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FREE REPORT SERIES

**BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: Vol. I
21 Insider Consulting Secrets
You're NOT Supposed To Know**

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of HardToFindSeminars.com.

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable audio business interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

Michael Senoff

Founder & CEO: www.hardtfindseminars.com

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21 Insider Consulting Secrets You're NOT Supposed To Know.” (86 pages of the most revealing, proprietary consulting secrets on the subject of business consulting that exist anywhere).

**Forward
By Michael Senoff**

Hi, this is Michael Senoff with www.HardToFindSeminars.com It's ten o'clock Thursday morning. I just got off the phone with Richard a veteran Marketing Consulting expert. Richard has been working as a full-time marketing consultant for the last 16 years. Now, when I meet a man who's out there still working in the trenches, still calling up clients, still active in the consulting business, I stop and take note.

When I found out Richard was a Jay Abraham original protégé all the way back in 1990, then I knew that I had really struck gold. I had to talk to Richard. I had to get inside his head, and I had to ask him every imaginable question about how he operates his consulting business. I've worked with other so-called marketing consultants in the past. Consultants that say they have experience, but when it comes down to it. Their experience claims fall short. I want to learn from an expert sales professional, still out there in the field doing consulting, and that's why I'm proud to introduce to you such a man.

Once Richard and I started talking, I never knew where the conversation would go, but by the time we ended this conversation, I think I have captured one of the most specific, detailed dissertations on the inside workings of how to operate and run a marketing consulting business. I had Richard take me

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through every single step of his process. I had him use real-life client examples to illustrate his points.

You will hear Richard’s system for getting clients. You’ll hear how to improve your practice if you’re a marketing consultant. You’ll hear what to do, how to qualify, how to set-up an appointment, where to meet – do you meet over breakfast? Do you meet over drinks? Do you meet in his office and why? – the questions to ask. You’ll hear about a PowerPoint presentation. You’ll hear his Opportunity Analysis Worksheet, how to charge, and most importantly how to close a deal.

We went into so many specifics, and I learned more in this conversation with Richard than I have with any other marketing consulting trainer. I absolutely know you’re going to be thrilled with this conversation. The recordings are in three 20-minute sections. Please stick with it until the end, because I have a free gift for you, which you’ll hear how to get at the end of this transcript. I know you’re going to benefit from this valuable information on. Enjoy!

Richard: The minute we got the owner’s unique selling proposition integrated into the sales pitch of the five salespeople, we increased our closing rate from 20-40 percent, and increased their revenues from \$60-\$90 million dollars.

Michael: Wow.

Music

Richard: It was phenomenal. You have no hard costs. The consulting business and marketing consulting including is the highest profit margin business out there. I mean, I meet these business owners everyday, and there you can buy on ten percent, 15 percent, 20 percent gross profit. Marketing consulting gives you 90-95 gross profit.

Michael: So, let me ask you this – You went through Jay’s marketing system in 1990. It’s 16 years later, and you’re still actually out there having someone telemarket for you, set up appointments. You’re calling to confirm. You’ve actually been doing this for this long.

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Richard: Oh yeah, and I’ll tell you why because the number one killer of the consulting business and marketing consulting included is you stop marketing. The minute you stop marketing, you’re dead because you’re start to get lethargic. You start to get lazy. You get clients and you think you’re busy enough. So, you don’t keep marketing. I throw out this rule right now and that is anyone serious about getting in the consulting business better always be willing to market 25 percent of their time.

Michael: So, this isn’t a land a huge client, get a good contingency deal, make several hundred thousand dollars, and retire for the next year.

Richard: You’ll only find those if you keep doing what I’ve described to you to do. You won’t find those by a science. You’ll run into them, and I’ve run into a couple of them. So, I’ve had a couple of client relationships that have given me the big bucks for the short period of time, but there far and few between.

Michael: Now, let’s talk about it. You said for a short period of time. Was this contingency relationship?

Richard: Both fee and contingency.

Michael: Do they want contingency relationships?

Richard: Contingencies are hard to make last.

Michael: Why?

Richard: There are several things. One is you’re in a partnership with the business owner. You’re now relying on his honesty and his trust and his capability of doing business, but it’s not always in your control. It may not always keep working the way you want it to work.

Michael: Does it change the relationship between the two people?

Richard: It absolutely does. That’s why I don’t recommend a contingency basis to begin with. I will always charge a fee first, and then as I work with the client and they work with me, and we find out that we’re working well together, it can evolve into a contingency opportunity.

Michael: If you were dropped off in the middle of an unknown town or city with no money, no credentials and no more knowledge

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about business than your neighbors pet dog, and you were given just five days to make \$10,000 as a marketing consultant, what would you do? What steps would you take? What mindset would you adopt? And how successful do you think you will be and why?

Richard: I would immediately find information that would act as a model or I would find a mentor. I would find someone in that community or on written material or a book. I’d go to the library. I’d go on the web, and I’d find the best marketing consultant out there, and I would read and I’d study and I would find out what he did or what she did, and I would then distill that into an approach and go immediately and begin to approach small businesses and find ways that I could leverage what the small business had already been doing and quickly generate cash for the business. If I was penniless at the time, and I didn’t have to have pennies right away, I would probably do it on a contingency basis where I would get a percentage of the increase that my marketing efforts would produce. So, that’s what I would do. I would find knowledge. I would find information. I would find a way to help start me, a way to jump-start me.

Michael: Now, is that what you did with your marketing consulting business?

Richard: I have done it, yes, and I have done it several times. I’ve done it both on a fee based level as well as a contingency based level.

Michael: Who was that expert that you modeled to start your business?

Richard: This is Jay Abraham.

Michael: Can you tell me about that?

Richard: Jay, back in 1990, was looking for a thousand protégés to train. So, he sent out some advertising and I read his ad in Entrepreneur Magazine. He took about a 27 page ad in the middle of Entrepreneur Magazine, and I was on an airline flight at the time and read it, and decided that then I would take what was my background which again in outside sales, combine it with his marketing expertise and I was intrigued then to start my own marketing consulting practice. So, I invested \$15,000 in Jay, and went and spent a week with him as well as about a hundred others. I came a way with all of the

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information that I needed to combine with my own skills where I had been to that point in my life, and started marketing consulting.

