thing or two from them. What is it they do?

Some aspects of the business understand that they are in it for the long haul. Win the client and you could have them and their loyalty for a very long time. However, they also understand that the cycle of the sale can

sometimes be three years. If that is the case, it is an absolute must to walk the fine line of selling or conversing.

We in this industry are out at many events, both for the industry and for our Clients. With that comes a lot of practice and that practice has built the event industry's sales professionals to be the best in the breed.

Beyond many events and practices, what else do they do. They realize their potential clients are human, and they're a part of the organizations that are trying to change the worlds of those they represent. Treating them as such, as humans, and discussing their passions is a key to the success. Those conversations lead to deeper conversations which lead to deeper conversations. Who knows! Maybe you will even become an industry's friend. In this industry, people move around from association to association. Helping one cause to another. It's important to keep in touch and to also stay focused on building the relationship, rather than going in for the fast sale.

I can go on and on about relationship selling and its advantages, but keep in mind, it is not the best approach for every sale, but it is a very darn good one!

**Nugget #26: Teeter the line between selling and conversing in order to bring in the best results.**

## Account Management

Did we forget, somewhere along the line, that account managers or client success managers are sales too? You've heard multiple times in this book that retention is king. That is true and will forever be true. However, once you have the stability of retained customers, it's time to upsell and cross-sell them. The investment needed to sell to the current customers is significantly less than that for acquiring new customers.

This plays a lot in the sponsorships for the event industry. Utilizing the strategies set out in this book will

help you to grow your revenue from your current customer base. That's even a more sustainable growth.

You as an event manager or sales professional may have multiple roles. As an event manager, you play both the role of a hunter and that of a farmer. Therefore, your job is twice as hard. It's also twice as rewarding, since you can win from both sides. Both roles require entirely different mindsets...or so we have been told. When you dig deeper into these roles, yes, there is a nurturing mentality needed to keep and retain, but there is also an aggressive (not too aggressive) mentality needed to gain new sales and upsells. This mentality and the ability to switch between can be difficult, and as a manager, it is even more difficult to hire.

It is the goal of every organization to grow. From non-profits to not-for-profits and for profits, the goal is always to grow. Why? No matter the type of organization, growing will help achieve that organization's ultimate mission.

Non-profits want to increase revenue to provide for the cause. Not-for-profits or associations need increased revenue in order to advocate for their members. For profit needs increased revenue in order to stay in business and employ hundreds, if not thousands of employees that help fuel the economy.

It does not matter what type of organization you are. All that matters is that you need to grow, and you can start with your current customer base to do so.

**Nugget #27: Let us not forget, here this day, the role of account managers is to stay. They retain what is, yet must also grow from within.**

## 20-40-40 Method

No, this is not a riddle to solve. It is, in fact, a very simple strategy to follow for gaining the most out of your current customer base. No organization should have one company comprise of twenty percent of their

revenue. It happens, it's ok. It should not be the case, and if it is, you have a lot of work to do in order to rectify the situation.

Reason. One company should not be able to hold your organization hostage. They know that they have the power to ask you to do whatever they want because the threat of them leaving is significant. You can certainly make the choice of playing the game and calling their bluff, or you can gradually take the power away from them and take full control of your organization.

What is this amazing 20-40-60 strategy? So glad you asked. Let's dig into it some more.

## The Amazing 20

The amazing twenty comprise of the top twenty customers by revenue. These are the customers that spend the most with you. In events, think of these as the largest exhibitors or better still, it should be the

combination of booth space, sponsorship, ad revenue, and any additional spend with your association. Yes, I separated these from the event specifically because you are looking at them as a holistic customer and not only for one particular event.

These twenty already spend quite a lot on you and with that, it may be difficult to get them to spend more. This requires a radically different approach. These are the customers you are ninety percent focused on for retaining, because losing them would be detrimental. The remaining ten percent is focused on getting them to spend more. By retaining these customers, you employ a more nurturing approach. The nurture approach helps to bring to the surface any pain they have with your organization and thus, gives you the opportunity to ease those pains. Easing the pains can be in ways that will get them to spend more, as the value is there for them.

Nurture first, fix their pains, retain, and grow. Value is hidden inside every nugget they release to you, and it can and should be solved by your organization.

## The Stellar 40

The stellar forty comprises of the next forty percent, aka twenty to sixty percent out of hundred. These forty are the middle class of your organization that are looking to become part of the amazing twenty, and it is your job to help them get there.

How do you move them from one class to another?

Every budget for every organization is different, we get that, however, your organization is helping them solve a pain that is helping them to grow their business. Right?

