

Secrets of Success

for  
**Magicians**  
and Stage  
**Hypnotists**

Profit From  
High Impact  
Marketing

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*“Success is that old ABC –  
ability, breaks, and courage.”  
~ Charles Luckman ~*

## INTRODUCTION

This is a book about achieving personal, professional, and financial success as a magician or stage hypnotist. There is no pre-defined point at which when reached means you have achieved success. Your individual definition of success will determine how you should measure it, and will tell you exactly when you have reached it. Your own true success is directly related to your personal vision of achievement and your own level of fulfilment. If you have not yet reached your desired level of success, you should read on.

*“Success without  
fulfillment is  
failure.”  
~ Anthony Robbins ~*

The chapters that follow will focus on mastering the key ingredients for success as a magician or stage hypnotist: setting and achieving your goals, developing a quality service or product, operating efficiently as a business, and leveraging your target market through high impact promotion and sales techniques. This book provides the secrets many performers search their entire careers for, but are not fortunate enough to find and implement. It explores one of the biggest secrets of all – high impact marketing: how you operate as a business and conduct yourself with your clients and prospects, the value and credibility of what you have to offer, and the way you make others aware of your services and products.

*“Success is not a  
doorway, it is a  
stairway!”  
~ Dottie Walters ~*

Let us be your guide on your journey to career success. The book you are holding is a goldmine of practical advice, tried and true methods, experiences from the experienced, and guidance and support to implement your vision and goals. But the information you read will only be as effective and as powerful as you make it. This wealth of knowledge and advice comes not only from *our* experiences, but also those from several polished and successful professionals who have shared their knowledge, advice, and

*“Give a man a fish  
and he will eat for a  
day. Teach a man to  
fish and he will eat  
for the rest of his  
life.”  
~ Chinese Proverb ~*

secrets through the interviews we have captured in this book. Take the information seriously, think about how you can incorporate these secrets into your own situation, and then live the benefits of your hard work. Study the recommendations we have provided and then plan how you can implement or adopt them. Every step you take can create a rise in your profits and upward growth in your career and your business.

*“A journey of a  
thousand miles  
begins with a  
single step.”  
~ Confucius ~*

Begin here to set the course for your future with the help of our high impact marketing advice. The ideas contained in the following pages are proven strategies for success. Use the knowledge in this book to build upon your own thoughts and practices. By simply copying the examples from this book, you will be missing its main purpose, which is to enable you to grow as a successful performer and businessperson. By using this book as a guide to developing new ideas and materials, you will have created the proper foundation for growth, profit, and true fulfillment in your field. There is no right way or wrong way to do things, but there are *different* ways of doing things. You will learn some of these through trial and error but hopefully, with the help of this book you will find the smoothest path and avoid many of the pitfalls performers so often encounter. Apply the suggested techniques with consistency and dedication, and you will soon notice a positive change as your career is propelled forward and upward.

*“Marketing is not a function,  
it is a whole business seen from  
the customer’s point of view.”  
~ Peter Drucker ~*

## CHAPTER 4

# MARKETING FOR SUCCESS

People rarely take the time to think that each and every aspect of how their business is conducted is part of marketing their services or products. The manner in which you answer the phone, the quality of your service or product, and the way you dress, act, and conduct business all falls under marketing. The purpose of this book is to set a foundation for a successful business in the entertainment industry. Therefore, we will focus on the aspects of marketing relevant to this industry, including several less obvious and often surprising, but equally important elements of a successful marketing strategy.

Most of the information in this book will apply to every market. It is your role to focus on the information for your own particular area or market segment. Most traditional marketing strategies demonstrate how to grow your business in a linear fashion. Our goal is to help make your business grow exponentially. Most marketing approaches focus on attracting *new* business all of the time. This can be very costly. Our goal is to help you develop a constant stream of new clients *in addition* to selling to past clients and having them refer new business to you.

The Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary defines marketing as “the process or technique of promoting, selling, and distributing a product or service.” Marketing is anything and everything you do in the promotion of your business. Marketing occurs from the moment you target a prospect and close the deal, until the moment they buy from you again. It is all about effective communication. The bottom line to any of your marketing and advertising efforts is to have someone buy your product or service. So, you must learn to communicate concisely the

solutions, services, and products you are able to provide to your prospects. Your marketing cannot rely on just an idea. It must have a complete strategy and rigorous implementation of this strategy to be successful.

*“The secret of success  
is consistency of  
purpose.”  
~ Benjamin Disraeli ~*

Think of your marketing efforts as both short-term and long-term. All of your marketing initiatives are an investment in your future business success, and effective marketing takes more than one step. Multiple exposures to the same person will create a positive, lasting response. With consistency, accuracy, confidence, and patience, you will notice your marketing efforts start to pay off.

When planning your marketing strategies, it is easy to over-spend but it is also easy to under-spend. Do not be cheap, but also do not blow your budget. Find a happy and effective medium when it comes to cost. When thinking of your total marketing campaign, you need to look beyond the cost itself, and explore the effectiveness. If a campaign costs thousands of dollars, but it pulls in many thousands of dollars in business, it is most likely an effective campaign. Before diving into your campaign, do some research and test the market. Start small before investing everything into a single campaign.

*“The minute you  
stop marketing,  
you stop selling.”  
~ Alexis Gutzman ~*

Which marketing strategies should you try? You will not be launching all of your marketing tactics at once, so try a few smaller campaigns to find what works. Then do what works repeatedly, again and again. If it does not work out, then what will you do? Get your feet wet in a variety of marketing strategies, and dive in after you know you can swim.

## **Creating Your Marketing Plan**

Before developing your marketing plan, you need to know where you currently stand in the marketplace. You need to know everything about your current situation. A good place to start is to look closely at your current strengths and weaknesses, and to look thoroughly at all the existing opportunities and threats you see affecting your efforts in any way. Think about all the ways you could turn your weaknesses into strengths, and the threats into opportunities. These actions need to become part of your plan. Do you see an untapped demand in your market? Perhaps

this is where you can create your own market *niche* – a specialized market – using your marketing plan as the vehicle.

Your marketing plan will describe how you will promote yourself and your business, and it describes the marketing activities you will pursue. The marketing plan is actually part of your overall business plan. The more direct and succinct your plan is, the more effective it will be. It needs to describe *how* you will meet your marketing objectives by listing the steps and actions you will take.

Your marketing plan needs to contain detailed answers to the following set of questions. It is very important to answer these questions thoroughly, honestly, and accurately. The time you spend on these questions is time well-invested. It will bring validity and credibility to your marketing plan and will significantly increase the amount of success you will achieve in its implementation. There will be less room for errors, and the marketing strategies and tactics you develop will be sound.

- What is the long-range plan for your business?
- What is your proposed geographic market? Is it local, provincial (state), and/or national?
- Does your target market have any boundaries based on consumer groups, or set by geographies?
- What is the size of your market?
- Are there any similar markets that may conflict with your target market?
- Who is your target prospect? What is their age? Their gender and lifestyle? Their values? Their occupation and income level?
- When will your target market need your service? Will it be on a year-round basis, for special occasions, or for holidays?
- What is your 'core' marketing message?

