

# *flackery*

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## MARKETING

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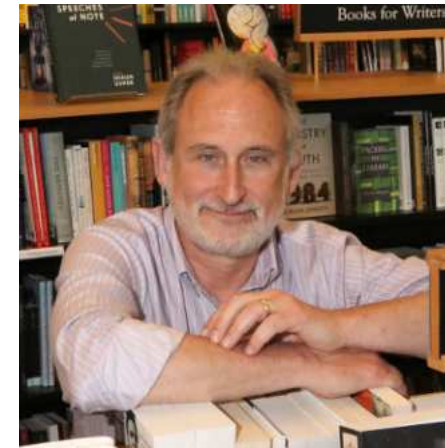
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**"If a window of opportunity appears, don't pull down the shade."—Tom Peters**

On the cusp of summer, we're all seeing new opportunities to relax on vacation, but before you focus on downtime, let's focus on helping you create and take advantage of new opportunities that can enhance your business.

Are you back to doing in-person networking? Lots of opportunities can be found when building new relationships if you approach the activity the right way. Do you realize that stepping away from your desk for a few minutes can lead to improved productivity? How about this insight: a great resource for new opportunities are your current customers! They're your customer for one or more reasons -- ask them questions to get insights. I bet you'll uncover new opportunities quickly.

There are distinct differences between planning and strategizing. We talk about that inside this issue. We also have a review of *The Happiness Advantage* where the mindset to do-all-the-things is the way to be happy, is turned on its head.

Creating this quarterly magazine uncovers many new avenues for us to pursue and we hope it's the same for you. We want you to have 'ah ha' moments and glean new ways to build your business and reach the success that you want.

Flackery is the digital magazine busting its seams with resources for small business owners and produced by The Business Guild, where our purpose-driven mission is to help you promote your business, and connect you to the people, information, and resources you need to succeed.

Keep your eyes and mind open to new opportunities and watch how your business can grow!

**Lisa J. Jackson**

Editor of Flackery

Co-Founder of The Business Guild LLC

Please feel free to share this issue of Flackery with other small business owners!

### Editor's Note

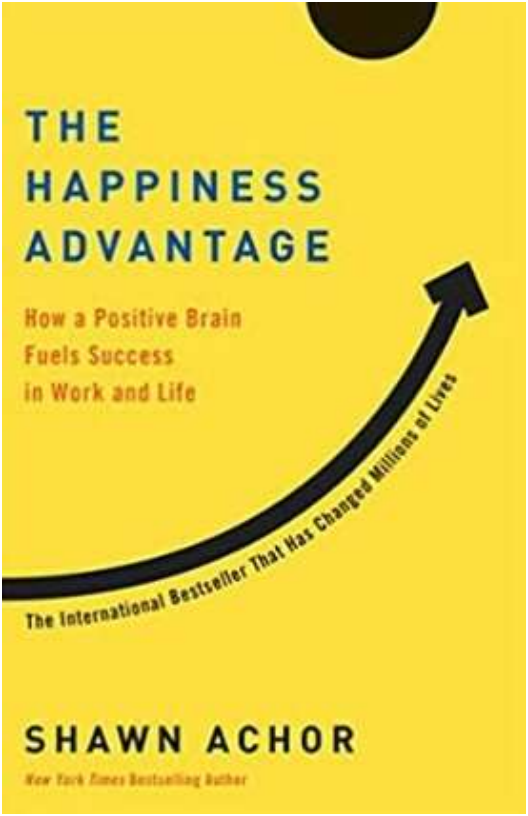


## Wondering why the heck we named The Business Guild magazine flackery?



**Here's a quick video with all the answers...**

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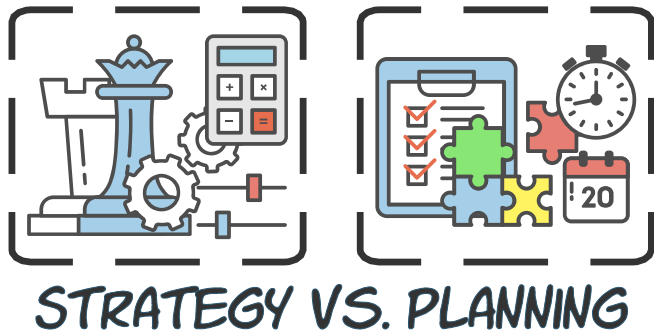


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## Bring a Little Joy to Your Marketing!



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## Book Review

### **The Happiness Advantage: How a Positive Brain Fuels Success in Work and Life**

By LISA J. JACKSON, The Business Guild

Author: Shawn Achor

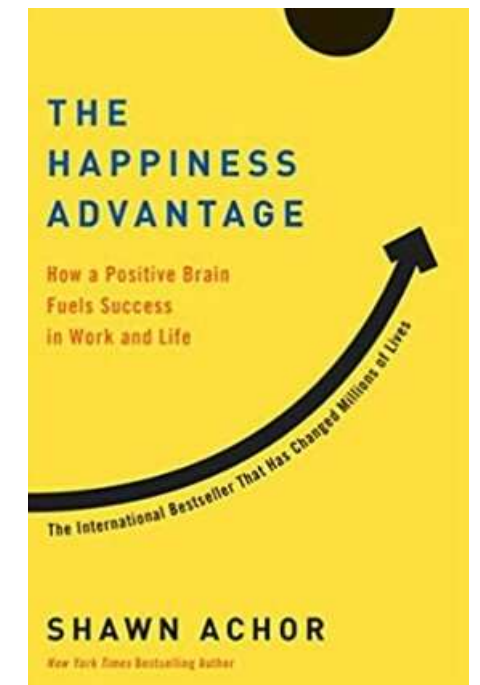
ASIN: 0307591557

ISBN: 978-0-307-59155-5

Price: \$17.00

Where to buy: Online and in bookstores

Note: Related TED Talk from Shawn Achor: The Happy Secret to Better Work



I find this book so refreshing and positive. We're raised to think that getting the best grades will lead to the best job making the most money and therefore make us happy.

Author and psychologist Shawn Achor posits that we reverse that formula -- that by being happy **first**, we will be able to achieve the high grades, land the best-fitting jobs, and create the lives we want. I simply love that logic!

By raising our positivity (triggering the dopamine), our brains will work more successfully because all our learning centers will be turned on, letting us adapt to the world around us in different ways!

