THE LEAGUE OF
EXTRAORDINARY MINDS

ACTION DOCUMENT
for Panel 3

Pre-emptive Marketing: Innovative Tactics that Outperform What Everyone Else Is Doing

"Expertise is only as good as the actions you take with them. In this program, we've gotten you world-class experts. We've tried to get you world-class interpretations that we are moving mountains to share with you. What you do with it is up to you."

Jay Abraham & Rich Schefren

Panel 3: Pre-emptive Marketing: Innovative Tactics that Outperform What Everyone Else Is Doing

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How the ideas from this panel get translated into business growth

This action document is designed to help you increase your credibility and the trust of your target market. We have synthesized the key points from the panel discussion into ten specific actions you can take to use trust and credibility for business growth.

League of Extraordinary Minds
Action Document

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I. Getting Focused

Know Why You Do What You Do

1. Your Purpose and Passion

Purpose and passion are fundamental to long term success in business. This may seem obvious to you, but many people focus on other criteria:

- Some jump into enterprises that offer the promise of large revenues.
- Others pursue franchises that has the best numbers and the best deal.
- Still others want a strong personal-professional link (for example, a stay-at-home mom may opt for a business that allows time to take care of household and children).

While these examples are valid reasons to select a particular kind of business, if passion and purpose are not part of the decision, long term success is doubtful.

Why do you own your own business?

If you can answer this question easily, review the following questions as a double check. If you have trouble responding clearly, take the time to think through and write out responses:

- ☐ What do you really enjoy doing?
- ☐ What are the top two or three things you must do every day to feel fulfilled?
- ☐ What aspects of the world around you are you passionate about?
- ☐ What do you want to be remembered for?
- ☐ What kind of lasting difference do you want to make?

Given your responses to these questions, consider your business:

- ☐ If you knew that no matter what you do in your business, you would make the money, have the time, and lead the lifestyle that you want:
    - What would you choose to do?
    - What products/services would you offer? To whom?
- ☐ Does your business today have some resemblance to this?
    - If so, in what way(s)?
    - If not, why not?

Use the results of your brainstorming to answer the question posed above: Why do you own your own business?

2. Gaining an Edge

Your purpose and passion are clear. The next question is:

Are you articulating these in marketing communications and other content that you provide to your market?

Review your market facing communications in all the forms they take. For example:

- ☐ Do your web site copy and design convey why you do what you do?
- ☐ Are you and your sales staff expressing your purpose in their presentations?
- ☐ Is your purpose and passion the context of your publications (white papers, articles, etc.)?

Gain an edge over the competition. Ensure that all the content that your market connects with you gets the “why” across.

Declare Your Sub-Niche

Focusing on a subset of your market will allow you to target your marketing and other communications very specifically, which in turn will increase the effectiveness of your marketing.

You may already be targeting a niche in your market. But if that niche is large (e.g., fitness professionals), you may need to split that niche down even further. The fitness niche, for example, can divide further into sub-niches like:

- Personal trainers
- Athletic clubs
- Massage therapists
- Health spas
- Yoga instructors

These sub-niches can be parsed even further. For example, consider personal trainers who prepare clients for competitions, or who work with seniors, or who focus specifically on Kettle Bells. Marketing to one of these groups would require completely different strategies and communications than those required by either of the other two.

1. Brainstorm sub-niche ideas

    - ☐ Using your niche as a starting point, list as many sub-niche ideas that you can come up with. Really go for it, and don't edit yourself. Nothing is too "out there."

    - ☐ Use online sources to spark your imagination. Places where you might find subsets of your niche include:

        - ☐ Google Groups

        - ☐ Google Trends

- ☐ Google Hot Trends Report
- ☐ Yahoo Groups
- ☐ Yahoo Answers
- ☐ Ebay Pulse
- ☐ Technorati
- ☐ Digg
- ☐ StumbleUpon
- ☐ Elance
- ☐ Guru

☐ Review your list and circle any ideas that appeal to you (don't worry about viability just yet). Review the ideas you've circled and continue to sort out the ones that work best for you until you have a list of between five and 7 sub-niche ideas.

2. Conduct a key word search

☐ Go to your favorite key word search tool (see Panel 2 Action Guide, page 8, for more information about key word search tools).

