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The Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce (ARCC) is a 100% membership funded organization with the mission of supporting our business community through advocacy, education, connection and collaboration. The ARCC offers numerous benefits intended to help businesses grow and thrive, including resources in the following areas: business and professional development, money savings, marketing and promotion, ribbon cuttings, and sponsorships.

518-798-1761 | AdirondackChamber.org

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518-668-5755 | LakeGeorgeChamber.com

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ARCC celebrates Robert Nemer as 35th Annual Juckett Award Honoree

Photo Courtesy of Andy Camp. Pictured left (left to right): ARCC Director of Events Carol Ann Conover, Francine Nemer, Robert Nemer, ARCC President & CEO Tricia Rogers, ARCC Vice President Amanda Blanton, and ARCC Membership Manager Ava Kanninen

by **Amanda Graves**
of *Five Towers Media*

On Friday March 8, 2024 The Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce (ARCC) presented the annual J. Walter Juckett Community Service Award to Robert Nemer. Originally created in 1988, the award honors someone who “demonstrates a fierce commitment and hands on dedication to the betterment of our community,” explained Amanda Blanton, ARCC Vice President, Marketing and Communications. J. Walter Juckett himself was an inspiring individual who participated in a variety of civic, charitable, religious, political, business, and educational activities, and received many honors for his work. This year, the event was hosted at the Sagamore Resort, where guests enjoyed dinner, live music, and of course recognized Nemer’s accomplishments and service to the community.

Nemer moved to Upstate New York from Philadelphia, where he was an elementary school teacher, in 1970 to help his father run his Volkswagen dealership in Albany. He partnered with his brother Peter, to establish the Nemer Motor Group in 1971, which currently includes four dealerships. Through his business, he has made several contributions to Glens Falls Hospital, Saratoga Hospital, St. Peter’s Hospital, and the Hudson Headquarters Health Network. He and his wife, Francine, have also donated their own money and time to these health centers.

Nemer is also a founding member of the Adirondack Civic Center Coalition, Inc. that was responsible for the acquisition of the Cool Insuring Arena, then known as the Glens Falls Civic Center. “He played a pivotal role in not only saving the arena, but also saving the hockey team multiple times,” said Blanton. Additionally, partnering with The Post Star and the Tri-County United Way, Nemer started the Kids with Packs Program. Every year, he collects hundreds of backpacks that get filled with school supplies. The backpacks are then donated to children in need throughout 14 schools in Warren, Washington, Saratoga, and other counties. Nemer also serves as a board member for the Hudson Headwaters Health Network, and the SUNY Adirondack Foundation. He is an active member of the Lake George Association, serving on the Council of Business Advisors.

Furthermore, he is a founding member of LG30, which is a select group of donors that are committed to the LGA mission of protecting and safeguarding Lake George. Nemer also frequently invests in the LGA’s Science-to-Solutions programs.

All of the above achievements, and many more, made Nemer the obvious recipient for the 35th J. Walter Juckett award. The ceremony began with an introduction from ARCC Board Chair Marc Yrsha, Senior Executive Vice President, Chief Banking Officer of Glens Falls National Bank and Trust Company. ARCC President and CEO Tricia Rogers then said a few words about Nemer and introduced the following: U.S. Senator Dan Stec, N.Y.S. Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, N.Y.S. Assemblyman Matthew Simpson, and constituent liaison for Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, Josh Williams. Each person talked about Nemer’s accomplishments and presented their proclamations to him.

The ceremony concluded with Nemer’s friend James Towne who gave a speech reminiscing on his friendship with Nemer and personally presented the award to him. Following the ceremony was a night of celebration for all Nemer has accomplished. “Our community really came together to support a wonderful man. The energy in the room was like no other. A huge thank you to the Sagamore Resort, our sponsors, Mr. Nemer, and our community for a truly special night,” said Rogers.

ABOUT THE ARCC

Founded in 1914, the Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce (ARCC) is a membership organization representing businesses in New York State’s Washington, Warren, Essex, and Northern Saratoga Counties. The ARCC is a 501c6 not-for-profit corporation, governed by volunteer Board of Directors, and does not receive any funding from local, county or state governments. Our mission is to support our business community through advocacy, education, connection, and collaboration.



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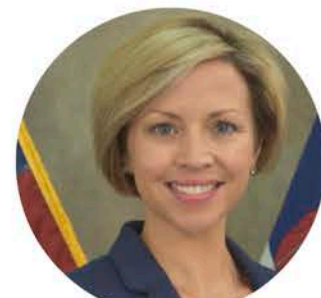
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Chief General Counsel,
New York State Office of
Information Technology Services

Speed Up Your Long Sales Cycle With These 3 Strategies



by Hope Relly-Cobb,
Director of Content,
SIX Marketing

Managing long sales cycles is one of the problems we hear about the most as marketers.

Specifically at SIX, where we work with many B2B clients who have very technical products or services. New clients often come to us frustrated by how slow their sales process is.

But the sales cycle isn't a marketing problem, right? Traditionally speaking, no it's not. But any marketing professional could probably tell you about a time they ran an objectively great campaign that generated leads but no sales. And that's frustrating for everyone involved.

It's one of the reasons we decided, a long time ago, to expand our own services to include not only marketing but also sales and technology consulting. We've found that working with our clients to improve sales cycles helps them see more success in their marketing.

Let's explore three strategies we typically use to speed up our clients' sales cycles.

1 Streamline your sales with the right technology.

There are many elements of the sales cycle that you can't control. Maybe the leads at your target companies must go through a lengthy buying process with multiple decision-makers and compliance. Perhaps you manufacture parts that must be included in design specifications long before your customer is ready to place an order. Or maybe your customers are just incredibly indecisive.

This might just be the way it is in your industry. And other than changing your industry (usually not a realistic option), there isn't much you can do about it.

