

CelebrityExpert™

I N S I D E R

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BUSINESS & BRAND BUILDING STRATEGIES FOR ENTREPRENEURS, AUTHORS, SPEAKERS AND PROFESSIONALS

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Nick Nanton, Esq. + Lindsay Dicks + JW Dicks, Esq.
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Happy New Year ... and we're off to the races!

By JW Dicks

This is going to be a great New Year for those who are ready to launch new marketing campaigns and pick up the pace. If you are reading this and realize you don't have a plan, then you are already behind the eight ball and you better catch up fast. And if you have been sitting around waiting for one of the talking heads on TV tell you things are getting better in the economy, then wait no more. If that's all you need to get motivated, then consider it said because whether it does or not doesn't really make any difference. You have to take control of your destiny and make your business work or realize you are in the wrong business and move in another direction, fast.

As I am sure you have noticed, everything is faster than it was even a few years ago. There is no longer a quest for information; information is everywhere. In fact, I recently found myself guilty of spending too much time researching, which I love to do, and not enough time out in the field and

going head-to-head with what's happening in the real world and not just my nice comfortable office.

There is no better marketing you can do than spending face-to-face time with qualified people. I have missed this, and I will bet many of you will admit the same using the too-cold, too-much-holiday, too-much-whatever excuse that keeps us from getting out in the world of our prospect and butting heads with our competition. Time to change.

I remember my father-in-law telling me one time years ago, when he found me sitting in the office waiting for something to happen to, "Go out and talk to five people about how you can help them." Five people a day was his motto, and if you do it every day, you will be successful. The five-a-day system was not my strong suit, but he was, of course, right about the number of prospects it produces. Five people a day doesn't seem a lot, but it's 30 people a week, in a six-day week, and 1,500 people a year, in a 50-day work year. Yes, I realize that requires a bit more hustle than a *4-Hour Workweek*, but Tim Ferriss, the author of the book, works a lot more than that himself. Even he admits that it was a great title, but not necessarily the

cont. on p7 ►

ONE-ON-ONE

WITH NICK NANTON

featuring

Neil Stafford



Neil Stafford is one of, "The Two Neils". He and his business partner Neil Travers are widely considered the UK's leading Internet and Information Marketers with a wide range of businesses in niche markets diverse as football, horse riding, Chinese cooking, training, consulting, gardening to name just a few. The Neils specialize in finding hidden markets and tapping into that market by providing information products delivered over the Internet in digital format or physical products shipped out via the mail.

Nick: Hey everybody Nick Nanton here. I'm excited to introduce you to Neil Stafford. Let's start by getting rid of one of the myth that Internet marketing is only for things that you can buy online and can be delivered online. Why don't you give us a couple examples of businesses that can use Internet marketing that are non-traditional.

Neil: Absolutely. Internet marketing is way of delivering information, products or services. For example, we work with pet shops. That's an interesting one because you think of the traditional stuff like food and equipment being ordered online, delivered through FedEx or UPS, and you think, "That's fine." But the guys we work with actually sell live parrots online that are delivered via mail order.

So yes, the Internet is for fantastic delivery mechanism for electronic products, but don't be fooled into thinking it's only for that. There are a whole host of businesses and products, physical products being sold online.

Nick: If someone wanted to get started and they were going to set up a website, what are some of the biggest mistakes people make or things they should do in order to make their website successful?

Neil: I think the main mistake is when people put what we call a "brochure site," which is a static site with information. It's like, "Our company was founded in 1800, and we do this, and we do that, and our service is brilliant." It's boring, and it's not about what they can do for their customers, which is a big mistake. Couple that with a static website, where nothing changes, and that is the biggest mistake. A dynamic website is not only appealing for prospects and customers; it's also appealing to the search engines because they are looking for changing, relevant content.

The next mistake we often see is websites that don't have any way of capturing the information of people who come to the site. Because it's so easy to click away after visiting a website a large proportion, in the high 90 percent of people who visit, in most cases either won't buy, won't come back again or if they do come back again it will be few and far between. So people need a mechanism on their website to capture the name and email address of people who are visit to enable them to follow up and keep in touch.

Going back to the pet shop example, we added a capture device to their site, and they started sending out emails to the people who left their

information on their site. Placing this one simple thing on their website has managed now to bring in fresh orders every single week from people who would otherwise have landed on the website and left immediately.

