

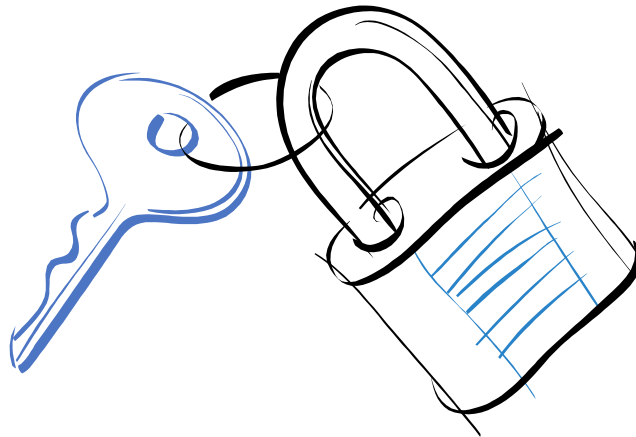
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*Presents*  
*Fast Cash Interview Series*

**Michael Senoff Interviews Kevin the Grass Cutter  
And Gutter Cleaner**



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## **How To Make Money As Soon As This Afternoon Cutting Grass, Cleaning Gutters Or Raking Leaves In Your Own Neighborhood**

Is there such a thing as a Perfect Business? Well, a gentleman named Kevin believes there is and, in this conversation, he will tell you what it is and why it is the Perfect Business. He also gives plenty of tips and resources to start up your Perfect Business at a low cost and get high profits.

So, what is this perfect business? According to Kevin, the Perfect Business is starting your own small lawn care business. All you need to start is a lawn mower and a weed eater. You don’t even need to buy an expensive blower at first – simply use a broom to sweep things up!

If you don’t have the money for a mower, borrow one from a neighbor, a friend, or Home Depot. Get some customers, make you money for the day and then go out and buy a used mower. Kevin advises that you should always use your own equipment as opposed to the equipment owned by your customers and he tells us why.

What you charge for your services depends on the size of the yard. You can compete with the big professional lawn care businesses – there’s plenty of business for everyone. Besides, a lot of people like to deal with small businesses in their communities.

Kevin explains how to get your first accounts simply by going around knocking on doors and introducing yourself and your service. He advises to work a certain neighborhood for business in order to reduce your driving time.

What you are ultimately looking for are regular, long-term accounts. However, don’t discount people who maintain their own yard but will need you when they go on vacation.

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According to Kevin, pricing your services comes from experience. You need to take into account what equipment you are using and the size of the yard. For just the basics of mowing and edging a lawn, Kevin advises that the cost should be about \$30-\$40 per hour – about a dollar per minute of work.

With any account, try to collect your fee when you complete the job. Kevin has encountered some late payers, but he says to keep after them. You may suggest that they leave a check for you at the back door.

You can estimate how much money you’re going to make depending on the geographic area and how many times per month you’ll be doing the lawn. So, if you want to raise your salary, you can calculate almost exactly how many new customers you need to obtain to get the salary you want.

Kevin discusses some of the best upsells that you can offer to your clients, how to pitch the client, how often to do the job, how to do the job, and what to charge for the service:

- Gutter Cleaning
- Mulching
- Hedge Trimming
- Leaf Removal
- Soil Airation

This is truly a great business where you can get a quick start with low amount of cash.

Kevin has put together an outstanding information product about everything you need to do to start, maintain, and grow your lawn care business.

He has hours of audio interviews and recordings on such topics as:

- More upsells and services to offer your clients
- How to price your services more effectively
- How to obtain referrals
- How to get immediate income
- How to do effective Joint Venture deal making
- How to market your services
- Referral marketing

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- Money management
- Web sites
- Professional publications and associations
- Professional lawn care equipment manufacturers

At the end of this audio interview with Kevin, you’ll learn about a web link that will teach you more about Kevin’s ultimate lawn care system and its pricing.

The Perfect Business may be waiting for you so go and learn more about how start making your \$100 a day every day cutting yards and cleaning gutters.

Kevin: You know you talked about why I wanted to work in this business and this is what I wanted to bring up. I believe that there’s not many other businesses out there that you can say hey, I want to have a pay increase of this much. I want to give myself a raise this much this year. I look at one account that’s going to bring you \$800 and some odd dollars. If you want to make that a \$4,000 increase, you know that you need to go out and pick up 5 new accounts.