☐ Prepare a word processing or spreadsheet document that has a separate page/sheet devoted to each of the sub-niche ideas on your list from the above task.

☐ Enter each idea into the key word search tool. Copy and paste the top ten search results into your document.

☐ For each idea, use the results to refine further. Is there a more focused sub-niche or one that works better for you? If so, replace your original sub-niche idea with the new one.

3. Do an online competition analysis

- ☐ Do an online search for each of your sub-niche ideas.
- ☐ What companies shows up on the natural search results? The pay-per-click results?
- ☐ Research each company you identify and make note of:
  - ☐ What products or services they offer
  - ☐ What they say in their marketing messages
  - ☐ What content they offer (articles, ebooks, reports, etc)
  - ☐ Any other features or characteristics that are noteworthy.
- ☐ If any of your sub-niche ideas are already being served by competitors, take them off your list.

4. With your short list of sub-niche ideas, come up with a focus phrase.

- ☐ Go to GTrends (http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/gtrends) and enter your sub-niche idea to generate a list of related keywords and phrases.
- ☐ Use the Niche Summary link to the right of each result to come up with a focus phrase. Use these criteria:
  - ☐ Fewer than 30,000 pages of Google competition
  - ☐ Greater than 100 Google visitors/day
- ☐ Go through you sub-niche idea list and create a focus phrase for no more than two of the ideas.

5. Use your focus phrases to conduct in-depth research. Take notes on your topics to gain knowledge of these areas.

    - ☐ Google your two focus phrases and take notes on the first 10-15 results that Google delivers.
    - ☐ Joining the mailing lists for sites within those results.
    - ☐ Research the two topics using Google news and Google blog search.
    - ☐ Join related groups in Facebook, Google Groups, Yahoo, and/or LinkeIn and keep tabs on what's going on there.

6. As a final test, once you've completed external research and determined the viability of one or both of your selected sub-niches, check in with yourself about each topic. If you can answer yes to most (preferably all) of these questions, seriously consider pursuing the pertinent sub-niche:

    - ☐ Is this sub-niche one that you are comfortable writing or speaking about?
    - ☐ Is it one you can find a lot to say about?
    - ☐ Do you understand/have empathy for the members of the sub-niche?
    - ☐ Can you envision a range of products/services you can offer the sub-niche?

II. Shaking Things Up

Express Your Personality

Do you express your personality in your business? In your marketing? Are you sure?

1. Do a “litmus test.”

- ☐ Ask people who know you to give you three words that describe your personality. Ask individuals from both the personal and professional sides of your life. Make a list of the words you get in response and who provided them.

- ☐ First, compare the feedback from people in your personal life with those in your professional life.

    - ☐ Are they similar?

    - ☐ Somewhat different?

    - ☐ Widely different? If so, why? What needs to be done to have the two sides converge?

- ☐ Now, go back through your business communications (marketing collaterals, published content, interview recordings, email messages, etc.).

    - ☐ Do these communications reflect your personality?

    - ☐ If not, what’s different?

    - ☐ What needs to be done to more accurately reflect your personality?

- ☐ Take the necessary actions to align and express your authentic personality in your business.

2. Do a visual assessment of your business communications.

   - ☐ Do they express your personality within the context of your market?

     - ☐ If not, why not?

     - ☐ What needs to be changed, added, or deleted to have the look of your communications fit your personality?

   - ☐ Do they “conform,” that is, do they look like the communications of your competitors?

     - ☐ If so, what needs to be changed, added or deleted to have the look of your communications stand out from the crowd?

   - ☐ Make the needed changes to the visual characteristics of your business communications.

Locate Hidden Opportunities

Whether you want to come up with a new marketing strategy, find a potential joint venture partner, create a new product or service, or just general want to get some creative energy going in your business, you very likely have a huge and untapped resource at your fingertips: Your computer. Specifically, your computer's hard drive.

There are probably a number of "golden nuggets" buried in your computer. Your own material, content you've received from others, messages that fell through the cracks and were never followed up.

Research your own hard drives for ideas and hidden opportunities. Listen to the podcasts, read the blog posts and ebooks, scan your own finished and unfinished writing. Take notes, write down ideas, follow up with people.