He talks about easy ways to train our brains to become more positive in just 2 minutes a day for 21 days. (1) Write down three new things you're grateful for [at the end of 21 days your brain will start shifting to see the positive first rather than the negative]. (2) If you journal about one positive experience you've had in the past 24 hours, you relive the experience and start to teach your brain that the behavior matters. (3) Meditation allows our brains to focus on one thing at one time. (4) Random acts of kindness are conscious acts of kindness and they can build positivity and happiness.

The book is an easy, enjoyable, understandable read. I encourage you to either watch his TED Talk on the topic and/or read the book for the positive insight. If we each turn our approach to happiness around, we'll create amazing ripples of positivity everywhere.

Happy reading!



# How to Make the Most of an In-Person Networking Event

By Lisa J. Jackson, The Business Guild



As humans, we have an innate need to be liked by others. So, walking into a roomful of strangers – where we feel a bit on display, feel that there are right questions to ask, right answers to give to questions posed, and so on – ratchets anxiety levels up, even for the most confident!

**D**o you feel networking is one of those “things to do” to build your business but you aren’t really excited about the prospect?

Will anyone like us? Of course they will!

Everyone in attendance is there for the same reason – to try to make connections and build business relationships. Each of us has a different approach, but the same worries overall.

**Treat networking as relationship building – that’s what it is, right?**

Let’s look at some ways to make in-person networking enjoyable and beneficial.

If you think about making

new (business) friends instead of focusing on pitching your services or products and being sales-y, your entire approach to conversations will be more natural, and you’ll be more naturally curious about the individual.

**Do some pre-event research.**

If you’re able to see who has RSVPed, do some research about the people and pick out one or two you want to meet. Prepare some questions for them in advance and be ready to be the first to say ‘hello’ to them at the event!

**Show up with a positive attitude**

If your body language is closed off, or you have a

scowl on your face, people will know you don’t want to be there and won’t approach you or be all that forthcoming when you approach them.

**Be yourself!**

If you’re pretending to be a version of yourself that isn’t true, it will come across. Just be you. New to networking? Say that. New to this event? Say that. Let people get to know you for who you are – ultimately, people hire you, the person, not your company, so let your personality come through sooner rather than later.

**Make the first move.**

Many folks are afraid to break the ice, so you’re doing them a favor by making the first move, helping them relax, and, the best part, you’re meeting someone new!

If you notice someone standing off to the side in the room, go up to them and say “hello!”

## In-person networking... it can be exciting for some and different levels of scary for others.

If you did some pre-event preparation to meet a particular person, put one foot in front of the other and introduce yourself to that person!

**Be a friend.**

Straight-on pitching is one way to get clients, sure, but building long-term relationships can lead to longer term success. Get to know people, their mission, their goals.

**Focus on making friends and being a friend. What do friends do? They are generous with their knowledge and share their ideas and resources. They ask questions to show they care!**

There isn’t a secret to the types of questions, just ask those that you would like to know answers to! Whatever you see or hear can make you curious, so listen closely and you’ll know

some questions to ask.

Sometimes focusing on one person at a time without having an agenda can lead you to new business ideas, communities, resources, and activities you hadn’t known about before.

**Gamify the activity!**

Set yourself a goal of meeting one person and having one good conversation before you leave. That’s doable, isn’t it? And when you accomplish

this goal, you’ll most likely keep going to see how many connections you can make before time runs out!

**Have your business cards ready.**

Yes, physical business cards are still useful. Make sure you bring enough to share with the group and that they have at least your name, your business name, and a way to contact you - email, phone, website, and/or LinkedIn profile URL.



**Collect more business cards than you give out.**

Here’s where curiosity comes in again. Have a reason to follow up. Ask the person if there is anything you can help them do, or who would be beneficial for them to meet. Ask for their business card and tell them you’ll reach out with a contact or resource after the event...and then...

**Follow up after the events!**

You know the saying, “The fortune is in the follow-up.” It’s so true, and where many people fall short. Reach out to people you met at the event on LinkedIn. Start a

conversation there. Read their posts and give a ‘like’ and comment on posts that resonate with you. Comments that share “why” you are commenting are much more likely to connect with others than simply saying, “Nice post.” While we won’t become besties with everyone we talk to, if we approach each conversation with curiosity instead of fear of failing in some way, we’ll build our confidence, and most likely, our business connections. Friendships and business relationships don’t happen in an instant, they need nurturing. Remain patient, persistent, and stay in touch with your connections. You’ll see the results over time. ✓

**Be a host / hostess for an event.**

If you’re in charge of checking people in as they arrive, you will be meeting every person in attendance! Introduce yourself as you check them in, and mention that you look forward to learning more about them.



**Looking for more networking tips?**

Check out these articles from The Business Guild & Flackery:

- *How to Tap the Power of Your Network*
- *Mastermind Groups Versus. Networking Groups*
- *How to Hit a Networking Hole in One*

Don't forget to visit our events page for our latest in-person events!  
[thebizguild.com/events](http://thebizguild.com/events)

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# How & Why You Need to Make Time for Marketing

By Pat Hammond, The Business Guild



## I'm going to share a business secret that will rock your world.

*You don't have to be the best or have the lowest prices to be successful.*

*You do need to be visible so people know who you are and can find you when they're ready to buy your products and services.*

That is why you need to make time for marketing.

Big companies like Nike and Pepsi have deep pockets. They can invest in dedicated marketing teams, sponsor national events, and pay for a big splash whenever they launch new products.

As a solopreneur or micro-business owner, most of your marketing activities fall on you. These can include:

- Strategy and Planning
- Implementation
- Communication
- Analytics

Every piece of your marketing puzzle is another task that requires regular input and review.

There is no wiggle room.

**If you want to achieve brand awareness and build customer**

relationships that lead to repeat sales, you have to make marketing a priority.

How much time should you spend on marketing?

The short answer is: it depends.

- Is your business B2B or B2C? — Expect to spend 10% - 15% more time marketing to consumers.
- Do you have a team or are you on your own?
- Can you afford to hire help or use time-saving apps?
- Is your brand already established?

There is no one authoritative source for things like how much time or money a micro-business owner should spend on marketing, but these factors contribute to help you find your personal sweet spot.

A [survey from Vertical Response](#) found that "43 percent of small business owners spend six hours weekly on social media marketing."

That's only a little over an hour a day, which doesn't sound so bad when you break it down over a five-day work week.

