

FINANCIAL

report: Dax Moy

FITNESS

What would you say if I told you that you have the potential, as a Personal Trainer, to earn 40, 50 or even in excess of £60,000 per year?

If you're thinking 'That's impossible!' then you're right. For you, the likelihood of reaching anything near these sums is impossible. You may as well stop reading this article right now and save yourself the bother of even contemplating the material.

If, on the other hand, you think to yourself 'Yes, that's for me' then read on and pay close attention, because what you read over the following pages is **GUARANTEED** to take you closer to realising your financial potential – **BUT ONLY IF YOU ACTUALLY USE THE INFORMATION.** You'll get absolutely zero benefit if all you do is read this article.

You see, unlike many other 'marketing experts', I'm not going to tell you how to design your business cards, how to write press releases or how to 'close the sale' with your prospective client. At least, not yet anyway.

As interesting as some of this information may be, I regard all of it as being of little importance to the Personal Trainer who is trying to build his/her business. Why? Because in order to be able to use these marketing tools you need prospects who are receptive to them in the first place. Therefore, this article aims to teach you how to develop the marketing skills to attract clients to your services, keep them long-term and create parallel revenue streams from your business that will bring in money even when you are not working.

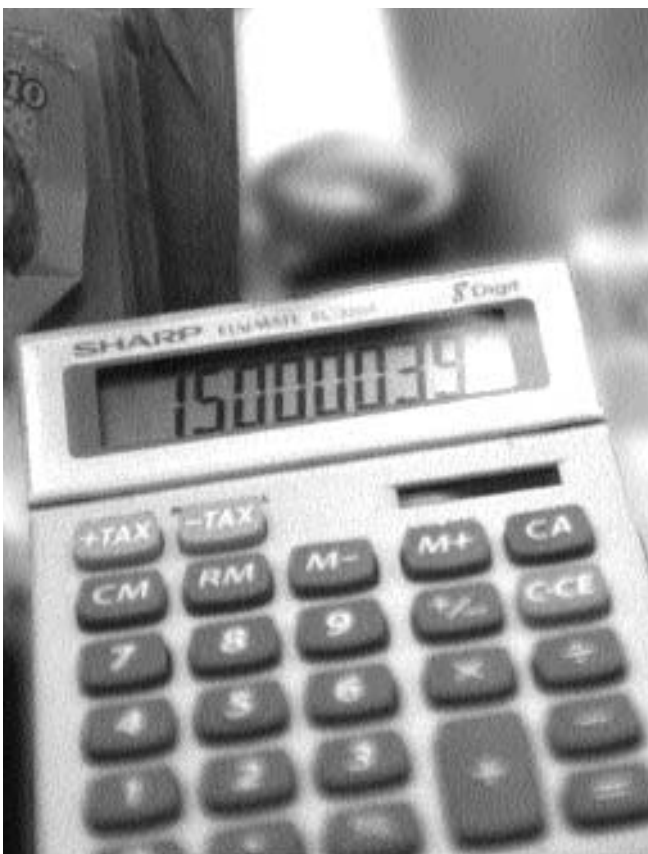
understanding your competition

Every month I have the great pleasure of lecturing to trainee Personal Trainers and Sports Therapists at one of the UK's top training establishments. At the start of the lecture I often ask students, 'What makes you so special? What would make me, as a potential client, seek out your services?' The answer always makes me laugh, not because of its content but because of the naïveté of the response, 'Well, I'm trained as a Therapist, a Personal Trainer and I can give nutritional advice and rehabilitate injuries. I'm an all-rounder who can deal with almost any client that is presented to me'. Sounds good? Sure, but consider this; this person is part of a class of 20-30 individuals, a new class starts every 4-6 weeks and there are 18 training establishments around the country for this one company alone.

Let's face it; competition for your services is fierce. In the above example, we see that one company alone is producing over 2,500 new Trainers to the industry every year. All with the same training as you, same skills as you and many living and working in the same area as you. So you see, simply marketing yourself on the strength of your certifications is a fairly limited endeavour which is guaranteed to see your marketing material buried amongst that of your competitors, leading to frustration for you and confusion for your prospects.

So what should we be doing? How do we differentiate ourselves from our competitors and create successful businesses that yield enough income to produce the financial freedom we desire?

The answer lies within you!



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the one and only you

You are unique. This is a proven FACT. It is indisputable. Regardless of the training, lifestyle and education that another person receives, they will never be the same as you. They will never have your exact philosophies, your drive, your ambition, your life force.

Why then, with this uniqueness, do we tend to gravitate toward the grey 'sameness' of our industry competitors when it comes to marketing ourselves? Why will 9 out of 10 Trainers carry similar business cards, print similar flyers and write similar websites? Quite frankly, this is marketing suicide.