- Who is the one who will make the purchasing decision? What would be a unique way to market to them?
- Exactly what business are you in and what do you have to sell? What business do your prospects perceive you to be in?
- Do your promotional materials reflect the quality of your service or product?
- How much does your target client expect to spend?
- At what price level will you offer your shows? Does your price allow for a profit margin after expenses?
- What is your market's interpretation of your value to them?
- What is your competition charging for a similar service or product?
- What is your current market position? What market position are you aiming for in one year? In five years?
- What attitudes about your service or product are prevalent in your market?
- Do people in your market have any particular habits that might be important?
- Who is your competition? What is their location?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your competition?
- How different are you competitor's shows or services from yours?
- Are you familiar with your competition's promotional materials and efforts? Their pricing?
- Are you aware of your competition's past and future clients and their future markets?

- 
- Are you familiar with how your competition conducts its business?
  - Do you know your competition's image and reputation in the marketplace?
  - Who could be future competitors in this market?
  - What is the advantage of doing business with you over your competition?
  - What forms of media will reach your target market?
  - When is the right time to advertise to this market? The wrong time?
  - How frequently should advertisements go to this market?
  - What is your advertising budget?
  - What exactly would your advertising include?
  - What forms of publicity would be suitable for this market: Radio? Television? Interviews? Feature stories or articles? Public speaking at events? Involvement in charity or community events?
  - Do you have a thorough understanding of the service or product you are planning to market? Have you taken into account the following attributes: quality, service, price, reliability, uniqueness, image, knowledge, reputation, guarantees?
  - How will your service or product help you solve your clients' problems?
  - What proof (testimonials or references) can you provide to back your claims?
  - What are some of the limitations, obstacles, or influencing factors you might face? How can you work around these?

**PERSONAL STORY**  
***A Marketing Disaster***  
*by Wayne Lee*

*Most people who are successful learn by their mistakes and their failures. 'Jubilee Disaster '98' was a great learning experience for me. I rented the Jubilee Auditorium in Edmonton, Alberta by partnering with another entertainer. We marketed the show as the "Attack of the Killer Comedians." Without researching possible date conflicts, we proceeded with our plans only to discover that the show fell on Grey Cup Sunday (one of the largest sporting events in Canada). Since we had planned on delivering a great show, we assumed that people would just come to the show without having to actively market to them. We were very naive. As the show date was drawing near, we noticed that tickets were not selling, so we bought thousands of dollars of advertising on the radio. These radio ads produced some interest, but we ended up giving away hundreds of tickets to fill the seats. We filled a quarter of the seats and the performance went well. After the show, I realized that we had lost thousands of dollars. I learned that in 'show business,' you cannot neglect the 'business' part of the 'show.'*

*When producing a show on your own, there are many factors to consider, including the following:*

- *Determine the objective of putting on the event (i.e. publicity, money, product sales, fundraiser, etc.).*
- *Develop a strategy and plan to achieve your goal.*
- *Choose an appropriate date and time for the show. Determine if there are any conflicting events or holidays on or near the date of your performance.*
- *Develop marketing strategies that will reach your target market.*
- *Budget for all marketing activities, venue rental, production rental, and other miscellaneous costs.*

- *Ensure your ticket sales cover your costs. When determining the ticket price of the show, remember the demographics of the people you are trying to attract to the show.*
- *Advertising costs should not exceed the revenues they will produce.*
- *Identify a title for the show that is consistent with the type of show being offered. The title “Attack of the Killer Comedians” was not synonymous with the type of performance being offered. The title suggested that comedians would be the focus of the show; advertising my own branding ‘Wayne Lee – The Hip-Notist,’ would have been more indicative of the type of show we were providing.*
- *Do not let egos get in the way of sound business decisions. Although people enjoyed themselves at the show, the reality was that our planning and marketing efforts were poor, and that we lost thousands of dollars because our egos wanted to play in a prestigious venue.*

*This experience served as a valuable guide to avoiding similar errors in the future and to planning more effectively.*

You can learn a great deal by studying the competition in order to improve your marketing efforts. Your competition is a good thing. It forces you to improve, to be creative, and to learn from them. Ask yourself what you can do differently or better than your competition is able to do. This will keep you focused on continuous improvement of your service or product. Avoid the mindset of, “Oh, there are already too many magicians and hypnotists.” Instead, believe that you are able to offer something unique and beyond what the competition can offer. It is imperative that your marketing strategy takes into account your competition. Research your competition within your market to determine their strengths and weaknesses. What do you offer that your competition does not, and what clearly sets you apart from them? What will make people choose to work with you instead of your competitors? What can you do to improve the possibility of this happening?

## **Knowing Your Competition**

It is good to check out what the competition is doing every so often, but do not dwell on them. Instead, focus on yourself, your own business, and your own marketing message. A lot of valuable time can be wasted by continually studying your competition. To focus on their successes and failures will only take energy and focus away from your own show and business. Study your competition and see what you can learn, and then apply it to your own business and move forward.

### **Establishing Your Market Position and Brand**

Positioning is all about how you want to be known in the marketplace. It is equivalent to your perceived 'status' in your market. Do you want to be known for the content of your show? The entertainment value you provide? The quality of your performance? The person you are? Positioning is what sets you apart from others. It is the foundation of your promotional design, your promotional activities, your customer relations, your public image, and your identity. Unless you are restricted by an extremely small performance region, positioning yourself within a single area of specialization can help bring you to financial success sooner. Spend time thinking about and developing your positioning and where you want to be in relation to your competition.

A very big part of positioning is developing your brand. A brand is something instantly known and recognized. It is the image in the marketplace you want to portray. It needs very little explanation. Your brand will create an emotional attachment to your company and services. 'The World's Greatest Hypnotist' will brand an image differently than 'Cutsie the Clown.' Once you brand yourself and become popular with that brand, it may be hard to break, similar to an actor being typecast. However, you can establish different images for the different markets you are targeting. Send out the right message to your target audience – know what you want, and brand yourself differently from the rest.

Your brand will help you stand out from your competition and enable you to launch new products or services in a shorter time due to the trust and recognition associated with it. Your brand creates your identity. It can be determined by your logo or

symbol, your own name, your company name, your product name, your slogans or taglines, your choice of color, your promotions and packaging, or your quality of service. Wayne's tagline is 'Wayne Lee the Hip-Notist.' It is unique to him, it is recognizable, and has served him well. Your brand is something you build over time. Along with your reputation, it is a big part of positioning yourself and your business in the marketplace.