Nick: Speaking of name capture, give people some of the most successful offers you've seen.

Neil: The most popular way of capturing a lead is to give something in return. I'll keep using the pet shop example. One of their free reports is about how to look after your parrot, "The seven things you must know about looking after a parrot and keep it healthy while you have it as a pet." And people say, "Okay, I want that report. I'm going to leave my name and email address and you will send me that report."

Nick: Let's talk a bit about email marketing because once you've built a list with the right opt-in offer you have to make contact with your list. I've heard some Internet marketers talk about a "gauntlet series" where the people who first sign up get a seven-, 14- or 12-day email series instantly trying to sell them something. Then I've heard some people say, "Build the rapport before you start to sell them something." Any advice?

Neil: We could spend hours on this, and it should be a call for another day, but in a nutshell we have sequences where we get people looking forward to our email. What we do is create a sequence of emails that engage the reader. We start building up trust, start building up relationship and start positioning Neil and I as the experts in this business. We'll send out a sequence of emails on a topic that has them engaged, and within each email we drop in cliffhangers that say, "In a couple days I'm going to tell you something about this and where you can get it for free or at a substantial discount." And that has people looking forward to that next email because the human mind wants closure. We have people on our email list who still open our emails after five or six years and have bought from us on numerous occasions.

Nick: That's awesome advice. Let's talk about some other ways of generating great traffic.

Neil: Okay. We encourage our clients to at least update their website three times a week with relevant, timely information. If that seems like a lot start with one a week, one every two weeks, whatever, but get into a system where you continually add information and add footprints out

onto the web to bring people back to your website.

Nick: Content is king online. For someone has heard about affiliate marketing but doesn't know much about it or how to actually make money, would you mind breaking down process and how to be successful?

Neil: Certainly. Affiliate marketing is where you refer people to another company's site; if that visitor buys from that company's website from your recommendation the company pays you a commission. It's like a recommendation service.

You could set up a simple website on a particular topic, such as binoculars. So you create a site about binoculars, and you could actually then start reviewing them with articles and videos showing the binoculars and the features. And at the end of each article, video, review you include a referral link from the company that contains a special code. So when somebody clicks on that link and goes through to the other company that company knows it's come from you. Therefore, if the person buys binocular the company pays you a commission on that sale.

Again coming back to what we talked about earlier, it's about building the list. The best affiliate marketers are ones who actually build lists in targeted markets so they can keep in touch and email offers back to that list. My biggest advice for anybody looking at affiliate marketing is to start building your list on particular topics as quickly and as soon as possible.

Nick: That is the best I've actually ever heard it explained and possibly the only profitable way I've heard in a long time too.

Neil, if they want to learn more from you or get on one of your newsletter list or something where they can learn more of your strategies, where can they find you?

Neil: The best place to go to www.InternetMarketingReview.com. You'll see that we practice what we preach. There is a place you can sign up for a free gift and tips, and we'll keep in touch with you. You'll see how we develop the relationship and trust with people on our list, and you'll see how we structure our emails. ★

Nick Nanton, Esq. (@nicknanton) – Dad, Husband, Lawyer, Branding & Marketing Consultant, Expert Blogger for Fast Company Magazine on Personal Branding, Best-Selling Author, Musician, Songwriter, Producer. Nick is the CEO of The Dicks + Nanton Branding Agency.



6 Important Factors to Consider When Creating a Business Blog

By Lindsay Dicks
a.k.a. The Chic Geek

Gone are the days when companies were faceless. With the rise of social media, consumers are getting smarter and smarter. Whether it's the middle of July or the holidays, the first thing anyone does is search for something online. It doesn't matter if your company is service or product oriented, if you're not online... and online in multiple ways, you should be.

Social media is great; I'm a HUGE fan. It provides a platform for businesses to easily connect with customers, and if you're using it correctly it can 100% increase your bottom line. I recently established two new clients solely from Facebook. Now, did that happen overnight? Absolutely not, I've been on Facebook since it was first established. However, it has now become a vital part of my overall business strategy.

