

What Goes Up Must Come Down- Marketing to avoid stress

Everything that exists is cyclical by nature and your fitness business is not any different. Especially if your business is new, the ups and downs can be drastic and can cause huge amounts of stress - particularly if your income and livelihood is dependent on the success of your business. There is no way to avoid the ebbs and flows of a PT business but there is a way to reduce the lows and to raise the highs and that is through consistent implementation and application of marketing strategies.

Marketing is the lifeblood of every fitness business and business growth and development is based on and is a result of marketing. The one area of marketing that most new fitness business owners struggle with is consistency. They usually don't understand that getting results with marketing takes time and they often give up too soon on a particular marketing strategy and then jump onto the next one. Marketing is similar to filling a funnel with molasses: As you begin to fill the funnel, the molasses will slowly drain from the other end. But once it starts draining, you will have a continuous flow, provided you continue to pour more molasses into the top of the funnel. If you stop pouring molasses in, your flow will eventually seize. Similarly, you may not see immediate results as you start your marketing campaign, however, if you continue with a consistent, determined effort, eventually you will be successful. But if your efforts falter, so will your results.

Here are some tips to avoid the pit falls of the *Marketing Blues*:

- Take the time to create a detailed marketing plan outlining all of the marketing strategies and tactics that you plan to implement. With each marketing tactic, create at least 3 action steps, milestones and objectives. Understand that your marketing plan is a living document and needs to be changed and updated as your business grows.
- Avoid the *silver bullet* marketing approach. Many PT businesses put all of their eggs in one basket and settle for one marketing strategy. The main problem with this approach is that it puts a large strain on this tactic and with that the pressure for results tends to get impacted and if the strategy does not work the business can be in trouble.
- Invest in a marketing coach to guide you through the marketing process. Since you are probably new to marketing, it will be imperative to have the experience and perspective from someone on the outside.
- Educate your self on the marketing process. Consider how much time and energy you have devoted to learning about personal training. The success of your business is at least as dependant on the ability to market PT as on the quality of your service. There are countless books and educational programs focused on marketing and several that are specific to yoga.
- Be patient, especially in the beginning as you implement your marketing strategies as most take time to produce results. Over time you will develop a sense for which strategies are more effective for your fitness business.
- Divide your efforts and resources between on-line and off-line marketing strategies. Some of the off-line strategies include networking, advertising, cold calling, and telemarketing. Some of the on-line strategies include e-mail marketing, pay-per-click advertising and directory listings.



- Check out the Small Business Administration (www.sba.gov). They have a variety of services and resources designed to help small businesses succeed.

There is saying, *if you want what others don't have, be willing to do what others don't do*, this saying can apply perfectly to your business. The reason that most PT businesses struggle and fail is because they don't put the necessary attention and focus on marketing. Many businesses get so caught up in running their businesses that they avoid building their businesses. Refuse to become a statistic; reduce your stress levels taking the first steps in proactively marketing your business.

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