Hi, it’s Michael Senoff with Michael Senoff’s [www.HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com) Here’s another hour interview. It’s an interview to help you if you need to go out and make some fast cash. Is there such thing as a perfect business? Well, Kevin believes there is an in this conversation, he’s going to tell us what it is and why it’s the perfect business. He’ll also give plenty of tips and resources to start up your perfect business at a low cost and to earn high profits. So what is this perfect business, according to Kevin? The perfect business is starting your own small lawn care business. All you need to start is a lawn mower and a weed eater. Kevin explains how to get your first account simply by going around, knocking on doors, and introducing yourself and your services. Kevin discusses some of the best upsells that you can offer to your client, how to pitch the client, how often to do the job, how to do the job and what to charge for. You’re going to hear about services that you can offer any one of them you can make an individualized, money-making, cash producing business starting tomorrow. We’re going to cover gutter cleaning, mulching, hedge trimming, leaf removal and soil aeration. We’ll talk about some marketing techniques like upsell, joint ventures, how to obtain referrals and how to earn immediate income. In the next hour, you’re going to learn more about the lawn care business than you probably have ever before, and I hope it gives you the confidence and the ability to walk

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out your door and knock on some doors, or mail a postcard, or make some phone calls, and start earning money cutting yards. So let’s get ready and go.

Michael: The purpose of this recording here is to show the listener here how he can go out, within 24 hours and go start generating cash income in his hand by providing the service to homes in the neighborhood or any area that needs the service. You call it the perfect business, why do you say cutting yards or the lawn care business is the perfect business?

Kevin: I believe it’s the perfect business because, for one it’s very low capital to be in this business. Anyone with a mower, you’ve got to have a mower and you’ve got to have a weed eater, but you don’t have to have a blower. You can use a broom. A blower really increases the speed, but you don’t need it. And basically that’s all you need to get into this business.

Michael: What about if you don’t have money to go out and buy \$100, \$200 mower. What would you suggest I do?

Kevin: If you don’t have the money to buy a mower, I would probably suggest you could borrow one from a neighbor. You could also, once you establish your account, tell your customers you’re going to set them up, let’s say next Wednesday. Hopefully you get three or four lawns. You’re charging \$35-40 a yard, get those yards and go to Home Dept and rent a mower for the day. It will cost \$35-40, maybe more than that, maybe \$50. Try to schedule all your yards the first time on the same day. That way, once you profit maybe \$100 the first time, you can look in the paper and get a used mower. If you can’t find one in the paper, go to a pawn shop and get one.

Michael: Did you ever find accounts where they already own the mower but you could still provide the service, where you could use their mower and all you needed was maybe some gasoline?

Kevin: I did. That was the way with several customers, because it worked. And most customers will have a mower. Maybe their health is declined or they don’t want to do the work themselves anymore, or whatever the reason. But you could find customers like that, and depending on the equipment, you’d work something out with them. A lot of customers, you use their equipment, a lot of time they expect you to do the yard for a lot less than what you normally would. But that’s what you have to do, and it’s definitely an option.

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Michael: Any idea back when you were 12, 13, 14 or 15 years old, just starting this, I’m sure you can remember a day when you made “X” amount of money. Can you think of some times when you just had a great day, this was when you were a one-man operation? What kind of money were you making back then?

Kevin: I believe probably at 12, I was making \$75-80 dollars.

Michael: That was 20 years ago.

Kevin: That was back in 1982.

Michael: Well, I remember when I was a kid and I did lawns in my neighborhood as well. I remember I was charging \$7, \$5, \$10, maybe \$15. I can’t remember ever charging any more than that and that was 25 years ago.

Kevin: That’s about right. My yards were priced, I think \$15 was the least expensive and then I had \$25, and some were \$20. That was gone all day for that \$80. But times have changed. Back then when I was 12, you didn’t see the fancy outfits that are running around the streets today. But there’s still so much money out there for everybody. Everybody sees all these big trailers but there’s enough business for everybody. I don’t think that any size of those people have than I have or these people are bigger than me, because there’s a lot of customers out there that will deal with small time people starting out because when I have a service that needs to be done with my house, I’d rather deal with people that are in small business than a bigger company.

Michael: Why is that?

Kevin: Because I do my own business, I think I like to see a small business succeed. I like to know that I’m talking to the owner or that the owner is maybe one step away or one step up from who’s actually doing my work. Plus you’re putting money back into the community, I think. You pay a small company to do your work and I think that’s much better for the economy.

Michael: Back then, when you were getting started and you were making \$85 a day, maybe 25 years ago, did you have a business card? Were you a sophisticated business? What did you need to go get an account back then?

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Kevin: What I did was basically just walk around and knock on doors. What I did and still promote to people is that we can get accounts in certain areas. You work that area, try to get as many lawns and accounts as you can. That way you reduce your drive time. Back then, no, I didn’t have business cards. We had flyers, very unsophisticated flyers. Basically, we just canvassed the neighborhood because I was only able to walk to where I could do the yards.