The problem with today's social media (and I say "today's" because if you think the concept is new, you're wrong... it's just a new platform) is that if all of the platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook, etc. disappeared tomorrow and you hadn't moved your "friends," "followers" and "fans" to a list that you could market to, you'd be in serious trouble.

That's is why it is VITAL to have a blog on your website... and ideally not just a link from your company site to a blog page... but one that is actually incorporated into your website (it's better for SEO).

Although the thought can be overwhelming, I promise it is worth it. Here are some simple steps to helping you tackle this task. If you already have a blog, these guidelines can be used as a formula to organize the various aspects involved in creating a successful business blog.

What You Need to Set Up a Simple Business Blog

1. Content

People visit a business blog for information. So it goes without saying that this is the most important aspect of

any blog. Be prepared to provide useful, quality content that readers will appreciate. Try to include pictures, diagrams, screenshots and video wherever possible to help to break up passages of text and make the blog appear more vibrant and interesting.

The biggest question I get asked is, "How often should I post?" My answer is always, "You have to test." And although that may sound like a "cop-out," it's not, and it is very true. What works for one market might not work for another. The relationship you have with your list will dictate how frequently they want to hear from you. Once great way to find out – ask ☺ You can do this very simply with a survey on your website. If your blog is on Wordpress, check out <http://lesterchan.net/wordpress/readme/wp-polls.html>. It's a great plugin that allows you to setup surveys quick and easy!

2. Who Writes?

This question really boils down to one thing, what is your highest and best use, or your personal ROI?

If the answer is take a sales call, speak at an event, meeting with a client, conference call or anything other than sit down and write a blog, then my answer is to outsource.

There are some FABULOUS ghostwriters out there. I have several that I snatched up to write for our clients. Here's the key to making a ghostwriter work for you. They MUST know how to write with personality. This is VERY important. There are fabulous writers out there, but they can be dry. You need a technical writer so there are no grammatical mistakes, but also one that can capture your voice.

3. Marketing and Promotion

Just because you build it, does not mean they will come. Unless you're a celebrity or some major company like Apple, just because you throw up a blog doesn't mean you're going to see profits overnight. This is one of the biggest misconceptions out there, and ultimately, this is

what makes social media so powerful.

You must treat at the blog like any other business. You don't just open your doors and all the sudden you're a millionaire (anyone who tells you otherwise is lying). In business after you open the doors, you market your business and interact with your community. Same with a blog. Once you start your blog, you use the power of social media to market your blog and interact with your customers. It's a two-step process, and if you're missing either step, it won't work.

4. Monetization and Profit Generation

I'm not talking about your own products or services, but rather the affiliates you promote or other advertisements you allow on your blog. These "other" promotions need to be carefully planned, and you need to make sure that what you are promoting is in line with the type of business that you are in.

Here are a couple of ways you can make a extra money with your blog: charging other businesses for hosting their ads on your blog; placing affiliate product ads on the blog; using CPC textual ads (like Google AdSense) to increase blog revenue and incorporating CPA adverts into the site.

There are many ways to increase profit from a business blog. The point to concentrate on is that advertisements can distract from your content, so choose wisely. External ads should be topically related to your own content so readers are likely to be interested and more liable to click on the ads and make you money. The look of the ads is also important. They should blend in with your blog theme and should be attractive, not garish. Textual ads can appear tacky and distracting if overdone.

5. Overall Design and Brand Establishment

There are a couple ways to set up a blog from a technical standpoint. If you already have a business website and you are unable to incorporate a blog that is actually a part of your domain (for example: www.YOURDOMAIN.com/blog) than you can set up a standalone Wordpress blog and link to it from your website.

If you have the option, ALWAYS have the blog actually be part of your website (this means that your whole website will be put onto Wordpress), this ideal way for search engine rankings. However, if you don't have that option, for whatever reason, make sure that you design your blog to mimic the overall business (and business website). Also be sure you link often back to your main website, and have lead capture on your blog just in case your visitors never make it over to your main website.

6. Direction and Purpose

Think about why you are creating a business blog and what you want it to achieve. Do so before you start thinking about how it will look and what content it will contain. Is your blog designed to increase customer interaction? Are you hoping to gain valuable free market research? Is your blog simply an extension of your sales department? Are you looking to use your blog to promote a new product or boost a sales campaign?

