



## GROW YOUR BUSINESS

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- ▶ The Top Business Trends of 2017 that Spell Success

---

- ▶ You Can't Please Everyone - How and When to Say NO

---

- ▶ Tips to Being A Better Business Writer

---

- ▶ Organizational Alignment



## The Top Business Trends in 2017 that Spell Success

Whether or not the end of the calendar year reflects the close of your fiscal year, December is still a great time to take a look at the past year, and prepare yourself for the year to come.

Looking into the future trends to give you a leg up moving into January. Be prepared to discuss the trends, how they may affect your business, and be open to discussion with your team members on the best path to moving forward in the upcoming year.

Here are a few hints towards what is to come in 2017!

1. Mobile marketing to become central, no longer a suggested method. Remember that time we delicately pushed you into the world of web-centric marketing methods? Well mobile is having its year in 2017. Buy buttons, mobile apps and mobile-only social media sites will take the forefront next year, so start preparing for the shift or risk falling behind and losing customers.
2. "Permission Marketing" will take the place of banner ads, pop-ups and the need to barrage your customers with uninvited digital marketing plays. The phrase was coined by Seth Godin, author, entrepreneur and marketing guru, often found speaking at TED talks around the world. It's just what it sounds like- marketing developed around the idea of a user designating permission. It's targeted, its niche and its perfect for small business use.
3. Not just the embracing of, but the incorporation and celebration of the millennial in the work place. As baby boomers begin the process of retirement, our work forces will be saturated by the younger crowd, and their ideas and instincts are key to the fluid transition between 'old' and 'new'. Take a crash course in diverse work place considerations and be prepared for the uptick of the tech-savvy generation.
4. Due to the above-mentioned surge of retirees that will highlight 2017, we can expect to see many businesses up for sale. As a small business owner, you may wonder how this will directly affect you. If you do your research you may be able to swoop up some competitors ready to leave their legacy in the hands of someone capable, buy into pieces of companies sectioning off for quick sale, or at least be in the know on the changes in your own industry.
5. Holistic approaches to business management. These methods have been on the steady rise, but they are poised for a quiet transition to power in 2017. As your workplace dynamics change, you will need to be equipped for the utilization of many of these holistic, work-life-balance suggestions to keep your team happy. Get trained in management of remote workers, consult with a health and wellness advisor to ensure your work place is encouraging healthy habits, and be the center of the "love where you work" movement at your business. Competition will begin to ramp up as employers compete for employees by engaging these holistic methods.

Remember that a time of transition is both exciting and scary. Be prepared and educated and these on-the-rise trends of 2017 will feel natural, well-supported and seamless!



NO THANKS

## You Can't Please Everyone - How and When to Say NO

As much as it may go against the very nature of a strong entrepreneurial leader, saying no is as empowering as your first day of business, your first big sale or your biggest success to date.

The best part? While many of the milestones happen only once, the bold decision to say "NO" can happen (and should happen!) many times on your business journey.

But beware the enticing high of saying no- it's not always the best way forward, as being a successful business owner is also very much centered around taking risks and being bold.

So how do you know when to say no?

The basic question itself is part of the described risk- you may get it wrong. There are, however, several specific situations in which you may want to rethink the 'yes-man/woman' attitude your fearless spirit has embraced.

One of the clearest areas to steer yourself away from while growing a business

is special treatment. Whether in retail, customer service, or production there will always be a customer who asks for something additional, or outside of the realm of your usual service/product.

This is a slippery slope. At a time in which you have ample resources, an overflow of cash in hand and time that is simply not being utilized, sure! Go ahead and accommodate that request. Likelihood of that ever being the case? Slim to none.

While taking customer requests and building them into your future models, you may eventually benefit from these asks, but while building a small business, learn when to say no to a special request.

The next awkward but necessary time you may need to say no is when deciding not to take on a potential client or customer.

As a small business owner, you will come across these situations in likely three ways:

1. Saying no to someone you know and like (think family or friend or colleague)

2. Saying no to someone you know and don't like

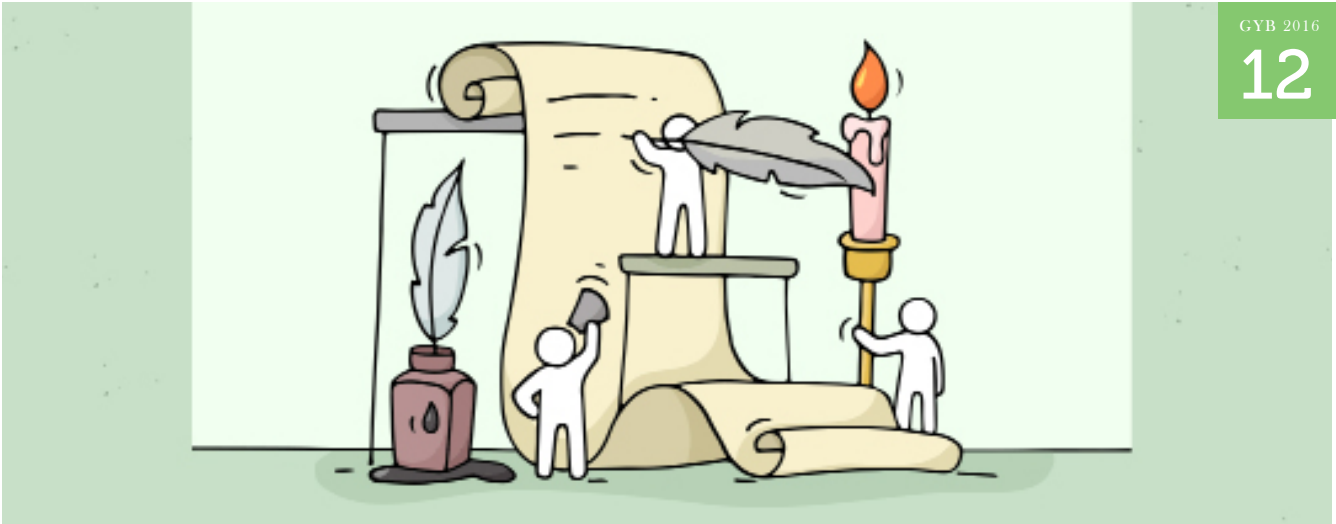
3. Saying no to a referral

While handled delicately and probably differently, one business columnist suggests to always employ the "Thanks, but no thanks" strategy. Always start with the positives, be clear about your reasons why not and be as honest as possible without crossing over to cruel or insensitive.

A good model for inspection when deciding if it's a no-go is:

1. Are you already at capacity?
2. Does this match your mission statement/values/goals?
3. Is it profitable? Is it marketable? Is it in your niche?

After you come to your decision, remember that a no should be bolstered by "I can't" and should as often as possible be delivered in the form of "I don't".



## Tips to Being A Better Business Writer

Writing is writing, no matter the scope. It is of vital importance that your written word (any and all of it) be carefully crafted, professionally presented and grammatically correct.

Let's start small, yet ubiquitous- the email. Emails go out to clients, employees, investors, vendors, and potentials in all of these categories. For many of these situations, your email may be the initial point of contact, therefore playing the role of first impression.

We don't need to reiterate the importance of a good first impression, so it makes sense that your emails should ALWAYS be spell-checked, grammatically reviewed and at their core, portray your business's values, style and look.

Consider having a second pair of eyes on an email of great significance, it can't hurt to be edited by a peer.

Emails should remain short and to the point- if further discussion is warranted, a phone call or in-person meeting may be necessary. Remember while writing

that yours is potentially one of thousands ending up in an inbox. Craft your subject line with care.

With any and all forms of business writing, you could consider working up a brief outline before writing. Get the general ideas on paper, highlight their importance, structure them in an order that makes for fluid reading and then tackle the actual writing.

Cut, then cut down again. Often your first version will be juiced up with extra (likely unnecessary) words. Edit and then edit again, take a break between reads to return with a fresh outlook. Once again, turn to peers if possible.

Often business owners utilize buzzy words, industry jargon or farcified language to attempt to sound more knowledgeable. Just as often, these attempts do the opposite and highlight your lack of writing skills.

Stick to what you know- keep in mind that you may eventually meet with the reader of your written works and would rather appear impressive, rather than a disappointment.

Practice makes perfect, drafts are vital and reading your work out loud are always pretty commonly used tactics for writing improvement.

Another common mistake is the misuse of fact vs. opinion. Consider your audience and cater your message directly, concisely and with careful consideration of the difference between fact and opinion. This is most important when curating newsletter content, blogs and anything that will reach a wider and more diverse audience.

### **BLURB:**

Crisis Management in three simple tips  
It's inevitable- there will come a day where a small (or big!) crisis affects your business. Whether it be internal or external there are three things as the leader that you should remember: maintain a level head, draw up a step-by-step plan of action, and consider asking for help whenever possible- this is one of those times that delegation is vital.



## Organizational Alignment

*“Think of alignment as a playbook for the entire company, just like in sports. For a coach to make sure every player is on the same page and goals are made, that playbook needs to be shared and discussed in real time.”*

—Andre Lavoie, CEO of Clear Company

This is one of the most clear-cut descriptions of what we mean by organizational alignment- as a playbook for your small business.

So how do you, as the ‘coach’ build this playbook and then actively hold the players accountable and aligned?

According to Lavoie, there are four levels of organization alignment:

1. Employee-role alignment. This step ensures each employee is well aligned with their own role, how it relates to and affects the overall goals of the business and what is expected of them.
2. Employee-goal alignment. As manager/owner/CEO it is your responsibility to establish goals for each and every employee. You after all, crafted the original mission statement and goals for the business, so you would best know how to align individual goals with that of the overall company. Discuss the goals, create timelines and hold employees accountable with performance checks.
3. Employee-team alignment. Simply put, the next step is taking everyone and their individual goals, and making sure they understand how they all relate to each other, and the company as a whole. Schedule frequent staff meetings and consider incorporating team goals on top of individual ones.
4. Employee-organization alignment. Once again, this is the sole responsibility of owners and managers. Make sure that employees see how their goals and intentions directly affect (and align with) those of the company’s mission statement. Think big picture, company-wide goals here.

While this is just one example of how alignment can be attributed, the general idea remains the same. Much like a sports team, there are different relationships and goals that can be achieved, while the overall mission of the organization can still be maintained. Most steps of organization alignment can be accomplished through regular meetings and discussions and the clear directive of goals on the individual, team and company-wide level.



While every effort has been made to provide valuable and useful information in this publication, this firm and any related suppliers accept no responsibility or any form of liability from reliance upon or use of its contents. Consider any suggestions within your own particular circumstances and contact us if you want more help.

#### Terms Of Use

All rights to the content in this publication are reserved by Bambu Digital. Any use of the content outside of this format must acknowledge Bambu Digital or its licensee, RAN ONE, as the original source.