Michael: Do you think your sales skills as an outside salesperson gave you an advantage over someone who didn’t have the sales expertise in being a marketing consultant?

Richard: I think it did with regards to my training from Jay, as Jay didn’t supply any of that in his training. Jay was strictly marketing. So, fortunately for me, I was able to supply what Jay didn’t give me. now, since then, I have been able to document the whole process from what you say to a perspective business client all the way to closing and servicing that client in a way that someone wouldn’t have to have that strong a sales background, but for me it was important that I had.

Michael: What were you selling in outside sales?

Richard: I had worked for a couple of different companies - one selling educational books to the public, another company selling software to trucking firms. I was with an auto racing firms selling auto racing brokerage services. So, it was pretty varied that I had had up to that point.

Michael: Some of the stuff was pretty high tech – the trucking software?

Richard: Yeah the software was \$30,000 software, and then spent some time also selling timeshares as well. So, it was a fun background.

Michael: Here’s a question from Marty. Can a person who has no money, no credit, and no job, go out and do this thing? Or is this some kind of pipe dream being a marketing consultant?

Richard: Well, they have to have a few innate characteristics. They have to enjoy working with people. They’ve got to have some passion. They’ve got to have an ability to communicate well with the business owner and enjoy working with the business owner. Those are the required. You can have no money. You can have all of the other stuff that you mentioned, but you do have to have at least what I just described.

Michael: Here’s a question from Ken. Let’s start with my favorite question, the numbers question. You can afford \$500 per

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month to start marketing your practice. What medium would you spend it on and what would your message be?

Richard: I would use the phone and I would save the \$500 and I would get on the phone and I would be contacting small business owners and my scripting would be, “Hello, Mr. Business Owner, my name is Tom, and I have a way that I can increase your sales for your business without spending any more money on advertising. Could I take 15-20 minutes and tell you a little bit more about it?”

Michael: Is this what you use even today.

Richard: You bet. Versions of that we still use even today.

Michael: Have you tried other versions and found this to be the one that produces results?

Richard: This one is one what sets me apart from everybody else.

Michael: How’s that?

Richard: Well, these small business owners are getting contacted constantly by traditional media, traditional advertising mediums like the newspaper, the radio, direct mail, coupons, the Internet, and when the approach is on the phone saying, “I’m going to be able to increase sales for your business without spending more money on these traditional advertising approaches” it catches their ear.

Michael: It is totally opposite to what other calls are.

Richard: That’s right.

Michael: Have you quantified this? How many calls does it take to get an appointment?

Richard: We have found that talking to ten business owners, in other words making contact with ten decision makers will get you an appointment.

Michael: How do we identify? How do we get that decision maker on that first scripted call?

Richard: Two ways. One is the market that I recommend a marketing consultant to begin in especially are the smaller businesses

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with sales between a half a million and three million, and the reason for that is the business owner is the contact person. They’re still the one trying to do everything. They usually still don’t have a marketing director or a VP of Marketing, or they still don’t have anyone on staff qualified to handle marketing. So, it’s the business owner trying to run the whole thing, and we’re coming in to help him. Now, once we get to about a five million dollar sales level, you begin to have different decision-making layers, and so someone else will probably answer the phone and you’ll have more difficulty getting to the business owner.

Michael: Where do you get your leads from to make the calls?

Richard: Well, there have been a couple of sources. You can get the Yellow Pages out or you can begin looking at companies that invest a lot in their yellow pages. There’s one source of lead.

Michael: What does that tell you when you see a huge ad in the yellow pages?

Richard: It tells you that you’ve got a business that’s spending a lot of money on traditional marketing. It may not be working very well. So, I might have a built in need already and he might be frustrated with his yellow page ad. He may be getting a lot of calls but not converting them. So, he’s still not making enough profit from his ads. You can also pick up magazines in your local area, and look through those and find companies that are spending money on advertising. Go through your local newspaper. Begin to build a little database of your own leads so you don’t have to spend money on a list. That’s another source. You can call a list company and you can get lists of companies in your area that have sales between \$500,000 and three million, who give you the business owners name, their phone number, their address, how many employees they have. You can decide if you want to eliminate certain kinds of businesses, and you have a list that you can buy from a list broker.

Michael: If I’m going to go through your training and become a marketing consultant, is this something that you’d recommend I do at the beginning myself or can I hire this out to a telemarketer or someone working part time?

Richard: That’s a great question. If you feel that you don’t have the skills, then outsource because I have. I’ve always rather gone

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to someone or some company that does it already and pay them to make those calls. However, early in my career, I was making those calls. I recommend that in starting that you make the calls because you’ll have that experience. It’s even hard for you to train a caller to do it.

Michael: I was talking to a friend of mine, and I didn’t realize that he was from Israel. He wanted to get into some sort of marketing consulting, and he would always want to meet me face-to-face, and I never really thought about it, but he was insecure and didn’t have the confidence to be on the phone because he thought his Israeli accent would hinder him from doing whatever he needed on the phone. But, he had the confidence meeting someone face-to-face because he could express more, more than just his voice to communicate. But, there are a lot of people here in the United States and really all over the world where they feel their accent gets in the way of them doing that telephone work. So, by farming it out, that’s not going to keep them from getting appointments.

Richard: Right.

Michael: Here’s a question from Rose. Rose wants to know how do you succeed in promoting products and services when you have no money at all?

Richard: The best way to do that is to find individuals or businesses that could promote them for you. So, what you do is you take a look at your products and services that you have, and you’ll ask the question, “What other businesses might have customers that want my product?” So, you’re tapping into or you’re forming alliances with or you’re becoming a partner with another business who’s already paid the money, who’s already invested the marketing dollars, and they’ve generated a customer base, but you haven’t. You don’t have the money to do that, and so you’re bringing your product and service in a way they can add value to their customers, and give you a piece of that. So, that’s the best and fastest way to get something launched if you don’t have the money.

Michael: Here’s a question from Scott. Richard, what would you do in the next 30 days to get started and ran your first client?