Individual consumers are inundated with advertising messages everyday. Most people try to block out these messages. Your difficult role as a marketer is to penetrate the marketplace that is overcrowded with sellers, and penetrate the consumers' barriers in order to effectively get your message across. Your challenge as an entertainer in this marketplace is to get your name out there so you know you are building credibility. Another challenge is to change people's perceptions and to create positive first impressions that become ingrained beliefs. This is where your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) comes into play. The USP concept first appeared in the 1950's, but it is an even more important marketing approach today due to the ever-increasing population of consumers and the growing number of businesses competing for people's attention. Your USP will help to capture the attention of your target audience and motivate them to action.

To have a unique selling proposition, the most basic requirement is that you position yourself apart from everyone else. You have to be unique, and your services and company must be (or appear to be) distinguishably different than your competition. Even if your product or service is very similar to what your competition is providing, you must find something you can offer that sets you apart from the rest. If you are unable to find something unique, then this is where you need to start; you need to work at developing a uniqueness you can call your own, or that distinguishes you as being different and adding more value than your competitors. You want to shape the way your business is perceived by your prospective customers in comparison to their perception of your competition. Your USP is synonymous with 'positioning' and 'branding.' You are selling yourself and your show by establishing your identity and the perception of yourself and your business in the eyes of others.

### **Defining Your Unique Selling Proposition (USP)**

Your unique selling proposition must be directed to your customer. It needs to be compelling so it causes people to pay attention and to be motivated to buy the service or product you are offering. Through your USP, the features of your show are turned into benefits for your prospects. For example, the intrigue of magic and hypnosis becomes entertainment value for your prospects. Some people will have misconceptions and biases about hypnosis and magic. Through your USP you need to prove how magic, hypnosis, or both will benefit their event. Your USP needs to portray a positive message that these are safe, clean activities that can provide positive benefits to your clients' events. So, in thinking about your USP, you need to ask yourself questions like: Why would my prospect want to feature magic or hypnosis at their event? What sets this apart from other, different types of entertainment? What are the positive outcomes from my show? This information, combined with the unique aspect of your show, will form the basis for constructing your own USP.

A truly effective USP will reflect that you are the 'first' or 'only one' able to do something or provide something. This is a major part of making your sales message unique. Most people feel that being first means being better. Therefore, by being first, you will need to claim that you have something your competition does not have. This is especially true if you are fighting for the market share of a major competitor. By thinking creatively you could find or create your own new markets to pioneer. You will be the first to enter these markets with a truly unique USP.

### **Developing Your USP**

Crafting a compelling USP is an art that communicates both your sales message and the notion that additional value will be received by engaging your services. Your challenge is to create a focused message that gives you a positive identity while demonstrating a high level of confidence. You are challenged to ensure your USP fulfills the needs of your potential clients, while presenting a better value than your competition is able to deliver.

Wayne Lee's USP is 'An evening of non-stop laughter and a show you will never forget!' When Wayne first devised his individual USP, he started by concentrating on what his specialty was with regard to hypnosis, and found his USP flowed very well from that. First, he had to visualize who he was selling to. He did this

by concentrating on understanding his market, what the market valued, and what it was seeking from entertainers. Wayne determined and listed all of the features of his show. Next, he spent time turning that list into a set of benefits for the customer. What would they get out of his show? How would their problems and desires be addressed? Then he had to think about which benefits would actually excite his prospects. Following that, he tried to determine whether customers would perceive these as benefits compared to what was being offered through the USPs of his competition. What benefits had his competition neglected to advertise? It was time to think about the aspects of his show that made him unique. Wayne needed to make an important decision on which aspects (quality, price, or service) to feature in his USP. At this point he determined that the strongest angle from which to focus his USP would be 'quality.' This entire creative process resulted in the development of Wayne's USP, 'An evening of non-stop laughter and a show you will never forget!'

Now that you have a USP to call your own, it is time to incorporate it into your marketing materials. Use it freely and confidently on every message you issue and on every document you publish. Make sure it is clearly visible in your e-mail signatures, your advertisements, and in all of the various components of your promotional package. By applying your USP effectively you will benefit from the impact it will have on your prospects and your clients.

At all times you must be able to back up and justify your USP with the utmost confidence. Are you able to say you are the "World's Greatest Magician" or the "World's Fastest Hypnotist?" What validates these claims? What makes you so 'great' or so 'fast'? Remain constantly aware of your talents and of what you are offering your clients. What do you have that will support your claims? When you are able to back up your claims confidently, your statements become true. As we mentioned in other sections, testimonials from previous clients can create the social proof of the validity of your USP. Never overlook the value that testimonials provide. Finally, if you cannot deliver your USP with confidence, change it!

### **Benefiting from Your USP**

## PERSONAL STORY

### *Name Recognition*

*by Wayne Lee*

*To develop name recognition, you need to do two things: have a professional and high-quality show, and develop ways for people to remember your name. How many times have you heard a client say, "Oh, we had a hypnotist last year, but I can't remember his name." You do not want this to happen to you.*

*How do you generate name recognition? The answer is in what you offer and provide that is different. Brand yourself so your name stands out and so you offer something unique. For instance, there are some hypnotists who claim they are the best or fastest in the world. This is very bold, but if they are able to back it up, then it may be a very powerful brand.*

*Within my hypnosis show, I used to give a post-hypnotic suggestion that whenever those on the stage hear "Wayne Lee" for the next five minutes after the show, they will stand up, shake their hips and shout out "I like that guy!" This builds my name familiarity and provides people with a chance to say my name, hear my name, and remember it after the show.*

*All literature leading up to the show and at the show will feature my name and picture. This will build excitement for my show. Once you have developed a brand, it is important you are consistent in your promotion and correspondence with clients and the audience.*

## **Focusing on Your Customer**

Many would say that having a focus on the customer is the most basic and fundamental requirement for successful marketing. This means having a total understanding of your customers' needs and expectations and working hard to exceed them. People do not really care about the newest magic trick you can do, or the numerous awards you have received. What they do care about most is what you can do for them. What can you offer your target market that is of value and interest to them? You need to know your service or product extremely well to be able to market it in a way that will meet your customers' needs and expectations.

In order to succeed in your market and your business, you need to present more and better benefits to your prospective clients than your competitors will. Be creative with your marketing techniques to stay at least one step ahead of your competition and your prospects' expectations, but never make promises you cannot keep. Have a positive, targeted, and focused message, and try to keep it as simple and crisp as possible. People will be attracted to what you are passionate and enthusiastic about, so you need to maintain an upbeat and professional image. Do not let negative, disempowering thoughts get in the way of your marketing efforts. If your thoughts begin to dampen your motivation and enthusiasm, then your marketing efforts will suffer.

Know who you are marketing to, and do not try to market to everyone. By blanketing every market, you will lose your focus and grasp on your chosen niche. If you are a children's performer, for example, market to the desires of the children as well as their parents. The children will influence their parents, thereby boosting your sales for children's shows. Make sure your website is 'child friendly' for this purpose.

Plan your marketing strategies backwards. Ask yourself: Where have I performed that I would like to perform at again? Who booked the entertainment? How did they go about booking me? Where did they hear about me? How did I target this market? Could I repeat this strategy with another client? Use your imagination and you will be able to see the required marketing strategies by starting at your target and working backwards to determine your strategies.

