

Businessessentials Bundle

Introduction

Welcome to another set of Businessessentials lessons! Inside this set we're going to once again cover the eight essential components of your business. Here's what you'll be learning about:

1. Market: How to Become a Trusted Go-To Source for Content in Your Market
2. Mission: How to Use Your Mission Statement to Build a Powerful Brand
3. Monetize: The Five Types of Profitable Membership Sites You'll Want to Build
4. Minimize: Three Proven Traffic Methods to Grow Your Business
5. Model: How to Effectively Lead Your Prospects and Customers Through Your Sales Funnel
6. More: How to Use Testing and Tracking to Get More Subscribers, More Customers and More Sales
7. Methods: Tips and Tricks for Effectively Scaling Your Business
8. Milestones: How to Set Effective Goals That You Can Meet and Even Exceed

End result? It's all about growing your business and putting more profit in your pocket. So, without further introduction, let's dive into the first lesson...

Report One: Market **How to Become a Trusted Go-To Source for Content in Your Market**

As you likely already know, creating content is one of the keys to building a thriving online business (especially an infoproduct business). You need content to:

- Generate traffic.
- Convert this traffic into subscribers.
- Build relationships with your prospects.
- Convert prospects into buyers.
- Convert buyers into repeat customers.

And of course if you're selling infoproducts, then you also need plenty of content in the form of ebooks, videos and more to sell to your customers.

Now here's the thing...

None of this content is going to be all that effective if you're not considered an expert/authority or the "go to" source for a specific topic in your market.

Makes sense, right? If no one has ever really heard of you, then they're not going to beat down your virtual door to get their hands on your content.

So, the question is, how do you become the "go to" source for trusted content in your niche?

Hint: it's not a "one and done" sort of thing. Instead, you need to take multiple steps on a consistent basis to build and protect your brand reputation as a trusted source. Here's how to do it...

Specialize in One Topic

Don't try to be a Jack of all trades in your niche. Instead, find one topic and specialize in it. Ideally, this should be a topic that others aren't specializing in too, or one that you can compete in because you have some special qualifications.

This doesn't mean you can't write about other topics. It just means you want to develop a reputation as the "go to" source for one specialized topic.

For example, maybe you're selling bodybuilding information. You can write about all sorts of bodybuilding topics, but perhaps you specialize in narrow topic, such symmetry, or the best leg exercises, or "peaking" at the right time for competitions.

To really make this effective, you may want to introduce some branding that emphasizes your specialization. Let's go back to the bodybuilding example, and let's suppose you're the expert at

helping people build symmetry with their physique before a competition. Whenever you sign your name, it might look something like this: "John Doe, Symmetry Specialist."

Another example: "Jane Doe, the Tomato-Growing Guru."

Next...

Offer Breaking News

Part of becoming a "go to" source is being the first to share news in your niche, especially with regards to how the news impacts your audience and any related advice you can give to them. In particular, focus on sharing news related to your specialty topic.

TIP: When you share news, be sure to link to quality news articles from reputable news sources (e.g., the Associated Press). Avoid fringe news sites in order to protect your reputation.

Next...

Blow Your Own Horn

Why should your audience listen to you? Here's where you blow your own horn by touting your credentials. This includes anything that makes you uniquely qualified to teach your specific specialty topic (and the niche topic as a whole), such:

- Relevant education credentials.
- Work experience.
- Awards and accolades.
- Results you've created for yourself.
- Results you've created for others.
- Strategies you've pioneered.
- Items you've invented.
- Other experts who've endorsed you.

...And any other proof that you're a trusted source of information when it comes to this topic.

For example, if you've won a prestigious award in your industry, then share this credential with your audience. You can share it on your site's "About" page, in the sidebar of your blog, in your social media profiles, in the "About" section of your free and paid products, in your newsletter byline... and basically anywhere else that your audience sees it.

You can also mention your credentials in the middle of a blog article or other content. Even something as simple as one line can help answer the reader's question about why they should listen to you.

Let's suppose you're writing about dog training. You can let people know you've been doing it a long time by sharing a story within your content. E.G. "When I trained my first dog 30 years ago, I admit I made a few mistakes..."

