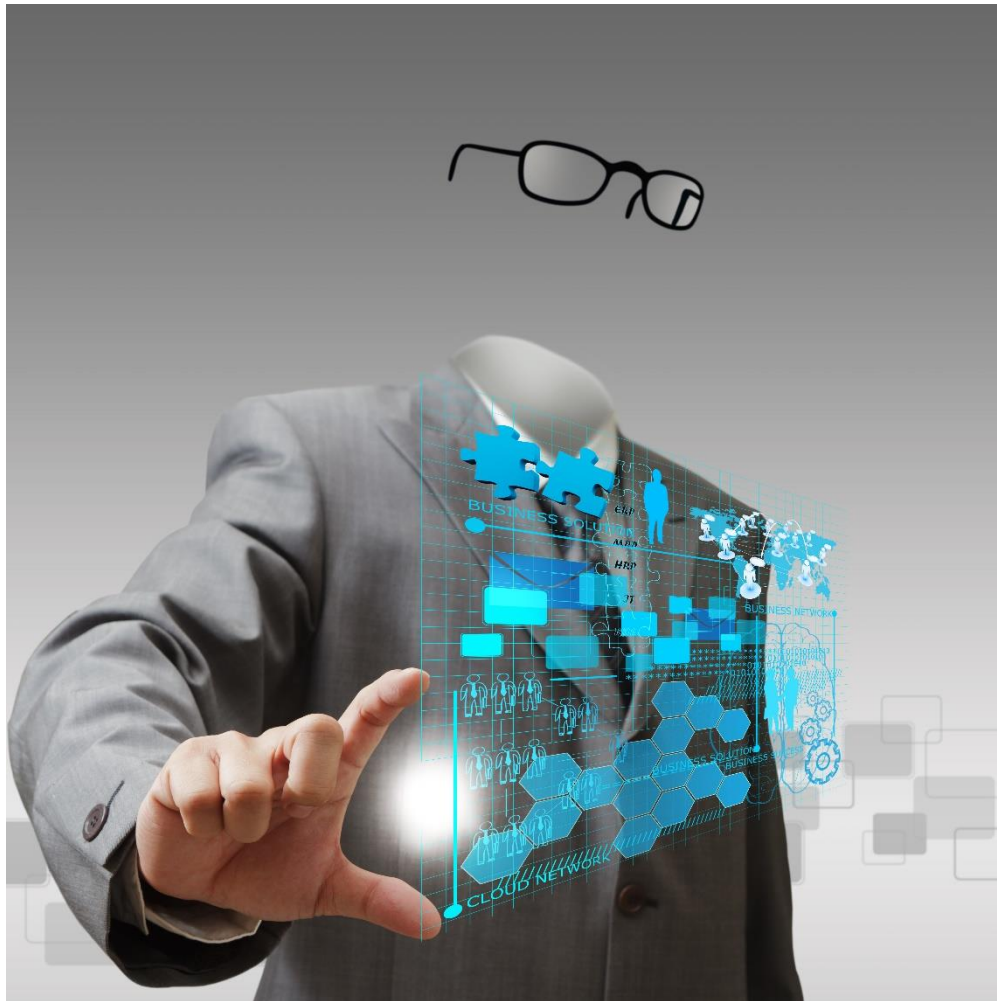


Dare to be Different: 5 Ways to Recreate Your Business for Greater Revenue



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Most people come up with an idea, or they have a passion, and they decide to turn it into a business. The savvy among them create a business plan around their idea or passion. Many get so excited about their venture that they create the product or service first and then try and find the market. This approach is like swimming upstream. It can be done but it's a lot harder. The easier way is to locate a group of people with a problem and solve for it.

Often finding your target audience *first* produces a greater return on investment. But if you already have a business, what can you do? You can reinvent it. The process is not as

hard as it sounds, but you have to let go and leave your comfort zone to provide a more tailored experience to your customers.

If you have enough profits and enough work, stop reading now. Otherwise, here are a few ways you can recreate your existing business for greater revenue.

Target Your Ideal Customer and Market to Them

This is the hardest jump to make, identifying a target market and forsaking all others. The idea that customization, and drilling down to one or two types of customers, will yield you more customers and not less is a bit unnerving at first. The secret to this work is to ensure that your ideal audience needs you and knows it. If you have to spend a lot of time convincing them of the need, you not only have a marketing campaign on your hands but an educational one as well.

Find a segment that has a problem you can help with. Then market to them by showing how your service or product solves their problem. Don't worry that you're not solving everyone else's problem. If you clearly and adequately solve someone's problem, they'll be back, and they'll bring their friends.

Transform Your Social Media

Now that you have a target market, find out where they are on social and show up. Don't worry about other platforms. If they're not there, no reason for you to be either. This also means posting the kinds of posts they are interested in, about subjects that appeal to them. Don't be vanilla. Adopt a tone that appeals to your ideal demographic as well. If you don't know how to do that, think about hiring your ideal customer (from a demographic perspective) to do it for you.

Create Content that Answers Their Questions

You know their pain point. Talk to it. Write about it directly, then tackle related issues as well. Marcus Sheridan was the co-owner of River Pools, which installed fiberglass pools. He recognized that most people don't wake up one morning, call a pool company, and ask them to start digging in the afternoon. There's a lot of research someone is going to conduct before they hand over \$30,000. Because of this he began compiling all the questions he received from potential customers and created content out of them. He

built a resource library. Not only was it loved by his customers, but Google took a fancy to it too. Soon he was ranking above all of his competition. All because he listened to potential customers and gave them what they needed to make an informed decision.

Stand Out

Maybe you're thinking that your customers don't need any educating. Maybe you run a boutique. I'd argue there's still content that could be effective for you like explaining the difference between a "wild" pearl and one that was cultivated, but there are other ways to stand out. Gift wrap your products, include a "thank you" message, or place an extra goodie or sample in the bag. These small gifts are a wonderful way to remain fresh in your customer's mind.

Give Them What They Want

This is perhaps one of the boldest things you can do once you decide on a target market. Now, think about giving your audience what they want, even if it changes your business model. It doesn't have to be painful for you and may actually introduce new economies of scale. For instance, there's a pizza place in Berkeley called the Cheeseboard Pizza Collective. They make 1 type of pizza every day, and no, that's not a typo. One. As in singular, for \$20. People line up around the block to await a slice of the Co-op's specialty pizza and because the place is small, they take their slice outside and consume it to the tunes of one of the local bands playing that evening. These "picnickers" are a silent, but powerful, testimonial for the co-op. The co-op realized their vegetarian clientele didn't want variety as much as they craved farm-fresh gourmet. It's difficult to provide farm-fresh in a variety of options, so the restaurant looks at the freshest ingredients available at that time and creates a pizza based on that. Doing so, has made them the talk of the town.

Who is your ideal customer and what are you doing for him or her today?

Christina R. Green teaches small businesses, chambers and associations how to connect through content. Her articles have appeared in the *Midwest Society of Association Executives' Magazine*, *NTEN.org*, *AssociationTech*, and *Socialfish*. She is a regular blogger at *Frankjkenny.com* and *Memberclicks*.

She's just a bookish writer on a quest to bring great storytelling to organizations everywhere.