Plan to review, measure, and record all aspects of your marketing efforts. This will take a bit of time but will be of great value and assistance in helping you to decide where to focus your efforts in future marketing promotions.

Your niche in the market may be defined narrowly or it may include a wider variety of market groups. In either case, from a promotion perspective we believe it is helpful to break your contact lists into smaller groups so your targets are more specific,

## **Targeting Your Marketing Efforts**

making your promotions more effective. It is important you are able to mentally picture the person who will be opening your promotional package. Who are they? What do they do? What field are they in? What aspects of your service or product are relevant to them? What are they looking for in an entertainer? What would capture their attention the most? Think carefully about who you are marketing to, and tailor your materials precisely to what this person or group will pay attention to... nothing more, nothing less.

The law of averages suggests that the more promotional contacts you make, the more sales you will get. Promotions can be in the form of calls, letters, mailings, faxes, promotional packages, and so on. Are you making some form of promotional contact with some of your prospects every day? Are you doing research and staying abreast of the current events and news in your area of expertise and in the markets you are targeting? This will help you to continually sharpen and target your promotional materials and to reflect your own continued growth in your entertainment field.

*“Business has only two basic functions – marketing and innovation.”  
~ Peter Drucker ~*

The average person is exposed to 3,500 marketing messages per day, displayed or transmitted by television, radio, billboards, the Internet, and so on. How can a magician or hypnotist compete with this vast amount of advertising? The answer lies in being relentlessly innovative in your approach, by using a wide variety of promotional techniques, and by never losing sight of who your target market is. You will find it is not advertising per se that will bring you the best returns, but an effective combination of the techniques discussed in this book. Our belief is that the best results come from a well-designed and targeted marketing plan that relies on a tailored blend of referrals, prospecting, networking, promoting, advertising, and selling.

## **Developing Your Headline**

A fundamental and critical part of your target marketing and promotional material is your headline. Having a meaningful headline, whether it is for a marketing letter, brochure, or promotional package will greatly improve the readership of your material and will capture your prospects' interest and attention. A headline has been referred to as an 'ad for an ad.' It is like looking through the newspaper. The first items read are the

headlines. If a headline does not grab your attention then you would not read the full article. The same rule applies to your own headline and your marketing material. If your headline does not draw attention, the chances of your body of text and your sales message being read are very slim. In any marketing material the single most important aspect is the headline.

Your reader needs to immediately understand and comprehend what you are offering. Therefore, your headline should effectively distinguish your specific audience, for example, “For festival entertainment directors looking for the perfect solution to next year’s entertainment line-up....” Since many people who read a headline do not actually go on to read the body of the message you should try to sell your service right in the headline: “For festival entertainment directors looking for the perfect solution to next year’s entertainment line-up... your entertainment problems can be solved by Sheldon Casavant Productions.”

Your headline needs to contain a compelling benefit for your prospects. Do this by appealing to the specific needs of your target audience. You can also create intrigue with your headline to make them want to read the rest of your text. This can be achieved by asking a question in the headline, to cause the reader to think and wonder about what they would be missing if they did not go on to read the rest of the piece.

The choice of words in your headline is absolutely key. Your name can be part of the headline, but it cannot comprise the majority of the headline. “The Magic of John Doe” delivers no benefit whatsoever to the reader, nor does it say anything that actually promotes John Doe. Always use the words “You” or “Your” to focus the attention on the reader and to appeal to their needs. Never use the words “I” and “We” as these will immediately take away from the reader’s importance and cause them to tune out. Only simple words should be used; keep to a grade six reading level. If the average person would not use the words in regular conversation, then leave them out. It is difficult for anyone to focus on complex words, especially when the goal is to capture the readers’ attention very quickly.

## Words to avoid:

- Bad
- Buy  
(Use Invest)
- Contract
- Cost
- Deal
- Death
- Decision
- Difficult
- Fail
- Failure
- Hard
- Liability
- Loss
- Obligation
- Responsibility
- Sell
- Taxes
- Worry
- Wrong

## Choose powerful words with a positive psychological response:

- Advice
- Alternative
- Benefits
- Discover
- Easy
- Fast
- Free
- Fun
- Gain
- Happy
- How to
- Introduce
- Love
- Magic
- Natural
- Now
- Precious
- Proud
- Proven
- Right
- Safe
- Sale
- Save
- Secret
- Solution
- Suddenly
- Value
- You

*“Far and away the best prize  
that life offers is the chance to  
work hard at work worth doing.”  
~ President Theodore Roosevelt ~*

## CHAPTER 6

# BUILDING YOUR CLIENT BASE

Prospecting is a key marketing activity. It is something you will do on a continual basis. It can be a very deliberate activity based on your marketing plan, or at times it can take place very informally, and even on a casual basis depending on your chosen stream for prospecting.

### Prospecting for New Clients

There are several ways you can attract prospects. It is important to make sure you are employing multiple streams and methods for attracting yours. The fewer streams or avenues you use to attract business prospects, the more vulnerable your business will be. If you rely only on word of mouth to generate new business, it will be difficult to create any control over the level of momentum in attracting new customers.

Become familiar with the following three basic rules for prospecting for new clients. These are fundamental to the selling process and will serve you well, regardless of the prospecting stream you are using:

1. Be aware of the return on investment (ROI) of your prospecting efforts. This refers to the amount of time, energy, or money spent to develop a client vs. the potential amount of money to be made from that client. Invest wisely with your resources.
2. Always show more interest in your prospects and their needs than you do in yourself, your skills and abilities, or your show.

3. Your genuine enthusiasm about what you do is what will sell your service or product. Your enthusiasm will spread to your prospects and they will become enthusiastic about working with you.

Strive to make an emotional connection with all of your prospects. Building and maintaining trust is probably the single most important aspect of your business. Trust comes first – then increased sales. Develop a high level of trust by *attracting* customers, rather than by *chasing* them. Do not push for the sale too quickly with a new prospect. Every prospect will move at a different pace. By moving too fast, you could scare them off for good. Learn to think like your prospect and to ‘put yourself in their shoes’ to know where you can improve and to know how best to approach them for the sale.

Be creative in finding new ways to seek out prospects. You cannot build a business on waiting for them to find you! For example, set a goal to talk to 25 new prospective clients each week. That is only five calls per day, and these contacts could make a big impact on your marketing efforts. Try setting results-oriented goals like, “I will book 25 shows this month.” In order to achieve this goal you will need an action-oriented marketing approach such as, “I will call ten new prospective clients per day.” It is only through direct actions such as these that you will achieve the results you are looking for.