But what you can change is your approach to outreach. **Using the right technology to identify, communicate with, and keep track of leads can streamline your side of the sales process and shave off valuable time.**

You can make your outreach more effective by using intent data to generate more refined prospect lists. This will allow your team to focus on communicating with prospects who not only meet your ideal customer profile (ICP) but are also most likely to buy.

Technology can also help you automate outreach and follow-up, document and keep track of all leads and communication, and nurture any leads stuck in the pipeline. By cleaning up your processes with technology, you can speed up your side of the sales cycle to help compensate for time-consuming processes on the prospect's side.

2 Support your prospect's decision-making process.

While you can't directly control how long your prospects take to complete their buying process, **you can help speed up their buying process by ensuring they have all the information necessary to make a decision.**

Understanding your customers and how they make buying decisions is important. Analyzing ICPs and personas helps us understand: your audience, how they conduct research, what sources of information they trust the most, what kind of information they need to make a decision, and more. A detail-oriented person will need more in-depth content, while fast-paced decision makers might want high-level information that's clear and concise.

It depends on your target companies, but you may need to sell a buying committee on your products or services. Buying committees involve multiple stakeholders who might have very different personalities and priorities.

For example, if your buyer personas include both engineers and supply chain managers, it's important to realize that it might take different strategies to reach them. Engineers tend to be highly skeptical buyers and need detailed information and specifications to make an informed decision. Supply chain managers will likely be less concerned with the specs and more concerned with your ability to deliver products on time and on budget. It's essential to have marketing materials that speak to each buyer's needs.



What kinds of educational content you need will vary greatly depending on your product or service, industry, and buyers. Some examples include: service/product pages, spec sheets, helpful blogs, newsletters, informational guides, infographics, videos, FAQs, case studies, and testimonials. Content takes some time and effort to build out, but eventually you'll have a strong foundation of content to support your sales team.

3 Scale up & refine your lead generation.

Once you have better processes in place, you can increase the volume of leads in your funnel and scale up your outreach. Streamlining your sales process and marketing content will allow you to communicate with and market to more leads at a time.

The best way to generate leads depends on your industry and where your target audience is best reached. You'll need to determine which channels (email, display ads, social media, etc.) are the most effective.

Account-based marketing (ABM) can be the best approach for companies with long sales cycles. ABM combines highly targeted and personalized outreach with advertising and other marketing support.

Using the right technology, you'll identify specific, high-value accounts that meet your ICP and send messaging to the right contacts at those companies, with content tailored directly to their needs. In addition to direct outreach, you'll also serve highly relevant ads to your prospects and provide them with personalized educational supporting content.

This lead generation approach focuses on spending your time and effort in the most effective way possible. **It helps shorten your sales cycle by ensuring that the leads entering your sales pipeline are high quality and likely to convert into long-term customers.**

SIX MARKETING

Speed Up Your Sales Process

Long sales cycles are frustrating, and in many industries, they're unavoidable. But streamlining processes, creating educational content, and refining your lead generation can make a crucial difference in your sales cycle.

If you'd like to learn more about how to speed up your sales cycle, visit our website at [SIX.marketing](https://www.six.marketing) to schedule some time to discuss your company's unique needs with our VP of Business Development, Leah Parillo, or email leah@six.marketing directly.



Photos courtesy of Cornell's.

CORNELL'S USED 2nd Annual CAR SHOW

Cornell's Used Auto Parts is happy to announce they will be hosting their second annual car show. After an extremely successful show last year, Cornell's is once again welcoming the public to come out and enjoy a fun car-filled day. The event will take place on Saturday, May 4th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. right at Cornell's Used Auto Parts (located at 62 S Greenfield Road, Greenfield Center, NY 12833). All makes and models are welcome to participate and people can expect food, yard tours, trophies, and most importantly, lots of cars!

Cornell's Used Auto Parts is dedicated to providing customers with high quality parts, for a fraction of the cost compared to a dealership. Family-owned and operated, the business was first established in 1972 by Duane Cornell. Today, the business is run by Duane's son Casey, who took over after his father's death.

With over one million parts available for next day delivery, Cornell's is committed to providing their customers the best possible service. All of their parts come with a standard six month warranty and there are many different extended warranties available for purchase.

The car show is returning after an unexpected popularity among the public. Originally Cornell's General Manager, Mike Colvett, had the idea expecting that it would be a fun cookout event for the employees. However, to their surprise, hundreds of people showed up to enjoy the car show and spend time with those in their community who shared a similar interest.

This year, the car show is expected to once again bring the community together to admire and appreciate many different kinds of cars.



Additionally, people will have the opportunity to take a tour of Cornell's lot and see what goes into running their business. All of the funds received during the event will be donated to the Double H Ranch, which provides specialized programs and year-round support for children and their families dealing with life-threatening illnesses.

Join Cornell's and the community to support a great cause on Saturday, May 4th at 10 a.m. at Cornell's Used Auto Parts. Whether you consider yourself an expert on all things car related, or have never been to a car show before, come out and enjoy a fun day at Cornell's Used Auto Parts.

For more information about Cornell's Used Auto Parts, please visit cornellsusedautoparts.com

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Strategies for Enhanced Efficiency & Consistent Revenue Generation



by Alan VanTassel
of Velocity Sales

In today's dynamic business landscape, staying ahead requires more than traditional sales approaches. To achieve sustainable success, businesses must adopt strategies that enhance efficiency and ensure consistent revenue generation.

From sales productivity to customer relationship management, let's explore the **three key aspects** contributing to a thriving and revenue-focused sales organization.

SALES PRODUCTIVITY: *A Foundation for Success*

Leveraging Your Sales Processes

Our annual State of Sales data reveals that an overwhelming 74% of small to mid-size businesses do not have a documented sales process. Yet, an efficient process the whole team understands forms the backbone of a successful sales organization. Explore how streamlining workflows and eliminating bottlenecks can lead to a more agile and responsive sales team.

