

VOLUME 1

# The Blueprint

FOR BUILDING A LEGACY BUSINESS

**Creating a Shift  
From Fear to Love**

**DON'T TAKE THE  
ONLINE WORLD  
FOR GRANTED**

**How to Be Assertive  
Without Alienating  
Anyone**

**CREATING A  
LEGACY THAT  
ENDURES**



# The Blueprint

FOR BUILDING A LEGACY BUSINESS

“

Believe in yourself.  
Invest in your business

Celeste Giordano

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Celeste Giordano Consulting  
PO Box 490291  
Lawrenceville, GA 30049  
888-692-6170  
celeste@celestegiordano.com  
CelesteGiordano.com

 CelesteGiordano

 Celeste.giordano.986

 Celeste.Giordano



Managing Editor  
Celeste Giordano

Copy Editor and Designer  
Debbie Kerr



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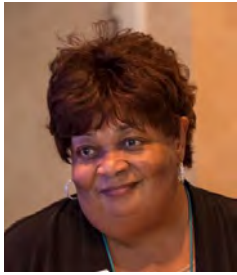


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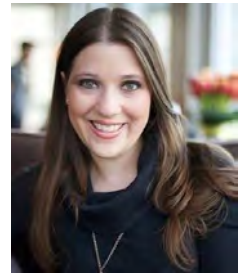


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# Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of *The Blueprint: For Building a Legacy Business*.

Sales is near and dear to my heart. Many small business owners hate selling but over and over again I've proven that anyone can learn to sell if they just have the right tools.

I love to lead my clients to success and as a business strategist my desire for this magazine is to help you in all aspects of your business. Several of my high-level clients, from various backgrounds, have contributed articles with tips, ideas, and insights for overcoming the struggles and challenges small business owners face.

A recurring theme in this issue is facing fear. Read the articles by Michal Mael on page 5 and Di Riseborough on page 10 on how to face your fears and conquer them. Other articles address technology and social media issues. In fact, every article is hand-picked to ensure the reader receives the best knowledge to become and stay successful in business.

A dedication to my parents is appropriate because without their guidance, example, and teachings about morals, ethics, and hard work I wouldn't be where I am today. All three siblings — I, my brother, and my sister — are successful entrepreneurs today because of the values instilled by our parents.

I'm thankful that my husband, Mike, was on the sales journey with me from 1992 – 2006 in my direct selling business. His continuing support, unconditional love, and dedication have made it so much easier on my entrepreneurial journey. I am honored and privileged to cherish the treasure of our commitment to love and marriage as we celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary this September. Be sure to read the article on page 15 about the importance of spousal support for entrepreneurs.

The tagline of my business is Learn • Grow • Achieve • Prosper which are the steps to take to become successful. It is my desire as a connector and international business consultant that anyone who is struggling in business finds the help they need.

Enjoy your issues of *The Blueprint*.

*Celeste Giordano*



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Nobody  
cares how  
much you  
know, until  
they know  
how much  
you care.

Theodore  
Roosevelt

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# Creating a Shift From Fear to Love

By Michal Mael

**I**t can be quite shocking when energy starts to move and people start to shake things up without knowing what's going on with themselves and their environments.

It's really kind of crazy in the world right now. Look at what is happening around the globe and then add Facebook to the picture. Thoughts are moving extremely fast, you might feel totally out of control. Aggression is in the air and you don't even notice that you're the one driving it. This is a time for a shift.

If you run, you better know how to run fast because there is no place to hide. You can keep running, or stop and see, maybe for the very first time, what it is all about, where you are, and how to get the hell out.

This is the time when everything you know to be true is up in the air. The tried and true is no longer. We can move to another city, get a new job, leave our families behind, and even get rid of all our belongings; and yet the answer lies in looking inward. Because everything we are seeing and feeling comes from the inside.

## **It's time to shift from fear to love.**

For a long time whenever I thought of looking inside, I thought, "Don't go there. Are you nuts?" Looking in was

not very pretty; there were so many "skeletons in the closets." There were memories that ruled my life even when I did not know it. But they were all fears that needed to be resolved.

It was time for me to become a spiritual adult and I made the commitment to my inner self (inner child) that I was going to go through it and come out the other side.

But why? My life was successful. I had a business and I was a good person. My reputation with my peers and clients was impressive.

I kept questioning why. I discovered that because I am a driven person, always striving to be the best, I wanted to impress upon myself that I was worth it; that I was here for a reason and I needed to find out what it was.

At that point, everything fell apart in my life and the process began — digging in and releasing the fears, hurt, pain, frustrations, arrogance, and mistrust. Trust me, there was a lot to go through and I started looking at my past to see where this all stemmed from.

That's when I noticed the huge collection of stones around my home. I already knew they affected me in different ways. You could even say they communicated with me. They listened to what I wanted and I believe they had no choice but to obey.

I opened up to my crystals, stones, and rocks and started to communicate with my subconscious mind. This was

the beginning of Energy Positioning Blueprint™.

I learned to listen to the energy in the home, feeling where the disconnect was and pushing stones to move the energy out of stagnation.

**The subconscious mind has a connection with the stones as they push through barriers and help you move forward.**

Stones are patient; they will live with you a lifetime hoping you will awaken. They help soothe your journey, move through it faster, and relax so you can rest. They also send love when you don't even know you need it or deserve it.