Where will you find the names of potential prospects you can contact by telephone? Part of your job in prospecting is to do your sleuthing and to be creative in seeking out these contacts. The sources are limitless. You just need to put in the effort to find them. Here are a few sources we have relied heavily on:

- the telephone book, especially the yellow pages,
- event planners’ contact lists,
- referrals from others,
- purchased lists of organizations, businesses, etc.,
- names of people who have shown interest at our shows,
- lists of Chamber of Commerce members,
- listings of regional fairs and exhibitions associations,

- school board listings of schools,
- Internet listings of businesses in our region,
- Better Business Bureau members listings, and
- the Internet to search our specific market.

Do not assume that the only way to reach your prospects is by telephone. We regularly use all of the following methods of contacting our prospects. You should not overlook any of these methods. Again, different prospects need to be handled in different ways:

- direct mail,
- in-person visit / business lunch, etc.,
- fax,
- e-mail,
- our website, and
- our advertising.

Never assume your prospects know everything about your service or product. Without informing them, how could they know? Make sure they know how your service or product will solve their problems and meet their unique needs. You need to be attuned to the reasons why your prospects would take the time to look at what you have to offer them. There are as many varied reasons as there are prospects. Why would your prospects be interested in you and/or your service or product? Following are a few possible reasons:

- to make or save money,
- to save time,
- for convenience,
- for an assurance of quality,
- for enjoyment, and/or
- for curiosity.

When prospecting, you need to find value and believe completely in your service or product in order to feel confident in promoting it to others. If you doubt in any way the value of what you have to offer, your potential for success at marketing will be greatly reduced. Do not give up too quickly on prospects who seem to have only marginal interest. Repetition is essential. Make contact

again at a later date to make a follow-up pitch. Perhaps use a different method of contacting them the next time. You will be more aware of their needs, and better equipped to appeal to them. It is not the quantity of prospects you reach that matters most; it is how often you connect with them, the quality of your message and the individual prospect's outlook that makes the difference in your rate of success.

### **Prospecting by Telephone**

The telephone will be your most often used method of contacting your business prospects. Our first tip is to always make sure you are calling people who are at least somewhat likely to be interested in what you have to offer. Random telephone calls will not sell your show, but they will annoy a lot of people.

Since the telephone is such an important tool in marketing it must be used correctly, like any other tool should be used. Talk with a smile when you are talking on the phone. It will add a 'happy' sound to your voice. If you are working out of your home, install a separate 'business' line so other members of the family do not answer these calls. Having your child or another family member answer the phone and yell out for you, or take a message and forget to give it to you will lead to a very unprofessional appearance to your prospects or clients. These situations make it worth moving to a separate line for your business. Be sure your phone is located in a quiet room in your house so you can be away from noises or people that cause distractions or give the wrong impression to your callers.

*"Never take a 'No' from a person who does not have the authority to say 'Yes.'"*  
~ Unknown ~

'Cold calls' involve approaching a potential client completely out of the blue in order to book a show. Never try to sell on the first call. This call is meant to gather information about the prospect and to add them to your contact list or mailing list. Through this call you have started to bridge the gap, because you now have a contact you did not have before. Now you are able to send them a promotional package if they are interested in seeing one.

When prospecting by telephone, we have found it can be beneficial to work under a company name, rather than using just your personal name. This makes the prospect feel as though they are dealing with an entire company that likely has a good deal of

established credibility, rather than with an individual. This reflects professionalism and can build trust in your prospect. If you sense your prospect is interested in making a booking, you can say, “I can pencil you in and hold that date for you.” Later on, you can call them back indicating that dates are filling up fast and you need to firm up their booking. You create urgency. It shows there is demand and scarcity in what you do. The credibility you have established with your company name will often be the factor that helps to close the deal with the prospect.

Do not be afraid to leave messages for new prospects; however, do not leave multiple messages. You will be viewed as a nuisance. Keep detailed records of your calls so you know what you said you would do, what they said they would do, and when you said you would call them back. Several different contact management software packages are available to aid you in this process. A simple telephone message book is also essential. People may still be interested in you or your services even if they do not immediately return your calls. Be patient, and give them another call to stay in contact with them if the wait is excessive.

Always take detailed notes when talking to a prospect on the phone. You will be able to remember their reactions and keep track of with whom you have talked. Finish writing your notes after you hang up, and make sure your notes are complete and legible before putting them away. You will thank yourself for keeping good notes the next time you want to call this prospect. [Refer to Appendix F: Booking Information (Sample 1) and Appendix G: Booking Information (Sample 2).]

If, after talking with you, a contact decides they cannot afford your show or has other reasons for not proceeding, still offer to send your promotional materials ‘for their future consideration.’ Always say you are interested in working with them in the future. Never dismiss a prospect completely unless they tell you to. We have found that sometimes they will call you back, even if it is only to provide a referral to someone else. It is surprising – this can be up to two or three years after your initial contact with them. Just because a prospect cannot afford your services does not mean they do not have an interest in your show. This person may still become an advocate and refer others to you. Send them

information on your show and your services. You can even refer them to other performers who are more in line with their price range. You can say, "A year from now, if you have a larger budget, I would love to work with you." You can follow-up with an e-mail containing your information, or send them a promotional package. When they open up your package and see your materials they may think, "Wow, maybe we *should* book this performer next time!"

Occasionally, you will receive leads over the telephone. These people who are contacting you have some level of interest in what you have to offer them, even if only a minor interest. Be sure to record their name and contact information very carefully. You will definitely want to make further contact with these individuals, even if their level of interest seems very low. After all, they contacted you for a reason, even if that reason is not very obvious right now. Prospects who call you are worth everything that you can do to close the sale. Be sure to follow through with them, using the marketing strategies you have developed. Do not let them get away.

The more leads you generate from incoming calls, the better. This is where a toll free number can be highly beneficial to your business. In our own experience, our toll free numbers have paid off when aiming to perform in other regions or countries. They have several advantages. As an example, they make your business look like a larger company, as small companies often do not offer toll free numbers. By having a toll free number, it demonstrates that you are interested in new business, and you are prepared to perform nationally and internationally. The prices for toll free line services are continuing to improve. Currently, in our region, the base rate for a toll free number is around \$8 per month with a very low per minute rate. If you already have another line installed, there will most likely not be a minimum base rate. With these kinds of rates, why would you not offer a toll free service to your prospects and clients?

## **Networking**

Networking is about recognizing that everyone is a potential client, and taking the opportunity to tell people about what you

do. It is a key component of your overall marketing strategy. It lets you be your own promoter, delivering your own key messages, while allowing people to meet you and see for themselves what you have to offer.

You will constantly find yourself in situations that are great networking opportunities, including meetings, social gatherings, luncheons, etc. Some of the best networking opportunities can be found with the local Chamber of Commerce, Toastmasters Club, Rotary Club, and Lions Club. Service organizations such as these are where you will meet very influential people in the community or in business. Another avenue worth exploring is meeting and speakers' associations. Meeting Planners International (MPI), for example, is a great organization to join and network through, as you will come in contact with several important event planners who have a great deal of influence over decisions about entertainers for key events. With some of these organizations you can either become a member, or you can attend the meetings as a guest. Either way, the networking opportunities are there in abundance.