The best sales process is:

- Well-defined and goal-oriented with meaningful benchmarks and milestones.
- Clearly communicated and understood by the team so it can be consistently implemented by all.
- Measurable, with outcomes being directly related to stages in the process so enhancements can be made when necessary.
- Customer-focused, the goal should be to solve a pain point or fulfill a want or need.

PERFORMANCE OPTIMIZATION:

Unleashing Potential

Optimizing performance at the individual and team levels is crucial for sustained success. The following techniques will drive continuous improvement and foster a culture of excellence.

Goal Achievement: Setting and Measuring Targets

Setting clear and achievable goals is vital in motivating sales teams. When the right sales metrics are in place, everyone has a better understanding of where they are in relation to the company's strategic goals. Additionally, applicable sales metrics should drive decisions for changes necessary to achieve short-term and long-term objectives.

Training and Development: Investing in Your Team

Further data from our State of Sales reveals that 91% of companies do not offer sales training to their teams. Yet, ongoing training not only equips employees with the latest skills and knowledge but also fosters adaptability in the face of evolving industry trends and technologies.

IMPORTANT SALES METRICS TO TRACK

MAIN METRICS TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS

REVENUE METRICS	MARKET METRICS	CUSTOMER METRICS	PERFORMANCE METRICS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Total Revenue ✓ Year-over-year change in revenue ✓ Revenue by: service or product, market, or territory ✓ Percentage of revenue from existing customers or new business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Market share percentage ✓ Year-over-year change in market share ✓ Gross Margin Return on Investment (GMROI) ✓ Price-to-earnings ratio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Customer acquisition cost (CAC) ✓ Customer lifetime value (CLV) ✓ Customer retention percentage ✓ Customer health score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Average time for conversion ✓ Number of new leads per period ✓ Number of new contracts signed per period ✓ Time spent in each part of the sales process



CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT:

Providing Key Insights

A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is a multifaceted asset, offering benefits beyond managing customer relationships. In the sales realm, a well-designed CRM is pivotal for businesses to establish and monitor the journey from initial contact to conversion, and ongoing account management.


Improving Overall Performance: Efficiency, Tracking, Customer Service

Implementing a CRM allows you to create a central hub for sales efficiency by documenting interactions, events, and milestones throughout the buyer journey. This ensures sales reps can easily access prospect information, allowing them to pick up seamlessly between interactions. Moreover, the CRM contributes to overall business performance by analyzing pipelines, revenue, and sales team productivity, offering insights to optimize processes and drive revenue impact.

BONUS: Sales Automation: Productivity in the Digital Age

Automation has become a cornerstone of modern sales strategies. Don't forget to explore how leveraging technology can streamline repetitive tasks, provide guidance on strategic activities, and be used as a brainstorming tool for client communication.

Harness the power of AI to pinpoint the metrics that will provide the most insight into your sales organization.



Unique Sales Metrics from ChatGPT Prompt

Give me a list of key performance metrics to track for my business in the [industry name] industry." ➔

Be sure to include details on the specific business model, sales cycle, customer demographics, and previous sales performance metrics.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Putting these sales strategies into action is crucial for improving efficiency and securing consistent revenue generation. While these three strategies offer valuable insights, a comprehensive approach that encompasses every facet of the sales process is where success lies.

As a seasoned Sales Leader, I specialize in this holistic approach by implementing Sales Xceleration's Certified Sales Operating Management System™ to guide you in formulating the core elements needed for sustained sales success. Contact me today to get started. ■



What's the Condition OF THE PROPERTY?

by Dan Wade, Esq. of
Ianniello Anderson, P.C.

For years, Sellers of real estate have had to provide very little information about the property they were selling, and the mantra was “**buyer beware.**” *That may be about to change...*

The Property Condition Disclosure Act of 2002 began the requirement for the Sellers to answer a series of forty-eight (48) questions about the various areas of the home and property and their condition on a document referred to as the Property Condition Disclosure Statement (PCDS). The PCDS was to be provided to a prospective Purchaser of property at the time of signing of the contract for the purchase of the subject property. The Sellers could answer the questions on the PCDS with the following responses: Yes, No, Unknown, or N/A. If a Seller refused or chose not to provide a completed PCDS with the contract, the Act stated that the penalty was for the Seller was to provide the Purchaser with a \$500.00 credit at closing for failing to provide a completed Property Condition Disclosure Statement. The Act also provided a few exemptions for parties or entities who were not required to provide a completed PCDS, with the idea that certain persons or entities may not have personal knowledge sufficient to meaningfully complete the disclosure.

In late 2023, the Property Condition Disclosure Act received a facelift. The amendment, which takes effect on March 20, 2024, deletes the subsection which provided for a \$500.00 penalty for Seller not providing a completed Property Condition Disclosure Agreement, effectively trying to make the completion of the PCDS mandatory, and adds seven (7) more questions to the PCDS, primarily related to flood plain issues with the property and flood insurance. Again, as before, there are a limited number of exempted persons and/or entities.

However, the amendment does not provide any new penalty should the Seller refuse to complete a Property Condition Disclosure Statement.

The following language remained in the amendment: “Nothing contained in this article shall be construed as limiting any existing legal cause of action or remedy at law, in statute or in equity.” However, the amendment, as in the original Act, only provides for liability for actual damages to a Purchaser from a Seller who provides a completed PCDS or fails to provide a revised PCDS. The Act, as amended, does not speak to what happens if a Seller refuses to complete and provide a Property Condition Disclosure Statement in the first place and it is not likely that practitioners will know the answer to this question until the Courts have had an opportunity to weigh in on any litigation brought before them.

The Act also does not specifically preclude parties to a real estate contract from waiving this requirement, if agreed between the parties. Could this potentially usher in a new era of Sellers requesting a waiver from interested Purchasers of the PCDS requirement in order to get around having to provide one? We currently see a similar trend in this very competitive Seller's market where Purchasers are waiving their right to an inspection in an effort to make their offer stand out.