The problem is social media is only one

# You can't succeed if people don't know you're there...

part of your marketing duties. If you're spending 15% of your time building brand awareness on Instagram and Facebook, that leaves a lot of other activities gathering dust on your to-do list.

- Website content and management
- Ebooks, downloads, and other giveaways
- Ads, graphics, videos
- Automated lead tracking
- Bots for website chat/Q&A
- Market research and analytics
- Customer relationship and email marketing campaigns

All of this is on top of that hour a day you spend interacting with people online.

When you consider all the various parts of your marketing strategy, you can

expect to spend an average of 15% - 25% of your time working on marketing. — That translates to 6 - 10 hours in a 40-hour work week.

## How do you find the time?

Finding time for marketing comes down to making it a priority and following through.

Things like blocking off a few hours once a month to curate and schedule social media content will save you a ton of time and ensure you're sending a regular, consistent message across your channels.

Another option is to hire a virtual assistant (VA) or marketing specialist to manage the tasks you don't have time for.

Don't forget to take advantage of the many online tools.

There are apps for almost every need and budget. Even better, many of the most popular social media scheduling platforms also offer a basic free level.

- [Buffer](#)
- [Later](#)
- [Simplified](#)
- [Planable](#)
- [Zoho Social](#)

Several of these plans also come with tools for writing content, editing photos, and designing posts.

If you're looking for something to help you plan and manage your social media campaigns, check out SEM Rush's free Social Tracker tool. Besides letting you schedule social media posts across six different platforms, it provides data for your audience, activity, and engagement. It even has an option for tracking competitors.

Not only do these types of tools optimize your time, they help you organize and manage your marketing campaigns. This will put you in a better position to reach your marketing goals and free up time for things like working with clients.

There is also an endless variety of email marketing platforms like MailerLite, HubSpot, and [Sender](#) with free plans that have generous limits for the number of contacts, emails, and email automation you can have each month.

There are even free video

platforms like [Loom](#) and [Vimeo](#) where you can create and edit video for your website and social media.

For those with a bit of money, the sky is the limit.

You can add things like chat bots, landing pages, A/B testing, campaign monitoring, and just about any other marketing tool you need to manage your campaigns and reach your marketing goals.

It will take a little effort to set up automation for things like lead generation,

email marketing, and customer on-boarding, but once it's done, you never have to stop what you're doing to make sure your new client receives their new client info packet.

If you want to build brand awareness, get in front of your target market, and sell your products and services, you need to make time for marketing.

There are plenty of budget-friendly tools to help; all you need to do is find the ones that work for you, then use them. ✓

## Need help with your marketing plan? Check out The Business Guild's marketing planner tools!

The Marketing Planner form is a structured template for creating a marketing plan. It includes sections for Title, Subtitle, Prepared for, Prepared by, Date, and Vers. The main body is divided into two columns: Customers and Competitors. The Customers column contains questions about who you're trying to reach, how your product is better, what problem you solve, and what your customer's value is. The Competitors column contains questions about who your competitors are, what their strengths and weaknesses are, and what your product is better than theirs. At the bottom, there are sections for Channels, Metrics, Cost, Funding, and ROI.

Marketing Planner

The Email Marketing Planner form is a structured template for creating an email marketing plan. It includes sections for Campaign Title, Subtitle, Prepared for, Prepared by, Date, and Vers. The main body is divided into four columns: Customers, Triggers, Frequency, and Timing. The Customers column contains questions about who you're trying to reach, what problem you solve, and what your customer's value is. The Triggers column contains questions about what triggers the email, how often you send it, and how many emails you send. The Frequency column contains questions about the time of day, day of the week, and day of the month. The Timing column contains questions about how long you'll run the campaign, how you'll build your mailing list, and A/B testing. At the bottom, there are sections for Goal, Metrics, Cost, and ROI.

Email Marketing Planner



# Looking for New Opportunities?

## Talk to Your Customers

By Pat Hammond, The Business Guild

***It is 5 times more expensive to find new customers than to keep existing ones.***

We've all seen the statistics. The numbers vary by source and market, but the underlying message is clear. *Selling to existing customers is much easier and cheaper than selling to new ones.*

This information is nothing new. You already have a strategy for creating customer relationships that lead to repeat sales. (Need help with customer relationship strategy? See [Build Strong Customer Relationships that Lead to Loyalty and Profitability.](#))

What you may not realize is that your customers represent a cornucopia of untapped opportunities far beyond additional sales.

Today, I'm going to show you how to leverage your existing customers to identify new opportunities in areas such as:

1. Research & Development
2. Markets
3. Products/Services
4. Partnerships

The way you're going to do it is by building the kind of strong, responsive relationships your customers crave.

### Research & Development

Start with a conversation.

While large corporations rely on customer surveys and market studies, as a small business owner, you have direct access to your customers.

You can sit down for coffee, meet with their teams, and garner valuable insights for your business.

These personal conversations help customers get to know you.

Once you're a trusted source, you will have ready access to first-hand information you'd never find in a generic survey.

Ask open-ended questions about things like:

- how they use your products
- other issues they need help with
- how your competitors' offerings differ
- who else would benefit from your service

Listen to their responses. It's okay to ask

more questions for clarification, but make sure it's considerate and conversational. — **You're not there to interrogate them!**

The next step is to review what you've learned.

**Markets**

After you've spoken to a few customers, look at your notes and identify which areas have the best potential.

- How many customers expressed similar needs or frustration with a common problem?
- Did anyone suggest a different use or alternative market for your existing products and services?
- Which clients offered to refer customers?
- Can you partner with a client to create a

combined product or service?

Review what people said and make a list of commonalities.

From there, you can pinpoint which information is actionable.

**"Conversations with customers will increase sales, even if the product or service is never mentioned."**  
**George Farris**

Do you have an existing product or service that will solve your clients' other problems?  
If yes, offer a free trial or hands-on demonstration on how to apply your solution to their problem.

**Products/Services**

If not, develop a new product or service to fix the

problem.  
Don't be afraid to adopt a technology mindset by taking an iterative approach that uses your customers as beta testers. Not only will this will help with customer adoption, they will love that they have input in solving the problem.

Think about how you can capitalize on what you have learned.

Can you sell an existing product or service to the new market, or

will you have to give it a new name and package?  
Don't forget to calculate the costs for updating usage information, how-to videos, and new marketing campaigns.

Follow up with your clients  
If a client offers to introduce you to potential customers, follow up with

**Success starts with strategic customer conversations.**

them. Be gracious. Thank them for thinking of you and let them know you want them to make the introduction.