*“Dig your well before  
you’re thirsty.”  
~ Harvey MacKay ~*

Your network is precisely that – an interwoven web of people who know about each other and are aware of what each other does and what they have to offer. You may not know everyone within the network, but information about you will spread quickly throughout the network as it grows and expands. Be sure to take every opportunity to network. People in and around your network will become your advocates, allies, and clients.

When trying to make new networking contacts, sit, talk, and mingle with people you do not know. Often, we tend to stay around the same people or groups. But your purpose at networking events is to branch out and meet new people. The more of these events you attend, the better you will be at introducing yourself to new people, and you will improve your ability to strike up a conversation with a possible future client. Try to meet as many people as you can, but do not try to sell anything on the first meeting. Your goal is to make contact, collect information about them, and to provide some information about yourself. You will then follow up at the appropriate time to implement other aspects of your marketing strategy.

An important tip to keep in mind while networking is to obtain business cards from those you network with. Do not just give them your card. You have no control over what they will do with it. Hopefully, it will join their collection of future contacts, but that cannot be guaranteed. By obtaining their cards, *you* now have control of any future correspondence that takes place.

### **Gathering Referrals**

Referrals are all about finding new contacts and prospects by having prior clients and other advocates refer your services to them. 'Word of mouth' advertising by supportive advocates is definitely one of the most powerful forms of marketing that can occur. Our experience has proven this to be the case over and over again. Advocates will cut down on your marketing costs by passing on your name to anyone who is even mildly interested.

Recognize those who refer someone to you. Think of what would happen if everyone who referred a show to you were to refer a second or third show. This would result in a measurable increase in business (and future referees). You need to remember them with your thanks and appreciation for what they do. Send a personal and caring thank-you card or letter or an unexpected gift immediately to those who have referred a new client to you. In addition, you could thank them over the phone, send them holiday cards, periodic e-mails or postcards, or perhaps enter them into your preferred client draw. Yes, by periodically selecting a client to reward with a prize you further increase your profile and goodwill as a performer.

You will be able to gauge the satisfaction and enthusiasm of your prior clients through their referrals. They would not refer you to their friends or business associates if they were not 100% impressed with your performance and your services. There is support from research showing that an average adult consumer can influence the buying behaviours of 52 other adults. This evidence suggests that one client has the power to bring you 52 additional clients. Just think of the possibilities! When requesting referrals from your past clients the easiest way is to simply ask for them. Another method is to provide an incentive for them to be your advocate, such as a gift certificate, a free gift, or a percentage

off their next show booking with you. Never miss the opportunity to ask your clients for referrals.

Reference letters from prior clients are a powerful part of your marketing strategy. You can use and re-use their letters of reference in numerous situations where you are marketing your show, promoting your business, or pursuing new clients. Be sure to ask your client to use their company's stationery or letterhead when writing you a letter of recommendation. This will add much in terms of recognition and instant credibility to their reference. Sometimes you will need to follow-up with your clients to remind them about your reference letter request. Be persistent. Continually enhancing your promotional package with current references is important.

There will be times when your prospects will want to contact one or more of your prior clients to discuss their level of satisfaction with your services. This is especially helpful if your prior client represents a reputable company or other organization in your target market. Prospects will recognize the company name and feel comfortable hiring you if your reference tells them your show was terrific. If you ask your client to be used as a reference, our experience shows that you should give out their name sparingly to prospects. If they receive too many calls they will begin to get annoyed. Also, if you are going to use your client as a reference, make sure you have asked them and have received their permission to do so. If not, they may sound confused when approached by your prospect. You would not want to place a valued client into this situation when it could have easily been avoided by simply requesting their permission ahead of time.

You can receive referrals from many sources beyond your past clients by setting the stage for yourself to receive numerous, ongoing referrals. To do this, you could, for example, develop a relationship with certain organizations in your area such as party stores, daycares, restaurants, and schools. (Be careful when marketing in schools because in some places certain methods may be illegal or frowned upon.) By doing something special for them, like a free magic show, they could refer their clients or similar organizations to you whenever they are looking for a unique performer. Toy stores are great places to establish a relationship

with, especially for booking kid's shows. The possibilities are immense when organizations team up and look out for each other in this way. Sheldon has received several new clients in the past because his hair stylist became his advocate. Hair stylists are a good source of referrals because they spend all of their time in direct conversation with their clients. This makes it very easy to spread the word quickly.

Another interesting type of referral situation is to develop a partnership with another entertainer in your area whom you trust and admire, and are not in direct competition with. Freely recommend each other's services. If you are unavailable to do a show or your client is looking for something different, another reliable entertainer is able to step in to help out. It's a win-win-win situation: you have helped out your client by recommending another entertainer, the entertainer is given a performing opportunity, and you know the favour will be returned in the future.

As we mentioned earlier in this section, word of mouth referrals are one of your most powerful and effective forms of advertising. People will pass along what they hear. Word of mouth is also stimulated and generated by the media. If you can find ways to get some publicity through radio, television, or the newspaper, this will help to generate word of mouth referrals for you.

### **PERSONAL STORY**

#### ***Your Existing Clients are a Goldmine***

*by Wayne Lee*

*Many entertainers want to conquer new territories and attract new customers. In the process, they tend to neglect their existing customers. What I have learned is that your existing customers are very willing to re-book shows, as well as to refer you to many other prospects. After performing for a few construction associations in Alberta, Canada, word of mouth from these clients resulted in my performing for a construction organization in Oregon, USA. After doing a follow-up with the association, I received numerous contacts from companies within this association. Touching base with these companies has resulted in an upcoming performance in Hawaii at Christmastime.*

*It takes a lot of time and effort to build relationships with clients. Once you have established a relationship, satisfied clients are usually very willing to pass on your information to other organizations. It creates a domino effect; referrals can lead to shows, which lead to more referrals and more shows. Hundreds of shows have come my way because of referrals. When you perform for an association, not only do you have a good chance of performing for another association, but each association is made up of multiple businesses that could be potential clients. A few years ago, I did a show for the Motor Dealers' Association of Alberta. This single show led to ten other shows from different dealerships.*

*Make sure that when you are at these shows you gather the prospects' contact information. Develop an organized client and potential client listing so it is easy to contact them in the future. If you rely on them to give you a call, you will be greatly disappointed. You have the greatest interest in working with them in the future, so you need to be proactive in giving them a call and staying in touch with them by sending out newsletters, postcards, etc.*

Your show is an extremely powerful opportunity for you to market yourself, and your unique capabilities. Where else will you have a captive audience who can witness your talents first hand, and be exposed to your subtle and not so subtle marketing messages? By having a top-notch show and using it to expand on your marketing strategies, you are able to leverage your entire marketing approach in a 'real time' situation. Your show is the most obvious means for marketing, and its importance cannot be overlooked.

