

MAVERICK MARKETING™

14 STEPS TO SUCCESS IN YOUR BUSINESS

*Ed Rigsbee
The Maverick Marketer*

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BY

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The Maverick Marketer

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Introduction

You desire business success. In these uncertain times everybody's looking for the answers. Your competition's looking also. This booklet will help you skip mistakes others have made. It will also help you profit from others' successes. Maverick Marketing is one answer. Challenge yourself not only to read, but to also put into action the innovative ideas that will follow.

Let's look at the origin of the term. In the last century there was a Texas lawyer who owned cattle. At the time, the practice was to let cattle graze on the open range. This is why branding was so important at the time -for identification. Yearly, the cattle would be gathered by identifying the brand, then be herded to the rail heads to be shipped to the east.

This Texas lawyer, Sam Maverick, refused to brand his cattle. When the time came to gather his herd - he gathered any and all without brands. He always got a little extra. Over the years the cowboys of the wild west would refer to an unbranded stray as a maverick. **This booklet is about assisting you to gather the stray customers and even a few that your competition has branded!**

Being a Maverick Marketer is about being different in a positive way. Hollywood has helped to change our perception of what a maverick really is. If you're old enough, you might remember the television show *MAVERICK*. James Garner played Bret Maverick, a gambler who always seemed to live on the under side of the law. In short, he was a rogue. Unfortunately, too many people think that being an unbranded person, a maverick is bad - I'm here to tell you that being a maverick is the only way to profit in these uncertain economic times.

Commit today to use the following 14 steps and you too can enjoy the success from being a Maverick Marketer.

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1: Know your competition better than they know themselves!

These words are from John Sculley, Chairman and CEO of Apple Computer. He declares this belief in his book: *Odyssey, Pepsi to Apple* and in many articles written about his success. It makes sense to know what the other people in your industry are doing.

One way to find out is to ask your suppliers - they may be your competition's supplier also. Visit your competition; go to their place of business, phone them with inquiries or answer their direct mail solicitations. Always be asking yourself, "Why would someone buy from them?"

You need to analyze, then adapt to your business what they are doing right. Next, determine what they are doing wrong but - for heaven's sake don't tell them in a weak moment of egotism. Keep it to yourself; profit from your competitor's mistakes! If you are thinking, "This is work!" You're right! Being successful is work - no magic trick will make you a competent Maverick Marketer but smart hard work will.

2: Do it differently and know when not to be different.

"Do what differently?" you might be thinking. Do anything you can to attract the attention of your potential customer and hopefully the attention of the media. (More on this later.) Consumers have tired of the "me too" businesses and services so it's high time you become unique in every way you can. It's important to understand that unique means: one and only; single; sole; different from all others; having no like or equal; extraordinary; rare. I think you get the point.

Footloose, one of my clients in Mammoth Lakes, CA, profits from being different. In a ski resort with a sport shop on every corner, Footloose stands out by

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being the uncontested expert in boot fitting. Even in drought years they always have business because of the special service only they can offer skiers.

Word of mouth is an important marketing strategy says Footloose General Manager, Tony Colasardo. Be sure those who might use your goods or services are using their mouth to say how wonderful and different you are from the rest of the herd. A happy customer will tell a hand full of friends about you but a torqued-off customer will tell at least a dozen people about how you "did it to them."

On December 21, 1937, Walt Disney introduced a unique kind of feature length movie to the world: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. It was a glittering premiere at the Carthay Circle Theater in Los Angeles.

Disney's uniqueness earned \$8,000,000 on the film's first release. Incredible! Considering that the average price of theater admission in the USA in 1938 was 23 cents for adults and a dime for children.

Greg Horton, President and C.E.O. of SMTEK in Newbury Park, CA has a special twist to his unique marketing. He competes with his customer's production departments for business - customers like Martin Marietta, Hughes Aircraft and Litton to mention a few.

In his business, high reliability surface mount technology, Horton excels because SMTEK is just about the only NASA approved company that can design and produce a higher quality product and do it at lower price than can the aerospace giants.

3: Don't wait for perfection.

If you wait for it to be perfect, it'll be too late. Get started, get some momentum going and then pause for accuracy or course correction. Did you know that an airline pilot will correct the course a hundred or more times from Los Angeles to Hawaii? It's true, so don't get discouraged if you get a little off course once in a while.