Here are some of the likely places to find golden nuggets:

- ☐ Your email system
    - ☐ The inbox, way at the bottom of the chronological list.
    - ☐ Sent items, messages you have sent out (again, look at the bottom of the chronological list).
    - ☐ Folders, especially those that you've set up to send certain types of messages to (e.g., newsletters, notifications of new blog posts, opt in list messages).
- ☐ Your own writings
    - ☐ Articles
    - ☐ Reports, white papers
    - ☐ Ebooks

    - ☐ Outlines and notes for publications you haven't yet written
    - ☐ Marketing copy
    - ☐ Emails you've sent to your own contact list
    - ☐ Blog comments you've prepared
- ☐ Client files
    - ☐ Materials and information collected in relation to work with clients
- ☐ Archived files
    - ☐ Podcasts that you've subscribed to or purchased
    - ☐ Recordings of your own interviews or podcasts
    - ☐ Ebooks and other written content you've acquired from others.
    - ☐ Materials from completed or abandoned projects

Ask "Different" Questions

Panelist Paul Cherry noted that 90 percent of the questions that somebody in a selling role tend to be product oriented, situational, and based on the current status. Paul suggests focusing most of your questions on tapping into emotions, beliefs, values, wants, needs, and history. Asking questions tailored toward a solution rather than your product.

1. Questions

Here is a list of questions you can include in your sales conversations to tap into the elements that Paul described.

a. Questions that Paul offered as examples:

- ☐ Tell me some of the things that you're looking for in a vendor relationship.
- ☐ Tell me a little about where you are today and how you envision your future two years from now.
- ☐ Give me a little bit of background in terms of where you were a year ago and what's led you to where you are today?'

b. Questions to apply to your own situation:

- ☐ How do you feel about that?
- ☐ How does this affect you?
- ☐ What else should I know about…
- ☐ What else would help me understand…"
- ☐ Why is that important to you?

    - ☐ Give me an example of . . . . .
    - ☐ Can you be more specific about…

2. Practice asking and listening

- ☐ Pick someone you want to establish rapport with. To start with, talk to someone "safe," like a friend or your spouse.
- ☐ Begin a conversation by asking a question and listening to their answer.
- ☐ Ask another question based on their response and listen to the answer.
- ☐ Continue in the same way— after each answer they give you, ask another question related to what they just said.
- ☐ Possible question starters are:
    - ☐ Why did you…
    - ☐ When did you…
    - ☐ How long have you…
    - ☐ How did you feel about that?
    - ☐ What do you mean?
- ☐ Listen for which portions of their responses that they get most emotional about so you can ask questions in that direction.
- ☐ Let the other person lead the conversation. If they ask you a question, answer it quickly and then ask them another question.
- ☐ Don't be judgmental and don't comment on the responses. Just listen and learn.

You'll learn quite a bit about the other person during a conversation like this. Applying this same questioning activity in your sales conversations will allow your prospects feel connected to you in a deeper way.

III. Getting the Best Payoff

Prioritize Your Days

Do you know how you spend your days? Are you handling the highest priority items first? If your answer to both questions is "no," you are not alone. Many entrepreneurs don't know where to invest their time, energy, resources, etc. to maximize their results.

Do this priority assessment on a regular basis, at least quarterly, preferably monthly.

1. Define the payoff

It's easier to follow through and be consistent when you know the payoff for your activities.

Define the payoff according to what's important or critical to your business. For example:

- ☐ If you are time-constrained, the payoff might be based on what you can accomplish in the least amount of time.
- ☐ If you need to turn parts of your operation over to staff or outsourcing providers, the payoff might be based on what you need to do in order to make the turn over effective.
- ☐ If spreading the word about your products and services is a critical success factor, the payoff might be based on what will move your message farther and faster.
- ☐ If offering development is need, the payoff might be based on steps needed to launch new products/services.

2. Record your activities

- ☐ Use the form below as a template to record your activities on a daily basis.
- ☐ Record significant activities. For example, record activities that require more than 15 minutes of your time.
- ☐ Record activities for at least a week.