We welcome you to have the experience of stones to ease your journey, to shift your purpose, and love will rise inside out. Start your journey of shifting from fear to love.♦

Michal Mael's worldly experience and exotic background makes her the perfect ambassador for Nature's gems. In 1999, "Rock Our World" was born. Michal quickly became one of the leading experts in the metaphysical world, and one of the top designers in creating Nature's Art Decor™ in the home and workplace. [Michalandcompany.com](http://Michalandcompany.com)

# Inspiring Stories of Hope

By Beth Brownlee and Ruth Nichols



For every woman who has struggled, questioned, realized, believed, accomplished, and triumphed...Trust Your Journey.

This inspiring message is from two women, a cancer survivor and a young widowed mother, who have dealt with challenging turning points in their lives and discovered along the way that sharing inspiration and stories of hope are an incomparable way to give.

Trust Your Journey is about **you!** Our vision is to inspire you daily to be grateful for what you have but mindful of what you can become. Life's challenges come in all sizes, shapes, and colors.

You are a unique woman on a journey, duplicated by no one but shared by many. No woman is alone in her life's journey. There are always others who have been in your shoes or are currently facing the challenges you are facing. Together we will find strength in sharing our stories and our journeys, knowing that all things are possible.

Wherever life takes you, Trust Your Journey.♦

  
 Trust Your  
 Journey®



Be grateful for what you have  
but mindful of what you can become.

Beth Brownlee and Ruth Nichols

The journey began 12 years ago when Beth Brownlee, founder of Trust Your Journey and an active and healthy professional in the retail business world, discovered she had developed breast cancer.

As she prepared for the battle of her life, she welcomed inspiration wherever it came from. Nothing was taken for granted, as her attitude had become a key component in her race for survival.

During her treatment she was given a gift with three simple words inscribed — Trust Your Journey. They immediately made sense and resonated within her. A renewed sense of courage, faith, and strength emerged. She gave the fight against cancer everything she had...and she won.

Ruth Nichols, Trust Your Journey's partner, is no stranger to adversity and heartache. Right after she met the man of her dreams, she learned he

was terminally ill.

She suspected a road full of challenges would lie before them but determined to follow her heart. They married and embarked on a journey that would leave Ruth forever changed.

After five years of grueling medical treatments, organ transplants, tears, sadness, and hope, Ruth lost her husband but emerged a strong new mother. With her son Nicholas as a constant reminder of true love and the memories of her husband still inside her heart, Ruth continues to trust her journey.

Beth and Ruth know what it feels like to be faced with the challenge of a lifetime. They also know what it feels like to live through that challenge, look back, and smile.

The Trust Your Life brand reflects the beliefs and values of two women who found strength and courage in these three simple words: Trust Your Journey.♦

Trust Your Journey's purpose is to encourage women to honor their inner strength and celebrate their unique, personal path through life. By doing so, our goal is to help 100,000,000 women on 7 continents, and in 195 countries make positive, effective changes in their lives. Our success in sharing this message will always be measured by the lives we touch.

Visit [www.TrustYourJourney.com](http://www.TrustYourJourney.com) for more information.

## Trust Your Journey Products

It was a gift inscribed with **Trust Your Journey** that inspired Beth Brownlee. We want to pass on this idea to you for your own encouragement or to share with others.

Visit our website to purchase our products:  
[TrustYourJourney.com](http://TrustYourJourney.com)

### Apparel

Choose from a variety of t-shirt styles in many colors with silk-screened messages to motivate and give hope.

### Jewelry

Our collection of necklaces, earrings, bracelets, keychains, and stones remind you to Trust Your Journey.

### Drinkware

Water bottles, coffee cups, and mugs display messages such as "Live Your Passion" and "She Believed She Could."

### Accessories

"Follow Your Heart" and "Believe In Your Dreams" are a few of the words emblazoned on caps, journals, and socks.

**[TrustYourJourney.com](http://TrustYourJourney.com)**

# Don't Take the Online World for Granted

By Julie Kerr

**S**ocial Media Marketing is one of the most effective and cost-efficient ways to advertise your business.

Think of all the people who consistently check in to the internet world via their phone, tablet, or desktop computer. Reaching those potential clients online is possibly the only way you'll ever get their attention.

The perks of online marketing are outstanding, and can help you gain lifelong customers ... with the sales to match.

## Target groups

Having an online presence gives you the opportunity to tell your story to hundreds of thousands of people daily.

Social Media Marketing allows you to narrow your reach to specific people whom you believe will be interested in — and try out — your service or product. You can target specific age groups, genders, locations, interests, and more. All these options are available in ad campaigns and boosted posts.

## Connect with your clients

Connect with your existing and future clients by telling your story. Use photos, videos, memes, and text to build rapport and, in turn, client loyalty. With technology at the tips of your fingers you have the ability to respond quickly to any questions they may ask or comments they make. This will show them that you care about them.

## Boost your website's SEO

Not only does the content you post online bring clients to your front door,

it also boosts your website closer to the first page in a Google search. Kind of like bringing your front door to them.

Anytime you post a blog, picture, comment, or video that links to your website, Google recognizes it and ranks it higher in importance when someone does a Google search. This brings you closer to the top of the first page which is where you aspire to be.

## Get noticed at events

Use the tools on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and other social media platforms to tag your location and let the world know at which event you and your team are stationed.