Some have offered that interested Purchasers could try to force the issue and require a completed PCDS before they would sign the contract, but in this very competitive market, it is likely that there will always be at least one interested Purchaser willing to undercut that requirement and sign a waiver. Others have offered that a Purchaser may bring an action to compel the Seller to provide a completed PCDS. However, an action to compel a completed PCDS would be costly and take time, and Purchasers may decide to rely more on an official inspection report they would order from a licensed inspector.

If the goal of the Act is to require a Seller a provide a completed PCDS at the time of contract signing, maybe a better option would be to increase the penalty credit to Purchaser rather than remove it. If, for example, Sellers were required to provide a \$5,000.00 credit to Purchaser in lieu of a completed PCDS, imagine how many more PCDS's would be completed.

As the world of real estate continues to evolve, both real estate brokers and attorneys will need to educate their clients as to the amended Act and closely watch for any new trends that emerge.

How much longer will buyers need to “beware?” *Stay tuned.* ■



**IS YOUR SPACE
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NAVIGATING *New Waters:*

A NAVY VETERAN'S SUCCESSFUL FORAY INTO INSURANCE

by Amanda Graves



Photo by Lillian Buck.



A group photo of some of the members of the Crash & Salvage Division on the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71), taken on their 9 and ½ month deployment to the Middle East in 2015. Photo provided.

From an early age, U.S. Navy veteran Dustin Hall was never one to back down from a challenge. Throughout his life, he has been in charge of logistics units, co-founded a business while studying at a highly accredited university, and is now embarking on a career in the insurance industry with Amsure. Between his work ethic and dedication to helping those in his community, it is clear that Dustin has a bright future ahead of him.

Dustin graduated from Glens Falls High School in 2013. He was unsure of his plans for the future, but came from a long line of men that had served in the military. Both his step father and grandfather had been in the Navy, so following their lead he enrolled. "It started a Navy tradition in a sense," he explained. After attending bootcamp, he traveled to Pensacola, Florida to begin his A school training. Dustin went into Aviation Boatswain's Mate, Aircraft Handling (ABH) training, where he learned how to supervise the movement of Naval aircraft and perform rescue duties. Once he had completed his A school, he traveled to Virginia where he was assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

About a year later in 2015, Dustin set out on a world tour. The Navy was doing a port change for three aircraft carriers: USS Theodore Roosevelt, USS Ronald Regan, and the USS George Washington.

Overall, he visited seven different countries seeing places like Australia, Dubai, England, India, and more, ending the tour in San Diego, California.



"One of my last out to sea operations was on the USS George Washington (CVN 73). This operation was for the then, new F-35 and testing launch and recovery operations for the first time on an Aircraft Carrier."

Afterwards, he traveled back to Virginia where he was reassigned to the USS George Washington. Once back, Dustin became in charge of managing a logistics unit at only 22 years old. "Day to day I was in charge of about 40 people in our unit," said Dustin, "It was a learning curve because when you're the supervisor to someone who is 33 years old, and they have 10 years on you, you kind of have to figure out 'How do you talk to this person?'"

Despite the challenge, Dustin excelled at his job and had plenty of support from those around him. "I had a couple great mentors in the Navy that took me under their wing, a couple officers, and they gave me that opportunity and I learned from it," he explained, "Those individuals were people who pushed me to start doing my education." Taking their advice, Dustin began to take classes at Tidewater Community College.

Dustin took four classes every semester, and was able to finish all of his prerequisites. He had to decide between staying in the Navy or continuing his education.

However, once he was accepted into the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, his decision was clear. “I was a C+/B- student getting into Syracuse’s number one program in the country,” explained Dustin, “I was like, I need to do this.”

Syracuse is well-known for their commitment to helping veterans further their education and as a proud alum, Dustin would agree. “I almost felt like I was recruited in a sense, kind of like what they do for sports players. They want veterans to come,” he said. In addition to the GI Bill, Syracuse participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program, which covers the education costs that the GI Bill does not. This allows veterans, like Dustin, to attend the university without needing to take out private loans.

Having grown up with an interest in politics, Dustin majored in policy studies but found it challenging to adjust to the college lifestyle. “Being a veteran there is a learning curve,” explained Dustin, “You get into math classes and professors say ‘You remember this from high school.’ Well high school was at that point seven years ago for me.” However, Dustin had lots of support from professors and mentioned Sean O’Keefe, who served as the Secretary of the Navy under President George H.W. Bush and the Administrator for NASA under President George W. Bush, as having an impact on his experience at Syracuse. “He kind of took me under his wing in the sense of applying myself,” said Dustin, who continued to explain how with O’Keefe’s encouragement, he took more challenging courses.

In addition to being a full-time student, Dustin co-founded the business College Truckers. Functioning similarly to a franchise, the business existed at other universities, but Dustin brought it to Syracuse. Completely student run, he hired other students and friends to be the “movers” that would pick-up their customers’ boxes and transport them to a storage unit. Once the semester was about to begin, customers would give them a date and room number and all of their belongings were dropped off and waiting for them. Eventually, the business became so successful during Dustin’s last year, they began shipping boxes for students who lived out of state.

In addition to running a successful business, Dustin kept himself busy by completing an internship. He attended a lecture from a former Syracuse alum who explained how his company insured the Superbowl, which, being a huge football fan himself, piqued Dustin’s interest. “It was the first time ever where I was like ‘Oh, insurance sounds kind of cool,’” said Dustin. This newfound interest led to him finding OneGroup, where he applied for an internship.

Due to him being slightly older than the average college student, OneGroup designed an internship around him, allowing him to work in every department. He completed many challenging tasks, like researching Spartanburg, South Carolina while living in New York because the company was expanding. He also had the opportunity to survey many county buildings and airports, although he was more of an observer for these trips. “Basically I was a notetaker; glorified notetaker as I like to call it,” joked Dustin. This experience confirmed that insurance was the industry Dustin wanted to pursue.