**Partnerships**

In a similar vein, consider opportunities to partner with a customer for a combined offering.

If it's your client's idea, listen to what they have to say. If it's yours, put together a brief and schedule a meeting to review it.

You should also circle back to let clients know you appreciate their input.

Remember that while you are the expert in your field, your customers are the

experts in theirs.  
Tell them how their ideas and experiences have helped you to add to or improve your offering. When appropriate, show them how you've implemented change based on their opinions.



**Customers Matter**

So many companies forget about customers after the initial sale. They send email campaigns for new products, but don't build relationships with customers.

Your competitors' inadequacies are your chance to shine.

All you need to do is step up, have a conversation, and reap the rewards. ✓



# Master Your Billing with Our New Monthly Time Tracker

By Pat Hammond, The Business Guild



Stop spending hours looking for sticky notes or guesstimating your billable hours at the end of the month. The Business Guild’s Monthly Time Tracker tool shows you exactly how much time you spend on each activity and project.

This is why we developed the Monthly Time Tracker as an evolution of our Weekly Time Tracker. Not only does the spreadsheet track both activities and projects, we’ve also added weekly and monthly dashboards that update with each

It doesn’t matter whether you sell your time as a service, or create products to sell.

No matter how you look at it, your time is essential to your business, and it has value.

You’d be shocked by how many people underestimate or don’t remember how much time they spend on client tasks.

Time is also the one thing many micro-business owners overlook when they price their products and set a break-even point.

For example, if you set your price based on the belief it will take you 1 1/2 hours to make your product, but it really takes 3 hours, your profit is going to be quite different from your estimate.

All of those uncounted hours represent lost earnings.

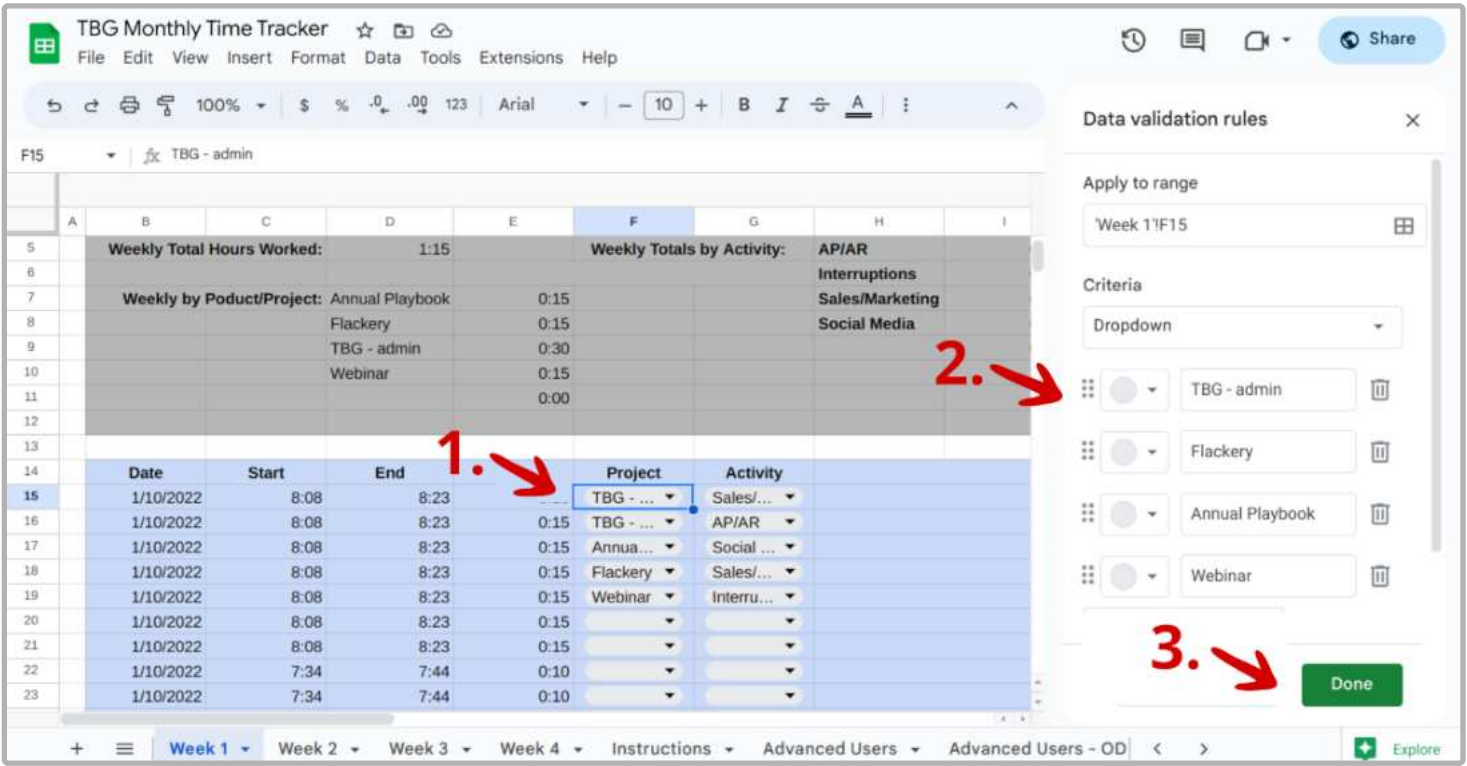
entry. This means you have a real-time view of how much time you’ve spent on each project and activity.

In addition to being a huge time saver for client billing, the information gives you a greater ability to manage your own projects and measure your ROI.

### How do you use the monthly time tracker?

You can download an Excel (XLSX) or LibreOffice (ODS) version, or [make a copy from The Business Guild’s Google Drive account](#).

Once you have your copy of the Monthly Time Tracker, all you need to do is replace the default project and activities dropdowns for your own project and activity categories.



To change the Project or Activities dropdown in Google Sheets, simply:

1. Click the first cell in the dropdown column to select all the cells in the column with a dropdown option.
2. Click on the arrow in the lower right corner of the first cell and choose ‘data validation’.
3. This will open a sidebar window with a list of data validation rules. Choose the rule for the column you want to change. Once the rule is displayed, you can add, change, or delete any of the current dropdown options.
4. When you’re satisfied with your new dropdown options, click ‘done’ to save.