The various aspect of a business blog can be altered to facilitate different functionalities. Pure sales blogs differ from those hoping to work more on CRM (Customer Relationship Management). Of course, there is no reason a business blog can't incorporate numerous roles, but if this is the case, then the specific aims should be established before the blog is designed. Knowing what you expect from a blog and the direction it should take increases the chances of achieving a positive end result with fewer design mishaps.

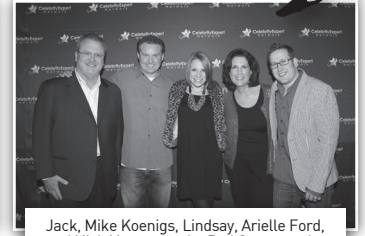
The Bigger the Effort, the Better the Result

A good business blog should be an extension of your business and a part of your sales team. The easiest way to make sure it's not overlooked is to set editorial guidelines and stay on track for posting content. Blogs can perform a multitude of beneficial tasks and provide a business with an additional source of income, increased brand recognition, and enhanced customer interaction. The question isn't, "Why do I need a business blog?" it is, "Why don't I already have a business blog?" ★



Lindsay Dicks (@lindsaymdicks) – "Online Branding Agent" dedicated to helping clients create online buzz about themselves and their business as well as make more money using content marketing and social media, CEO of CelebritySites.com, Best-Selling Author, Speaker, Coach and avid Gator Fan.

Inside the Agency



Arielle Ford interviews Sylvester Nkongo of Cameroon, Africa on the set of Meet the Experts in San Diego

Jack, Mike Koenigs, Lindsay, Arielle Ford, and Nick Nanton on the Red Carpet at the Meet the Experts Red Carpet Bash

This month we hosted the first annual **National Academy of Best-Selling Authors Best-Sellers' Summit & Awards Gala** in New York City where we spent 2 days hearing from some of the top thought leaders in the world, including the legendary **Michael E. Gerber (Author of the E-myth)** some of the brightest minds from all around the world and it all culminated in an amazing awards ceremony in Times Square! We're now planning next year's event Sept. 21-23, and we can't wait! Make sure you don't miss out as it's going to be bigger and better than ever!

WINTER EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Dicks + Nanton Celebrity Expert Mastermind. We have a very elite, small group, of top entrepreneurs who are growing their businesses that meet 3 times a year in different locations to learn "what's working now" from each other as well as to work through challenges in our business. We have room for two more very motivated, successful entrepreneurs who want to contribute and learn from the best in the business. If you are interested, please email Nick@CelebrityBrandingAgency.com for a Mastermind Application.

It's Time for BIG PRINT Media! We hosted a very special tele-seminar in December and revealed how you can get GUARANTEED Big Name media like USA Today, Forbes.com, CBSnews.com, Yahoo Finance, Morningstar, Marketwatch, and MANY, MANY more. If you missed it and would like to get in on our USA Today feature and more in the first part of 2011, email Angie@DicksNanton.com today!

In the Real Estate Business? Be on The Ron LeGrand Show! We'll be shooting a new TV Show on January 24-26! The Ron LeGrand Show will be shot at D+N Studios in Orlando. Over half the spots were taken from previous people who missed a show, so this will be a sell out. To get your application, email Angie@DicksNanton.com and return it to us as soon as possible.

Are You one of America's PremierExperts®? If you are, you need to be listed on AmericasPremierExperts.com. Take a look at the premiere site for consumers and journalists alike to find the experts they need. For more information on becoming one of America's PremierExperts® visit the site or email Jen@CelebrityBrandingAgency.com

Interested in Becoming a Best-Selling Author? We've got a new book on Online Marketing, and one about how to win in business in the new economy scheduled for production. If you'd like to be one of our next best-selling authors in either of these books, contact Angie@CelebrityPressPublishing.com to get details and deadlines!