After obtaining his bachelor’s degree, which he completed in only three years, Dustin moved back to Glens Falls and despite knowing what he wanted to do, he didn’t jump into the insurance industry right away. “Having the mentors I had at OneGroup, they encouraged me to really try to find the right agency, the right insurance company to land at, not just to go right out and find a job,” said Dustin. While interviewing and looking for insurance jobs, he worked as the deputy commissioner of elections. Eventually, he found Amsure and knew it was the perfect opportunity for him.

“They’re willing to put the time and effort into me and teach me. They’re willing to team me up with a mentor so I can learn from someone who’s been doing it, not just getting help here and there,” explained Dustin. He works closely with his mentor Dave Meager, who has worked in the insurance industry for more than 50 years.

Passionate about his work, Dustin is constantly networking and building connections with those in his community.



*Dustin and his wife, Bailey Hall
after he graduated from Syracuse University in 2021.*

“My philosophy is that you build the network and worry about the sales later,” explained Dustin, “While obviously growing a book of business in the future is the overall goal, I’d rather grow that book of business through friendships, and networking, and connections versus the typical go out and pick someone randomly.” One way he has made genuine connections was through the Adirondack Chamber of Commerce (ARCC) Veteran’s Business Network (VBN). He mentioned Sean Dion and Juan Gonzales, who both serve leadership positions on the VBN. Being veterans themselves, Dustin can relate to them in a way many people cannot. As a bonus, he is able to help them on the insurance side of their businesses as well.

Dustin also enjoys helping fire districts when he gets the chance. “Fire districts, that’s one of my soft spots in the insurance industry. I love fire districts in the sense of I was an aircraft firefighter so I can go in and I can talk to firefighters or a fire district and I kind of understand them. It’s always nice knowing I have their back in a sense on the insurance side,” said Dustin.

While still early in his career, Dustin is proving that he has the dedication and drive needed to succeed. “I’ve learned that the best approach that you can do coming into the insurance industry is just be true and genuine, and if you don’t know something admit that you don’t know something, but then come back and [say] ‘Here, this is the answer,’” shared Dustin. “At the end of the day, an agent or broker should become a trusted advisor to your business,” said Dustin. He makes sure that he is always thinking of the people and keeping their business’ best interest in mind when giving advice.

Outside of work, Dustin spends lots of time with his wife, Bailey, and Vizsla dog, Trigger. They enjoy going on walks and exploring trails together as the weather warms up. He also has a love for cars, “My wife would tell you it’s probably a little more of an obsession,” he admitted. Specifically, he loves Porsches, and is always excited to find someone else to talk to about his interest. Additionally, Bailey and Dustin are preparing to become first-time parents with an upcoming due date this August.

5 Podcast Concepts (for you to steal)



by Michael Nelson
of Five Towers Media

Last month, we published a short article on why everyone needs a podcast. Since then, we have received quite a few questions about podcasts and the logistics of putting them together. A frequent question is, 'What should the show be about, or what should I talk about?'

Many seem to have the incorrect idea that their industry or profession is not that interesting. We want you to know that with very few exceptions, most people have stories to tell that others would want to hear.

To help facilitate the concept and launch of your podcast, here are 5 show formats you could put into play.

1 *The Interview:* I like the interview format the best, and I believe it is one of the easier formats to pull off. All you need is a guest and your own curiosity. Or, you could be the guest and you just need someone to ask you questions. It can be industry specific, geographically specific, topic specific, etc. You can interview current clients & customers or complete strangers.

Personally, I enjoy using the podcast to get in front of people I wouldn't have been able to meet otherwise. It's an easy way to increase your network while also adding value to others. It gives all parties a piece of content that only costs us our time. Then, we can use for social, website, email campaigns, and more.

2 *The Monologue:* Are you an expert on a topic? The monologue, in my opinion, is not an easy format and requires a bit more preparation. But, when done well, is very entertaining.

It can be 5 minutes or it can be 50. The important thing is to not drone on with any one thought, as attention spans are shorter and shorter. Have an impassioned message you want to get out? Are you excited about certain topics and have a fiery personality?

Lean into a monologue rant. Consider the rant format, especially if you are funny, but consider keeping it short.

3 *The How-To:* The “how to” podcast is also a great one for brands that are looking to increase their presence on Youtube or Rumble. “How to” videos show up in search results on Google, so they have an SEO value that others may not.

4 *The Review:* Similar to the “How To” format, the “Review” format also shows up on google search pretty well. You can review products (your own or someone else’s), local services, industry specific tools, etc. Again, there are no limits.

5 *The Recap:* If you listen to news or political podcasts, you have probably heard a recap or two. This ranges from taking news clips and giving your thoughts on them to dissecting entire shows and giving your thoughts along the way. This can be local or national news, politics, high school sports, or whatever you think your audience will want to hear your thoughts about.



- *Why are you creating the podcast and what do you hope to achieve?*
- *Does the content you are creating achieve this? Make sure it does.*
- *At what frequency will you record podcasts? Create a schedule and try to stick to it.*

You could also start a show that incorporates all 5 or a combination of just a few. Really, the options are endless. **Here are a couple of last minute thoughts to consider as well:**

The main thing to remember is to relax, and have fun. Of course, if you are still not sure but think a podcast may be a good content solution for you, **give us a call, or visit us at fivetowers.us.**

- M



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THE FUNDAMENTAL ROLE *OF INCOME*



by **Conor Boyd**, *Founder & Managing Partner of Thoroughbred Advisors*

I have a question I ask all my clients, What is the engine that drives your lifestyle? Most of them eventually land on income. Of course health, family, faith, and many other things are important to our existence but the income we earn, in my estimate, is the thing that is the lynchpin for our lifestyle.