By spending more with you, they are ultimately helping themselves. This group requires fifty percent retention techniques, and fifty percent upsell techniques. You don't want to lose too many in this group, but you also want many of the customers in this group to expand your portfolio.

Splitting the stellar forty into two groups will really help keep focus on where it needs to be. Top fifty percent of the stellar forty will also employ the ninety percent retention and the ten percent upsell technique. Keep and retain as many in this sub-group as possible, while also nurturing them to reveal their pains and provide the value needed to increase their spending.

The second group of fifty, you will employ the ten percent retain and ninety percent upsell technique. Why? The goal is to get this sub-group to move to the first half of the fifty sub-group, if not more. This is your greatest avenue of success and where you should gain the most revenue. These are the mid-size organizations that have the budget but are yet to see the true value your organization provides.

Utilize the pains from the first half of the fifty sub-group in order to sell and help uplift the second fifty percent. Their pains will most likely be similar with possibly a couple of variations. This is where tracking this

information is extremely important. Track all your objections, all of them.

Put together campaigns around specific segments with similar pain points, and market those pain points heavily. They will see them at the right time, the right place, the right moment and it will finally hit them that you, the organization they spend money with already, can help them solve this pain.

After employing a marketing campaign, pick up the phone and call these individuals, and be sure to tell them that you have noticed that similar organizations have this particular pain point and explain to them how you can solve it. Let it sit with them and they will come back.

The stellar forty is the group that can help you achieve your growth goal for the year. Pay super attention to this group.

## The Fantastic 40

The fantastic forty comprises of the lower forty percent organizations in regard to revenue spend. This sounds bad, but it's the truth. They are still very much fantastic, because they see some value in your organization, but maybe not enough. This group can be made up of a multitude of reasonings and objections. Mom and Pop shops that have limited budget, small or mid-sized organization wanting to only step their toes in the water for now, and many more.

There are multiple avenues to approach the fantastic forty, and it all depends on your bandwidth and budget. You can follow the same path as the stellar forty and create subgroups to bring the first half of the fantastic forty into the second half of the stellar forty. This would then create a total of four sub-groups for your campaigns. For most, especially short-staffed organizations, this may be a bit too much. If this approach suits the bandwidth you and your organization has, I would recommend it as your first choice.

As a second option, this group, the entire fantastic forty, can be marketed too solely through drip campaigns. Drip campaigns, funnel marketing or whatever the cool term is nowadays, are simply email marketing campaigns that take the individual on a journey that ultimately leads to an appointment or call with you or directly to a sale.

Previously, we discussed drip campaigns through reads and unreads. This technique can also be utilized here. Keep in mind that, now that you have documented all your objections and pains from the groups, you can use those objections and pains to showcase the value that solves them in your drip campaign.

For short staffed organizations, this may be the best approach, since breaking the group into further segments can be time consuming. With that, the further you can break the group down into segments and personalize the outreach, the better your results will be.

**Nugget #28: Categorize your current revenue drivers so as to help prioritize the right approach for each group.**

## Product Driven Method

Products can mean a variety of things, depending on the type of organization you are part of. Events can be broken down into a multitude of products from booth space to sponsorship, registration and to many many more. Think of your entire organization and what value you bring to your audience. The values you determine are your products. Events aren't limited to the three or four days onsite. That is a large chunk of the value, but it's not all of it.

As professionals, we need to begin thinking outside the circle. The cyclical nature of life and specifically, our business, causes complacency without a conscious understanding that it is happening. This subconscious behaviour creates the same patterns of work and decision

making, causing us all to stay in the circle. This concept, how to step outside your circle and add layers to enhance the circle, I will discuss in Sales'd It! Volume 2.

The reason I precursored this section with outside the circle mindset is to help with the understanding that we must break the cycle and think about the organization or the event differently. The same products sold today are not the same from a decade ago and will not be the same in ten more years.

Take for example, lanyards. A sponsorship that for most, was the big money maker sponsorship. Today, it's a nice one to have. Businesses nowadays are looking at sales-oriented results, not only market or brand awareness. Take that lanyard sponsorship and tie it with a digital marketing campaign or omni channel marketing campaign, and that organization will bite.

This does not mean you need to stop selling what you have sold in the past. It means that you must sell it differently, based on the values of today's business

environment. Selling ad space in the onsite printed program was replaced by mobile apps or online digital directories. To this day, I do not understand why events do not sell the mobile app the way they did printed programs. It boggles my mind how a technology that replaced the printed guide, enhances the experience, provides real feedback on users, clicks, downloads etc, is the hardest to sell. What you are telling me is that businesses today still believe that hope is a metric of ROI or ROO.