Private Consulting Clients this month:

Kenny Chapman
Dr. Veronica Anderson
Sean Greeley of Net Profit Explosion
Jeff Kaller of Paramount Promotions

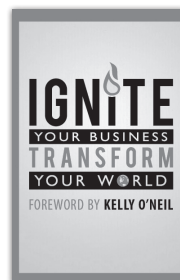
To get information on this program and to schedule a time, contact Angie@CelebrityBrandingAgency.com

We also just wrapped shooting **Meet the Experts with Arielle Ford** in San Diego and as you can see by the images above, a great time was had by all! **Did you miss out on the chance to be on Meet the Experts with Arielle Ford?** Not to worry, we just are going to be shooting our next season of interviews for our Americas PremierExperts® show in Orlando in January! We will be shooting January 24-26. If you want to learn more about being on this show and to get one of the few remaining spots, email Angie@DicksNanton.com now to set up a time to speak with Angie to see if you are a good fit for the show! **Go now, before we sell out again!**

EVENT SCHEDULE

- JAN 15 -16** Marshall Sylver's Turning Point Seminar (Las Vegas) **(NICK)**
- JAN 24-26** America's PremierExperts® TV Shoot (Orlando)
- JAN 24-26** The Ron LeGrand Show TV Shoot (Orlando)
- FEB 11-13** D+N Eite Mastermind Meeting and GRAMMY Awards (Hollywood, CA) **(NICK, JACK, LINDSAY)**
- FEB 23-24** D+N Celebrity Expert Mastermind Meeting (Orlando, FL) **(NICK, JACK, LINDSAY)**
- MAR 1-3** Dan Kennedy Private Event (Cleveland, OH) **(NICK & JACK)**
- MAR 3-6** BGI Marketing Systems Event (Las Vegas, NV) **(NICK)**
- MAR 21-24** InfusionCon (Phoenix, AZ) **(NICK)**
- APR 8-10** Ben Glass Great Legal Marketing Super Conference (Washington D.C.) **(NICK)**
- APR 27-29** Glazer- Kennedy Super Conference (Chicago, IL) **(NICK, LINDSAY)**
- MAY 5-7** Elite Mastermind Meeting and Kentucky Derby (Louisville, KY) **(NICK, JACK, LINDSAY)**
- MAY 19-23** Fitness Entrepreneur Bootcamp (Birmingham, England) **(NICK)**
- JUN 3-5** Consumer's Advocate TV Show Shoot with Ben Glass (Washington, DC) **(NICK, JACK, LINDSAY)**
- SEP 21-23** National Academy of Best-Selling Authors Best-Sellers' Summit & Awards Gala (New York City) **(NICK, JACK, LINDSAY)**
- OCT 7-9** Internet Marketing Review Seminar (London, UK) **(NICK)**

Congrats to our newest Best-Selling Authors!



Marie Guthrie	Darsana Roldan
Dr. Kenneth Cohn	Vivian Bernardo
Dr. Thomas Allyn	Roger Salam
Felice Keller	Richard Seppala
Linda A.B. Miller	Nick Nanton, Esq.
Dawn Robertson	Lindsay Dicks
Kelly O'Neil	J.W. Dicks, Esq.

Happy New Year cont. from p1

amount of time he actually spends per week working.

I don't know how many people you will sell following the five-people-a-day plan, but you will very likely make your goal for the year, meet a lot of great people and make your life more fulfilling at the same time. If you don't have a better plan going yet for the year, implement this one and tell me how well it worked for you at the end of next year.

And speaking of holidays, please don't forget... Valentine's Day always sneaks up on us... guys especially. By the time you read this newsletter, it won't be far off, so plan something nice right now for your sweetie and also for you clients. Both will appreciate it. Valentine's Day is a great time for sales or even just sales-related messages to be sent by mail. For some strange and magical reason people start watching the mail for things in little packages or red envelopes.



Our National Academy of Best-Selling Authors Awards Event and Thought Leaders Summit were wildly successful for all who attended and received their Best-Seller Golden Quill Awards, recognizing their achievement of becoming a Best-Selling Author. Check out the Celebrity Branding Agency website to see us all in Times Square hanging out over the Hard Rock Café's Grand Marquee sign with all of the authors' names in lights. It was an event to remember, and next year's will be just as special.