Whether you are 2, 20, 65, or 90 years old, it is about income. Working or retired, it is about income. You may say, well there is that one person. Perhaps you have taken a vow of poverty and it is about someone else's income. Or perhaps you are a YouTube sensation, forging hatchets from iron ore, completely self-sufficient, living off the land. Either way, for most of us, income is paramount to the lives we live.

THE ILLUSION OF ASSETS OVER INCOME

An interesting thing I have observed is that society tends to be more enchanted by assets. To allow you to think for yourself about what is most important. Imagine this.

Imagine that you won the lottery and I told you your ticket was worth \$100 million dollars! What feelings would you have? How would your life change in the blink of an eye? How would you physically change before our eyes?

And then, just as quickly as I said you won \$100 million dollars, I followed up with the fine print of your massive win. "You my friend will receive your \$100 million in the form of \$1,000 annual payments for the next 100,000 years and upon your death, whatever you have not enjoyed, you will leave for the next lucky winner!"

I am not saying any of us would turn down \$1,000/year but hopefully I am proving to you that it is not about assets, but rather the income that can be generated from those assets. We have a tremendous amount of clients in the Capital Region who have or will have NYS Pensions. For years now, I have smiled at how little these clients have appreciated the money that is required behind these pensions to guarantee payments for a lifetime. Ironically, I have also smiled at how much our clients overestimate the amount of income that their 401(k)s can generate based on the lump sum they have.

UNDERSTANDING COMPOUNDING INTEREST & MORTALITY CREDITS

Two simple but profound distinctions every human should understand are the idea of compounding interest and the law of large numbers or in the context of income, mortality credits.

Investopedia defines compound interest as the interest on savings calculated on both the initial principal, and the accumulated interest from previous periods. As I often say, over many, many years of diligent saving, you have the opportunity to take a little bit of money and create a lot of money. In the context of compounding interest, the years you have and the interest you earn each year will determine the success of this strategy.

The law of large numbers, and in this case mortality credits, can have a significant impact on income. Simply put, across a very large group of people, actuarially, you can determine an average age of death.

Some people will live beyond this average age, and some people unfortunately will die before this average age. Mortality credit is the idea that when you pool a percentage of your money together with thousands of other people, the ones who pass earlier than expected can benefit the ones who live longer than expected. This can increase the amount of income available for each individual while they are living. Pensions, such as the ones provided to employees of NY State and other municipalities, leverage this actuarial science and mortality credit in providing these employees with a guaranteed income for life.

TOOLS AND CONTEXT IN FINANCIAL PLANNING

In my opinion, the financial industry is divided into two camps. Of course, there are firms like Thoroughbred Advisors who enjoy and see the value of each camp. The financial tools available in our industry primarily fall under two major umbrellas: investments and insurance. Those in the investment camp leverage the distinction of compounding interest, and work to solve the income challenge through building greater assets. The insurance camp often leverages the law of large numbers and mortality credits when solving the income challenge. In my opinion both are valuable, they are simply different tools.

We believe that tools are neither good nor bad until you put context around them. To give a simple example, in the context of a nail, hammers are amazing tools. In the context of a screw, hammers are not so amazing. With that said, I can definitely get a screw in with a hammer! At the end, however, what does the screw look like and what does the material surrounding it look like?

THE CONTINUOUS IMPORTANCE OF INCOME

The context of our lives. The resources we have. These and other factors will impact the tools you will need to implement. And as a reminder, your lives are driven by income today, and so it will be for the years to come.

If you do not have a clear view of how you will maximize income now, and in the future, we would welcome a conversation.

The information provided herein is for general informational purposes only and should not be considered investment advice. Any strategies described may not be suitable for everyone. Readers are encouraged to evaluate all information in light of their own situation and seek the advice of an appropriate professional advisor.



Thoroughbred Advisors is a leading financial firm dedicated to providing tailored, transparent, and authentic financial solutions for their clients. Established in 2014, the firm focuses on empowering individuals, families, and businesses in the Capital Region to achieve lasting financial success.

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Clarity of Vision *Leads to* **CELEBRATION** of **SUCCESS**



by Wendy Waldron,
Certified EOS Implementer®

Business founders and owners are often **outstanding visionaries**.

Being a visionary, however, sometimes comes with blind spots. You may be “the bee’s knees” at casting a vision for your company, yet unknowingly neglect certain employee needs that are vital for your vision to become a reality.

If this assertion surprises you, consider your immediate response to one question about your business. Are you ready? Here it is:

“What does success look like?”

Your answer undoubtedly relates to the long-term vision for your business, whether that has to do with revenue goals, expansion plans, innovative product lines, or some other “big picture” results. Your image of success is crystal clear in your mind. You can pinpoint metrics and milestones that will mark your progress. You can’t wait to celebrate when you finally see your vision played out in the real world.

Given this clarity about how success looks, how it is measured, and how it is celebrated, you are motivated and engaged and know just what you need to do!

But there is something important to remember: the people who work for you may not think in such “big picture” terms.

They may understand and acknowledge the grand vision for the company, but that is not their day-to-day existence and experience. They have a job to do, such as making sales, making calls, or making widgets. **That is what consumes their time and attention.**

As the business owner and visionary, these daily tasks most likely never cross your mind. (And rightly so, since they aren’t your job.) Yet, *these short-term actions make your long-term vision possible*. For example, take the Accounts Payable team. Processing checks to pay vendors probably doesn’t get on the agenda for your leadership meetings. But if the Accounts Payable team fails to send checks in a timely manner, that can jeopardize key vendor relationships. Therefore, behind the scenes, Accounts Payable plays an important role in the success or failure of your company vision.

This is the case for every area of your company: each job, team, department, and function plays a role in how your vision succeeds or fails. Therefore, as a leader, doesn’t it make sense to ensure that your employees have clarity about how success looks, how it is measured, and how it is celebrated *for their specific roles and responsibilities*? Clarity motivates and engages you; in the same way, your employees will become motivated and engaged when they have clarity about the part of the vision that they own.