Influence the introduction you will be given by the master of ceremonies at your events by providing them with the content. Always bring a typewritten introduction of your show with you to each performance. Your client may have already asked and received one earlier to give to the master of ceremonies, but always bring another copy since these frequently are lost or misplaced prior to the show. You can tailor your introduction to bring out some of your key promotional highlights. Try to convey information about the types of shows you do and the benefits you

## **Your Show as a Marketing Tool**

bring to your clients. Your introduction could also include something like, "If you would like to know more about Wayne's performances, please visit him after the show." Make sure your contact information is available to give out in large quantities to interested individuals.

Your perceived greatness may only be as great as your last performance. When you perform, you have both the client and the audience to impress and influence. Focus on doing the very best show you can. Try to entertain everyone at the event. For instance, if you are performing a family show, do not focus only on the children. Make sure to actively engage everyone in your show; you do not know who your next client could be. Know what the expectations of your client are before you arrive. Do they want the audience to be entertained, educated, or babysat? Do they want the show to attract more business patrons or guests? And be sure to leave your audience wanting more. The minute they feel they have seen enough is when you have crossed the line between an effective and ineffective performance.

If you are doing a public show, have someone take pictures during the performance and forward the best one to the local media. This will help the media out, and will move them one step closer to writing an article about the event or about you. It is a great idea to take pictures with a digital camera. You can then simply e-mail or send a few pictures to your client for their own promotional use. This will show that you are going out of your way to satisfy them, even after the show.

Learn to leverage your marketing efforts at your shows to create unique and effective ways to create interest in all of your services. One method is to offer additional services or products to patrons directly at the event. By understanding your client's needs, it will be easier to add extra value for the client, while at the same time further promoting your own services and products.

Make sure there is a follow-up done with the client after each show. Ask your client for an honest evaluation as well as for referrals. When possible, record the audio and visual of your shows. These can then be used for selling your services by

incorporating them into your promotional materials. The tapes are also extremely useful to you as a means of personal critique.

Keep detailed information about how each show turned out, the price that was charged, the client's response to the show, and what your performance consisted of. This will save you a lot of time in knowing what to offer them in the future, and will help you to provide variety in your future shows for this client. [Refer to Appendix H: Event Profile.]

To gain further leverage from your shows, be willing to expand your performance area beyond local shows. By being ready to travel a few hours to some shows, you are greatly expanding the number of prospective clients available to you.

Never solicit your services at another entertainer's show or event unless the other entertainer encourages you to do so. This is WRONG and unethical. Also, stay focused on who your client is. The client would frown upon your making balloon animals, for example, for people within the venue, other than for their own patrons.

### **PERSONAL STORY**

#### ***Successful Marketing: "Learn to Do by Doing"***

*by Wayne Lee*

*If you want to become a good speaker – speak. If you want to become a good teacher – teach. If you want to become a good salesperson – sell. If you want to become a good entertainer – entertain... and perform as many shows as you can.*

*When I started out in my career, I was fascinated with hypnosis. I read books, watched videos, critiqued live performances, and asked the experts. In essence, I studied hypnosis and how to perform stage shows. This is a prerequisite to becoming an excellent entertainer and it does not stop here. If you love to perform, it will be a lifelong learning experience.*

*Many entertainers get frustrated because they want success overnight. My first show was at a night club, where I had the opportunity to do an 'open mic' on a variety night. There was a crowd of 300 people. I was*

*exited and nervous at the same time. After I performed, I thought I did well and the people enjoyed themselves. When I look back on the videotape of the performance I have a hard time watching it. Each year I improve; I continue to improve my craft to this day.*

*This initial show was monumental, because it resulted in numerous performances at this club. The exposure created a domino effect. The Manager of Yuk Yuks Comedy Club (one of the biggest comedy club chains in the world) was at one of these initial shows. He eventually hired me to perform at Yuk Yuks, which led to a two year contract with this club. Many bookings arose from people seeing these shows at Yuk Yuks. For instance, the Entertainment Director for Klondike Days (one of Canada's largest exhibitions) ended up booking me to perform at their fair. For five years I performed to thousands of people and this led to my performing at a string of other major fairs. Some of these fairs have included the Calgary Stampede ("The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth"), Saskatoon Exhibition, Regina Buffalo Days, and the Canadian National Exhibition. Within a typical summer I would be performing up to 150 shows in two months. All of these shows are rooted back to my first performance at a small night club in Edmonton. You do not know who is in your audience and who may book you for their next event. One of your best marketing tools is your show.*

*My experience can be summed up in a simple formula: Perform at every available opportunity + a polished performance + frequent exposure = multiple spin-off bookings + higher rates for your shows = freedom to do the shows you want, for the amount of money you want, whenever you want, and for whomever you want.*

### **Expanding Your Bookings with Agents**

Booking agents provide a useful service for hypnotists and magicians. We encourage you to tap into this service to supplement your sources for increased bookings. We also encourage you to approach the use of agents with caution. Your reputation is always on the line, so you will want to be sure that any agents you use will work hard to maintain and even enhance your reputation as an entertainer who is in high demand.

You will most likely not be able to depend fully on the bookings that agents provide for you. You will probably never be their one and only, exclusive entertainer. They place numerous entertainers

simultaneously so you will not know what your share of the work will be. You will still need to freelance and market your own show to gather your own bookings. However, agents will find opportunities that you alone are not able to access. For this reason it makes sense to use agents, but only if you view them as supplementary to your own marketing efforts. You may be successful in linking up with one or two agents who book you frequently, but this situation can change quickly if they decide to start booking someone else in your place. There are no guarantees with agents, so they should not be your exclusive source for marketing your show and generating bookings.

Generally speaking, the more advocates you have promoting and selling your show, the greater the impact will be on your level of success. For example, if a product were to be sold only from a single source, the manufacturer would not be successful. However, by having numerous different outlets and stores selling the same product, the manufacturer has a much greater likelihood for increased sales. This is why it makes sense to be connected with a few reputable agents.

In essence, agents will become your remote salespeople. They will save you the time and expense of finding prospects and turning them into clients. They make the phone calls, deliver the promotional materials, handle the contracts, and are responsible for the time and expenses involved in mailings, faxes, and phone calls. They work hard on your behalf. This service is very attractive, and will cost you their commission fee. But overall, by using agents to acquire bookings, your exposure will be greater as a result of an increased number of shows, and your revenue stream will be higher.

It can be difficult to begin working with different agents. It may seem like a very slow process, but it can pay off in the end. Your initial contact with an agent should either be in person or by phone. They want to meet you personally so they know with whom they are dealing. It can take a bit of time to cultivate a relationship to the point where the agent will book you. Be patient. We have had agents who started to book us a year or two following our initial contact. Once you have established a good

relationship, you should begin to see progressively more shows being booked for you.

Agents' interest in you comes from their desire to please their clients. You become a part of the product they are selling. They have a wide variety of other entertainers to choose from, so you will need to treat the agents as though they are your own clients. Sell them on the many benefits you have to offer them and their clients. Make a point of providing customized promotional materials to their company, an up-to-date listing of your openings, your price lists, and so on, depending on what they want to see. They may even request a full show video or showcasing opportunities for you to demonstrate your capabilities.