Michael Gerber, *E-Myth* International Best-Selling Author, accepted the Academy's Life Time Achievement Award, and the story he told us of his struggle to find his place in life reminded us all that it is never too late to start or begin again. He didn't start selling his entrepreneurial philosophy until he was 42. Ac-



Hot Trends continued from p8

3. BRAND REVERSION – Nostalgia opens the door for childhood brands. This trend happens at the end of every generation's normal lifespan where there is a desire to once again have what you had in youth, so you gravitate to things that bring good memories and make you feel good. Nothing wrong with that, but the movement usually dies because the generation does. As we discussed earlier, this time they might not go as fast. And by "they" I mean the generation and the nostalgia may not fade as fast. Please don't miss the point I keep hitting on – the Boomer generation is the largest we have had in this country. Every time a marketer who has not paid attention to what the Boomer generation does when in transition has regretted it. Right now the Boomers are in transition again, and many are looking at their aging and will try and change it, just like they have always done. The many spoils will go to those who take notice of this group of buyers, who will not do what the previous generation did. There is big money to be made in this market and if you don't believe me, just research AARP. You'll be glad you did, whatever your age.

2. WEARABLE TECH – Gadget-infused accessories make for easy connectivity. Americans love everything tech and their gadgets. Anything you can think of goes here. There will be lots of fads and this is

according to Michael, he received his best training while running a business as a finishing carpenter on construction projects. It was there he learned the importance of practicing your craft over and over until you got it exactly right, and then developing a system for everything around what you know so it became a process that can be taught and repeated to others. These lessons became the bases for his philosophy for any business because it didn't make any difference what type it was. Learn your craft, systemize it, train others the system and continue the process. Simple lesson...powerful results. I encourage you to think of its application in your business just as it has become the backbone for successful franchises everywhere. This doesn't mean you have to franchise, but the growth model is exceptional for any business expansion.

Bart Queen, of Speak America, one of our "Thought Leaders" of the year winners, drew everyone's attention with his explanation of the power of building your "Core Story" and making it part of your business. Your Core Story is all about you, who you are, where you have been, where you are going and why what you do is important to your prospects. Once developed, your Core Story becomes the focal point for your message to your prospects, adding your unique selling proposition and irresistible offer. Bart reminded us that your Core Story is what makes you totally unique to your prospects, and the more you tell it, the people who hear it and it relates to will become your strongest clients. By sharing your story and building this connection, the people you meet you will, in essence, eliminate your competition from consideration because the only way to get you and your story is to hire you. Your Core Story brands you as a unique expert in what you do, which, in turn, builds your value in your prospects eyes and away from your competition.

We will tell you more about the power of developing your core story and some of the other exciting ideas our thought leaders shared with all of our clients, award winners and attendees as the year progresses. ★

one area that a fad (think APP) can be very profitable, very fast.

1. CHARITABLE DEVIANCE – Social campaigns are placing heavier emphasis on attention-grabbing methods, and some are a little out there for me. The theory is that there are so many charities now out competing for the same dollar you have to do something really unique to attract your donor. There may be some truth to that, but I think it is more of a notion that there are more charities scrambling for money in tough times so they are doing what they feel they have to do. Instead of this becoming a long-term trend, I see this as a weeding out of charities that may be borderline in their attempt to build a market that wasn't necessarily there.

The truth of the matter is that the real trend the reporters are seeing is the creation of more social consciousness, and that is trend is real. This is the creation of "cause" economy. There is clearly opportunity for a lot of good to be done. However, we have to remember that causes do not normally produce new revenue. Right now, this country needs a great blend of cause and a much needed boost of entrepreneurship that creates more jobs and an increase flow of money. The "entrepreneur cause" is found in companies such as Toms Shoes, which donates a pair of shoes to a child in need for every shoe you buy gets my vote. Check it out at Toms.com. It will open your eyes to the possibilities. ★

Hot trends From TrendHunter and me...

By JW Dicks



TrendHunter.com has become one of our favorite sites to see what's new in the world and how we might use the trends to our business advantage. It has more than 35,000 volunteer reporters contributing to trends in many different classifications. Like anything that covers such a broad genre, some of the information needs to be filtered as to its importance to our business and specifically to your individual niche markets. However, getting your name on their email list is highly recommended as you will pick up some cool ideas and applications that you can sort and modify for your industry.

My only caveat to this review is to note that there is frequently a fine line between a trend and a fad. Fads are rarely sustainable to make long-term profits, so you have to exercise caution. On the other hand, the exciting part is that catching a trend and incorporating it into your business model can make big money.

Below is TrendHunter's newly released list of top ten trends for 2011. (The comments are mine.)