Michael: What would you say when you knocked on the door?

Kevin: I’d say, “Hi, my name is Kevin. I live right around the corner and I do yards down the street from you, 4 houses down. I’m curious if you need someone to cut your grass or to do any other service around your house.”

Michael: You don’t have to be a sophisticated salesman to do this. This isn’t a hard sell, is it?

Kevin: No, it’s not. It’s not a hard sell at all. And what you’ll find also, is a lot of those people will say, no we don’t need it. My husband does it. But when we go on vacation, we’d love to have you. Just think about how many people go on vacation in your neighborhood. I mean, a lot of times they need that service but it’s not promoted.

Michael: Let’s say they need your service. What would they usually say then? How much is it?

Kevin: They would say how much is it?

Michael: And how do you price out a yard? Some yards are bigger than others. Could you tell how long it would take you to knock out a yard by just looking at it?

Kevin: I can. That comes with experience.

Michael: Let’s talk in today’s prices, in 2006-2007, what you would do today. Because now you’ve got a lot more confidence. You know that the market will pay more than \$7. Back then, 25 years ago, you didn’t have the experience and confidence. So what would you charge today, if you’re telling someone to get out there and make some money cutting yards? How would you size up the price at the time it’s going to take?

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Kevin: I think it depends on what equipment you’re running, for one, and how much you’re willing to make an hour.

Michael: Let’s keep it simple for the guy who’s going to go rent a lawn mower or is going to borrow a lawn mower and is just going to stick to the basics because he needs to make some quick money. So let’s just say basics, cutting the yard with just the lawn mower, maybe an edger and a broom.

Kevin: I would say, just starting out, he could ask their neighbor, and ask some friends, how long it takes to cut his grass. Get an idea of how long it takes them to cut their grass with a 21” mower and that way they’ll have an idea of how long it’s going to take to cut a yard that they run across of similar size. Obviously you can make more when you have bigger and larger equipment. But I would say at least I’d have to start out at \$30-35 per hour. That’s based on how much drive time is involved. When I was cutting, I was averaging about \$1.00 a minute. That didn’t include drive time. For a yard that took me 30 minutes, I was getting \$30 for. That’s everything; that’s cutting the grass, edging, blowing, cleaning it up and making it look good. It averaged about \$1.00 a minute.

Michael: Then how would you get paid? Would you ask for the money up front or would you wait until the job’s done?

Kevin: Usually, I collect everything when the job’s done. If they’re at home, I get a check. If they’re not at home, what I would do is leave an envelope in the mailbox with my address on it. I don’t put a stamp on it; I figure they can do that. In most of the times, they will drop the check in the mail. I never ran around tracking down customers and went back to their house to collect checks. That was condescending. And a majority of your customers are not going to try to rip you off.

Michael: Most people are honest.

Kevin: Exactly. There are some that will be late payers, but they’ll eventually pay you. Or once you get on an established relationship with them, you can have them leave the check on the back door, if they know that you’re coming on a certain day. Most of my yards were like that. I would always come on a Thursday, I’d say just leave the check on the back door on Thursday. If they missed a week, or forgot to leave it out that week, I’d just say could you add it to next week. They will leave a check, real easy, right on the door.



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Michael: Alright, let’s just say this simply for the listener because I think this is really important to understand. This isn’t like a one-time sale. This isn’t like knock on the door, do a yard, and then you’ve got to find another customer. This would you say most of your customers are repeat business. This is like when you get your hair cut. Every time your hair grows, you have to go get it cut. Same thing; the grass isn’t going to stop growing. It may slow down in the winter, but once you get an account for \$35, how often are you doing a yard, would you say? What’s the average? Every two weeks?

Kevin: No, it’s actually once a week.

Michael: Once a week.

Kevin: It depends on the time of year, but I try to get all my accounts on a once a week basis.

Michael: The grass grows that fast?

Kevin: Yes, and I’m in the south. In other areas, it may not grow as fast.

Michael: You’re talking a job four times a month. An account’s going to pay you. Let’s say you charge \$35 for a small yard and it takes you about an hour. You’re going to get that \$35 consistently four times a month, month after month after month, as long as you keep that account.

Kevin: That’s correct. Average is about 24 cuttings a year.

Michael: Let’s look at that. One account for \$35 times, what’s the average cutting per year?

Kevin: 24 times.

Michael: 24 times. That one account at the end of the year is about \$840 if we do the average, 24 times a year. So every time you get an account, you can just project by the end of the year that one account is worth \$840 to you.