5. Repeat these steps for each day of the week.

The directions for the LibreOffice and Microsoft Excel spreadsheet versions are very similar.

### Get your FREE Monthly Time Tracker!

- TBG Monthly Time Tracker - Google Sheets
- TBG Monthly Time Tracker - Excel (XLSX)
- TBG Monthly Time Tracker - LibreOffice (ODS)



Breakdown by Project/Activity										

1. Select the range of cells you want to update and go to Data in the main header menu, then ‘validity’ or ‘validation.’ Instead of a sidebar, you will see a pop-up window where you can add, delete, or edit the projects or activities in the dropdown menus.

Updating dropdowns looks a little complex when you see it written out, but it’s a straightforward task that shouldn’t take more than a few minutes.

**Important:** We set the time calculation formulas for 7 projects and 10 activities. You can add as many project or activity categories as you want, but if you exceed 7 projects or 10 activities, you will need to change the layout and

formulas on both the weekly pages and the monthly overview page. — See the spreadsheet for detailed instructions.

When you’re finished customizing your projects and activities, all that’s left is to make time tracking part of your routine. Once it’s a habit, you will be amazed by how much time you really spend on non-essential or unpaid activities vs. things that make you money. You may even be a little horrified to see how much client work you do for free.

Either way, you don’t have to wait until the start of a new week or new month. [Download your free Monthly Time Tracker](#) and start managing your time and mastering your billable hours today! ✓

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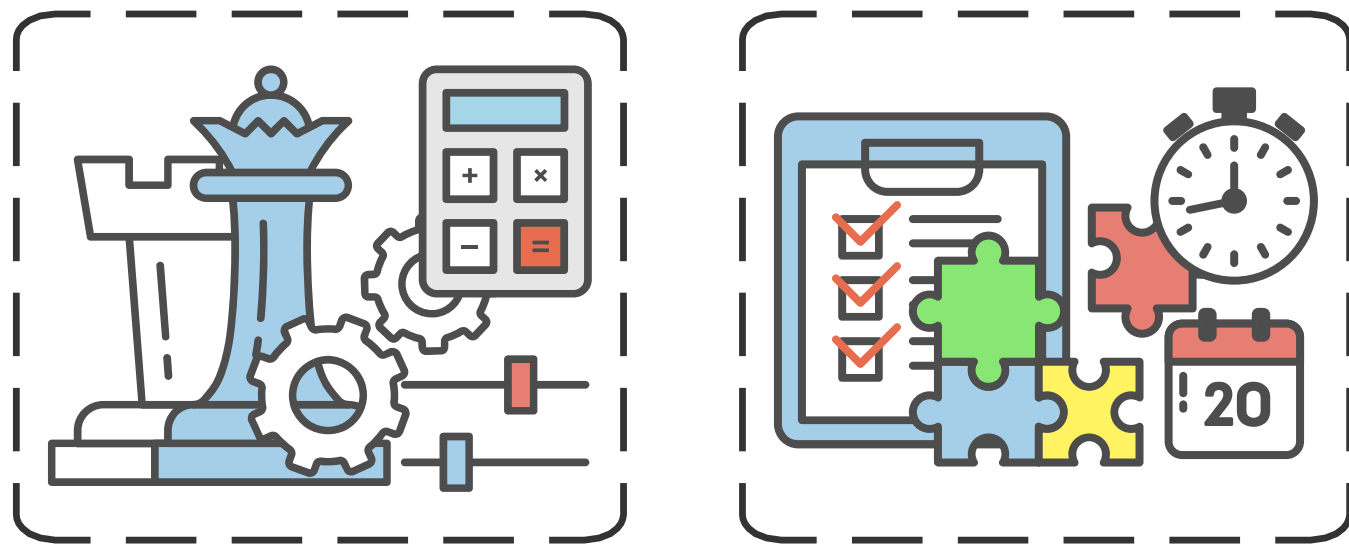
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Other Solo Entrepreneurs



# The Difference Between Strategy and Planning & Why It's Important

By Pat Hammond, The Business Guild



## STRATEGY VS. PLANNING

**Hint: It's the distinction between concept and action**

Have you ever noticed how some business words get blurry after repeated use, misuse, and conflation?

People use terms like *brand* and *logo*, or *mission* and *vision statement* interchangeably.

It's understandable. Language grows

with each use and some of these terms are fluid.

Planning and strategy are not.

They are related concepts, but each has its own distinct definition.

In his video, [A Plan Is Not a Strategy](#), Roger Martin, former dean of the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, states that "A

strategy is an integrative set of choices that positions you on a playing field of your choice in a way that you win."

Martin explains that your strategy should identify "why we should be on this playing field and here's how we're going to be better than anybody else at serving the customers on that playing field."

In simple terms, **your business strategy is your idea of how you will create value and differentiate yourself from the competition.**

What it really comes down to is idea vs. action.

As Bernie Franzgrote, a co-founder and Synergy Architect at [Kreativ Insight](#), says, "The plans are your tactics, strategies are big pictures."

**The difference is important because your business strategy guides critical decisions about your business.**

This keeps you from wasting time and money on activities that don't support your objective.

Your strategy should also have enough flexibility to adjust to changing circumstances without losing sight of your core vision.

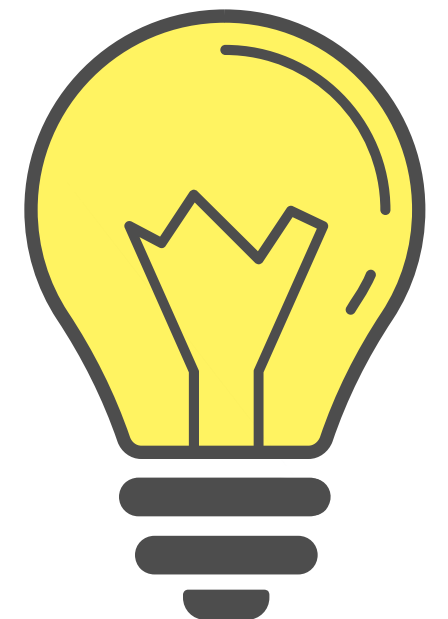
[Nick Leighton](#), author of [Exactly Where You Want to Be: A Business Owner's Guide to Passion, Profit and Happiness](#), says that things change fast, and in today's market, it's more important than ever to stay on top of your strategy.

Things like supply chain, labor, and the cost of energy are outside of your control, yet have a major impact on your business.

He suggests business owners block off one hour each week to review and update their strategy.