No way in this world was having an ad in a printed guide of any true measurable value. It was hope that a buyer would scan and happen upon that ad. That hope was misguided, and the mindset never changed, because the value of mobile apps for events was not sold correctly.

At long last, the tangent will end. Product driven method is rather simple, really. Determine your values, which in turn will be your products. Choose a product that solves a pain. Take that pain and product, and market it to those prospects you know to have this pain. This goes back to

objection collection. We will cover this in an upcoming section, as it's rather important and crucial to the success of any method.

This can be a multi-prong approach, meaning that you do not have to solely market only one pain and product at a time. If your objection collection was done properly, you can sort your data and tackle all at once.

This method is useful for both prospecting and uplift. Your current customer base has pains that can be solved, so, ensure that you have products that can be useful for them beyond what they currently have with you.

## Just Checking In...

Thou shall not be said. Thou shall not state the words 'just checking in'. Repeat this fifty times so it sinks in. One of the hardest habits to overcome is the check in email. Still to this day, I fall prey to its ease. The laziness behind this “tactic” is so absurd that it’s painful.

Yes, maybe well not maybe, you are checking in, but that is no way to speak to a prospect or customer. What value have you given them by checking in? What reason have you given them to open, read, respond, or let alone respect the email you have sent to them?

Perhaps I have not driven my point home about purpose. Everything done must have a purpose. That check-in email has a purpose to hopefully push the conversation forward and to the next stage. Now, we add a layer to that purpose. What value have you given to that purpose? Break it down. Just checking in drives urgency, or at least, hopes to accomplish this. Urgency is of no value to the customer or prospect. Urgency stated with intent drives value.

*“Last time we spoke, you mentioned your interest in visiting Ireland. I happen to come across this article on a great deal and planned trip to Ireland. Enjoy! Any headway on making a decision for x? We have a special promotion running and it ends on x date. Would love to*

*schedule some time to go over it further with you. Does x date and time work well for you?"*

**Value, purpose, personalization, intent, urgency, and call to action. It's a simple fifteen extra second approach that will drive growth.**

Remove negative connotation words from your dictionary. Every little negative adds up and chisels away at the success rate of the sale. Do not negotiate against yourself by adding negative reactive phrases and words to your communications.

## Objection Give Me A Hand

Everyone loves to talk about objection handling, they also love stating that they have the best rebuttals to an objection. Rarely do those that tout it write them down.

If your objections are not written down and have written rebuttals, they are not effective rebuttals. The only way to truly understand the objection, besides asking clarifying questions, is to write it down, think about it, crowdsource the rebuttal amongst your team, and finally, write down the rebuttal.

If you receive an objection out of the left field during a call or demo, one of the best tactics I have seen implemented is the acknowledge it, write it down, and ignore during the call or demo.

Acknowledge the objection so that you can have a clear understanding of the deep rooted reasonings behind the objection. Meaning that you should restate it and ask if this the objection, and if so, ask if they can help you understand why this is an objection. Many times, this automatically disqualifies the objection and moves on. This also gives you the moment to write down the objection.

Ignoring the objection on the call is a smart move. Why? Your call or demo has been carefully tailored and scripted in order to provide the utmost value to this client or prospect. Derailing the conversation based on the objection can have negative effects on the call, and this can make it much harder to win them after the call.

Wait, but you said, 'clarify the objection'. Yes, clarifying the objection does not mean derailing. Clarifying means ensuring that you understand the objection. “Let me make sure I understand your comment (do not call it an objection).” “Is this correct?” “Great, I’ll follow up with you after to understand this a little more, and also provide you with the value you need.”

It may sound as if you are deflecting, but you are actually providing them a service by honouring and acknowledging them, then giving more thought to it after the call.

**Nugget #29: Writeth down of thee objections. Findeth of thine patterns. Procureth of thee rebuttals. Provideth the best value points.**

## Community 365

The day businesses began using social media, it was this storm of bewilderment and anticipation. That storm subsided as ads and groups became mainstream. These groups are communities. Communities in which like-minded peers can share thoughts and opinions, ask questions, and gain valuable insight from the community hosts.

As social media has become inundated with content and data, and the fear of social media tracking your every move has also increased, there came a need for other communities to form. Technology exists in order to

create these forums, albeit they are not like the nineties boxy look forums, they are modern and sleek, and they provide targeted approaches to deliver content to your audience.

These communities are key to the future of business and events alike. Imagine being able to have a community in which you can deliver content which are specific to your industry or organization's products to all prospects, only to tease them and entice them to become a member to access a members only area. This is the key. This is huge. This is the future. Members only areas that deliver targeted content specified by the user. Yup...that is personalization to its finest.