Hashtags, checking in, and tagging friends spreads like wildfire and you'll be surprised who ends up noticing and drops in to see you.

## Track the results

Seeing your post, ad, or blog post



reaching many people is probably the most satisfying part of tracking conversions. Social Media Marketing makes this accessible by tracking the number of quality hits you are getting. Many sites give suggestions on ways to tweak posts and redefine target groups.

Even if you are not computer savvy it is important to invest in the people who spend time shopping online. Who knows? Your product or service could be their next click.♦

Julie Kerr is based in Barrie, Ontario, and writes blogposts, social media campaigns, and articles for magazines. She is also co-owner of Sunset Tanning Salon in Mississauga.

**If you feel like this when you think about updating your social media ...**



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- Write and post weekly blogs with basic SEO
- Report daily links to your social media accounts
- Compose and launch email marketing to your list



Contact Julie Kerr • [juleekerr@icloud.com](mailto:juleekerr@icloud.com)



# Creating a Legacy That Endures

By Joan Williams

**H**ave you heard about the turtle who was found perched on top of the fence post? One thing is for sure, it didn't get there by itself.

As I reflect on my leadership journey, I am indebted to the many mentors who guided me at crucial steps along the way toward reaching my goals. From my parents and teachers, to ministers and business coaches, I am appreciative of their investment into my life just when I needed it. As a result, I have chosen to pay it forward.

Mentoring others is like a boomerang that rewards you immeasurably. One such example came out of my 27-year tenure as Director of the School Nutrition Program in Carroll County, Georgia, where I led 170 employees in 23 schools.

To gain their trust, I spent time visiting each school and getting to know the people and discover their goals. Many wanted to go to college or technical school, and some wanted to advance in their profession.

One such employee was a food assistant who had a GED but wanted to become a manager. After showing a great work ethic, she was promoted and gradually moved up from manager to system-wide training manager. With a strong desire to become the director, she took the necessary steps to earn a college degree and then her MBA.

After mentoring her for 10+ years, I knew she was ready to lead the program just when I was ready to retire and begin my own business. Seeing her grow and lead and then carrying on the work I had begun has been one of the greatest highlights of

my life. In addition, many other employees have pursued their goals as a result of her example.

I've experienced the rewards both personally and professionally that mentorship can provide.

1) It hones your own skills and strengths as a leader.

2) It causes you to think of others' dreams and goals and to offer work experiences that bring out their best.

3) When people are working in their strengths, the productivity level is increased and employee morale is high.

4) It creates a team atmosphere where people are valued and appreciated, which trickles down to the customers.

5) Your mentorship creates a ripple effect and others duplicate your efforts.

One of the greatest benefits as a leader or business owner is that your legacy continues. John Maxwell states that "a legacy is created only when a person puts his organization into the position to do great things without him. Your lasting value will be measured by succession."

Who wants to build a business and then have it fail when he leaves? Developing leaders ensures that your work is not in vain and that you can enjoy the fruits of your efforts — which is a true legacy.

Each of us can make a difference, whether it's reaching out to a stranger with a kind word, practicing random acts of kindness, or taking time to encourage people. All of these actions can empower and inspire others to pass it on and on and on...

To whom can you mentor and pass



**A candle loses nothing  
by lighting another candle.**  
~ James Keller

on your wisdom, your encouragement,  
and your resources today?♦

At an early age, Joan developed a passion for educating and empowering others to achieve success. A former teacher and school system administrator and now entrepreneur, she utilizes her 30+ years of organizational leadership and business development by teaching topics from nutrition education to developing effective teams. In addition, she mentors individuals on achieving their personal goals.  
678-910-1931  
joanw8280@gmail.com

# How to Be Assertive Without Alienating Anyone

By Di Riseborough

**Y**ou may not give much thought to the existence of boundaries in your daily life, but they are everywhere. For example, when driving on a two-lane road, you stay to the right of the center line, especially if there is a car coming from the opposite direction. That's a boundary you can clearly see.

But what about relationship boundaries? You may come from a family where boundaries are unclear or barely recognized, which can lead to conflict or feelings of resentment.

Maybe you don't even know what a boundary really is. The simplest way for me to define a boundary is "where I end and you begin." Knowing our boundaries enables us to make choices about how we feel, think, or behave.

Healthy personal boundaries = taking responsibility for your own actions and emotions, while *not* taking responsibility for the actions or emotions of others.

**Whatever you are willing to put up with, is exactly what you will have. ~ Unknown**

Establishing healthy boundaries is not selfish. Knowing your boundaries allows you to have a clear sense of how you experience things as well as have empathy for others, without taking responsibility for them. Healthy boundaries create a good balance between taking care of yourself and being there for others without being manipulated or exploited.



Asking for what you want – and setting boundaries around what you don't want – is a key life skill. But sometimes in our enthusiasm to practice this skill, we over-do our own assertiveness and end up with partners/family/friends who shut down, get angry, or feel resentful.

Here are four tips for developing your assertiveness in a way that will actually strengthen, deepen, and enrich your relationships — thus avoiding the "alienation trap."

## **Get Clear**

Being assertive starts with knowing

what you are — and aren't — willing to be, do, or have. Many of us don't know this critical information as we have not been taught or have not taken the time to really find out for ourselves.