Make a Great Impression

The key here is to make sure every piece of content you publish is high-quality and looks great. This means doing the following:

- Creating well-written, engaging and accurate content.
- Designing the interior of the product so that it looks polished and professional.
- Getting a professional ecover.

If you can't do any of these things yourself, then it's a good idea to outsource these tasks to professionals. You can post projects on sites like Upwork.com, Guru.com and Fiverr.com.

Share Good Content for Free

The idea behind this strategy is to share the high-caliber content for free that others charge for. Not only does this help establish you as the "go to" source in your market, but it also makes people figure your paid content must be REALLY good since your free content is better than most.

Provide Something Fresh

Part of becoming the go-to source of content means that you can't just share the same type of content that everyone else is sharing. In order to develop a reputation as an expert/authority in your niche, you need to share content that others aren't sharing.

If you can pioneer a strategy, that's awesome. If you can share a tip that you've never seen anyone else share, that's good too. Here are other ways to share unique content:

Create a case study or experiment. While others may also do case studies or experiments, no two are the same.

Tell a personal story. For example, did you have to overcome some sort of obstacle before getting results in the niche? Do you have an embarrassing story to share? While others may share stories, your story is unique to you. Not only do stories make your content more memorable, it also helps you engage readers on an emotional level.

Share information in a unique way. For example, if everyone shares information in text-format in your niche, then you can stand out by sharing short videos. (This also helps humanize you and builds trust in your audience.)

Create a formula. Still another way to stand out from your competitors is by creating a formula for achieving a step-by-step process. I like to use this strategy by creating acronyms around a process. So, even though others are sharing similar information, my formula stands out (and by creating a formula, I'm positioned as an expert).

For example, let's suppose you have six-step formula for building a business. You may call it the "P.R.O.F.I.T." formula, where each letter corresponds to a step of the process. E.G., Step 1, PICK a Business Model, Step 2, RESEARCH the Market... and so on with the rest of the letters in the formula all corresponding to a step of the process.

Now the next tip...

Interact With Readers

In order to move past the image of you as a faceless "company," you need to interact with your readers. That's why you should post content to interactive platforms, such as a blog (with comments enabled) and social media. Be sure to reply to comments and/or "like" comments. This helps build relationships and rapport with readers, and cements their loyalty.

Host Live Events

Live events – such as a webinar – tend to carry a high perceived value. As such, any time you do a live event, your audience is going to treat it as highly valuable content. This goes a long way in helping cement your reputation as an authority in the niche. Plus, a live event gives you the opportunity to interact one-on-one with your audience as you field questions and showcase your expertise with your answers.

Protect Your Reputation

Your reputation is one of your most valuable assets. It takes time to build a good reputation in your niche as a source of quality information, but you can destroy your reputation with just one poor post or product. That's why you'll want to fiercely protect your good reputation with these tips:

- Post high-quality content only. Don't push out subpar content just to meet a deadline. Better to be a few hours late than to put out something that will destroy your reputation.
- Be careful with what you promote. Review and use every single product that you promote, and be brutally honest in your assessment. If you don't think your audience should buy a particular product, then say so. This sort of honesty will help build your reputation as someone trustworthy in the niche.

Here's the next tip...

Blanket Your Niche With Content

Still another way to position yourself as the go-to source of information is by blanketing your niche with content. Whenever your prospects search for information online, you want them to encounter YOUR name and content. This repeated association will help you build your authority in the niche.

Here are some of the ways to distribute your content:

- Publish high-quality content on your blog.
- Do guest blogging.
- Share content via your newsletter.
- Post on social media.
- Syndicate your content.
- Use search engine optimization strategies so that prospects find your content when they're searching for specific niche problems.
- Do webinars.
- Produce high-quality freemiums and lead magnets.
- Create rebrandable reports for your affiliates to distribute.
- Publish a book on Kindle.
- Sell a hard copy book (check CreateSpace.com).
- Give local talks and post the video clips.
- Create other videos to share on YouTube, your blog, and social media.
- Create viral content such as infographics, short videos, blog post and similar.
- Distribute press releases locally as well as using services such as PRWeb.com.
- Ask your joint venture partners to help you distribute your content.
- Place paid advertising that points to your content.
- Post comments/content in niche communities such as forums and Facebook groups (preferably ones you own, but you can post in ones belonging to others as well).