3. Prioritize your activities

- ☐ Assign priorities to your activities according to the payoff you have defined.
- ☐ Give highest payoff tasks an “A,” next highest “B,” and so on.
- ☐ Create a list of your “A” priorities, and prioritize them again from highest to lowest payoff by assigning numerical values to each. As a result, you will have an “A1” task, an “A2” task, etc.
- ☐ Do the same with your “B” priorities.
- ☐ Consider your other priorities. Do you really need to do these tasks? Could they be abandoned, or could they be delegated to someone else? Take the needed action to remove these tasks from your schedule.

4. Plan your schedule according to priority

- ☐ Set up your schedule for a week.
- ☐ Starting with you A1 priority, schedule the tasks needed to address/achieve it.
- ☐ If aspects of your A1 priority require a waiting period, move to your A2 priority and schedule related tasks.
- ☐ Continue to assign tasks that address your top priorities.

Daily Activity Log/Priority Matrix

DAY/DATE:				
Time Start	Time End	Activity	1° Priority (A,B,C…)	2° Priority (1,2,3…)

NOTES FOR THE DAY:

Focus on Tomorrow, Get Paid Today

Are you ensuring your long-term success in a way that is also generating revenue today? If not, this is a strategy to incorporate into your business planning right away.

1. Today to tomorrow
    - ☐ List all of the current products/services you currently offer.
    - ☐ Note which of these lead to one or more still-to-be-created offerings
        - ☐ What offerings do they lead to?
        - ☐ How do the current offerings tie to the future ones?
        - ☐ What needs to be done to create that link successfully?
2. Tomorrow to today
    - ☐ Now flip the view: Consider your business 3 to 5 years in the future.
        - ☐ What products/services do you offer to your market?
        - ☐ Write them down in as much detail as possible.
    - ☐ Now work backwards
        - ☐ What needs to happen in the year prior to have those offerings in place?
        - ☐ Work backward to the second year prior and so on.
            - ☐ Are there other offerings that precede those future offerings?
            - ☐ If so, are those offerings currently in your portfolio?

- ☐ If not, what needs to happen to add them?

- ☐ Work backward to today

  - ☐ Do any current offerings link to the future offerings?

    - ☐ Which ones?

    - ☐ How do they connect?

  - ☐ What resources (intellectual property, rough designs or notes, etc.) do you have in hand today that can create offerings that link to the future offerings?

    - ☐ List the resources

    - ☐ Brainstorm and list offerings that can be created from these resources

    - ☐ Describe how they link to the future offerings you've listed

    - ☐ What needs to be done to create those links? Create a plan to make that happen

IV. Creating Your Marketing Plan

Write a 7-Sentence Marketing Plan

Panelist Jay Conrad Levinson talked about how to create a 7-sentence marketing plan. He noted that in his workshops he gives participants only five minutes to do this.

1. What is the purpose of your marketing? Express this in physical action. What specific physical action do you want them to take? Do you want them to click to a website? do you want them to call an 800 number? do you want them to look for your product next time they're at the store?

2. What competitive advantage are you going to stress to get them to take the action in #1? List the benefits you offer that your competitors do not offer (these are your competitive advantages), and focus on just one.

3. Describe your target audience.

4. List the marketing “weapons” you’ll use. Use the next exercise to create this sentence.

5. Describe your niche/sub-niche (refer to the exercise on page 3).

6. Describe your identity/personality (refer to the exercise on page 7)

7. State your marketing budget. The simplest way to state it is as a percentage of your projected gross sales. (Note: In 2008, the average American business average, world business really, invested 4 percent of their gross sales in marketing.)

Identify the Right Marketing Vehicles

Use the checklist below to select the vehicles ("weapons") you will use to put your marketing plan into action. (Note: This list is derived from the 100 Marketing Weapons that Jay Conrad Levinson lists on his website.)