For the events industry, every event should have members and non-members. It baffles me to this day that so many non-association events do not have members, both exhibitors(suppliers) and attendees(buyers). Members are easy to market to; they are also easy to deliver rich content that will entice them to learn more

and travel to your event. It's proven. Ask every association out there putting on an event.

Members are the future, whether they are free or paid. Putting together communities for those members in which they can receive the specific content relevant to them, is what is needed to move the needle forward.

**Nugget #30: Form a community, add the tech to deliver specific content to the individual's desire, grow your member base in order to increase your audience at events and your overall business.**

## The Future and The Now

What is the future? Is it what will happen in the next ten minutes, or the next hour, or even the next five years?

The future, in reality, is what we make of it. So, in essence, the future is not really a time or a place, but what takes place in our own reality.

In my own reality, I see many great things for the future of sales, marketing, and every aspect of events. These realities that are in my head, of course, are what I perceive to be the future. Perception, a funny notion. Perception is the king of all deceptions. Our minds play tricks based on our own bias and preclude our own perceptions based on those beliefs and bias.

What is my reality? What is my perception? Let me posit on this and conclude with my reality in a moment. Let's focus on the now that will lead to a better future, a better reality.

Nowadays, if you are not using some sort of technology to further your sales, marketing, and to also grow your event, you are behind the times. Such a rash fact to mention, yet, most often the truth is harsh.

Technology will further enhance your business' growth. Here are some thoughts on which technology you should be utilizing currently in order to take the next steps to a better reality.

Martech or marketing technology is a key to creating a more personalized approach to gaining new leads and upselling your current clients. We are over the times when mass emails without personalized approaches are being sent out. The opt in to receive targeted content is what leads and clients want to receive. Martech furthers your ability to grow, utilizing a targeted approach to grow your organization one vertical at a time.

Communities will be a key tool for the future of events and organizations. What was past now come to the future. If the success of Redditt shows us anything, it's that people have a yearning to belong to a community of individuals that discuss interests that interest them. Like minded individuals gravitate towards each other. Give them your community to share their thoughts, questions, and ideas. Give them your community to help you grow and deliver personalized content.

One-to-One scheduling and matching. The dawn of AI and machine learning is here. With new computational

algorithms' helps to personalize experiences every day, this form of matching and recommendations will soon become the most important experience at an event. In a fat economy, we become complacent and rampant with in-efficiencies, but it is in those economies that we must resolve to becoming the most efficient and effective, for when the downturn arrives, we will outlast. Buyers and suppliers want a more personalized experience that will deliver them the value they want. They need tangible ROI to take home in order to justify the spend on your event. This is where one-to-one scheduling will provide the utmost value in our industry.

These one-to-ones come in many forms. Hosted buyer programs so as to deliver truly powerful decision makers to the exhibitors. Scheduling dedicated visits to the exhibitors' booth through the matching algorithm. Many forms can take place for events, but the most common theme moving forward will be one-to-one meetings.

## Conclusion

Sales is fickle. Sales is a delicate balance between aggressive and passive. Is sales for everyone? Yes. There are many types of sales and sales like events can take several forms. Sales is not only cold calling. Sales is relationships. Sales is selling yourself. Sales is part of life. The love hate relationship we all have with sales will never truly go away. However, we will come to an understanding that we are all in sales.

Once you come to that realization, you begin to understand the value of sales in your own life. In your business, you begin to structure all of your departments to understand that they too are all part of the sales engine. Aligned with one goal which is to grow the organization.

As you walk down the street and perform, your usual people watching, carefully observe how each individual is “selling” themselves. The expensive watches or designer purses to project an image. Everyone everywhere is selling something.

Hopefully, what you have gathered here is that internal processes are key to organizational and personal success. This does not in any way mean that you need a process for everything in your life. It means that processes for structured aspects of your life will help obtain maximum efficiency in order to produce the best results, and ultimately obtaining the results you wish.

As more and more outside organizations see the value in events, our bubble, our circle will begin to change. Some for the better, and some maybe not. With this change will come hardships, but ultimately, the events industry will change to act and behave more like businesses. While this is a good change to help drive revenue and margins, we must keep to the core of all events. Deliver value to the entire event audience.

Truly analyse your circle. Not your circle of friends, but the cyclical nature of your life. Pull back the negative and sections of the circle that are not optimized to spin

the circle to its max. Work on those sections of the circle in order to complete what will be your ultimate circle.

We all strive for perfection or to be greater. Be great with your circle. Be great with what it is you have in the present. Only then, can you look outside of your circle to expand it and enhance it.

# Sales'd It!

## Outside the Circle