You see, when prospects are faced with products that are all similar, the tendency is to go either with the cheapest or the one that looks the best. What does this mean to you? Well, your hourly rate had better match (or be cheaper) than that of your competition or you will need to spend more than your competitors in order for your materials to look better than theirs.

In truth, neither of these strategies is acceptable, at least, not in the long term. I mean, who wants to have their hourly rate determined by their competition? What if they drop their fees to undercut you? Will you drop yours again to match theirs? As you can see, this strategy is flawed and should be avoided at all costs. NEVER let your competition determine your value.

What about paying for glossier, flashier marketing materials? That works right? WRONG! You can have the nicest-looking, glossiest marketing material with all the 'flashes, bangs and whistles' and still never get the client response you desire. Why? Because 'Image marketing' simply doesn't work. Not on the small scale anyway. Leave this stuff to the big gyms or you'll be trodden underfoot by the running herd of new members they've just created – at a huge cost.

Quite simply, there will ALWAYS be someone out there with more money to spend on marketing than you so you'll always be playing 'catch up' to someone with deeper pockets. Obviously, this isn't a sound way to market your business. You'll go broke in no time!

The answer to creating a memorable, client-winning marketing message lies within how you present yourself to your target market. You do have a target market right? If you don't, you're committing the first cardinal sin of marketing; failing to

identify the end user of your service. This is like firing a shotgun from a hundred yards and still expecting to hit your target every time. Sure, you may hit the target on occasions but it'll be a haphazard process that you won't be able to reproduce. Conversely, having a specific market to aim your promotions at is like shooting with a sniper rifle. Every time you take a shot you know it'll hit the right target and that, my friends, is what marketing is all about!

You see, when you direct your efforts toward a specific target market you can do so much more than simply market your services. You have a great opportunity to establish yourself as a specialist. An expert. And let's face it, everyone prefers dealing with experts, even when the cost is higher. A good example of this is seen in the world of medicine. People will pay through the nose to see the top Orthopaedic or Heart Surgeons because they perceive that the service they receive will be so much better and yield better results.

Why then should well-trained Personal Trainers settle for marketing themselves simply as a 'Personal Trainer'? This title tells your prospects nothing about who you are, what you do or how you differ from your competition. Instead the well-trained fitness professional needs to capitalise on their strengths by marketing themselves as an expert in one area.

For example, if you have an established clientele of tennis players (or even have a strong background in the sport yourself) you could market yourself as a 'Tennis Conditioning Specialist'. Doing so identifies you to prospects who may have never hired a 'Personal Trainer' to help them with their sports preparation. See the difference? Who would YOU rather hire?

If tennis isn't your thing you could just as easily create a niche for yourself in any of the following areas:

- Corrective Exercise
- Performance Enhancement
- Kinetic Chain Specialist
- Strength Conditioning
- Ante/Post Natal Fitness
- Back Rehabilitation
- Core Conditioning
- Golf Conditioning
- Sports Conditioning
- or ANY area where you have specialist knowledge or interest.

Now, I'm not suggesting you simply create a title and market yourself as an expert in an area. Doing so would be unethical and unprofessional and besides, you'd soon be found out by your client (I know of several PT's who marketed themselves as



specialists in various areas who were later caught out when the athletes they took on realised that they didn't really understand their sports at all. Not only did they not keep the athletes as clients but they also lost many clients when word got out that they were 'faking it').

Instead, try to build upon your existing knowledge by:

- attending workshops, seminars and lectures in your area of interest
- buying books, magazines and periodicals to stay at the cutting-edge of your field
- seeking out those who are already earning a living from your chosen specialisation and get them to mentor you. If they won't (they may see you as direct competition) then PAY them for a series of appointments and learn from them that way instead
- giving small presentations to other fitness professionals or members of the public. This means that you really have to learn your stuff to a high degree but it also confirms to others that you are the expert you profess to be.

Make no mistake; creating a unique market identity (UMI) is one of the most important things that any entrepreneur can do to gain marketing momentum. This simple yet highly effective step will assist you in creating specific marketing messages that sing out to prospects that are looking for specific help within a specific area, thereby positioning you as an 'expert' within your field.

And let's face it; when was the last time you heard of a poor expert? 

Dax Moy is a Master Personal Trainer, Corrective and Performance Exercise Specialist and Educator working in London. Voted one of the UK's Top Fitness Experts in 2002, Dax provides specialist training to Personal Trainers, Physiotherapists and Osteopaths at the F.I.T Academy.

For information on marketing seminars or other courses, please call 020 7354 3550 or visit www.daxmoy-pts.co.uk