

It's a numbers game... part two of our series.

Last time we discussed the numbers of getting people to see your work, and how that is so important to build a business.

How many of you:

1. Made the minimum commitment to getting to 6 people per day for three days (Tue/Wed/Thurs)?
2. Exceeded the minimum commitment and got to more than 18 people in those three days. Which means you have contacted 36+ people about your work at this point.
3. Found excuses and other things more pressing to get done.

No judgement here, only asking you to face resistance in the eye and either kick its damned ass or continue being acquiescent to it.

Resistance is NOT your friend... and if you found every reason under the sun not to do the minimum of 3 emails and 3 calls over 3 days, then you know what you have to work on.

Today's discussion is on the numbers of contacts you make to individuals who you want to work with. We need a number of people to see our work, but we also need to touch those people more than once to get that work.

It is a process. A journey. A vision quest.

OK, so it may not be a vision quest, but it is still a process.

“Only 2% of sales occur at a first meeting.

People in business often hope and expect to do business the first time they meet a prospect. Yet studies reveal that only 2% of sales occur when two parties meet for the first time.

The 2% who buy at a first meeting tend to be people who have already looked into the subject matter, and already know what they're looking for. If they meet someone who ticks all the right boxes and they get on well, then business may well be transacted. But that is far from the norm. The other 98% will only buy once a certain level of trust has been built up.

Why 8% of Sales People Get 80% of the Sales.

<http://www.marketingdonut.co.uk/marketing/sales/sales-techniques-and-negotiations/why-8-of-sales-people-get-80-of-the-sales>

Read through the link above. Giving up because there is no sale is counter to what you want to achieve. Remember, the people they are discussing above are selling something the client needs or wants.

We are selling ourselves to be considered for something the client can get from a whole host of other talented competitors. We aren't really 'selling' in the traditional meaning of the word, we are promoting

ourselves, sharing our work, becoming acquainted with the AD/PE/CD... not 'selling' them toner cartridges or accounting.

We cannot really 'sell' our work anyway. If there is no gig at the agency that is right for us, or no gig that is requiring photography, no amount of sales techniques or tricks or secrets can get us into a purchase order. There is NO work that day for us.

So why go?

Because we want to be top of mind when a job DOES come in to the art department. When they think of a photographer to shoot tractors, we want to be the one that comes to mind since we shoot farms and farming equipment so dang well it makes cows give more milk.

THAT is the purpose of the meeting. The touch point.

Top of mind and becoming the one they think of when the time is right.

To do that takes more than one showing of your portfolio.

(Right about now someone is sitting out there saying "Yeah, you ain't seen MY portfolio... I will show it and get the gig.")

Yes, you are probably taking the reigns of your unicorn and heading out over the rainbow freeway about now too.

That rarely happens. Really rarely.

Instead what happens is that there is a slow and steady courtship of sorts. You show your work, they ignore you (or seem to) and you keep on showing your work. They may keep on ignoring you... or not. That 'or not' moment is the first of several milestones.

They call you in to see the book. And to size you up.

Are you fun to work with? Are you neat and orderly about your work? Are you trustworthy? Will you be on time and on budget and not insult their client or get drunk with the models and run off to Bermuda with all the cash in hand.

Hey... it happens.

So you go. Show the book. Meet the people.

Entering phase two:

Now there may be more showings in the works, some email contacts, some phone calls, coffee meetings for new work... all kinds of direct mail.

"Once a response form has been filled out, now is the time to engage in peer-to-peer discussions with the prospect. Start by building a relationship. Launching immediately into the BANT questions (Are you the purchaser? Do you have approved budget?) is a turnoff. First leverage the digitally collected information as a bridge to determine where the prospect is personally. Open-ended questions (rather than buttons on a web form) will accelerate this qualification process. What problem is the prospect trying to solve? Where does it hurt? What is going on in their world that triggered the need? What would be their perfect solution if they could describe it? Are they collecting information for a team? What's their timeline they are working with? What information would you need from us to be

considered as your solution? Great phone/social skills are a huge plus here. And for most Sales teams, the earlier your prospect is in the buying process, the better—it gives your team a chance to be consultative and influence the specs, thereby gaining the inside track. Once you have enough data to determine BANT, try to move the prospect toward meeting with a sales rep. As a result of this process, most real prospects will see the meeting as a mutual best next step, and that's where most Sales teams want to be.

Read more:

<https://www.onlinemarketinginstitute.org/blog/2013/10/why-it-takes-7-to-13-touches-qualified-sales-lead-part2/#sthash.3pgYQRuX.dpuf>

The article above is relating to traditional sales, but there are some great points to be made in there. Read it. Some say it takes 7-8 touches by a photographer before you get called back. Some say it takes ten or so. I say it takes more than five and less than 1,247. (Note, if they haven't contacted you after about a hundred, it may be time to pull them from your list and move on. But for those of you really, I mean REALLY committed, 1,247 is the magic number.)

So what counts as a 'touch' for a client?

Portfolio review.
Thank you note.
Direct mail.
Email.
Phone call.
Promotional item.

What may not count are tweets or RT's, facebook "likes" or pinning their latest designs to your pinterest boards... seriously?

This is why making the process INTO a process makes sense. Have a way of working that allows you to think about the amount of touches you make with a prospective client. And keep them coming, as there can always be new images and things to share.

NOTE: Spamming them is as bad... no, it's worse, than seeing them once and never going back cause you are all butthurt over not getting that \$100K gig you wanted.

Consider what you think of as being too much.

Yeah... don't do that.

Sales tools and automated sales software. I don't use it. I still use a simple spreadsheet in Excel. And my trusty notebook. That is not to say you shouldn't, only me confessing it takes so long to learn all the things about those software solutions that I lose interest too fast.

Been doing it my way for way too long... heh.

So let's get real here for a moment.

You make a contact with an art director... this means you have a conversation with them. Whether email (OK, but not best) or a personal review (best) and then you start the count.

Show the book, leave a piece for them at the showing, send a thank you card (print?), send a follow up email (2 weeks or so) with another photograph attached. Then wait 6-8 weeks and send another email, and a direct mail piece. Repeat that until you have some new work to show. I count four 'touches' there... five with the follow up a few weeks out.

Numbers. Then...

Call for an appointment to show the new work.

Show new work. Send thank you card, follow up email... you know the drill now.
You are making new work, right?

Right?

Especially you guys who didn't make the lousy 18 touches per week... it is because you were heavily shooting... right?

Riiiiiggghhhttt...

Look, this is not the easiest profession you have chosen to go down. Not sure what that would be unless you like delivering pizza in your Nissan, but this one will wrap you up, chew you to a nub and spit you out in the time it takes that pizza to get cold enough to deliver free. The winners fight for it. The winners put in the hard, droll, and sometimes messy work of doing what others don't.

92% of sales people quit after the first 'no-sale' show.

Pathetic.

Be the 8%... **it's a numbers game.**