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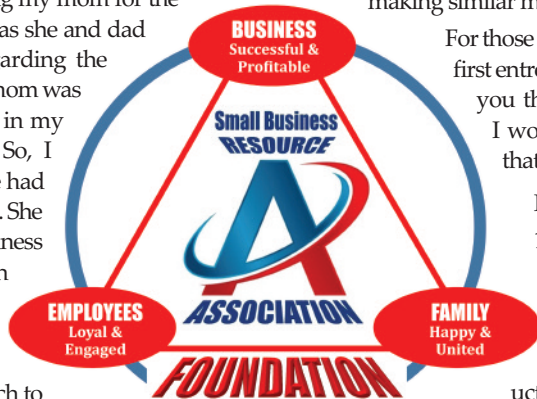


THE SBRA COMMUNITY SO, YOU WANT TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR!



**By Gary Seibert, CEO,
Small Business Resource Association**

My lifelong journey as an Entrepreneur started at the age of six. I wanted a baseball glove so I could play T-Ball and my dad told me I needed to earn the money to buy the glove because, I had ruined the one he bought me the previous year by leaving it outside over the winter. I had to buy #2 glove to teach me the lesson of taking care of your possessions. I was only six, where was I going to get the money? Asking my mom for the money was out of the question as she and dad shared the same thoughts regarding the lesson to be learned. However, mom was a possible resource to help me in my first Entrepreneurial venture. So, I went to her and asked her if we had any sandwich bags and popcorn. She said yes to both and my first business was birthed. We made popcorn and stuffed about 30 bags. I got a card table and a chair, made a sign and set up at the end of our driveway. It didn't take much to start my first business but without mom's help I may not have succeeded in selling every bag and earning \$3. None the less, I had a need (a new baseball glove) and I found a way to earn the money. Dad came home from work and was so proud of my effort, he immediately took me to the sporting goods store, threw in another \$3 bucks and we bought a brand new, all leather, Rawlings baseball glove for \$6. That was 1951, that same glove today would probably cost \$75 to \$100. That simple lesson planted a seed in me that has inspired me for my entire life. If you want something



bad enough, and you are willing to work hard to achieve it, you will find a way to earn it.

From that humble beginning my Entrepreneurial skill set has grown dramatically because of several incredible mentors/business coaches that have guided me along my journey as well as my willingness to "just try it" and learn from my mistakes. I would suggest trying the mentor route first, it is much less expensive and less painful, although, a mistake or two is good medicine and helps build your business immune system that will protect you from making similar mistakes in the future.

For those of you that are about to enter your first entrepreneurial venture or for those of you that are in your first year or two, I would like to share some thoughts that may be of help.

In the Beginning

1. Know your business. Whatever your business does, does it address a need in the marketplace. In other words, are people in need of and looking for products or services like you will be providing? Are you competitively priced? Do you know your competition? Are you easy to do business with? Is your location great? Is your staff knowledgeable, friendly and customer service driven?

2. Just as important, do you know yourself? Do you know your strengths and limitations? Do you have people you can count on to support you in the areas that you are not strong? Are you willing and able to listen to other people's perspectives and learn from their experience? Are you creative and a visionary? Can you manage yourself

let alone others that will be working for you? Do you understand the fundamentals of business finance? These are all key questions you need to consider because they are the same questions your competitors are making sure they can answer. They want your customer as bad as you do.

3. You will need Professional help. In most cases, until your business has grown to the point that you can afford in-house professional help, you will need to outsource these necessary services to others. You will most likely need the advice of an attorney in setting up your business structure and in some cases, you might include your accountant in the conversation to make sure you structure your financial and legal entity to best meet your short and long term goals. Your accountant is so very important in helping you set up your books and keeping accurate records to make sure you are operating in financially sound practices. Your marketing strategy needs to address your target customers and you will need someone that can track the success of your marketing dollars.