In that case, it may be useful to ask: "In an ideal world, what would I like to happen?" Focusing on an ideal outcome opens your mind, prevents you from falling into passivity or "victim-thinking," and helps you get really clear on what you want and don't want.

Follow these tips to get you started: *(Continued on next page)*

## How to Be Assertive Without Alienating Anyone

(Continued from previous page)

- Make a list of your personal relationships and how you want to be treated in each of them.
- Identify an area of your life that is neglected and in need of attention, for example your physical, emotional, or spiritual life. What small step could you take towards bringing balance into one of these areas?
- Identify your “overdraft account” for your personal boundary system. It’s a security system warning that your personal energy field has been breached, and you’re letting stuff in that isn’t yours. This is really important.

When our boundaries are weak, unguarded, or unclear, we let in all sorts of stuff that isn’t actually our stuff, and we unconsciously give away our own personal energy. You might feel drained, resentful, or overwhelmed.

That means you’re dealing with a breach of your energetic security system and a leak of your own personal energy. You’re looking at warning signs indicating that some work needs to be done, and some boundaries need to be shored up.

### Set Boundaries

Once you know the outcome you need (or want), share it. Pay attention to the way it feels in your body when you state your boundaries to another person. With practice, you can actually sense when you’re hitting the “sweet spot.” It can feel pleasurable, even exhilarating, to express your needs or desires out loud.

A phrase like “such and such doesn’t work for me” is a simple way of being assertive while maintaining a connection in your relationships.

### Make a Regular Habit of Stating Your Needs and Desires

You build your assertiveness the same way you build any muscle: exercise. Practice speaking up about your needs, big or small, on a daily basis. When you speak up about things that are less controversial — such as where to go to dinner, requesting help unloading the dishwasher, or which TV program to watch — both you and those around you get used to your assertiveness. It becomes easier for you to practice and for those around you to hear.

### Give as Much as You Get

Assertiveness is a two-way street. If you want your boundaries to be respected,

you must return the courtesy to those around you. If someone doesn’t want you to give advice, don’t. If someone asks you to wait thirty minutes after work before you talk and connect, respect that. When it comes to following through on another’s reasonable request, actions really do speak louder than words.

Bear in mind that those close to you may not fully support your attempts to change. They are used to the old ways of doing things. As with any life change, setting new healthier boundaries for you has a price, and this may mean losing acquaintances along the way. Of course, those relationships that are worth having will survive and grow stronger.

### Tactics To Deal with Objections

- Be consistent with your new boundaries
- Keep them simple
- Stay calm at all times
- Be responsible for your own emotional reactions rather than blaming other people
- If it appears you need to compromise, be flexible; take it slowly and don’t agree to anything that doesn’t feel right

Once you have established strong, clear boundaries, people give you more respect. Emotional manipulators will back off and in their place sustainable, loving relationships will thrive.♦

## Forgiveness: How to Let Go When It Still Hurts

Through her own powerful story of forgiving the man who brutally murdered her grandmother, Di Riseborough teaches that through forgiveness there is peace after pain. The essence of her business is transformational, intuitive, spiritual, inspirational, energy-boosting, and action-oriented. The Seven Keys of C.O.U.R.A.G.E. is a 7-key acronym she uses to teach people how to live their best life.

[www.diriseborough.com](http://www.diriseborough.com)



Di Riseborough is an Intuitive Life Strategist who combines Spiritual Psychotherapy, Life Coaching, and Energy Psychology to assist you in making positive changes and better choices. As an “F-Word” (Fear & Forgiveness) Specialist featured on the Oprah Winfrey Network, she helps you become consciously aware of which fears are driving your decisions and then acts as an emotional compass to set you in the right direction. [www.diriseborough.com](http://www.diriseborough.com)



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# Art Matters

By Carolyn Wright

**A**rt Matters. This phrase has a dual meaning and purpose for me. As the owner of an art gallery and lover of all the arts, you might say, “Of course art would matter to you; it’s your business.” And you would be right.

However, art matters far beyond the scope of my personal world. It matters in our schools, our communities, our culture, and our humanity. So, I hope that you will join me as we explore some of the ways art matters in a broader sense, and the positive impact it has on our communities.

Often, funding for the arts is one of the first areas to be reduced or eliminated during economic downturns or budget cuts and one of the last areas to be reinvigorated financially. Studies have shown that students who are exposed to arts education and training for several years (visual arts, music, dance, theater, etc.) score higher on tests and experience lower dropout rates.

Arts education and involvement stimulates the brain in a different way than science, math, and technology. All of these are essential to the development of well-rounded, creative, I-can-work-with-others, think-outside-the-box individuals. This dual approach to education — training the creative as well as the logical part of the brain — is exactly what corporations desire in their employees.

The late Steve Jobs, founder of Apple said in 2011 during the introduction of the iPad2, “It is in



Apple’s DNA that technology alone is not enough — it’s technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our hearts sing.”

“GE hires a lot of engineers. We want young people who can do more than add up a string of numbers and write a coherent sentence. They must be able to solve problems, communicate ideas, and be sensitive to the world around them. Participation in the arts is one of the best ways to develop these abilities.” Clifford V. Smith, President of General Electric Foundation.

Joseph M. Calahan, Director of Cooperate Communications, Xerox Corporation said, “Arts education aids students in skills needed in the workplace: flexibility, the ability to solve problems and communicate, the ability to learn new skills, to be creative and innovative, and to strive for excellence.”