10. ROCKSTAR SELF-EXPRESSIONISM – Rock 'n roll styling, attitude and self expression are concepts we talk about frequently. Some work, and some don't for business. The take away here is the verification that Celebrities are attention getters, and when you make yourself the Celebrity in your niche it is a powerful brand builder. While obtaining celebrity status in your niche is the focus of our company, you can see that it is indeed a new trend as well.

9. GERIATRIC COUTURE – The comedy of this trend, in the eyes of the TrendHunter, is that kids are using their grandparents fashion of the '60s/'70s as a sort of anti-trend to what their peers wear. That may be so, but I also see more from this trend than that. What may start as an anti-movement can easily move to cool. Take a look at some of the top fashion magazines, and even retailers like Neiman Marcus, and you will see clothes that look vintage '60s/'70s. TV shows such as *Mad Men* bring back the look of that period and keep it there as long as the show runs. Once those clothes become trendy again, the kid's grandparent will buy them because they bring back memories of great times. So, what starts as a counter-trend may flip to mainstream.

The geriatric trend, as they call it, is also going to grow in other directions. One of the reasons for its growth is because the boomers are hitting what once was considered retirement age. Boomer retirement won't be the same as previous generations because today's retirees look and feel younger, want to stay active, may live another 25 to 30 years and want to do more things in their life. Most will continue working way beyond what was once considered "normal" retirement age. This is good because it will mean a sustained workforce that is also buyers of products. Because of this trend, there will not be the drop-off of buyers that many predicted due to the demographic drop-off after boomers were expected to retire. On the other hand, because Boomers will keep working and maintain jobs in the workforce, there will be fewer openings for the next generation of worker to fill. This has created a problem already as it is now taking longer for the next generation to find good job openings for higher-paying jobs.

Another positive from the geriatric trend is that Boomers are also

going to create new service needs such as rehabbing housing to fit their stay-home desires vs. the tradition move into a retirement homes. This may actually help the housing market by putting a damper on normal housing turnover when retirees traditionally would be downsizing and the next generation filling the sale of their homes. If fewer homes are available for sale, there will be a new demand for housing, which this country desperately needs, and it may come sooner than later.

8. LUXURY LIVES ON – There are many example of this from high-end Disney vacation timeshares to increased travel, higher-class service and more luxury products. While there is some notion that houses won't be as big or pretentious as they once were, I'm not sure. People who have money still like their luxury, and the only reason to give it up is because of the current economic dip. The rational for smaller houses as you get older is nice, in theory, but it is described by people who, for the most part, don't live in big houses so they don't understand why you have them as you grow older. The answer is space. If you can afford it, there are few luxuries that equal free space designed the way you want it... Room to roam and room for the kids to bring your grandkids to visit are two good reasons. Don't discount this unless you've been there (from one who likes his space).

7. DEMOCRATIC SELLING – There are a number of websites cropping up that allow consumers to pick which product will be produced by voting - Useabrand.com is an example. Other sites allow customers to custom make t-shirts and instantly produce as few as one. A client of ours, Big Top, has made its mark in the t-shirt arena and has just opened its first retail store where customers can print their clothes on the spot.

6. HYPERREALISM – Real life is simulated in photorealistic artworks that defy deception. I think this is another form of escapism and is probably outside my field. It is more likely a fad than a real trend, caused by the economic and personal financial woes of many of the artists themselves looking to get away even in their own art and find buyers who are trying to do the same. However, don't bet the farm on my opinion on this one, it isn't my gig.

5. NEXT BESTING – Consumers bypass traditional brands for the "next-best alternative." This has come about in the down economy because some consumers are conserving and backing away from products out of their price range. This trend includes big brands. The result is the rise to alternative product lines filling in the sweet spot. In some cases this involves buying faux or products to rent instead of buy. I think there are opportunities to see gaps in product lines and business services that your competitors may not be offering. This is not so much a new idea as an old one that people are focusing on making it seem new.

4. MODERN CUBISM – Square geometry in design coincides with preference to reduce clutter. This finds its place in everything from Cube, the car, to cube houses and furniture that are following the simple basic lines of the cube. There is a place for it but I am not sure the market is large enough now, and I can tell you that I have no interest whatsoever in driving a cube on the freeway with 18 wheelers weaving beside me.

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