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I'll share with you Dr. Terry Paulson's Three P's: Perfection, which leads to Procrastination, which leads to Paralysis. Don't become paralysed; you can't make any money that way. As Kings hockey star, Wayne Gretzky says, "You miss 100% of the shot's you never take."

Lee Iacocca says that 95% is good enough, if you wait for the last 5% to be just right, what you were working on becomes obsolete. Quality remains the goal by the time it reaches the customer, but getting started allows you to experience mistakes early, before they cost you.

4: Network at every opportunity.

Two mistakes business people make in regards to networking - being too pushy or assuming they will never need what I offer. Care enough about the other person to want to assist them rather than being pushy about what you do.

Ask people for two cards. As you chat, write something on one; this will show them you really care about what they do and later jog your memory. Tell them that you'll pass the other on to a friend who might be in need of their goods or services. This will show others that you want to assist them and they will be more willing to assist you.

Never be without your business cards. Keep the cards in your left outer coat pocket. Learn the Maverick Quickdraw. Slip your left hand in your pocket when shaking someone's hand. While you are holding their right hand, offer your business card, they'll take it easily with their left hand. As they give you their card, take it from them with your right hand, thank them and slip it into your right outer coat pocket. An advantage of doing this is that you'll not accidentally hand someone else's card out.

You never know who the person you're talking to might know. Many people ask their friends or colleagues before looking for a supplier. Don't second guess - treat everybody with respect. An old Estonian proverb says, "If you go only once around the

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room, you are wiser than one who stands still."

Be an energizing networker Pretend you're the host and responsible for making everyone welcome. Learn to be an active listener with head nodding, eye contact, and asking open ended questions - get your face out of park.

5: Get publicity.

Publicity is a form of networking and you want all that you can get! Publicity is not intended to replace your target market advertising program but to supplement it. Publicity, when you get it, is worth 700% more than advertising on the credibility scale for effectiveness.

Publicity is about "hooking" a media person's interest in you or your business. Send out news releases regularly to the media. Keep a notebook of what you've sent out and develop a schedule for future releases. Be sure they are interesting and unique so they'll hook into an editor's curiosity. Check your local library for books on publicity, they're in section # 658. If you need a media list, it too is at your library. Start with *Gale Directory of Publications & Broadcast Media*.

Additional methods of publicizing what you do are to write articles and speak to community and civic groups. Writing is easier than you might think and the more you write the better you get.

Start out by writing a few pages about the value people get from your industry and most important, keep it positive and interesting. Write from the customers' perspective and use a new angle. Offer your work to the community paper at no charge. If they don't bite, refer to the Gales directory and send your masterpiece to other papers.

Public speaking is fun. Sure, it's easy for me to say that because it's what I do for a living. Give yourself a chance, you also can get in front of a group of people and

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have fun too. Bill Brook's *High Impact Public Speaking* is a great book to help you start. Call his office at 1-800-633-7762.

Here's an easy way to start: Prepare a 25 minute presentation about the value your industry provides for consumers. Start out with something humorous about your business or someone else in the industry. Keep the presentation body fun, informative and positive. End with a quote or a short meaningful story. Just relax and you'll be a hit.

Contact your chamber of commerce for a list of organizations that interest you. Call them, you'll be surprised at how many will accept your offer to speak to their group. Don't try to sell the audience anything except yourself. Be a giver - a giver of knowledge and business will come your way. Remember to send out news releases to local papers every time you speak.

While you're out speaking, look for an organization to join. Get involved, volunteer to be the chair person of a fund raiser and have it at your place of business. This is a great way to get some extra exposure. Being active in your community is an excellent way to be noticed and have people come to you to do business.

6: Cut your costs.

Be creative when starting on any project. Ask yourself, "How can I do this, spending less money and making it more effective?" An example might be to partner with your printer: Ask questions about the difficulty of the job and how else might it be done to cut costs. On expensive four color work, allow the printer to include their name and address in exchange for a discount.

Maybe you're printing stationary, have your printer do a short run of card stock weight paper behind the primary run. The cost for the extra will be nominal. Use the heavier weight stock as report covers and customize the covers by running them through your laser printer or photocopier.

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You might want to use a printer who has a large press and get more than one item per run; possibly a catalog page, a business reply card and a business card. Take this concept and apply it to everything you do. You will soon find hundreds of ways to save and do your projects more effectively.