Richard: Get on the phone. The phone is the most underutilized marketing asset that’s out there. It cost nothing, and yet you can take the time to contact enough people to find someone

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interested and go see face-to-face. So, if I had 30 days I would combine phone with in-person visits. “Let me show you how I can increase your sales 25-100 percent without spending more money on advertising.” And, I’d take my phone pitch that I just said a few minutes ago. I would also examine what relationships I might have developed in my community. For example, if I worked at all with the local printer or my accountant, these are two businesses or entities that have businesses as clients, and I would immediately go them and say, “Could I offer a free consultation to your client?” So, it’s a service that my accountant could offer to his small business owners without spending any money, but it’s good for the accountant because if his businesses increase sales, he’s going to be doing more accounting. So, those are the two things I would do rapidly for 30 days. I’d be on the phone. I’d be out in person meeting businesses, and then I would be leveraging any relationships that I could find and that I could partner with. Just like we described in your previous question, if I had not money and I’m just getting started, how do I take my marketing service and start to make money with it, and I recommend that you form alliances and partners. So, I would do that as a marketing consultant, which I did. Early in my career, I got leads from my accountant. I got leads from a local printer. I went to the local Chamber of Commerce and starting joining a couple of the lead clubs that cost zero to join.

Michael: Were they happy to share the leads with you?

Richard: Absolutely.

Michael: Do you have to pay them money for them?

Richard: No, they just exchanged leads. They let you get up and give a little presentation, two minutes or so, about what you do. So, all of those are workable ways to generate leads quickly.

Michael: Your favorite is the phone and face-to-face presentations.

Richard: That’s my favorite if I don’t have those relationships. If I have those relationships, those are my favorite. The consulting business, and marketing consulting included, is the highest profit margin business out there. I mean, I meet these business owners everyday, and there you can buy on 10 percent, 15 percent, 20 percent gross profit. Marketing consulting gives you 90-95 percent gross profit. You have no hard costs. It’s all intellectual services. So, you’re packaging

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your expertise. So, you should see profit immediately. You should see profit from your first fees if you can generate a fee.

Michael: Here’s a question from Carl from Phoenix. Hi Richard, the question I have is the marketing consulting market saturated here in the United States.

Richard: It is very crowded, no question, and it’s getting more crowded in the sense that you now have Internet marketing consultants who are out there, so the ecommerce and dot-coms of the world, and the website designers who now have come along, and that is why it’s even more critical that you distinguish yourself from all of those. That’s why you take the approach to marketing that I have in a way that says, “Mr. Business Owner, I know you’ve been hit with all these others, but I’m different, and here’s how I’m different. I’m going to take what you’ve already got, and create more cash flow for you. I’m going to increase your sales and your net profits, and I’m going to help you find more working capital because we may stop spending on some of these other marketing or advertising approaches, and we’re going to help you see a way to do it without any of that. Now, we might still do some, Mr. Business Owner. I’m not saying that these other approaches don’t work.” But, this is how you get in the door. This is how you separate yourself from the others. So, it doesn’t matter how many others there are, as long as you are perceived and have something different, you’re going to be okay.

Michael: Here’s a question from Rick. Richard, let’s say I’m a marketing consultant cold-calling for potential clients with no previous mailings or anything like that. They don’t know me from Adam. I’m just cold-calling the yellow pages by phone looking for potential clients. What do I say to get interest and to get an appointment?

Richard: “Hi, my name is Rick. I’m with XYZ Marketing Firm. I’m in your area helping small businesses increase sales as well as net profits anywhere from 25 to 100 percent in as little as 60-90 days without spending more money with advertising. Can I take 20 minutes of your time and tell you a little bit more about what I do?”

Michael: All right, and what if he says yes, what are you going to say?

Richard: “Great. I’m available Tuesday or Thursday at two o’clock. Will that work for you?”

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Michael: Sure, where do you meet him, at his place?

Richard: Yes, I’ll go to his place of business.

Michael: Do you ever find that there could be distractions there when you’re trying to have that 20 minutes or 30 minutes with him?

Richard: Sure there are sometimes the distractions, and that’s the nature of the small business owner that you simply deal with those, and there have been times when I’ve rescheduled and come back. There’s been times where I just sat patiently and waited until the distractions passed.

Michael: Have you ever tried getting them outside of their business? Maybe meeting at a coffee shop or somewhere close?

Richard: Yes, we’ve done that as well. So, that can work. I don’t recommend that on a first visit in that I think it’s critical that the consultant kind of see the place of business, see what the business owner’s going up against, but it’s worked the other way as well.

Michael: That’s a good idea. So, you can get in there and get an idea if this is someone you even want to work with.

Richard: Right.

Michael: You’re not going to want to work with everyone you get to meet with, right?

Richard: No, and that’s a great point because you could spend a lot of energy and waste a lot of time which is money to the consultant by working with some clients that you really shouldn’t be working with.

Michael: We qualify them somewhat in the mailing list or through the yellow pages, but are there other qualifying questions that your telemarketer would do or that you would do before you meet them to alleviate that wasted time?

Richard: Absolutely. In my marketing consulting training system, we take the philosophy that it is better to qualify heavily upfront to find the right clients because just to save time, and so there are some other qualifiers. The critical qualifier is, and I will say this sometimes after a telemarketer sets an appointment or I’m

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calling to confirm the appointment. I’ll say, “Now, Mr. Business Owner, let me just confirm. Do you really want to grow? Is that right? Are you ready to grow your business?” Because you’ve got some business owners who don’t really care about growing, and so you don’t want to waste time telling them they ought to be growing because there are some that are happy where they’re at. They’re happy right where they’re at. So, I need to make sure that Mr. Business Owner, are you ready to grow? Do you really want to grow this business some more? Are you ready to do that? Second, I might qualify them as to how long they’ve been in the business because my marketing system is not really built and systemized for a new start-up because when you make a pitch to the business owner that you’re going to find ways to help them grow without spending more money on advertising, you’re going to be doing it through his customer base or his staff or his sales people or his relationships with other businesses. Well, if he’s a brand new start-up, he doesn’t have very much of that.

Michael: And, that’s not someone you even want to go near.