What does this mean for you and your community? The arts in various forms — museums and galleries, film and television production, theatre,

ballet, music, and national touring entertainment — is developing and growing to varying degrees in and around our most vibrant communities.

Yet we can’t just rest on our laurels. We must keep looking for ways to grow and develop toward the best possible quality of life, while supporting healthy economic growth and development that reaches every American. Art matters because in every great community, in every

great civilization, the arts have played a role in its long-term survival and success.

Want to see more of the arts in your community? Start a conversation as to how you can advance awareness of and appreciation for the arts where you live, because Art Matters!♦

**I believe that creativity will be the currency of the 21st century.**

Gerald Gordon, Ph.D.,  
President/CEO,  
Fairfax County (Virginia)  
Economic Development Authority

Carolyn Wright is an Atlanta native and a resident of Snellville, Georgia, since 1987. She describes herself as a lover of art, world traveler, and a student of life. She and her sister Sylvia Culberson own The LONA Gallery located on the square in Historic Downtown Lawrenceville, Georgia. | [thelonagallery.com](http://thelonagallery.com)

# 5 Major Identity Theft Prosecutions

By Sara Poe

**T**he IRS has warned that identity theft is no longer the domain of small time thieves. Rather, it's increasingly undertaken by multi-national criminal enterprises that obtain personal information online. Here are 5 of the largest cases of identity theft in 2015.

**1** Keisha Lanier of Newnan, Georgia, and Tracy Mitchell were handed stiff sentences by a court in Alabama for heading a large identity theft ring which filed over 9,000 individual tax returns.

The sources for the stolen identities included the US Army, several Alabama state agencies, and a call center in Georgia.

After receiving the refunds from financial institutions, the fraudsters printed out checks from check stock that had been sent to their homes. When the institutions stopped this practice, the thieves recruited US Postal Service employees who supplied them with addresses on their routes. The postal employees then handed over the checks for a fee.

Via a sophisticated money laundering operation, the \$10,000,000 in refunds received was cashed at businesses in Alabama, Georgia, and Kentucky.

**2** Georgia residents Patrice and Antonio Taylor, Jarrett Jones, and Victoria Davis were convicted of filing over 1,100 fraudulent tax returns. A cellphone belonging to Patrice Taylor was used to call the IRS's Automated

Electronic Filing PIN Request 114 times. Taylor, who was employed at Tift Regional Hospital, stole the personal information of five patients and 531 sixteen-year-olds and used it to submit fake returns.

**3** Stacy Williams of Statesboro, Georgia, was the last of 15 Georgia residents charged under a large identity theft and tax fraud scheme. Williams was sentenced to 94 months in prison and ordered to pay restitution.

**4** Three men based in Miami, Florida, stole personal identity information and filed hundreds of fake tax returns using online tax preparation programs. They requested that the refunds be placed on prepaid debit cards which were mailed to addresses they had supplied.

**5** A career criminal, his wife and other participants in Tampa, Florida, used lists and medical records of 7,000 people to obtain stolen names, social security numbers, and dates of birth. They filed fake tax returns and opened prepaid debit cards to obtain \$3,000,000 in refunds over three years.

To protect yourself from tax-related identity theft, ask your tax preparer or accountant about the current security strategies implemented by the IRS, states, and the tax industry.



**15**  
Million US  
residents experience  
identity theft each year

**\$16**  
Billion  
was stolen from  
US consumers in 2016

Ensure that your tax preparer specializes in simplifying their clients' financials and taxes and taking the anxiety and confusion out of the accounting process. ♦

Sara Poe CPA, founder of Poe's Accounting Services and Lightning Tax Services, helps clients understand and navigate their finances. ♦ 770-545-8841  
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# The Real Value of Spousal Support

By Celeste Giordano

Countless people play roles that are absolutely fundamental, yet tragically undervalued — ranging from full-time moms and dads to teachers and nurses. Too often, the spouses and partners of entrepreneurs are similarly undervalued. They don't get the love and appreciation they deserve.

Many of the entrepreneurs I've met over the years are busy chasing their dreams. Sometimes, despite their best intentions, they forget to see who is standing by their side, supporting them each step of the way.

If you are fortunate to have a supportive partner who is a listening ear, an advisor, a confidant, a shoulder to cry on, and someone to laugh with, then you are truly blessed.

## Are you a supportive partner?

Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to criticize you here. I understand that for busy entrepreneurs trying to build a business, it is SO easy to get caught up with the myriad of responsibilities on your plate.

But when you start putting business before your spouse and loved ones, your relationships will suffer and your support system will crumble. That's not good for your personal life, and it certainly jeopardizes your ability to build a profitable Legacy Business.

## Give the gift of time.

One of the greatest benefits of entrepreneurship is that you are the master of your schedule. Even if your schedule seems hectic, don't lose sight of the fact that you are in the driver's

seat. You decide when, where, how long, and with whom you work. Set aside time in your schedule to spend with your spouse or partner.

Recently, I had the opportunity to take advantage of my mobility as an entrepreneur. My husband Mike had to travel to Washington D.C. for business. It's a city we have never explored together, so I decided to tag along to show my support and enjoy some quality time with him.