Business is waking up to student interns. Call your local high school or college and ask if they have a program. Usually you pay the student a lower wage because they are learning from you. Some colleges have state or federal monies to pay a percentage of the intern's wage.

This is a true story: It took place a few years ago at a posh resort near the Del Mar Racetrack in California. The management had been plagued each racing season with a horde of prostitutes, if we can presume that a horde is a good word for such a large group of such ladies.

Day after day the women of the night placed business cards on doors, Coke machines and other locations all over the resort. The managers assigned people to pluck the cards up as soon as they spotted them, but the professional women just kept on promoting the product with business cards that featured 'Surfer Girls.'

After great amounts of money, time, and energy were poured into the problem, the resort people found an immediate and complete solution. And it only cost \$10. The problem was solved by a rubber stamp the resort had made. They sent a staffer around to stamp the back of each of the business cards - each of which was carefully left right where it was found. The rubber stamp read: 'First Hour Free.' Reprinted from *RIGSBEE ON SALES & MARKETING* April 1991.

7: Barter when you can.

Most people pay for services; Maverick Marketers try bartering first. Even Fortune 500 companies barter - Xerox once bartered \$1.7 million worth of computers

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and typewriters to pay for two years of a five-year office lease. McDonnell Douglas Corp. traded twenty-five planes it couldn't sell for cash to Yugoslavia for electronic parts, heavy machinery and a various other items.

Think past the two party trade to multi-party trades, this will give you even more options. Bartering usually brings you new customers, ones that you might not have considered possible.

Two sources for barter knowledge are: National Trade Exchange, 1-800-955-SWAP and *Smarter Barter* by Michael Gershman. The book is out of print but your library might have a copy. It will teach you how to improve your bottom line through barter. The computer I used to write this booklet was obtained by barter. You too can profit -give it a try!

Maverick Marketers aren't rustlers, barter is not tax-free. You are required to report bartered items to the IRS, your buddy in business. Still barter can free-up your cash flow in these uncertain times that could be quite valuable.

8: Strategic Partnering.

Every Lone Ranger knows when it's important to be part of a team. Chrysler partners with Mitsubishi; Ford with Jaguar. In each case, the companies formed strategic partnerships that created synergy in their marketing efforts. Synergy is when the whole equals more than the sum total of its parts. Like Sam Maverick, letting the other cattle owners donate their unbranded strays to his herd.

Disneyland has an official airline, car rental company and even a cruise ship line. The companies who partner with Disney get more than just marketing exposure, they get positioning and credibility. What can you do?

Say you're in the travel business for example. Visit all the businesses you can and

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offer them your extra travel posters and maybe even a trip that you received at no charge, for their promotions. Let them know what you want in exchange. How about the opportunity to post your business name, address and phone number in a noticeable location for all their customers to see. Maybe they could name you in their newspaper, television and/or radio advertising?

If you're a manufacturer, produce a poster showing five to ten steps you use to produce the Quality Advantage. Give it to companies that sell your goods. Leave space to print the name of each retailer for a personalized poster they will want to use.

Ask yourself, "Who can I partner with that's not a competitor?" How can I be a partner in this relationship? Be sure to make it a synergistic and long term partnership. It's easier to keep a quality relationship going than to develop new ones.

9: With a positive attitude, view challenges from a new perspective.

Norman Vincent Peal, in his classic *The Power of Positive Thinking* says, "A sense of inadequacy interferes with the attainment of your hopes, but self-confidence leads to self-realization and achievement." Create for yourself the attitude of limitless possibilities. It's no secret that attitude can make the difference between failure and success - which do you want? I know, you're saying, "Success! Why else would I take the time to read this?" To my surprise, many people who come to my seminars need as my colleague, Zig Ziglar says, "A check-up from the neck up!" It's easier than you think to get into the "I don't care's" or the "I can't do it's." You can - it's all in how you view your world.

To view your daily concerns, better yet - challenges, from a new perspective requires that you shift your paradigms. Paradigms are patterns, examples, models or standards. Columbus, 500 years ago, shattered the world's paradigm of the earth by not falling off. You too, must challenge your paradigms and shift the ones that are not serving you.

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Look at it this way: when you look at a tall tree from 50 feet away through a standard 50mm camera lens you see a particular view, not all of the tree. Now change to a macro closeup lens and you see not much of anything. Now change to a wide angle lens and you see just about all of it. What was different each time? The lens, your filter - each of us filters how the world truly is and that's our reality. So, change your filter, your vision and behold all the new possibilities.