Richard: That’s right, and they usually don’t have the money to pay you. So, leave them alone, and let them build their business for a few years. Our target client is the one that’s been in business three to five years or more, wants to grow his business, and then probably the last qualify question that I might ask is, “Now, Mr. Business Owner, this investment could be anywhere from \$4-\$10,000 over a period of three to six months. I don’t want to hurt your business. Is that something that you could handle if this is something you wanted to do?” Now, I should qualify that qualifier because I’ll say that now after several years in the business, but you may not say that as a beginning consultant, but boy, I’d rather even get that out on the table because if he doesn’t have any money, if he doesn’t believe in investing in marketing, if he doesn’t really want to grow, if he hasn’t been around for a better so that I know that there’s other ways to find growth for him, then let him stay in the market for a while and let him change his attitude through the market. I don’t have time to change it. Does that make sense?

Michael: Yes it does. Let me ask you this. You’ve got your telemarketer setting up appointments. They set the appointment say a week ahead. In your experience, let’s say when you first started compared to what you do now, were you the person calling back to confirm the appointment? When would you call back?

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If the appointment was on a Friday, what day would you call back to confirm and to ask these qualifying questions?

Richard: I’d usually call back on Thursday, back a day before the appointment. I’d say, “I’m just calling to confirm our appointment for tomorrow at nine o’clock. Is that right?” They said, “Yes. I’ve got you on the calendar.” Great, and then depending on how I felt, I might ask some of those other qualifying questions.

Michael: Then based on their answers you would decide either keep the appointment or not keep it. Let’s say that you find that this probably isn’t a prospect, what are you going to say to them?

Richard: That is a great question because I just had it happen. I just had the caller set up an appointment for me with a small business owner, and I called him back to confirm, and he said, “You know, I’m so glad you called because I have a service appointment I need to make in the morning at eight-thirty.”, which was when our appointment was set. That gave me time to talk to him a little bit more, and I said, “Well, tell me a little bit about your business.” And, he told me a little bit about his business and I could tell from his attitude that he probably wasn’t ready to meet right now. So, I said, “Listen, maybe next week I’ll give you a call sometime.” So, that freed up my whole morning. I didn’t go waste it with someone I just didn’t feel was quite ready for me.

Michael: So, let me ask you this – You went through Jay’s marketing system in 1990. It’s 14 years later, and you’re still actually out there having someone telemarket for you, set up appointments. You’re calling to confirm. You’ve actually been doing this for this long.

Richard: Oh yeah, and I’ll tell you why because the number one killer of the consulting business and marketing consulting included is you stop marketing. The minute you stop marketing, you’re dead because you’re start to get lethargic. You start to get lazy. You get clients and you think you’re busy enough. So, you don’t keep marketing. I throw out this rule right now and that is anyone serious about getting in the consulting business better always be willing to market 25 percent of their time.

Michael: So, this isn’t a land a huge client, get a good contingency deal, make several hundred thousand dollars, and retire for the next year.

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Richard: You’ll only find those if you keep doing what I’ve described to you to do. You won’t find those by a science. You’ll run into them, and I’ve run into a couple of them. So, I’ve had a couple of client relationships that have given me the big bucks for the short period of time, but there far and few between.

Michael: Now, let’s talk about it. You said for a short period of time. Was this contingency relationship?

Richard: Both fee and contingency.

Michael: Do they last contingency relationships?

Richard: Contingencies are hard to make last.

Michael: Why?

Richard: There are several things. One is you’re in a partnership with the business owner. You’re now relying on his honesty and his trust and his capability of doing business, but it’s not always in your control. It may not always keep working the way you want it to work.

Michael: Does it change the relationship between the two people?

Richard: It absolutely does. That’s why I don’t recommend a contingency basis to begin with. I will always charge a fee first, and then as I work with the client and they work with me, and we find out that we’re working well together, it can evolve into a contingency opportunity.

Michael: That working relationship is really a qualifier whether he’s honest, whether he’s interested in growing his business, and whether there’s potential. If that’s going good, is there any reason why he wouldn’t want to do a contingency?

Richard: There really isn’t, and if it’s going good, he’s paid me my fees on time like I’ve asked, he’s been happy to pay them, and we’ve built up a good relationship, he knows what I’m going to do for him in this contingency relationship, I know what he’s going to do for me in this contingency relationship, and then it’s much easier.

Michael: What about Jay Abraham’s thing? You went to the training in ’90. I remember it’s “If I Could Bring Your Business A Dollar,

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Would You Be Willing to Pay Me 25 Cents for the Increase of The Business?” What’s wrong with that model? What did you find was wrong with that model? Did you believe in the model at first?

Richard: Oh, I did because that’s what Jay trained us. So, I came home, and I ran an ad of that very nature, and I got phone calls and I put it out there into a small business magazine that was being distributed to businesses, and it said that very thing. It said, “If I could make you a dollar, you pay me 25 cents.” And, I got several phone calls. Then, I found out the problem with starting it that way. Jay was able to do it because he had already made hundreds of thousands of dollars and had hundreds of thousands of dollars in the bank, and so he could afford to do a contingency, but many of these contingency clients take a lot of time to make work and before you see the sales, and it takes money to make the marketing work, and they don’t have the money. That’s why they called you to do it on your commission. Those are the obstacles I found. I found, “Oh man, this is going to take too long and I’ve got a mortgage to pay.”

Michael: Do you remember the first client that called you?

Richard: Yes.

Michael: Who was it?

Richard: They were producing a family unity tape set. They were kind of a non-profit type of entity. So, they didn’t have a budget for marketing. I guess part of the answer to the question is where are you at when you take the training. If you already have money in the bank, if you already have a career that you’ve built up a retirement and you can afford six to twelve months to make a contingency work, good for you.

Michael: Yeah, and you would invest your own money in doing it.

Richard: And your time.

Michael: Okay.

Richard: If you are like most of us, and you have a mortgage to pay, and you have bills that have to be paid every third day, then you probably don’t have the time to give that to a contingency. So, that’s why in 1990 when it wasn’t working well for me, I

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created my marketing consulting system which is based on a fee-based system because immediately I saw that I needed to change the way I was approaching these small business owners. I couldn’t do it right then the way Jay Abraham taught me, and so I had to change it to a fee-based structure, and that’s the way it is.