Of course, I couldn't just press "pause" and put my business on hold. I have responsibilities to my clients and spent ample time in scheduled phone meetings and consultations. But as an entrepreneur, I had the ability to work remotely.

The result? Mike and I had the opportunity to visit sites and enjoy meals together in our off time. Business didn't suffer, and we invested in our relationship. It was a win-win.

## Support their dreams

When my husband Mike and I got

married, we made a commitment to honor and support one another. Part of honoring your spouse — and your relationship — is supporting their dreams. Make sure that you show an interest in your spouse's goals, whether they are entrepreneurs or they work a traditional 9-to-5 job.

When you spend time together, make sure you aren't monopolizing the conversation. Yes, you can talk about your day and the challenges you face in your business, but make sure to express equal interest in what's going on in their life, personally and professionally,

## Clock out

Carving out quality time with your spouse means that you both have to take off your business hats. You can't enjoy each other if you aren't present, and you can't be present unless you shift gears. Before spending time with your partner, take a minute to clear away the mental clutter of the day and remove your business hat.

*Continued on next page*



## The Real Value of Spousal Support

*Continued from previous page*

Most importantly, you can't spend quality time together with your spouse, partner, or anyone else unless you unplug from technology. That means closing your laptop and shutting off your phone.

Your attention is priceless. It shows the person you're speaking with that you care and they matter. If you're constantly checking your emails, voicemails, and social media you're sending a clear message that they aren't as important.

### Family matters

The lessons I've described above don't only apply to romantic relationships. You need to be present and give quality time to all those in your life who matter — children, parents, grandparents, and dear friends.

When you make a conscientious effort to nurture your relationships, they blossom. Strong personal relationships offer the solid foundation necessary to overcome obstacles and stay committed to growing your business.

At Celeste Giordano Coaching, the entrepreneurs I work with learn the fundamental importance of creating work-life balance. Your business success is accelerated when you have the support of your loved ones. Creating a support system means investing undistracted quality time into your personal relationships.

It might feel like you need your personal life to take a back seat temporarily while you get your business to the next level, but this is an illusion. The happiest entrepreneurs understand that balance is integral to building a Legacy Business and living a life you love.

Contact me today to explore which practical action steps you can take to "Double Plus" your income without sacrificing your personal life and the relationships that matter most. ♦ celeste@celestegiordano.com

# How to Rid Yourself of the Blogging Blues

By Rachel Segal



If you find yourself drowning your "my blog's a bust" sorrows in a pint of Haagen Dazs (no judgment here), don't fret. Here are 5 must-implement tips on how to make sure your blog is attention-grabbing, not snooze-worthy:

**1. Identify your audience.** "Spray and pray" tactics don't work. Posts written to appeal to everyone are posts no one will take the time to read. Once you've identified exactly who you're talking to, you can customize your content to pique their attention. What are your target market's needs, challenges, and interests? Keep those in mind when selecting the topic and tone of your next blog post.

**2. Get to the point.** In a saturated blogosphere ripe with short attention spans, you have to make your point and fast! Don't wait until the end of your blog post to share your key message. Tell your readers what you're going to tell them and why it's important for them to know. Once they're hooked on the relevance of your message, you've bought yourself some time to drive home your message.

**3. Let's get visual.** Words are powerful, but we're visual creatures. Increase reader engagement by making sure each blog post is paired with pictures that tie into your content and make an impact. If you can learn how to tell stories with relevant photos and videos, you'll be well on your way to an attention-worthy blog.

**4. Goodbye stiff upper lip.** A blog is a conversation on paper. Read: not the place for academic or formal writing. You speak casually and when it comes to blogs you ought to write that way. But remember, a conversational tone is no excuse for poor grammar and punctuation. You'll be sending a message loud and clear that you don't care, and neither will your readers.

**5. Offer a solution.** If you're blogging about a problem or issue, offer a solution or call to action. How can your company or organization make the reader's life easier or more meaningful? The blog isn't a direct sales pitch but you should make it seamless for readers to act on the issue you've laid out. Every blog post should link back to your contact page or a description of your products and services.

So there you have it folks, hope is not lost. Implement these tips to engage your target audience and keep them coming back for more.

Happy blogging! ♦

Rachel Segal (Groskopf) founded Bizbuzz PR ([www.bizbuzzpr.com](http://www.bizbuzzpr.com)) with a vision of helping clients find the right words to tell their stories. She has produced marketing materials and developed brand strategies for a diverse clientele, from budding entrepreneurs and starts-ups to well-established companies and non-profit organizations.



# How to Protect Your Business From Cyber-Attacks

By Jason Rush

“**W**e can’t open any of our documents,” Tiffany, the receptionist at a construction firm in Atlanta, said in a panicked state when I answered the phone. After confirming that they, in fact, could not open any documents, I logged into her system and saw that all of the documents on her machine and on the company network folders had incorrect file extensions.

“Shut down all of your systems now!” I advised her. The firm had just been struck by a ransomware virus. Thankfully, the company had a disaster recovery solution in place and the recovery procedure had them operating again in a short time.

The above scenario was real, and it shows a good outcome, but a statistic released by the U.S. National Cyber Security Alliance found that 60 percent of small companies are unable to sustain their businesses after a cyber-attack. And according to the Ponemon Institute, the average cost for small businesses to clean up after they have been hacked is \$690,000; for middle market companies, it’s over \$1 million.