You get the idea – everywhere your prospects look in your niche should have them stumbling on your name and content.

Do Interviews

When you do an interview, you're automatically viewed as an expert on the topic. That's why you'll want to offer yourself for interviews to people in your niche. This includes:

- Encouraging affiliates to interview you. You can then promote your offer using your affiliate's link, so you'll both make money when people buy through the interview.
- Creating a "media page" on your site to encourage the media to contact you for interviews about your specialty topic. Be sure to include information about the topics you're qualified to speak on, with an emphasis on your specialty topic. Be sure to also include video or audio clips (samples) from past interviews.
- Seeking out interviews in your niche. Is there a blogger, talk radio host or other influencer who tends to do plenty of interviews in your niche? If so, get in touch with them to offer yourself as a guest expert on your specialty topic. Again, send clips so that they can see for themselves that you'll be a high-quality guest.

Now a few parting thoughts...

Your Assignment

As you can see, becoming a "go to" source in your niche – an expert – isn't something that comes about overnight. Instead, you need to take the above steps and keep taking them over time to build and then protect your reputation. However, it's well worth the investment of time, as people much prefer to do business with an authority rather than some no-name person in your niche, which means higher conversions. What's more, experts can charge more for information versus others who aren't well-known in the niche. That's why you'll want to get started on these tactics as soon as possible to start developing your good reputation in your niche.

To that end, here's your assignment for this lesson: create a plan for becoming the go-to expert in your niche. Go through each of the steps and tips listed in this lesson, and brainstorm how you can implement that tip in your business.

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson...

Report Two: Mission

How to Use Your Mission Statement to Build a Powerful Brand

As you learned in an earlier Businessessentials "Mission" lesson, your mission statement is this:

What Your Company Does + How Your Company Does It + Why Your Company Does It

This statement then becomes a guiding force for you, your employees (if any) and your customers. If your business is a ship, then the mission statement is the rudder.

But that's not all. Once you've become clear about your mission statement, you can then use it to help you build a powerful brand (including your slogan).

One really good example of a company whose slogan flows directly from their mission statement is Walmart.

Walmart's mission statement: Saving people money so they can live better.

Walmart's slogan: Save Money. Live Better.

Now you can do the same thing by using your mission as a starting point when creating your branding. The big advantage of doing this is continuity between all pieces of your business. In other words, there's no confusion for you, your associates (such as employees or even affiliates), and your customers, as you're sharing the same core message.

Let's take a look at how to do this...

Step 1: Exam Your Mission Statement

Your first step is to take a good look at your mission statement to be sure that it accurately reflects what your business does, why it does it, and how it does it. If it's not accurate, now is the time to tweak it.

As you're examining your statement, think in particular about what makes your company unique with regards to the "What, How, and Why." Specifically:

- Does your company do something that no other company does?
- Does your company accomplish this task in a unique way?
- Is there a unique reason why your company does what it does?

Keep any differences in mind as you move through the following steps, as they'll come in handy again shortly.

Next step...

Step 2: Understand the Difference Between Your Mission and Your Branding

Before you start working on your branding, you need to understand the difference between your mission statement and your branding.

Your mission statement is just that: a statement. It's a description of what your company does, how it does it, and why. You can think of this as the logical "what, how, why" of your business.

Your branding is different because it's all about conveying a feeling. It's the positive feeling your customers experience when they're using your products. And it's the positive feeling you want your prospects (and customers) to associate with your company.

So, you can think of it this way: your mission describes what you do, and your branding associates a specific emotion with what your business does.

Now the next step...

Step 3: Determine the Emotion You Want to Convey

Now what you need to do is determine what your customers are already feeling when they use your products (or services), or how you'd LIKE them to feel. What emotion would you like associated with your company?

This is actually a three-step process. The first step is to brainstorm "feelings" that would work well with your business. The second is to determine if this feeling is something your customers value. And the third step is to check your competition's branding so that you can avoid obvious overlap.