Tools like The Business Guild's one-page [Status Check canvas](#) can help you quickly take a snapshot of:

- Your current status
- What you've completed
- What's left to do
- Issues/Threats
- Opportunities
- Solutions/How you will respond to issues and new



opportunities

Developing a unified business strategy is one of the most challenging things a small business owner has to do because it sets the foundation for all of your business decisions.

Although CEOs of large corporations have the advantage of paid advisors and boards of directors to guide them, solopreneurs and micro-business owners are often in a better position to carve out a unique vision for their businesses.

While you probably don't have the same financial resources as your larger competitors, your smaller size makes it easier for you to take risks and

respond to change.

This doesn't mean you have to do it alone.

If your budget doesn't stretch to paid



professionals, every state has at least one [Small Business Development Center](#) with experts who can advise you on almost every aspect of your business.

You can also tap your own network to put together an ad hoc board of advisors.

Many professionals are happy to stand as

mentors and trusted advisors. They won't do the work for you, but they will provide feedback and challenge your ideas.

Both of which can help you gain perspective and consider potential issues before you spend time and money.

The bottom line is that you can't have a plan without a strategy and your strategy will go nowhere without

a plan.

Take the time to develop a clear vision that highlights why you are in a specific market and how you are better than your competitors. Once you have that, it will be a lot easier to develop your plan to achieve it. ✓

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# Why Taking Breaks Is Vital for Productivity: A Guide for Solo Business Owners

By Lisa J. Jackson, The Business Guild

## Taking breaks is an essential part of being productive – and staying sane.

As small business owners, we wear 'all the hats' in our business and it's a lot of work to be successful at what we do!

There's a health danger to working too hard for too long: burnout. If we don't take breaks from time to time and give ourselves some space from our busy schedules, then burnout is most likely inevitable. And then where will our business end up?

Fortunately, there are plenty of ways we can avoid burnout and remain productive throughout the day or week. It's a matter of setting aside (aka scheduling) time specifically for taking breaks!

We all have reasons why we don't make time for breaks, yet breaks are vital to enabling us to be happy, healthy, and productive.

**Productivity means working on the right things at the right time in the right way**

Productivity is not about working harder, but rather working smarter to get the right things done at the right time in the right way.

Taking breaks every now and then to recharge goes a long way to helping us be productive and stay focused on tasks. When we're tired or stressed from working long hours, our productivity suffers because our energy levels drop significantly, and we can find it hard to focus on anything else other than getting some rest or relaxation.

Taking short breaks, especially when we feel stuck, gives our brains a chance to relax, too. We may step away for 15 minutes, but once we're back in front of the screen, many times we'll have breakthrough ideas that get us unstuck and help us finish what we're working on – making the breaks a great use of our time!

Taking breaks is a great way to refresh





## Stepping away from all our screens gives us time to relax and de-stress.

ourselves before diving into the next project.

Breaks where we step away from our desk, take a break from tech (stop looking at a screen), and get some fresh air can particularly reap long-term benefits.

### Short breaks help recharge our batteries for the rest of the day

Taking a short break can help:

- Improve productivity
- Deal with difficult situations in a more productive way
- Ease eye strain
- Avoid burnout/exhaustion

Grabbing a healthy snack while taking a break can also be helpful. When we eat foods with healthy fats and protein, such as nuts or Greek yogurt, it can help us sustain energy levels

and improve our focus when we need it.

### Breaks boost our creativity

Taking breaks is a great way to boost creativity. When we're focused on one task for too long, our brains tend to get stuck in a rut and we can start to make assumptions about what the solution should look like.

Taking breaks gives our brains time to rest and refresh (or even reboot!), so that when we return to the project, problem, or task, we will see it from a fresh perspective – which can lead to new ideas and solutions.

I have had many 'ah ha' moments after taking a break because I come back with a clear head and an improved ability to focus.

Let's touch on multitasking! (Psst, multitasking is not a

way to be productive.)

When we constantly switch between different tasks or projects without taking any time off in between them, our brains become overwhelmed by all the unrelated information coming from different directions.

Multitasking is a surefire way to find ourselves unable to finish even basic tasks because our minds simply aren't able to process everything as quickly as they can when we focus on one thing.

### Schedule Time for Breaks

It's easy to preach about taking breaks during the day, right? But there's always "one more thing" to get done before we grab a drink, step away from the desk, or even go to the bathroom. One more call to make, one more email to send, one more fire to put out.

But seriously, it isn't difficult to do, we simply must find what works best. So here are some suggestions. Try one and

see if it works for you. If not, try something else.

While scheduling your week, leave space between meetings instead of having them back-to-back.

Use the 'time block' method to add break time into your calendar – actually block off time as "Take a break" or "Step away from the desk". If it's scheduled, you'll most likely do it, right?

There are techniques to try, too, such as Pomodoro. This involves setting a timer for twenty minutes and focus on one task or project. When the timer goes off, take a five-minute break. Rinse and repeat.

With a set time to focus, it's more likely you'll accomplish what you need to, and the regular breaks can lead to increased productivity and less burnout.

Similarly, randomly set an alarm on your phone, smart watch, or Alexa or Siri device, to nudge you every hour (or whatever time limit you want) as a reminder to step away (or at least look up from the screen) for five minutes.

## Need help with mastering work/life balance?

Check out our free work/life balance worksheet & weekly planner tools.

Drinking water/coffee/soda consistently throughout the day can force you to take breaks – bladders can only hold so much for so long!

### Taking breaks is great for our businesses and ourselves

As a solopreneur or small business owner, it can be difficult to make time for ourselves, but the more we do so, the better off our business will be. Finding the ways to recharge that work for us is essential for productivity in today's fast-paced, always-on world.

By taking breaks and putting a pause to our thoughts on the next task, the next email, the next Zoom meeting, etc., we can avoid burnout and come back fresh and able to solve problems quicker and come up with new ideas

more easily!

If you needed convincing about the benefits of taking breaks during the day, I hope this showed you some solid reasons why it's true.

Even a five-minute break a few times a day can go a long way to keep from feeling overwhelmed and unproductive.

Give it a try!✓





# How to Protect Your Business & Watch Out for Your Money

By Pat Hammond, The Business Guild

## *Do you know where your money is? Are you sure?*

Let's start with a story.

Once upon a time, there was a man who owned a restaurant. It wasn't anything fancy, just a little place where families could enjoy good food at an affordable price.