- ☐ Niche/positioning
- ☐ Name of company
- ☐ Identity
- ☐ Logo
- ☐ Theme
- ☐ Stationery
- ☐ Business card
- ☐ Signs inside
- ☐ Signs outside
- ☐ Hours of operation
- ☐ Days of operation
- ☐ Window display
- ☐ Word-of-mouth
- ☐ Community involvement
- ☐ Barter
- ☐ Club/Association memberships
- ☐ Partial payment plans
- ☐ Cause-related marketing
- ☐ Telephone demeanor
- ☐ Toll free phone number
- ☐ Free consultations
- ☐ Free seminars and clinics
- ☐ Free demonstrations
- ☐ Free samples
- ☐ Giver vs taker stance
- ☐ Marketing on telephone hold
- ☐ Success stories
- ☐ Employee attire
- ☐ Service
- ☐ Follow-up
- ☐ Yourself and your employees
- ☐ Gifts and ad specialities
- ☐ Catalog
- ☐ Yellow Pages ads
- ☐ Column in a publication
- ☐ Article in a publication
- ☐ Speaker at any club
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Benefits list
- ☐ Selection
- ☐ Contact time with customer
- ☐ How you say hello/goodbye
- ☐ Public relations
- ☐ Media contacts
- ☐ Neatness
- ☐ Referral program
- ☐ Sharing with peers
- ☐ Guarantee
- ☐ Telemarketing
- ☐ Gift certificates
- ☐ Brochures
- ☐ Electronic brochures
- ☐ Location
- ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Sales training
- ☐ Networking
- ☐ Quality
- ☐ Reprints and blow-ups
- ☐ Flipcharts
- ☐ Opportunities to upgrade
- ☐ Contests/sweepstakes
- ☐ Blog
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Participation in blogs/forums

- ☐ Direct mail letters
- ☐ Direct mail postcards
- ☐ Postcard decks
- ☐ Email campaigns
- ☐ Posters
- ☐ Special events
- ☐ Show display
- ☐ Audio-visual aids
- ☐ Prospect mailing lists
- ☐ Information products
- ☐ Research studies
- ☐ Competitive advantages
- ☐ Speed
- ☐ Testimonials
- ☐ Reputation
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Classified advertising
- ☐ Newspaper ads
- ☐ Magazine ads
- ☐ Radio spots
- ☐ TV spots
- ☐ Infomercials
- ☐ Movie ads
- ☐ Credibility
- ☐ Enthusiasm & passion
- ☐ Being easy to do business with
- ☐ Brand name awareness
- ☐ Customer mailing list
- ☐ Competitiveness

Create Your Marketing Calendar

Marketing vehicles that require projects or initiatives for execution need to be planned and a timeline needs to be created for them.

1. Scope your project

    - ☐ Answer these questions:

        - ☐ What end result do you need to accomplish?
        - ☐ How will you know when that result has taken place?
        - ☐ Generally, what resources will you need?
        - ☐ What is your anticipated time frame?

    - ☐ Use the material you've written to create a basic project scope. This doesn't have to be involved and complex. It could be something as simple as "Hire an experienced sales rep by February 5th," or "Conduct a panel discussion via webinar in the third quarter."

2. Identify needed resources

    - ☐ Physical resources

        - ☐ List technology resources (hardware, software, internet services, etc.) that will be needed.
        - ☐ Work and/or meeting space
        - ☐ Office supplies
        - ☐ Vehicles. Again, if a resource already exists in your company, you will need to consider its allocation to your project versus other

activities in your company. If it doesn't, you will need to determine the best way to obtain it.

- ☐ If a resource already exists in-house, what kind of allocation do you need for your project and how will that affect the use of the resource for other parts of your operations?

- ☐ If the resource must be brought in from outside, does it need to be purchasd? Rented? Hosted by a third party service?

- ☐ Human resources

  - ☐ Yourself

  - ☐ Employees

  - ☐ Outside contractors

  - ☐ Role whose resource needs to be determined

  - ☐ How does each need to be allocated to the project.

3. Identify/organize tasks

- ☐ List tasks in a spreadsheet. Type out every single task you can think of as quickly as you can in a worksheet column, one task per line. Just keep typing until you have recorded everything you can think of.

- ☐ Rearrange tasks in chronological order; in other words, put them in the order that they need to happen, with tasks that depend on the completion of other tasks listed after their precursors.

- ☐ Put the tasks for each project onto a master calendar, preferably one that is easily apparent in your workspace. Monitor status and make adjustments as needed as you work toward completion.