Forty-three percent of cyber-attacks target small businesses because small businesses are an easy, soft target to penetrate. Cyber-criminals can steal your credit card and financial information, personal information, and other data.

So, what can you do to protect your business from being the next cyber-attack statistic?

Most cyber breaches happen because an employee does something they are not supposed to. From unsafe internet browsing to simple human



error, employee actions weigh heavily on your company’s cyber well-being. Basic training and coaching can stop the majority of low-level threats. But, that is not enough.

Business owners must implement and establish data security, protocols, practices, and procedures that every employee takes seriously.

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**A multi-layer defense is necessary for any company that is exposed to the internet.**

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**Create a business continuity and incident response plan.** This plan will take effect immediately following a compromise of your systems. With the right plan, your company can be back up and operating in a matter of hours.

**Keep software up to date.** This doesn’t just refer to your security software. The software your business typically uses in everyday applications has security updates and patches, so make sure these are updated.

**Guard against spam.** Emails, and even Facebook and Twitter posts, might contain links that cybercriminals can use to gain access to your sensitive data and information. Even if you know where a message comes from, delete it if it looks suspicious.

**Be proactive before you suspect anything.** Seconds count when running a business, so downtime leads to lost money. Firewalls, intrusion detection devices, and packet scanners are additional ways that your business can protect against attacks before they happen. These devices act like a big iron gate to your proverbial city.

Another option to consider is cyber insurance, which can protect you after a loss from a hack or other data spills. With the right type of insurance your company will be covered after a security breach, including legal fees.

If you are ever in doubt about whether your business is doing things the right way, or for advice about what types of cyber-security would be best, talk to your IT professional. They have years of experience and education under their belts and can help with securing your business’s data.♦

Jason Rush is the President of Rush Tech Solutions, LLC, a managed IT service provider in Loganville, Georgia. He is married to Michelle and they have a 4-year-old daughter, Arabella. In his spare time, he likes to golf, snowboard, and play poker. [rushtechsolutions.com](http://rushtechsolutions.com)

# Technology and Travel Trends

By Jamie Parker

In a November 2015 interview on the CNN segment *Facetime*, Peter Kerkar, marketing director of the Cox and Kings group, stated that the next big trend in travel is to provide complex dynamic packaging on a mobile platform.

He states that travel is increasing at a record-setting pace and that people are wanting more of an experience versus a vacation.

What is an experience? It is a trip that provides a detailed itinerary in a way that is not available today. For example, what if you could go to New York, stay at a nice hotel, purchase tickets to a Broadway show, take the Statue of Liberty Harbor tour, and pre-arrange transportation for these excursions all in one package with just the click of a button?

That is where the industry is trending and the first or best company that provides this option in a mobile platform is the company to beat in the upcoming years, according to Kerkar.

There is also a trend toward lower airfares as more and more discounted servicers enter the fray. WOW airlines now offers transatlantic travel at rock bottom prices. Examples include Boston to Amsterdam starting at \$245 round trip. Even ground transportation companies like MegaBus allow travelers to go to popular destinations for as little as a dollar.

How does technology play into these trends? We are seeing a rise in travel-related technologies. Virtual reality 360-degree travel is here. You can experience destinations throughout the world through your smart phone. Look up, down, turn around and it is as if you are actually



there. Dreamtrips, airlines like Qantas, and hotel chains like Marriott are also experimenting with offering VR goggles to their consumers, according to *USA Today*.

Smart Cards are on the horizon. Imagine walking into a hotel and with the swipe of a card you check in and go directly to your room. The cards can also hold information from your credit cards, loyalty cards, etc.

All this seems like pie-in-the-sky but the reality is that much of this technology will be available by the end of 2017.

Dreamtrips, an app available on Apple and Android devices, has created a travel community that takes the best features of Facebook, Yelp and Trip Advisor and combines them into one. You can make friends, post and comment, book experiences like the ones described above, see reviews, experience virtual reality 360-

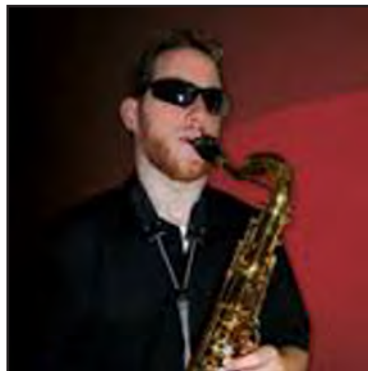
degree travel, and much more.

The world is becoming an increasingly smaller place and technology is driving the travel industry to unite people more frequently in more ways than ever before.

Whether you use virtual reality travel or are staying in someone's apartment in another city, travel is becoming more accessible to the masses.

The next big thing is just around the corner...stay tuned.♦

As a seventeen-year veteran teacher in public schools, Jamie Parker realized that many students weren't experiencing the world. He combines his passion for kids and serving and now helps families travel the world as a sales director for Dreamtrips and a top agent with Keller Williams.



## Jamie Parker

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# How Speaking Can Change Your Life and Your Business

By Arvee Robinson

**L**ike many entrepreneurs who come out of corporate careers, I was passionate about helping people, but knew little about starting a business.

The moment I walked out of my job, I had a sense of total freedom! After punching a time clock for so many years, it felt like I had all the free time in the world. I hung out my shingle and volunteered to be Division Governor for my district in Toastmasters, started a storytelling club, and joined a network marketing company. I did everything except work with clients.