Everything was wonderful. The dining room was always full, and the restaurant had a faithful following.

The owner was busy cooking meals and running the kitchen. He felt lucky to have reliable people to handle the front of house and manage the books.

For over ten years, he built a business doing a job he loved.

Then one day, it all fell apart.

He discovered a trusted employee had stopped paying some bills.

He knew the business was making money and none of the vendors who came to his kitchen complained about missing payments.

The problem was the employee paid the people the owner saw every week, like the produce vendor, but didn't always pay the

bills he didn't see.

Imagine his surprise when he discovered his mortgage was in arrears and the lender was threatening foreclosure! Think about the horror when he received a letter stating he owed the IRS!

## **How do you protect yourself?**

This example illustrates a betrayal by a trusted employee, but a simple mistake could be just as disastrous.

What would you do if you had a claim, but discovered your insurance lapsed because someone forgot to pay the premium?

What if someone made a transposition error, and you discovered that \$94,000 you thought was in the bank was really only \$49,000?

Money is the lifeblood of your business. As an owner, you need to stay on top of your finances, even if you have a bookkeeper.

You do this by establishing a regular financial review and establishing open lines of communication.



### Stay Informed

This isn't about trust.

Finance is a key part of running a business, and you need to know how your company is doing financially to make informed decisions. The easiest way to do that is to have a regular weekly, monthly, or quarterly review of your finances. — The frequency will depend on your business. Sit down with your

bookkeeper or accountant to review your income statement.

This one basic report will give you a quick overview of your company's standing for a set reporting period.

- Revenue
- Operating Expenses
- Cost of Goods Sold
- Profit/Loss
- Taxes

Are you making a profit or losing money?

Check the math. Do the numbers look reasonable?

Some income statements are basic, with a summary line for sales, other income, taxes, and expenses. Others include a breakdown for the cost of goods sold and operating expenses. If you need more details, ask for them.

Your accountant or bookkeeper can create reports to help you track your finances, such as project budgets and product costs.

You'll also want to run a balance sheet to get a

snapshot of your assets and liabilities and cash flow statement to review your actual cash on hand. — This is useful for anyone who invoices clients and needs to see how much actual money they have versus sales.

If you extend terms rather than take cash on delivery, add an aging receivables report to the mix. This will let you know which invoices are outstanding and how much they owe.

Running a revenue by customer report can tell you which customers are the most profitable. You can also run custom reports by product, channel, or customer type. Not all of these would have helped our restaurateur, but he might have noticed something wasn't right if he'd taken the time to look at his weekly receipts and expenses and compared them to his bank statement. (Another thing a lot of small business

owners ignore.)

### Don't be blindsided

This is your business and your money. It's your job to know what's going on, even if you pay someone else to do the paperwork.

Make sure you have access to all banking and accounting information. This includes checkbooks, online banking, payment processing, as well as accounting apps.

Ask for and review monthly reconciliation statements.

Our example was a worst-case scenario, but being informed is not always about lack of trust.

Mistakes happen. It's why we do oversight.

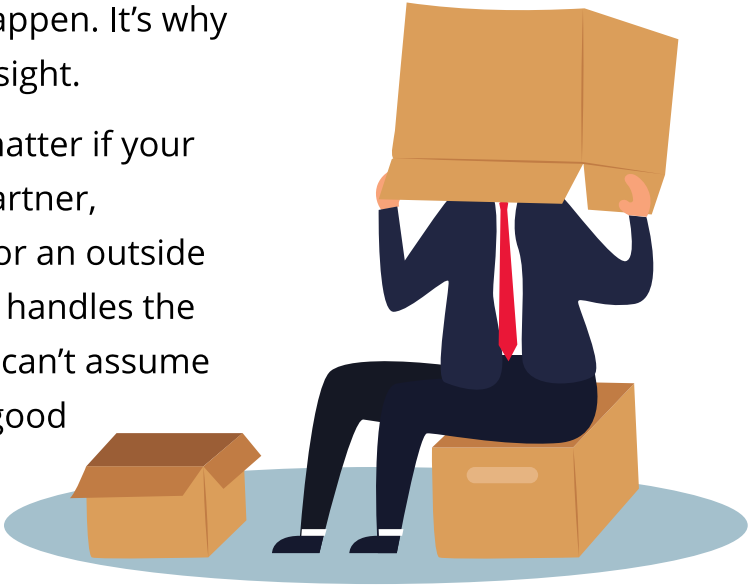
It doesn't matter if your business partner, employee, or an outside accountant handles the books. You can't assume things are good just because

### Need help with accounting or receivables?

Check out these articles from The Business Guild:

- 5 Essential Accounting Reports & Why You Need Them
- How to Stay Ahead of Your Receivables in 3 Easy Steps

you see sales. Schedule a recurring meeting with your accountant, or whomever handles your books, to review your business finances. ✓





## Joy Fueled Marketing with Shannon Hernandez



"What does know, like, and trust look like?"



## Bring a Little Joy to Your Marketing!

By Pat Hammond, The Business Guild

Do you struggle with marketing?

Are you doing all the right things, but not generating leads or making sales?

Maybe it's time to step back and rethink what you're doing.

I recently talked to Shannon Hernandez, a marketing expert from the Joyful Business Revolution, about the challenges that solopreneurs and micro-business owners

face with marketing.

The pace of change is overwhelming. Between the developing technology (hello AI!) and new social media

platforms, it's difficult to know how and when to reach customers.

Shannon's message is simple: "If it ain't joyful, we ain't doing that sh\*t!"

Forget about wasting time on activities that are inauthentic. Focus on the ones that resonate.

She offered two tried-and-true techniques for creating the right content to reach the right audience on the right channels.

## Nobody can do business with you if they don't know you're there...

1. Identify your [Content Personality](#)
2. Use the 4-step Joy-Fueled Marketing framework

She says that everyone has a content personality that "aligns with their natural strengths."

Some people are great at writing, others shine with video, and some are on fire with a live audience.

Start by identifying what you're good at and what you enjoy doing.

Shannon says there are five different content personality types, and everyone has one.

1. Live
2. Visual
3. Written
4. Audio
5. Video

This is not a woo-woo

solution for your marketing misery.

Shannon has spent over eight years honing a quiz that will help you identify your content personality and says it's never wrong. "People try to hack the quiz. They put in like 42 different emails trying to get different results. — It's not hackable."