Early in your dealings with agents it is very important to establish clear communications with them. Find out what they expect from you and be very clear about what you will expect from them as your agent. Clear expectations and communications are vital to building a successful and fruitful relationship. It is also vital that you size up the various agencies early in your discussions with them. Your goal is to find and work only for the top tier agencies. These are the only ones who will have your reputation and your success in mind as they work to provide bookings for you. Bad agencies will make you look bad. As soon as you sense this is happening, break your ties with the agent and move on. You cannot afford to have problems where your reputation is concerned.

### **Your Relationship with Agents**

Once you have developed a relationship with an agent, it is wise to work at building and maintaining that relationship, as you would with any one of your valuable clients. Plan to build a strong relationship with them. Make a point of helping them out, and never putting up roadblocks that would dampen the relationship. By helping them they will help you in the future. You are representing each other's business so you need to approach the situation as though it is a professional, business relationship that is valued and worth maintaining.

Agents appreciate being kept informed and up-to-date with respect to changes to your show or any of the other services you are offering. Keep in regular contact with them by sending them

new promotional materials and updates on your show and your schedule. You could even send them a few VIP tickets to your shows, either for themselves or to pass along to their clients or prospects. Also, make sure your agents know of your website or are included in your regular e-mailings so they can stay abreast of you as one of their top performers.

Another thing all agents appreciate is you calling them back quickly when they are seeking information from you about your availability. Most of the time they are in the middle of arranging a booking with a client, and they want to be as responsive as possible to that client. Help the agent by being responsive yourself. Anything you do to make the agent's life easier will help you in the long run. Responsiveness is one of the key ingredients for success in business. Your promptness will not only please your agent, it will help them to capture bookings before their competition does.

Perhaps the most important aspect of maintaining your relationship with agents is having a high level of trust in each other. Agents want to be assured their contacts and clients are protected from the possibility of you taking them over as your own direct clients. This is a key area where you need to focus on building trust and providing assurances and proof that you will not undertake your own marketing efforts with the agents' clients. Agents know each other and word will spread very quickly if you are not a team player and break the agents' trust in you. As a professional, this is something you must never do.

If approached by prospective clients at a show booked through an agent, do not say, "I can't give you my card, but if you look me up in the yellow pages, you can find my information there." This is equally as unethical as distributing your materials directly. If someone gives you their business card, forward it to the agent so they can follow up with the individual.

Show the agent you have their best interests in mind by asking for a supply of their business cards to distribute at your events. Simply write your name on the back of the business card to make it easier for potential clients to contact the agency and make a

specific request for your services the next time they are planning an event.

Your business relationship with your agents should be a long-term undertaking. Plan to keep reinforcing your relationships by providing recognition to those agents who, in fact, produce good results for you. Send them tokens of appreciation such as thank-you notes, greeting cards, small gift baskets, etc. There are many ways to express your thanks for their multiple bookings. We feel it is important to do this on a regular basis. It is simply good business practice to maintain strong working relationships. The results you achieve will be a reflection of the strength of your business relationships and the effort you put into keeping them strong.

### **Agent Contracts and Pricing**

There are some agents whose goal is to have total rights to your bookings and complete control over your show. Our recommendation is to stay clear of signing any form of "exclusive" contract with agents unless the situation is absolutely safe, it is the right thing to do at the time, and you completely understand the fine print. Be very careful in this area. There have been many instances where exclusive agreements have been signed and yet the agent rarely books any shows for the performer. This is one of the worst things that can happen to your career. Your success is completely at the mercy of a single agent. Never allow this to happen to you.

Expect to pay healthy commissions to the agent who is booking your shows. The average commission is between 10%-25%. They provide a valuable service, and their rates reflect this fact. Prior to starting any work for an agent, a good practice is to ask them how they make their commission on your shows. Do they take a percentage, or do they keep the difference between what you charge and the price at which they can sell your show? Obviously, the percentage approach provides the better deal for you. If the agent takes 20%, it is easy for you to justify the cost as they are saving you a lot of work, time, and expense in booking the show. We strongly suggest seeking out those agents who work on a percentage basis. If they are able to obtain a higher price for your show, then you will benefit along with them.

Consistency in pricing is something we like to promote. It is best to be consistent in your pricing with all the agents you deal with. Agents want to know that there is an even playing field, and that other agents do not have pricing advantages over them. By maintaining a reasonable, consistent pricing level, there is the potential to be booked more frequently, as you will be consistent with other entertainers and will remain competitive with other forms of entertainment available to the agent.

As a hypnotist or magician there will be many occasions when you will have opportunities to recommend and sell the services of other performers. It is perfectly alright to do this, provided it is done ethically and in a forthright and businesslike manner. As with any other service you provide, your reputation is on the line when you operate as an agent, so you need to do it well. Make sure you are confident with the performer you are booking; examine their promotional material and view their performance. Ensure their act is consistent with what the client is looking for. Yours and the performer's reputation can be easily tarnished, leading to lost opportunities with clients in the future.

### You as the Agent

Unless you are going to concentrate heavily on providing agency services, do not expect to make lots of money by arranging occasional bookings for others. However, if you are able to offer this service on a casual basis, everybody wins: the client, the performer, and you.

If you are going to be selling other performers, do not hide the fact that you will be taking a commission for your services to the performers. There is a lot of work required in this business and you need to be paid for your time. You need to be completely upfront with this in order to maintain productive relationships with fellow performers. In return, the performers you are recommending and selling need to be completely honest with you, as well as being 100% reliable.

# Secrets of Success for Magicians and Stage Hypnotists

**Launch your entertainment career to new heights!**

**Secrets finally revealed...  
how high impact marketing  
will propel your growth,  
profitability, and success!**

Hypnotist Wayne Lee and magician Sheldon Casavant offer a host of best-kept secrets for building exceptional success as a performer in today's market. They have compiled a compelling collection of practical advice, tips, and recommendations for taking your career as a magician or stage hypnotist to the next level through effective marketing – the level you dream about – if you only had the right formula.

#### **Wayne and Sheldon offer you:**

- Important advice derived through their knowledge and experience.
- Valuable insights from interviews with 11 prominent professionals.
- A rich collection of tools, with immediate benefits for you.
- A high-value list of additional reference sources.
- Inspirational quotes for reflection as you build your career.

#### **In this book:**

- Discover your professional goals and use them to build your success.
- See why setting a business focus is fundamental to your growth.
- Learn about exciting new markets you must explore to expand your business.
- Develop a complete approach for marketing yourself and your show.
- Find out what promotional materials will work best to raise your profile and image.
- Gain new methods for attracting and keeping clients.
- Increase your success rate in selling more shows, more often.
- Get the information you need about advertising and publicity for you and your show.
- Move to the front of the line by marketing on the Internet.

**"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."  
– Confucius**

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