4. Your Business Plan is a must and most people don't spend enough time preparing that plan, let alone, even looking at it after they open the doors. It's a Business Plan and a plan needs to be followed in order to be successful. If you don't have one, prepare one. If you have one, take a look at what you said you were going to do and see how well you actually did. You might need to make some changes.

From a popcorn stand to a lifetime of starting and building businesses, the concept has never changed. I felt a need to do something and I did it. The only difference is that I learned that starting and growing a business was a lot more than popcorn, sandwich bags and a card table. I learned to ask for and get help from people that had knowledge and experience. I learned from their mistakes and made less of my own. Today my wife calls me a Serial Entrepreneur and I would not have it any other way.

SBRA Business Spotlight

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STORYTELLING IS THE MARKETING SHAKE-UP YOU NEED – HERE'S WHY.



By Kyra Denlinger, Bell Media Group, Proud SBRA Member

In 2014, I took a job as a corporate restaurant manager. Part of the gig was learning every station in the restaurant – including prep, line work, and dish. Dressed in an old pair of jeans, nonslip shoes, and a company baseball hat, I showed up at 6:30 AM on the dot for my first day of training. I couldn't wait to get into the kitchen and show all the back-of-house guys that I could hack it anywhere.

Except I couldn't.

I had traditionally been a high achiever in professional and academic settings, and I assumed that success would come naturally. But there aren't any textbooks that teach you how to roll dough. No manuals that explain the cadence of working on a line. And no flowcharts outlining the technical communication required to get 25 tickets on their tables, hot and on time.

Twelve hours later, I was blinking back tears as I continued to pound away at my station. The kitchen manager caught my eye and said, with a half-smirk, "Go home, Kyra, you're done for the day."

Covered in grease and flour and frustrated with myself for my lack of ability to finish the shift, I tore off my dirty apron and exited the back of the restaurant without a word.

But I continued to show up. And by the end of the grueling two weeks, things were looking up. I had built friendly relationships, developed an enhanced enjoyment of food, and, most importantly, gained a new appreciation for a craft that fell outside of my natural ability. I'll never be a great back-of-house employee – but I'll also never look at one the same way again.

Why would I tell you this story?

It's not the most flattering story, in all honesty. It is, however, relatable. It indirectly reveals deeper truths about my personality and provides context for my work ethic. And most importantly – it's real, and hopefully, it's memorable.

Storytelling has become one of the hottest crazes in marketing for a couple of key reasons:

People are wired to understand and remember stories. Telling stories dates to the dawn of humankind - people are wired to understand and respond to them. For centuries, people have used the art of storytelling to document history, convey complex lessons, and inspire action – far longer than they've been presenting PowerPoints or creating social media posts.

Stories influence the customer journey. Establishing trust is a big part of the customer journey – stories can help you get there faster. Storytelling in marketing leverages the power of your company's unique culture to showcase the values you share with your customers and demonstrate why it makes perfect sense for them to buy from you.

Stories help you show, not tell. Simon Sinek reminds us that people don't care about *what* you do; they care about *why* you do it. But your "why" can be complex. Your organization's "why" might be focused on your founder's experience, or it might be built on the collective experiences of an entire population. Either way, stories show the heart of your organization to your customers, driving brand preference and loyalty.

Storytelling is a powerful method that can both enhance your marketing efforts and create meaningful connection. But beyond the ROI and the technical stuff, stories are good for the soul. It's a wonderfully freeing practice to tell them and share them with others. If you're looking for creative ways to make an impact with your marketing, telling your story just might be the secret weapon you've been looking for.

SBRA Monthly Member Shout Out

Members Helping Each Other Grow

SBRA EVENTS - BE BETTER. GROW FASTER.

TUNE-UP Tuesdays
information. sharing. motivating.



Tune Up Tuesdays 9:30-10:30 AM

• June 1, 2021 –
What's Changed and What Hasn't
presented by John Whitehall of
Sandler Sales Training

• June 15, 2021 –
"How a Mastermind Group can Help
Grow Your Business," Presented by
Terri Hill of Two Hills Consulting



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