Here are three ways to provide clarity for your people and, in so doing, **help your vision to become reality:**

1. Define **How Success Looks**.

Talk with each department or team about how success looks for them, bearing in mind that success does not refer exclusively to results, but also to actions. For example, one measure of success for the business development team would be the number of prospects converted into customers each week.

But another measure of success could be the number of calls or meetings that were held, because these actions are necessary to keep the pipeline full so that a steady stream of prospects can be converted into customers.

With that in mind, there might be a week with no conversions that is nevertheless a great success because of the number of opportunities that entered the pipeline.

2. Determine **How Success Is Measured**.

People appreciate benchmarks, scorecards, and metrics because they offer something concrete to strive for. Having defined how success looks in each area of your company, work with your leaders to put in place practical metrics to measure progress toward and the attainment of success. For instance, call center success could be measured based on the results of post-call customer satisfaction surveys.

3. Decide **How Success Is Celebrated**.

Celebrating short-term wins helps keep people energized because it tells them that what they do is important and that they have done a great job. For example, as the business owner, you can ask your team leaders what successes they have seen in the past week and let them shine a spotlight on their team’s accomplishments. How will you then affirm what has been done and reinforce the part these successes play in reaching the company’s goals? Whatever you decide, enjoy that time of celebration together!

Here’s the bottom line: if you help your people define, measure, and celebrate the success they achieve in delivering on their specific part of the company’s vision, the overall long-term vision will take care of itself. Then you can have the ultimate celebration you are striving for!

Do you need help defining, measuring, and celebrating success across your organization? **Contact me today!**

Wendy Waldron is a Certified EOS Implementer®, accomplished medical practice executive, coach, and speaker. Scan the QR code to learn more.





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Navigating the Path to **BUSINESS OWNERSHIP:**



by **Matthew D. Wagoner**
of *The Wagoner Firm*

A Strategic Approach to Finding a Business for Sale

In the final edition of our four-part series on buying and selling a small business, we're looking at how to zero in on your perfect acquisition target. We're going to detail the multifaceted approach of identifying those potential targets, ensuring a comprehensive strategy that aligns with your vision, and both your personal and financial goals.

Beginning the Search

This phase in the acquisition journey involves identifying businesses that are on the market and “off market” or not listed for sale. The process is facilitated by various platforms and strategies, each with its unique advantages and challenges.

For on market businesses, online marketplaces such as BizBuySell.com and BusinessesForSale.com have bridged the gap between sellers and potential buyers in the business world. These digital platforms are equipped with advanced search functionalities, enabling users to meticulously sift through listings based on specific criteria like location, industry, and price range. Beyond mere listings, these websites often provide valuable resources and insights into the business buying process, including articles, tools for valuation, and tips for due diligence.

Of course, business brokers will also have listings and can be utilized to assist in the complex search process to make it a more manageable endeavor. Business brokers offer a personalized service, presenting a selection of businesses that closely match your criteria and investment goals.

Their network often extends to off market listings that are not available to the public, providing potential buyers with access to unique opportunities that might otherwise be missed. Remember, a good broker not only helps in finding the right business but also assists in navigating the negotiation and purchase process, leveraging their expertise to your advantage in what can be a competitive market landscape.

Direct approaches, such as cold calling and direct mailing, serve as targeted strategies for individuals with a precise understanding of the business sector they wish to enter. These tactics allow you to directly engage with business owners, uncovering off market sale opportunities that might not be listed on public platforms. While these methods demand more time and effort, they can also lead to direct negotiations with owners willing to sell their business, potentially reducing competition and facilitating more favorable terms.

Networking plays a crucial role in the business acquisition process, with local business associations, chambers of commerce, and industry-specific events acting as fertile grounds for building valuable connections. Engaging with business advisors, accountants, and attorneys is especially fruitful, as these professionals

are often privy to early discussions about businesses considering a sale. Expanding your professional network can not only provide you with insider information, but also enhance your credibility in the business community, making you a preferred candidate for business owners looking to sell.

Subscribing to industry-specific publications is a strategic move for prospective buyers, offering updates on businesses for sale and insights into market trends. Auctions and liquidation sales, on the other hand, present unique opportunities to acquire businesses or their assets at a discount. These methods can be particularly advantageous for those looking to enter a market at a lower entry cost, provided they are prepared to put in the necessary legwork.

Initial Screening & Outreach

At this phase in the process, the groundwork for a successful acquisition is laid, involving a meticulous review of potential businesses and the start of conversations with sellers or their intermediaries. This phase is not just procedural; it is the foundation upon which the rest of the acquisition process is built.



First, buyers should take a deep dive into the available data concerning the businesses. This isn't merely about skimming through financial statements or customer testimonials; it's about piecing together a comprehensive picture of the business's history, its standing among consumers, and its future trajectory.

After the initial research, but before reaching out to a seller or broker, the next step is drafting a set of pointed questions. These inquiries are designed to peel back the layers of the business, revealing the motivations behind the sale, the hurdles the business faces, its financial robustness, the tangible and intangible assets that come with the purchase, any key employees to the success of the business, and potential real estate associated with the business, among many other things. This preparatory step is not just about gathering information; it's about setting the stage for meaningful dialogue.

The manner of the initial contact—whether direct to the seller or here that the tone for all future interactions is established. Professionalism and a respect for confidentiality are not just courtesies; they are necessities, given the often-sensitive nature of business sales. This initial outreach is the first step in building a relationship based on trust and mutual respect. Good relations between a buyer and seller are critical to a smooth transaction, and both sides should keep that in mind, particularly during the initial vetting process.

Following the preparatory work and initial outreach, the conversation deepens through meetings and calls. These interactions are valuable opportunities to delve into the finer details of the business's operation, its challenges, and potential for growth. It's also a moment to discuss the sale's terms candidly, and to assess the seller's sincerity and commitment to the transaction.