Michael: You didn’t have the assets to do what he did.

Richard: That’s right.

Michael: He was just teaching the best way he knew how from his experience and from where he was.

Richard: That’s right, and so I don’t blame him.

Michael: You’re teaching it from where you were.

Richard: That’s right, and where I think most are.

Michael: Right.

Richard: And, that’s why I think it’s the most successful system out there. I’ve had competitors who have been out there. They were trained by Jay, but they still have not figured out how to go to a perspective business owner, present him value, and charge a fee, and then present him the next value and charge a fee, and present him the next value and charge fee. That’s what’s unique about the system. It’s so systemized from beginning to end.

Michael: How long did it take you to put this system together?

Richard: At least four or five years.

Michael: Here’s a question from Peter. As you may be aware Michael, I spoke to Richard a few weeks ago about his marketing system. I’m intrigued by his concepts and program, but I’m not in a position to consider the training until I finish my move from Boston to Florida. In the meantime, here are a few questions. What advice would you give someone with previous business experience who is interested in getting into marketing consulting? And, what is the quickest way to start attracting clients?

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Richard: Well, the first thing then that I would do is I would look at my business background and my business training and I would find relationships in that business world that I’ve been in, and these relationships I would cultivate with those who sell something or offer something to other businesses, in other words, the same kinds of clients that I want. So, I would leverage my business relationships the best I could. My marketing consulting system recommends you charge fees that range anywhere from \$1,500 on a low end to \$4 or \$5,000 on a high end, and really varies with the size of the business that you’re visiting with and the amount of work that you’re going to have to do, and we teach you all of that in the training.

Michael: Now, is that per month?

Richard: That’s right, and you might have a client for anywhere from four to seven months that you’re retaining and working with, and you can work with anywhere from ten to twelve, fifteen clients at a time. So, you’ve got to kind of determine how much time it’s going to take, how large the business is, and their ability to pay and then your ability to create the value. So, there are no set fees. We teach you more how to determine those fees based on the circumstance you’re in.

Michael: Let me ask you this. It’s Tuesday, November 9th, how many clients are you currently working with right now?

Richard: Ten.

Michael: You have ten clients you’re working with, and how much time are you spending on each client per month?

Richard: My marketing consulting system is built and documented in such a way that you’re probably sending between two and four hours per week per client. Now, I’ll have to tell you, I’m spending less time than that right now because you’re only getting faster, you’re only getting better, you’re only getting more experience each year that you’re in this business, and so my per hour compensation has gone up dramatically from when I started because two things have happened. One is I’ve been able to increase my fees as I get better. It’s just like Jay Abraham. I remember early on he was charging one or two thousand dollars per hour on the phone. Now, he’s getting four or five thousand dollars.

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Michael: Yes, when demand goes up, price goes up.

Richard: That’s right.

Michael: And, when your confidence goes up, price goes up.

Richard: Yes, and so starting out, the way I remember when I was sweating out trying to charge any fee at all. So, we want to help you avoid that start-up learning curve, and give you the training and the confidence so that right off the bat you begin asking for the fees because you can as a trained marketing consultant, tap into the system that’s been around for 14-15 years. So, it’s produced phenomenal results for clients. So, you’re not a start-up. You’re actually participating in part of a system that’s been around for a long time, and that should help you in setting those higher fees from the beginning as well as the training and the confidence it gives you to set a higher fee.

Michael: Here’s another question from Peter, how do you get passed the gatekeeper to talk to your prospects or to get that meeting with your prospect? And, what is the best way to track your results with a client that is not very open with his books?

Richard: I haven’t confronted the gatekeeper issue a lot because of the target market I’m recommending you go to. When we make phone calls to the target market we’re in, we’re usually getting the business owner on the phone. So, that’s one way to avoid that problem is by sticking to the target market that you’re equipped to take care of. What you have to kind of do sometimes on the other is maybe you send him a postcard or you send him a newsletter or you send him part of a book you’ve written, and that helps to get past the gatekeeper because you’re mailing it right to the business owner, and then you follow-up with a phone call. I’ve never really had to also get into the books with a company because what we teach in the system is the marketing that you do you’ll be able to track by the results of the mail piece or the results of the ad or the results of the letter. How much money that makes, and how much profit that means has been less of an issue than how much in sales it’s got. Does that make sense?

Michael: Yes.

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Richard: So, you’re more concerned with tracking the sales, and when you create the pieces as you will be trained how to do in my marketing consulting system, you can track that pretty well.

Michael: Here’s a question from Dino. Richard, I’m in the UK, and I’ve got a question for you. Why is it that over 80 percent of the people who set out to become a marketing consultant fail to make more than \$10,000 per year?

Richard: Because they are not persistent in their own marketing. It’s because they get into a trap that is so easy for consultants to get into, and that is they’ll get a client and so they think now that they’re busy and so they stop marketing. They stop promoting themselves, and when you do that you’ll dry up and die. So, that’s why most will not make it. That’s why a big part of the training is how to grow your practice and how to get clients and we teach them multi pillared marketing approach where they’re teaching you several ways to get clients, not just one or two ways to get clients. You have to do for your marketing consulting practice exactly what you advise clients to do for their business, and if you’re not, the same thing that’s going to happen to your client, that is dry up and die and get beat by their competition, is going to happen to you and your practice. So, I’ve published a book. I have a seminar material, and included in your training you’ll get all of that – how to put on a seminar and teach the marketing system to businesses, and you’ll always get clients that way. We teach you how to use the phone to get clients. We teach you how to use the mail to get clients. We teach you about setting up alliances and partnerships to get clients. So, we teach you a multi-pillar way to get clients because we don’t want that to happen to you, but if you are not persistent in the marketing then your risk is that you’ll be done. Most consulting opportunities don’t cover that. Jay didn’t. I spent \$15,000 for Jay Abraham. He didn’t teach me how to go get a client. I had to go figure that out myself, and I’ve seen competitors out there, other marketing consulting groups, that might have great content, but what they didn’t do is what I did, and that’s spend time on the street for years learning how to identify, present and close a client so that 14 years later, now, it’s still happening.