Sometimes you can stretch your humor muscles to experience a new perspective. Norman Cousins suggested that humor resulted from a "train wreck of the mind." Pretend you work for *Candid Camera* and play "what if" games. Doing this will feed your uniqueness. If you want more, read Dr. Terry Paulson's *Making Humor Work*. It will introduce you to the humor advantage in sales and provide a needed stress break as well. Call his office to order your copy, 1-800-521-6172.

10: Use technology to your advantage.

In his book, *Managing the Future, 10 Driving Forces of Change for the '90s*, Robert B. Tucker identified technological edge as one of the driving forces. Check your bookstore or call his office: (805) 682-1012. What is your technological edge? How do you get the jump on your competition?

Too often people will forgo technological advancements that will give them an edge over their competition because they fear the unknown. Don't wait until your competition forces you to learn and then play catch-up. Be at the head of the herd; it's a better view. The key to using technology: You must be the master and technology the servant. Stay in control!

I recently visited a McDonald's restaurant at a downtown location and was amazed to see a special line for FAX orders. Offices could FAX their lunch order and it would be waiting for them to pick-up. This is using technology for an edge. Think of ideas to use your FAX machine to do more business and not just to communicate

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quickly. You do have a FAX, don't you?

If your business is a sales oriented business - do you and your salespeople keep track of clients by computer or by memory? Harvey Mackay, in his book: *Swim with the Sharks, Without Being Eaten Alive*, says, "The palest ink is better than the most retentive memory."

Get a laptop computer and a program like TeleMagic or ACT to help you be more productive. Your friendly computer salesperson can show you how.

What about Video? A picture is worth a thousand words - how many times have you heard this saying? It's true and you can take advantage of the relatively inexpensive medium. Have a video produced that tells the benefits customers will receive by using your products or services. Send it out ahead of your salesperson or in replacement of an outside sales department. Many companies today are successfully using video; yet it's still relatively new. One pioneer in producing videos for business is Bob Chesney, Chesney Communications in Irvine, CA. 1-800-223-8878 extension 26.

Another way to attack this challenge is to produce a video yourself. A very inexpensive method is to use your local cable television's public access equipment. Wonderful Uncle Sam has made it mandatory for cable companies to provide equipment for you and I.

The only catch is that it must be done in a public interest format and be used to produce programming for the community. Use your creativity, you'll come up with an idea. Best of all, the cable companies will also teach you how to use their equipment - what a country!

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11: Your Partnering Triad™.

I'll say it again, "Know when to be a maverick and when to partner!" The triad I suggest you partner with is made with your suppliers, employees and customers. Any one of the three could have a decisive effect on the success of your business.

Your suppliers are people, too. Treat them with respect and you'll get more from them. In my days as a sales representative, I consciously made the choice which retailers received extra time and "goodies" and which didn't! Don't fool yourself - treat your suppliers poorly and they'll do the same to you. This will cost you in your pocketbook.

Your employees or as Bill Gore of the famed product - Gore-tex, would call them, "associates," can make or break you. Remember the Movie *9 to 5*? Dolly Parton and company went to extremes, but I'm sure it had a nonfiction origin. In my *Psychology of Employee Motivation* seminar I suggest you make your employees part of the team - the first string. Then be ready to enjoy more productivity from their efforts.

Partnering with your customers takes many forms. Leslie Wexner, founder of The Limited, finds a model person who would shop at his stores. For his spicy lingerie stores, Victoria's Secret, as an example, he chose Cybil Shepherd. He develops the stores strategic plans with her in mind. I talk more about this in the *Maverick Marketing* video.

It is also important to communicate with your customers; more about this in the next step. To listen you must ask the right questions - the kind that will empower them to open up and tell you the truth. Be like Stew Leonard, founder of the famous Norwalk, Conn. dairy store. He holds regular focus groups with his customers and then puts their suggestions into action. He says this is one of the important ingredients that has contributed to his \$115 million in annual sales from a 115,000 square foot store. Another is the five-ton piece of granite every customer sees when entering his store. Their motto, cut into the granite states: "THE CUSTOMER IS ALWAYS RIGHT." It took him 22 years, but what an accomplishment!

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Listen to your customers and be their partner. They'll tell you all you need to know to sell them all they need, want and desire. Why not learn from those who bring you the money? I've found it's easier to row a boat in the direction of the current.