In many cases, a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) becomes part of the process. This legal formality is more than just a procedural hurdle; it's a pledge of confidentiality that ensures the information shared remains between the parties involved. Signing an NDA marks a transition into more detailed discussions about the business, safeguarding the sensitive data that comes to light.

Throughout this process, vigilance is key. Any hesitation to disclose vital information, unexplained surges in financial performance, or undue haste to close the deal may be red flags identifying potential issues within the

business or the sale process itself. Buyers should trust their instincts, ask questions, and verify information as they are making a life-altering decision rife with risk under the best of circumstances. Notably, most buyers will have help along the way from brokers, attorneys, and accountants, among others. They should work with experienced advisors and use that experience to their advantage as much as possible.

Conclusion

Finding the right business to purchase is an intricate blend of diligent research, strategic outreach, and keen intuition. By leveraging a variety of methods to identify potential opportunities, engaging in thorough initial screening, and conducting detailed outreach, prospective buyers can navigate the complex landscape of business acquisition with confidence. The journey to business ownership, like many of life's journeys, is paved with challenges.

However, with the right approach, it can lead to rewarding opportunities and long-term success. The key to a seamless acquisition lies in understanding the market, knowing what questions to ask, and maintaining a clear vision of your entrepreneurial goals.

If you have questions about embarking on this journey yourself, our team at The Wagoner Firm, PLLC is always available to start that conversation. **Learn more by visiting thewagonerfirm.com.**

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SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 51

A Family Foundation, Built Right

In this episode, our hosts Mike Nelson and Derek Foster interview Paul Lachar, owner and mason at Top Course Masonry! The whole family's in on this foundational construction dream... But there's no dysfunction here. Paul and his crew have served the region with pride for over 20 years, and there's no end in sight! Listen to this episode to hear about his experience, how he keeps the family in harmony, how he got back to school after an injury, and more!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 50

Hiring to Your Weaknesses... AND Strengths?

In this episode, our hosts Mike Nelson and Derek Foster interview Michael Turcotte, proprietor of Turn Cycle Solutions! Michael built and grew his New Hampshire-based business with the usual hard work and hiring team members to cover his own weaknesses... But he also made the unique decision to hire people with similar strengths to his own. Why would he replace his own strengths with a costly employee, and how did this decision help his business grow? Listen to this episode, and you just might find out!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 49

The True Meaning of Leadership

In this episode, our hosts Mike Nelson and Derek Foster interview Dean Leber, a top leadership consultant at The Leaders Group! The corporate world is full of bloated questions - "What's the difference between a mission and vision statement?" and "How do I empower my employees to become good leaders?" These questions seem jejune on the surface, but Dean has real, authentic answers to them that can help you, your team, and your business. Listen to this episode to find out how!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 48

From Scraping to Scaping

In this episode, our hosts Mike Nelson and Derek Foster interview Chris Manzela, co-owner of BradManz Landscaping! Chris has been working since he was only 14 years old, but he's progressed a long way since then - from \$3.75 an hour bussing tables to owning his own business and a massive football fan cave, Chris' steps forward have not been small! What's his secret? Listen to this episode, and you just might find out!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 47

Ownership vs. Management - Dimitri's Story

In this episode, our hosts Mike Nelson and Derek Foster interview Dimitri Skrinik, the Project Manager at MODS National! Dimitri's had an exciting journey, between emigrating from Moldova, leveraging internships into running his own blue collar business... And then leaving it to manage construction projects using shipping containers! Why did he choose Project Management over business ownership? What have his experiences taught him? Hear the answers, his story, and more here, in this episode!

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BUYING LOCAL



Saratoga, Warren, and Washington County have no shortage of fantastic goods and services to offer! In this podcast, our host Mike Nelson will clue you in on the amazing gems hidden in your very own community!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 55

Unraveling Financial Mysteries

In this episode, our host Mike Nelson interviews Charles Amodio, a main partner and forensic accountant at FAZ Forensics! Forensic accounting is a little-known but invaluable resource to businesses of all kinds, and FAZ is the premier provider of it in the region! Whether you need a business valuation, financial investigation, or even litigation support, when answers matter, FAZ delivers!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 54

March to Victory – The Men Behind the Melee

In this episode, our host Mike Nelson interviews Don Walton and Jay Ingleston – former fighters turned promoters at DonnyBrooke Fight Promotions! On March 30th, Vermont-based Donnybrooke is bringing a premier MMA event to New York state for the first time – Adina Hornstra vs. LG Pannell and Carmen Corchado vs. Oriana Bracho at the March to Victory! How did they go about putting together this action-packed event? What were their motivations behind the matchups? What brings them to New York this time around? You’ll have to listen to this episode to find out!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 53

The Real Estate Roundtable Reconvenes

In this episode, our host Mike Nelson talks with local top real estate experts Dan Wade, Mark Pawlows, and Lori Danussi! It’s been a few years since the COVID pandemic first affected the real estate market... What’s recovered, what still has a ways to go, and what does that mean to prospective home-buyers and sellers? Listen to this episode for the answers to those questions, and many more!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 52

Three Generations of Boxley Brilliance

In this episode, our host Mike Nelson interviews Steven and Christian Boxley, the father-son Presidential team of Boxley’s Services! For three generations, Boxley’s has provided complete cleaning and detailing services to homes, businesses, and vehicles... From humble beginnings, Boxley’s transformed hard work and reliable service into a successful and reputable business. Each generation has built upon the last; and Christian has plenty of new ideas to help Boxley’s grow!



SCAN TO LISTEN

EPISODE 51

Leave Your Company & Start Your Own: The Five Towers Story

In this episode, our host Mike Nelson interviews Brad Colacino, his partner at – and co-owner of – Five Towers Media! Brad had a stable, cushy job at a big white collar company, but he decided to leave it all behind to start his own business! Has he achieved the success he sought? What does he love about his current company? Find out the answers in this special first episode of our second season!

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