Michael: Can you make the business work without having to meet a client face-to-face? Have you ever done any consulting that way using the Internet to send the forms and the phone to do the interviews and stuff like that?

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Richard: Well, it’s good you asked that because part of getting trained in my system is that you’ll have access to an Internet based coaching system. So, yes, we’re aware that that’s going on, and so we’ve put the entire marketing system on the Internet, and you can take a business through the system that way now. Have I done it a lot? No, and I’ll tell you why. Most of the clients, the small business owners, get up in the morning and they’re at their shop and they’re working all day. If you’re going to reach them, they don’t have a minute during that day that they’re pausing to get on the Internet. They’re meeting payroll. They’re buying inventory. They’re figuring out ways to sell more. So, they need to be met face-to-face. So, you’re going to have a few, but I don’t want to give you all the impression that that’s going to be a way to generate all of their income.

Michael: That’s fair enough. Here’s some questions relating to credibility, and it seems like several people are concerned with that. One from Dave – how can a rookie consultant cover up for his lack of credibility if he still has no paying clients to give him testimonials?

Richard: Then he uses the testimonials of my marketing system that are already out there. I have more than you’ll need. When you go through the training, you’re going to be able to tap into that credibility. So, they’re not only getting the system, they’re getting the 14 years of performance. That’s one way he can cover that up. The other way is when I got started, I had been in the outside sales arena and I had performed. The prospect is less concerned about what you’ve done in the past, and more concerned about how he thinks you’re going to solve his problem, and so as a consultant, you need to be concerned more with how you’re going to be able to listen to, understand and present a solution to that business owner’s problem. If you spend your time doing that, he’s not going to worry about your credibility. If he has the confidence that you can solve his problem, and so I used stories from my sales background. They weren’t at all connected with the marketing system that I was using. So, I would also caution someone in trying to cover up, and I would rather say explore what you do have that you might be able to throw out there as some credibility.

Michael: Now, can you think back in all your face-to-face presentations when you’re meeting with the clients, how many can you think of that said, “Tell me about why I should?”

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Richard: It’s really not a big issue and that’s because when you go in with my marketing system, it’s overwhelming. The business owner goes, “Oh wow, this make sense.” When you deliver a proven system that he can’t debate with, why is he going to say, “Prove it to me?” You already have.

Michael: Without giving away too much, can you talk about the Opportunity Analysis Worksheet – what it does, how it’s used, and what the purpose of it is in your system?

Richard: You bet. Where my trained consultants separate themselves from everybody else is the ability to go into a small business and identify what the system refers to as “hidden marketing assets”. The opportunity worksheet is simply a systematic way we train the consultants how to identify those assets, and so there’s a series of questions that the opportunity worksheet guides the consultant through so that he doesn’t miss any of the assets because the proposal then that you’re trained in solving the business owner’s problem is leveraging those assets into a marketing system. That’s why it’s so different from anybody else. Any traditional advertiser or traditional marketing consultant doesn’t care about the business’s hidden marketing assets. They just want to sell more advertising, and they want to sell more direct mail or they want to sell more coupons or they want to sell more billboard space or more radio or more newspaper ads. You’re going in and saying, “Hey, you don’t need any of that, but I do need to take you through a series of questions to see if you have what I call marketing assets. Then, I’ll take those assets and I will systematically leverage them into a marketing system to create increases for you.” So, that in a nutshell is what separates our consultants from everybody else.

Michael: From your experience, how long have you found it takes you for that initial meeting when you take that business owner through the opportunity analysis worksheet?

Richard: It’s about an hour.

Michael: Do you need a laptop to take them through that system or can you do this all on paper?

Richard: It’s all on paper. They’ll need a laptop. What you do then is take the information gathered from the opportunity session and create an outline of marketing steps that you’re recommending for the client.

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Michael: You’ve got a sales background. This opportunity analysis worksheet is a well thought out sales system. Would you agree?

Richard: Yeah, that’s why it was created is I knew that if someone else who wanted to be a marketing consultant might not have the sales background that we’d have to create an almost word for word presentation, and that’s in the opportunity analysis. So, it’s there almost word for word if they want to, and in fact early on, I did. Early on, I had to take it, what I had been writing down and actually say, “Well, Mr. Owner, excuse me for a minute, I’m just going to go through a sheet here that I have to make sure that I cover everything.” They go, “Oh sure.” But, really what it was for me was a cheat sheet.

Michael: And, you have this script of exactly what to say from the time you get in there?

Richard: That’s right.

Michael: And, you just read it off of the paper?

Richard: That’s right.

Michael: Here’s a question from George. What do you find is the numbers on objection people have to hiring a marketing consultant?

Richard: I’d say there’s a close tie between two. One is the feeling that “Oh, I’m doing fine. I can do this myself.” And, then second, “I don’t want to invest the money.” So, those two are probably your top.

Michael: Now, if you’ve got a guy that says, “I don’t want to invest the money.” You’ve got a sales background. Do you have an answer for that or do you pretty much know that if this guy doesn’t want to invest the money it isn’t going to happen?

Richard: It’s one of the purposes of the opportunity and the questionnaire that we train you is to show him the money. Before you ask him to invest, you’ve got to show him where the money’s going to come, and part of that hour presentation you’re illustrating for him ways he can make more money. So, that at the end, if he doesn’t see the small investment he’s going to pay you isn’t going to bring him the returns that

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you’ve described, then two things. One is you haven’t made the sale or you really didn’t show him the money or he doesn’t have the money and doesn’t want to spend it regardless of how much you could show him.

Michael: And, you’re using his numbers to come up with the figures, right?

Richard: Absolutely.

Michael: Is that a challenge when you’re asking him for gross sales?

Richard: No, they’re usually very open with that.

Michael: Those have those numbers pretty much down.

Richard: Maybe, Mike, this would help illustrate. Let’s say I’m talking to a business owner, and I ask him a question. I say, “Well, you have two sales people.” And, he says, “Yes.” “What is their conversion rate or how many people are they closing right now?” And he says, “Well, I think they’re closing about two out of ten.” And, I say, “Well, that’s great. If my marketing system that I’ll help implement into your business could raise that from two to three out of ten, can you see how much more money that would make you?” And, he says, “Yeah, that would be great.” “Well, that’s what that marketing system will help you do. It will help you raise that conversion rate from two to three and you can see how that might make you another \$100,000 a year. Does that make sense?” And, he says, “Yeah, I can see that.” So, see I’m showing him how he’s going to be making a lot of money.