For the first part, you want to brainstorm positive feelings. For example:

Happiness	Joy	Power
Courageous	Trusting	Resolved
Optimistic	Adventurous	Successful
Triumphant	Amusing	Captivated
Sophistication	Love	Decadence
Pride	Amusement	Safe/secure
Caring	Empowering	Noble
Awe	Inspiration	Hope
Excitement	Delighted	Curious
Luxurious	Magical	Uplifting
Faithful	Tough	Capable
Powerful	Resilient	Serene
Adventurous	Ecstatic	Peaceful

... And so on.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, as there are hundreds of ways to describe various emotions.

So, go ahead and brainstorm to figure out which feelings are a potentially good fit for your business.

The second step is to figure out what your audience values. Some of this you can figure out just based on common sense. For example, if you're helping people to de-stress through meditation, then your audience probably isn't looking to feel powerful or sophisticated during this particular activity. Instead, they're looking to feel serene, peaceful, loved and so on.

You can also eavesdrop on conversations within your niche (such as on blogs, forums and in groups) to get a sense of what your audience is feeling or how they want to feel. You might even read product reviews for competing products to get a sense of how users feel.

Finally, the last sub-step for this process is to do your market research to find out what sort of emotions your competitors are conveying with their branding and how they're doing it. While your branding may convey similar emotions, you don't want to overlap too much with others in your niche, as then you won't really stand out.

Once you've walked through these various sub-steps, then it will become clear which feelings are the best fit, based on what your competition is doing and what your audience values. Pick the one that you think fits best, and move onto the next step...

Step 4: Develop Your Brand

Now that you know the feeling you want associated with your brand, the next step is to develop the parts of your branding that will help convey this feeling. Specifically, we're going to look at these two parts:

- Your logo and overall color scheme.
- Your slogan.

Let's look at these two separately...

Your Logo/Color Scheme

I lumped these two pieces together since your logo generally will include the same colors you'll use on your website, ecovers, ads and other graphics.

What you'll want to do is brainstorm a logo image and colors that are good fits for the feeling you're trying to convey. What I'd suggest you do is first take a close look at a variety of well-known brands to see how they use color and imaging. For example, look at:

- Baby product brands (such as Pampers).
- Luxury brands, such as Ferrari and Rolex.
- Family-friendly brands such as Toys R Us or Disney.
- Financial brands such as Mastercard.

And so on. Just think of your favorite brands, and examine how they convey certain feelings with the visual aspects of their branding.

Secondly, look at brands within your niche. You want to get a sense of how they convey certain feelings, but you also want to make sure that your brand looks nothing like your competitors' branding.

If brainstorming branding imaging is something within your skillset, then you may have some idea of what you want your brand to look like. In this case, you can talk to a logo designer to help you bring your vision to a reality.

If you can't quite visualize what your logo and colors may look like, then go to a logo designer with experience in brainstorming and developing brands. Let them know the feeling you want to convey, give them starting points for colors and imaging, and provide links to your competitors.

Next...

Your Slogan

The second big component of your branding is your slogan. Usually, this slogan reflects your USP (unique selling point), which is the one thing that makes your company different and better than the competitors. When people are wondering why they should buy from you instead of your competitors, the USP is what answers that question.

Take note, however: your USP/slogan doesn't need to be based on something that you're doing that absolutely no one else in your niche is doing. It just needs to be something that your competitors haven't capitalized on.

The classic example here is Folger's coffee, with the USP that says "mountain grown." Nearly all coffee is grown in the mountains – it's just that Folger's was the first company to stake this out as a USP.

If you can think of some characteristic of your business that's different from what others are doing, that's terrific. Here are some questions you can answer to help you brainstorm:

- Is your guarantee unique?
- Do you offer exceptional customer service?
- Do you offer customer service in a unique way (such as phone service while your competitors offer online-only service)?
- Do you have unique qualifications to create your products?
- Are your products created in a unique way?
- Are your products delivered in a unique way?
- Are you the "first" in some category or some location to offer something?
- Are you the only business to offer some specific product or service?
- Do you offer a product or service to a unique segment of the population?
- How is your actual product or the results it produces different from similar products? (E.G., it's faster, easier, etc.)
- Do you have a unique price (either low or high) in your market?
- Do you offer any sort of unique payment plans?
- What else is unique about you and your business? (Brainstorm as many factors as possible.)