12: Advanced selling skills.

In my seminar, *Maverick Selling*, I teach the WE BUY SYSTEM - WE BUY is an acrostic, let's spell it out.

W - We listen to our customers. It is very important to listen with your ears and your eyes. Listen for "hot buttons" and what motivates them to buy. See with your eyes their subtle body language.

E - Effects of asking questions. You must ask questions to get your customers talking. In selling, use your anatomy as a guide - two ears and one mouth means to listen twice as much as you talk. The answers they give you will help you to know which benefits to talk about.

B - Benefit selling. Too many so called salespeople are really nothing more than "features jockeys." They intimidate people into buying, using massive doses of their hot air. Features are what the manufacturer builds into the product - benefits are what the features do to make the purchaser's life easier, happier, more enjoyable, etc. People don't buy features, they buy benefits!

U - Urgency to buy, NOW! How many times have you heard it? "I'd like to look around some more." By knowing your product inside and out as well as what your competitors offer, you can save your customer time by explaining all of their other options and why your's is the best for them. Many times when they say no they are really saying that they need to know more.

Y - You make the difference by becoming a partner with your customer. You, as well as your customer are unique. It takes the human ingredient to make the sale or to add-on

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to the sale. You must learn how to communicate in a way that empowers both you and your customer to be at the same level.

Learn a basic understanding of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). NLP is the science of how the human's brain learns. Call it a mind map if you like. Everyone has a preferred learning strategy. The brain learns by seeing - a visual, by hearing - an auditory or by feeling - a kinesthetic. This knowledge will put you miles ahead of your competition. A great book to read on the subject is: *Unlimited Power* by Anthony Robbins.

Imagine a construction company starting to dig a tunnel through a mountain. Starting at both sides - if they communicate properly they meet in the middle. If not, they dig two tunnels. Be on the same level of communication as your customers.

13: The global village.

World communication networks and speedy international travel have contributed Earth becoming a single global village. Leland Russell coined the term: Geo Paradigm™. Globalization is now a reality. Those who have success in their forecast will come to understand what it means to them, their business, and their community. It is absolutely necessary to understand how this effects you.

Global trends have an affect on your business: the optical industry, as an example sees metal frames, influenced by either a range of vintage treatments or high-tech materials and design, dominate the international frame market in the early 1990s. How does this affect those in the domestic American market? Optical dispensers better know!

In some cities, globalization has truly come to town. What are you doing to meet the diverse needs of your citizens? What is the current demographic make-up of your marketing area? Bridge to these people and it may open new doors around the world.

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For many of you, there might be an off-shore market for your goods - one that you may not even know exists. Who might be your foreign partner? Businesses are invading our shores, this could be good or bad news, depending on your point of view. Learn the export secrets business people of other countries already know. Exploit the possibilities.

Chuck and Loralie Harris are the founders of fourteen year old, Loralie Originals. This \$15,000,000 a year formal wear manufacturer in Redding, CA is currently working on breaking into the Japanese market. They compete internationally from a small Northern California City with those in the clothing hubs of Los Angeles and New York. They understand the opportunities of the Geo Paradigm and are in pursuit of it.

Continual updating is paramount for global business success as well as knowing when not to change. A regular search for knowledge is highly important. You must know as much about what is happening down the block as across the oceans.

14: Send business to your competition.

Let's face it, not all business is good business. Some accounts, clients or deals will cost you more in time, money or aggravation than they're worth. Get a triple win by sending them to the competition.

First, you'll spend the time you would have wasted developing valuable and profitable new accounts, clients or deals. Second, your competitors will think you're great for sending business their way. Third, they'll be so busy with their unprofitable business that they won't have time to go after the customers you've branded.

The secret is knowing what business to keep and what to send away - careful, it's tricky! But how do you know who to send away? Can you use intuition? How about rapport? Maybe research? All of the above. An ancient Zen proverb says it best: "When the source is deep, the flow is long."

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Create a deep source of product, sales, marketing, and management knowledge - the flow of profit will be deep. The ideas you've read about in this booklet are only as good as your ability and desire to put them into action. As stated in step 3, don't wait for your ducks to be lined up all nice and neat, like in a shooting gallery.

The strength and energy needed to be a successful Maverick Marketer can be found within. Take care of your body and mind to receive the rewards that life has to offer.

"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle..." -Sun Tzu