Michael: So, it really shouldn’t be an objection if you’ve done your presentation right.

Richard: You’ve got it. That’s right.

Michael: How many can you close? Give me some numbers. You set up 100 appointments, how many appointments are you going to end up seeing? How many are you going to close? And, how many are going to stick with it?

Richard: Out of ten appointments, my closing rate right now is about five out of ten. So, I have about a 50 percent conversion rate. However, early on, in the beginning, I would expect that a beginning consultant should hold about a 20-30 percent

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conversion rate. So, if you’re seeing ten appointments a week, then you should pick two to three clients a week. Those two to three clients you should be servicing for four to six or seven months if you’re doing your job. So, you’ll keep a client that long. Well, that means then, that at the end of four or five months, you’re going to be finished with a client, and you better have a replacement. That’s why, again, the emphasis on marketing 25 percent of your week all the time. Then people say, “Well, Richard, then you’re going to get full and you don’t have enough.” I can tell you from experience, you’re never full enough. And, if I am by chance, then I simply tell a client, I can’t start with them right now, but I could at X-date. Or, if he gives me the luxury of saying, “I can start with you now, but the fee will have to be X.” And, I raise my fee. You see? So, consultants somewhat have to create the demand that then would generate and justify a fee.

Michael: Well, one of the attractive benefits that other business and marketing consultant opportunities are offering is a residual income, and from what you’re saying is contingency isn’t the focus on your program, but you did say there is an opportunity for that. So, a question from Larry from Florida is how do you develop the residual income from your marketing consulting practice?

Richard: That is a great question, and there are a lot of different ways to develop. In fact, one of our consultants in the Chicago area, Steve is his name, he took my training and he immediately began to work with small businesses and he charged a fee to begin with, and then he began to take part ownership of the company.

Michael: How did he do that? Give me an example of what he did.

Richard: What he did is he went in and said, “Okay, if I’m going to go ahead and lower my fees to get my marketing system in your business, I would like to work out a percentage of ownership in the company.” So, here’s a consultant then that’s taken some ownership in companies and he’s told us that it’s created his retirement.

Michael: And, it’s a lot safer than some contingency deal?

Richard: Exactly. He’s got ownership, and he said just the other day that he’s actually created his retirement. So, residual opportunities are there. It’s just I think each consultant

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mindset. How do they want to use the system? Do they want to use it with a few clients and get heavily involved and maybe even become part owner, or maybe find some contingency opportunities? So, the system is such that I think that the personality of the consultant can be a driving use of the system.

Michael: Here’s a question from Lee. How could you make more in consulting fees with less paperwork and report writing? Is there a lot of report writing in this?

Richard: There really isn’t. My system teaches you how to generate of course an outline or I don’t like to use the word proposal. One thing that we teach you is you’ve got to be able to go in to the client and then respond back in your proposal to the client directly. You can’t come back with a generic proposal. You’ve got to come back with a system outline that hits the points that you uncovered in your opportunity analysis. So, that’s why every outline is going to be different for each prospect. So, there is that. After that, you’re getting paid to service the client, and any other writing or any other report generating is going to be paid for as part of the system.

Michael: And, you have these outlines in the system?

Richard: That’s right.

Michael: Here’s a question from Dave. By giving the prospect good value through educating at your first meeting with the agenda you’ve created through the answers the prospect gave in response to the questions that you had gone over in the opportunity analysis worksheet, how do you not give them enough information so that they would tend to want to do it on their own?

Richard: One of the marketing principles that Jay taught me that I’ve seen come true is you can tell a prospect a lot of things to do, but it all comes down to execution and he is not trained to execute. In fact, if I were to say the number one reason clients will retain a marketing consultant. It’s less for what he told them he’s going to do, and more for that he’s going to do it. In other words, the execution, the marketing content in the system is really not new. It’s been around and used successfully for years, and so they know a lot of this stuff. The business owner already knows he should be doing this. He

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hasn’t been doing this. So, by coming to him with a system, and your ability to execute, that’s what he’s going to buy.

Michael: Yeah, you’re going to do it for him.

Richard: Yes, because he’s probably bought books before. He’s probably maybe hired someone before that he thought would do it and it’s still not done.

Michael: Here’s a question from Bonnie. Richard, do you deal with clients who won’t take your advice? In other words, they hire you because you’re an expert and they need your help, then when you advise them on what to do, they disagree and think that their way is better. Should you just fire them or compromise or do what they want because the customer is always right?

Richard: Part of the upfront psychological contract is what I’ve heard it referred to. “I’m going to recommend certain marketing steps, Mr. Business owner, and I’m going to make sure that we get them executed. I do need your total support behind that, otherwise my guarantee is void. I’m guaranteeing to you that the system will perform, but unless everything is done the way I say it should be done and in the manner that I recommend it should be done, I can’t guarantee my performance. So, if you want to change it, if you want to do something else, or if you say, ‘I don’t want to do this.’, then it just voids our guarantee. Is that okay?” Cover all of that ahead of time. Now, certainly there’s going to be cases, and I’ve had them. I’ve had clients who have paid me and some of the marketing hasn’t worked, and yet the reason they know it hasn’t worked is they haven’t done their part. So, I still fulfilled my guarantee, but the results didn’t necessarily happen yet, the recognized it’s because they didn’t do their part.

Michael: Do you have a specific script or format that you use when asking for referrals and if so what is it? Do you have different approaches when seeking referrals from non-clients as opposed to clients? At what point in the relationship do you start asking? Now, this would be for building your marketing consulting practice.

Richard: The point that you might ask for referrals is going to be different with every client. Sometimes my clients are so excited after step one that I can ask for referrals. Sometimes it takes three or four months before things start working and

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start generating that I can ask for referrals. Really the right answer that it’s kind of whenever the client gives you a buying signal. And, that might be at any point in the steps.

Michael: How would you do it? What would you say?