After several months of living off my savings, I realized I was doing it all wrong.

Months earlier, I attended Adam Urbanski's two-day seminar, Small Biz Marketing Summit. Adam talked about marketing — building your database, your brand, and your marketing funnel. I had no clue what he was talking about but thought, "I'll figure this out. How hard can it be?"

I never did figure it out on my own.

One day I glanced at my bookshelf and the notebook from Adam's seminar caught my attention. I read through it and realized I couldn't implement any of his ideas on my own. I called Adam and hired him as my mentor to help me make sense of this entrepreneurial marketing process.

During our first coaching call, I said, "Here's my problem, I started my business several months ago and I haven't attracted any coaching clients. What am I doing wrong?"

"How are you spending your time?" Adam asked.

With much excitement, I shared



**Your message is your gift to the world.**

**It costs you nothing and buys you everything.**

~ Arvee Robinson

with him all the activities I was involved in.

"No wonder you don't have any business!" he said. "You're too busy being busy! If it doesn't produce clients, don't do it."

He paused for a second, then asked, "What do you teach your clients?"

"How to get clients with public speaking," I answered.

"Then why aren't you practicing what you preach?"

That question changed my life. I had never thought to use what I taught.

The minute I hung up, I called the program chairs of every organization I knew and set up a speaking schedule.

If I had not hired Adam as my mentor, I would have run back to

corporate America with my tail between my legs. Thank God that didn't happen.

My first speech, to a group of high-powered bankers, attorneys, and consultants, was 30 minutes on how to deliver a persuasive speech. I don't remember the exact title but I do remember I landed two clients that day. Afterwards, I reminded myself, "Public speaking worked in corporate America and it works for entrepreneurs, too."

I built a six-figure income using public speaking to market my services. To this day, I speak once or twice a week to bring in new clients.

You too can use public speaking as a marketing strategy to attract clients, generate leads, and grow your business. All you need is knowledge and passion. You can learn the rest.

Why speaking works:

1. Speaking positions you as an expert in your field.
2. Speaking allows your audience to fall in love with you.
3. Speaking is an inexpensive marketing strategy.
4. Speaking is an effortless way to build your database.
5. Speaking is leverage.

Public speaking works for every business if you learn what to say, how to say it, and where to say it. ♦

Arvee Robinson is an in-demand international public and keynote speaker and trainer motivating audiences in the United States and around the world. Her audiences have fun with interactive stories and role-plays while learning workable step-by-step strategies they can instantly put into action. | [arveerobinson.com](http://arveerobinson.com)

# 5 SIMPLE REASONS

YOU NEED TO PUBLISH YOUR OWN

# MAGAZINE



By Debbie Kerr

Today I spent time cleaning out my email inbox. You know, unsubscribing and deleting unopened emails that even with the best intentions I know I will never read. And Facebook? Did I really get sucked in again to scrolling through the nonstop feed of kittens, political rants, cryptic notes, and other posts that are a waste of time? How can I grow my business if I'm constantly bombarded with electronic "noise?" It seems like everyone is vying for my attention in the same way.

I'd rather sit down and read something with substance. There's something comforting about picking up a book or magazine at leisure – to feel it in my hands, turn the pages, and even breathe in the smell. I can concentrate and enjoy a cup of tea while reading.

That's why you need a printed magazine: to stand out from the hundreds of other business owners who send digital messages every day. Who else can brag about having their own printed magazine? If you don't have the time, talent, or desire to write, delegate the project to a designer. You don't have to do a thing to look amazing.

## Why you need to publish your own magazine

- 1. Showcase your expertise in a newsstand-quality publication.** You've heard that a book is the new business card, but imagine that a magazine is the new business card. Show off your expertise by sharing your knowledge in a beautiful, glossy publication. It's not as hard or costly as you think it might be, and the impact is priceless.
- 2. Build your credibility by sharing relevant, practical content.** Be the authority your clients expect and share your motivational, educational, or entertaining ideas. Ask guest authors or business owners in a complementary field to contribute articles and your influence widens when they share the magazine with their followers.
- 3. Repurpose your existing content.** Already have a blog, a book, or workshop materials? Don't reinvent the wheel. Use excerpts from what you have already produced and promote your book, blog, or course by publishing your content in a magazine to reach your audience in an exclusive way.
- 4. Connect with your audience in a unique, tangible way.** Be different and fresh. Who else takes the time to do that? Despite what many people say, print is not dead. People look forward to getting something in the mail and are unlikely to throw away a beautiful, resourceful magazine.
- 5. Keep in touch on a regular basis.** One of the cardinal rules of keeping in touch is to stay top of mind with your clients. But if everyone is scrambling for the top using the same platform, it becomes senseless. Publishing your own magazine makes you look like a million dollars and your clients are thrilled to receive the magazine in their mailbox. It's a win-win situation.

Debbie Kerr is a creative editor, whose passion is to design and create printed materials for speakers, authors, and coaches. She publishes her own magazine, *The Atalanta Woman*<sup>TM</sup>, ([TheAtalantaWoman.com](http://TheAtalantaWoman.com)), as well as designing publications for her clients. | [dkerr@planbee.biz](mailto:dkerr@planbee.biz) | 678-641-2896