

Business Goal Setting and Then Following Through

Your business can't go according to [plan](#) if you have no plan.

Implement a great idea with the right know-how to get you where you want to go.

What do you want to achieve this year? More new customers per week? Higher average order amounts? Better customer service ratings? No matter what it is you are shooting for, goal setting is one of the most important things that you will do.

I've got a few tips to help you get there.

1. Keep it Challenging but Realistic

Any goal that you set for your company should be challenging but don't overdo it. For example, if you had an average order amount of \$700 last year, you wouldn't want to set your goal for this year at \$3000 per order. Unless you make drastic changes in how your company runs or what you are selling, that goal is just not realistic. You know best what you may be able to achieve in your particular industry, so be honest with yourself and set your goals accordingly.

2. Write All Your Goals Down

You may say to yourself on January 1, "I want to get 20 more new customers per week this year." A few months later you will be saying "Did I say I wanted 20 or 30?" Or more realistically, you have forgotten that you even made that goal. If you have all of your goals written down you will be able to not only go back and check them, you will also be able to go down the list every few months and check to see how many of them you have completed.

3. Assess Your Current Situation

To set goals you have to know where you are at right now. In 2003 I wanted to assess our customer service rating so we sent out a survey to all of our customers on which they could rate us in each department of our operation. That helped us establish our base. Now we send the survey to every customer after every order. This way we can keep track of how we are doing and if there is ever a hiccup we can fix it quickly. Don't assume anything. Always assess the current situation before setting a new goal.

It's Only Going to Hurt A Little

Now, in financial goal setting for your business, one invariably comes to the question: How do I decide on a budget when starting a marketing plan?

This is obviously the first question that you have to answer in order to get started on your new campaign and in order to reach the income goals you have set for yourself.

So how do you figure out what your budget should be? Here is an easy method to help you find a number that is going to work for you and your business. Some might say that it is a good rule of thumb, but I personally judge things on whether or not they work and get results. That's all.

Moving on... Start with the amount of income that your company generated last month and multiply it by .14 (or 14%). That means that if you had \$50,000 in Gross Income last month you should budget to spend \$7000 on marketing in the next month. Wait... I know, it sounds painful but it is just like a shot at the doctor.

It might hurt for a minute (or in this case a month) but down the road you are going to be glad that you went through it. Putting that much toward the right marketing will bump up your income the next month and start you on a cycle of steady growth.

I know that some businesses run tighter than others and it is possible that you won't be comfortable with that amount in the beginning. Don't misunderstand me, any marketing is better than no marketing.

Don't get discouraged if your budget is lower than 14%. But use 14% as the ideal to strive for because, for me as well as many other growing businesses, it has proven to give the best rate of growth possible. How do I know, you ask? My company has expanded 400% in the past 2 years. Now picture your business at 4 times its current size... There's that smile I was looking for!

The growth of your business is based on three factors; quality products, great customer service and the proper amount of marketing. If you know you have the first two taken care and you still aren't experiencing healthy growth then you need to take a serious look at your marketing budget.

So sharpen your pencils, start calculating and decide how rapidly you want your business to grow.

Please take a moment this week to sit down and decide on your goals for the New Year. Even if it is past the New Year and even well into the year, set your goals for the rest of the year.

Everything is easier when you are working towards a goal. My goal is your success and I assume that is your goal as well.