**Your content personality isn't about the activity. It's about the energy you bring to it.**

It doesn't mean you can't use the other four types. Knowing your content personality helps you to focus your efforts on content that converts.

Once you know your ideal content, you can identify platforms and narrow down the options.

It's kind of like looking at a Venn diagram with your target market on one side and your content personality on the other. That sweet spot in the middle is your ideal platform.

Remember, it's all about getting your message out.



# Identify your content identity and play to your strengths

“The greatest messaging in the world is laid on a solid foundation of knowing what you’re messaging. You know what your customers want. You know what the results are. When you can speak to those, that’s when people will reach out and say, ‘I want that.’”

Your messaging has to be ‘sticky’ and memorable.

Joy-Fueled Marketing is a 4-step framework that can help you do that.

## Step 1 - Attract your people

“We call this aligned community attraction. This is the know. This is your brand awareness. How do they know you exist? Nobody can do business with you if they don’t know you’re there.”

## Step 2 - Build your community

“Maybe they’re not ready to buy right now, but how do you build that community? How do you nurture it? How do you deepen the relationship? This is the like factor.

“This is important in the customer journey. They gotta know you’re there, and they gotta know you care.”

## Step 3 - Curate the community experience to build trust

“This is where you generate leads.”

It’s also the place where people stumble. It’s not enough to get followers. You have to move them from ‘knowing’ to deepening the relationship

and earning their trust.

## Step 4 - Make the sale

“At the end of the day, our prospective clients in our community want to know us, like us, and trust us. That’s when they will invest in us.”

It may not happen right away. Sometimes the timing is off. People don’t have the money or don’t have a pressing need. But you will be top of mind when they or someone they know is ready to buy.

If you’re tired of churning out social media content and not getting results, [take the quiz](#). Discover your content personality, then use the 4-step framework to apply it.

Not only will it simplify your marketing, you’ll get results. ✓



## Skip the overwhelm, I can help you make sense of your taxes.

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- Estates & Trusts

**If you have received an IRS demand letter or are being audited, I can help.**

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# Content Marketing

## Promote Your Business With Feature Stories & Sponsored Posts

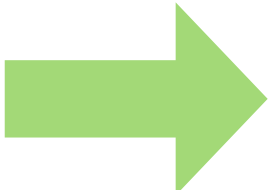
**Flackery** is now accepting feature stories and sponsored posts from The Business Guild members and non-members.\*

Your Original Content  
Members: FREE  
Non-Members: \$125  
Deadline: July 28, 2023

## Make *YOUR* content marketing easy!

Content marketing is a key component of your successful marketing strategy and we provide the *perfect marketing tools, using the perfect marketing vehicle, at a price you can afford.*

- Professional presentation
- Targeted small biz audience
- Shareable evergreen content



**Submit your content today!**

The Business Guild & Flackery make it easy for **YOU** to share **YOUR** expertise and promote **YOUR** business.



## No time to write? No problem!

We've teamed up with Lisa J. Jackson from [writeyourwaynh.org](http://writeyourwaynh.org) to bring "Your Words, Only Better" to Flackery!

### How does it work?

Lisa will interview you about your business and story idea then craft it into a written article featuring your ideas and expertise.

- No struggling to find the right words
- No issues finding the time to write
- No excuses!

Your Words, Only Better  
Members: \$175  
Non-Members: \$250

Book Today -- Your Words, Only Better  
Deadline is July 28th!

\* see submission guidelines for details

# Promote *YOUR* Business in Flackery!

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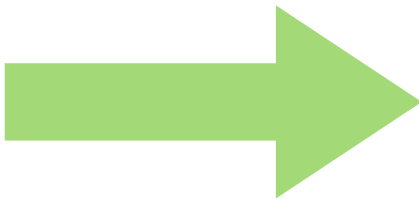
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# Business Resources

It would take the entire magazine to list resources for every city, state, or county, so we're including direct links to the corresponding resources pages on The Business Guild's website. If you're looking for a resource that isn't listed, please send an email to [info@thebizguild.com](mailto:info@thebizguild.com) and we'll try to help you find what you're looking for.

## Free and Budget-Friendly Resources for Your Business

### Business & Strategic Planning

This includes federal business resources, useful tools, and all of The Business Guild's business planning templates.

### Web Design

The web design resources feature useful tips for choosing a CMS, building a website, improving page speed, and managing site maintenance.

### Graphic Design & Video

The section covers graphic design tips and links to several free graphic design programs as well as helpful information about video setup, recording, and editing

### Sales & Marketing

Sales & Marketing has info about ERPs and CRMs; tips, tricks, and strategies for boosting sales; top picks for email marketing programs; templates for sales and marketing campaigns; and links to community partners.

### Classes & Training

The classes & training section offers a collection of live and on-demand classes, events, and seminars from The Business Guild, our members, and community partners.

### Back Office

This section contains a variety of back office tools and resources for your HR, accounting, and IT questions.

[thebizguild.com/succeed](https://thebizguild.com/succeed)

# Past Issues



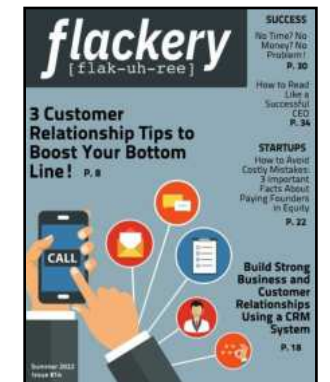
Spring 2023



Winter 2022



Fall 2022



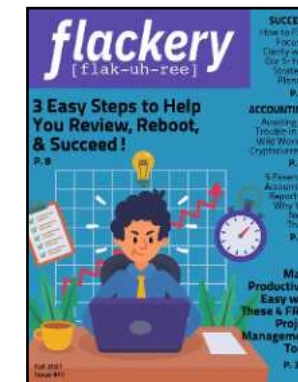
Summer 2022



Spring 2022



Winter 2021



Fall 2021



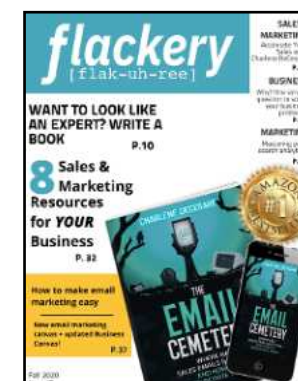
Summer 2021



Spring 2021



Winter 2020



Fall 2020



Winter 2019

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"Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people miss them."

- Ann Landers