Richard: I would say, “Listen, I’m excited that this is working for us. You feel like it’s working for your business.” And, they say, “Yes.” And, I will especially ask for referrals from a client who has other small businesses as clients, and I’ll say something like, “Well, would it be okay if maybe we sponsored or if you’d like to sponsor a little workshop for some of your clients that I can share these marketing ideas with some of them?” So, I’ve done sponsored workshops as a way to generate referrals.

Michael: So, they’ll send out something to their list a letter or a mailing?

Richard: Yes.

Michael: And, you’ve got that in the system.

Richard: Right. So, you can generate referrals through a seminar or they might give you, “Do you have one or two business associates that you think this might work for and that I can use your name in approaching?” And, that might give me one or two referrals.

Michael: How much are you using referrals in your consulting practice?

Richard: I probably right now, I would say that 80 percent of my income has come from referrals because I’ve built up enough relationships where I get referrals. These are with groups and associations that we have trained to do on how to set up some of these same relationships.

Michael: Give me an example of one of the workshops you did.

Richard: Elko, Nevada is one good example. We did a workshop there and it ended up selling both one on one consulting services as well as selling some of the web coaching services. So, that was fairly successful. I’ve also done a lot of the workshops for Chambers of Commerce who has these luncheons, and they sponsored me as a speaker. Almost always I’ll get clients from those workshops. So, the seminar and you get all of this in your training is very powerful because it’s a good balance of

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teaching and not giving them too much. It always intrigues them enough that they want to follow-up with a consultation.

Michael: Here’s a question from Mike – where do you see small business growth in the future, and where will a small business marketing consultant be seeing the biggest area of growth to tap into – specific areas, niches, markets or services? Any ideas on that?

Richard: Well, the Internet definitely is a big area. I see that growing. I see more and more of my own clients over time are getting involved in the Internet. So, I’m having more opportunity with them, as they build their business models or change their business models to accommodate the Internet. What’s great is that my system works whether it’s with a brick and mortar company or on the Internet, it still applies. So, all steps of the marketing consulting you can do, you can do either with a web-based company or a brick and mortar company. So, I see that as a big one. Retail is struggling, and so retail is an opportunity. The small Mom and Pop retail stores are getting beat up by Wal-Mart. They’re getting beat up by the big Home Depots and all of those big box companies are threatening them. So, they’re looking for answers. They’re looking for help. I think another big opportunity is going to be more and more small business owners are starting their own businesses. They’re buying franchises and sometimes the franchise has all the marketing laid out for them, but sometimes they don’t. I’m working right now with a franchise client that just doesn’t feel that he’s getting any help from headquarters. So, there’s going to be a lot of people getting into business by themselves being that that whole sector is growing. So, those are the opportunities that I see.

Michael: Here’s a question from Margo. Although no two businesses are exactly alike, generally speaking what are the three surest methods of immediately increasing profits in a small business?

Richard: I would say the three are number one, creating a really good unique selling proposition and then integrating that into all of their current marketing processes.

Michael: Give me an example.

Richard: I worked with a client that was in the employee leasing business. He was the owner, the sole owner, and he five salespeople. Well, the sales were not doing as well as he

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would’ve liked, and so he hired me as a consultant to create a Unique Selling Proposition. So, we did that, and part of that process is asking the owner what he really thinks his Unique Selling Proposition is. So, I got that from the owner. Well, in step two, you go about integrating that Unique Selling Proposition into all of the sales process.

Michael: What did he come up with as his Unique Selling Proposition?

Richard: He said, “Richard, I don’t sell life insurance. I don’t sell health insurance. I save a small business owner time and energy in complying with all of the legal rules of business.” So, really you’re not selling product. You’re not selling payroll services. You’re selling time, and energy and liability for the business owner. You’re taking away all of these things so he doesn’t have to deal with, and he said, “Yeah, that’s why my USP is.” Well, I went and asked his five salespeople what they sold, and they were not selling that. Instead, they were selling health insurance or 401(k) s or payroll service. Well, the minute we got the owner’s Unique Selling Proposition integrated into the sales pitch of the five salespeople, we increased their closing rate from 20 to 40 percent and increased their revenues from \$60 to \$90 million dollars.

Michael: Wow.

Richard: It was phenomenal.

Michael: And, that’s just one thing.

Richard: That’s just one thing. So, to answer her question there’s number one and that is getting a good, unique selling proposition from the very beginning and getting it integrated. A second way to see money real quickly is improving the sales performance of sales people, and that’s done by giving them a good unique selling proposition, and then maybe doing some basic sales training. A third quick way-

Michael: Do you cover sales training in your system?

Richard: Yes, in fact we have a module in there that is a sales training module that they can use as part of their consulting.

Michael: And, I don’t have to be an expert at it? All I’ve got to do is follow along?

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Richard: Just follow the outline. The third way that would be fast is the customer base. I’ve seen a lot of money raised quickly be reactivating inactive customers.

Michael: Give me an example.

Richard: I had a doctor who was in the weight control business. In other words, he would advise patients on how to lose weight, and he had his own product, his own protein drink and cookies and things that were used in helping his patients lose weight. Well, he had about 500 patients that he had taken care of over the years, probably 50-100 that were active at any one time. I said, “Well, what’s happened to the other 400?” He says, “Well, I don’t know.” So, we put together a little simple letter to reactive those patients, and his revenues went up 25 percent in 30 days. So, that’s a big and fast and can be a very quick way to make money. So, those are your three.

Michael: Would you be willing to share with my listeners the series of 15 or 20 case studies that you’ve experienced in your consulting business?

Richard: Oh, you bet.

Michael: We’ll save that for another recording. I really appreciate you taking the time and handling all these questions from all my subscribers. I really appreciate it.

Richard: Thank you, it was a pleasure.

I hope this recording has been some of the best marketing advice you’ve heard in a long time. Richard’s proven system of uncovering hidden marketing assets in a business is based on his 15 years of marketing consulting, and it works. Whether you’re a new business looking for a way to systematize your marketing, or if you want to be a marketing consultant helping small to medium sized businesses while making a very comfortable income working part-time from home, Richard’s system can shortcut the learning process for you. For more information on Richard’s marketing system call 858-274-7851 or e-mail Michael@hardtfindseminars.com