Kevin: Absolutely. You know, you talked about yards as the perfect business and this is what I wanted to bring up. I believe that there’s not many other businesses out there that you can say, hey, I want to have a pay increase of this much. I want to give myself a raise of this much this year. I look at one account is going to bring you \$800 and some odd dollars. If you want a \$5,000 increase, or if

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you want a \$4,000 increase, you know that you need to go out and pick up 5 new accounts. And that’s \$4,000 added on to your income.

Michael: Now you say here, in your system, in your course, on how much you can earn. And you have here that you could turn possibly \$10-60,000 in your first year and then \$100-250,000 after a few years. You say that’s not an unrealistic number as long as you’re willing to commit. Is that true?

Kevin: That’s true.

Michael: You know people that make more than that in the business?

Kevin: Oh, absolutely. I know guys that are running 5 and 6 trucks. They do a lot of commercial property. They’re big in Memphis. That’s not uncommon. I mean, \$100,000 is not uncommon in this business. What a lot of people fail to do when they get their lot accounts, they don’t work their core accounts. They continue to pick up lot after lot after lot and when you start to do that, you spread yourself really thin across all your customers. You’re not pulling the most money out of all those customers that you can. You’ve got mulch, you’ve got hedge trimming, gutter cleaning, leaf removal. So that’s what you want to do. You want to try to suck that money out of those customers.

Michael: So what you’re saying is you get in the door doing a simple lawn and you can stay focused on lawn but you’re missing the boat in what you’re not upselling other services that you can do that add on to the cost of your lawn service while you’re there.

Kevin: 100% correct.

Michael: So let’s talk about as ones business grows. What other important piece of equipment would they need to be able to provide the jobs or services for upsells, and what are some of the easiest upsells or other services you can sell a lawn care customer while you’re there based on your experience over the years? The easiest quickest money, because you’re in a business that you work in for times, so obviously you want to pick the things that bring the most money for the least amount of time that are easiest for you. What have you found those to be?

Kevin: There’s two that I would recommend. Number one if you’re going after the most money is gutter cleaning. Gutter cleaning, there’s a

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lot of people out there that way, way undercharge for gutter cleaning.

Michael: Tell me what you think is undercharged price and what one should be charging for it based on your experience.

Kevin: I’ve heard of people charging \$35 and \$40, \$50 for gutter cleaning. Which, in my opinion, is not worth you risking your neck to clean gutters for \$50. IT does depend on the town you’re in, but I think if you’re in a bigger town like Memphis or Louisville, Kentucky, or Atlanta, you can get for a two story, 2400 square foot house, \$150, \$175, \$200. You know, about a dollar a foot is really what the going rate should be.

Michael: That’s incredible. I’m laughing because I used to clean my gutters and I used to clean the neighbor’s gutters across the street. And I’d probably do it for \$15. Let’s talk about that. Gutter cleaning can bring you \$100/hour fee because of the inherent risk. To clean those gutters, the only way is getting a ladder, going up on the roof, laying down on the roof and using your hands to pull all of that stuff out of the gutter. Correct?

Kevin: Right. Or you could walk the roof with a back pack blower, provided it’s not, you know there’s little tricks and tips you could use. You could slip resistant shoes when you walk the roof. There’s also things you could put on your ladders to make you a lot more stable. You should never put a ladder up against the gutter. Number one, it’s very unsafe. If the bottom part is not level, that ladder could just slide right off the gutter. Number two, which is another very important reason why you should not do that, if it damages the customers gutters. If they have aluminum gutters up there, that ladder could damage those customers’ gutters and that’s unprofessional. So what you need is a stabilizer bar on all extension ladders. You can pick those things up for \$20 at Home Depot.

Michael: So, to clean gutters, you’re going to need a ladder, right?

Kevin: You need a ladder, I’d say a 28 foot extension ladder is a good one to start with.

Michael: Can you rent those?

Kevin: Sure. I believe at Home Depot you can rent those, also. You can get them at other rental houses that rent equipment.

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Michael: Did you find that most of your homes had extension ladders or no?

Kevin: They did not. You know, to invest in a 28 foot extension ladder, I think you’re looking at \$150 maybe. Could be a little less now. But, no, most people didn’t have it. They couldn’t probably spend that kind of money and risk getting hurt doing that.

Michael: How would you do your gutters most of the time? Would you use your blower or would you do it by hand?

Kevin: It’s about 50/50. Most of the roofs I could walk but a lot of times, I don’t really recommend this unless you’re very comfortable with it, but I took the back pack blower up a 28 foot extension ladder. Standing on the ladder, I’d blow the debris out. Left side, then right side.

Michael: So you’d go up and down the ladder rather than walk the roof?

Kevin: If I could not walk the roof, that’s what I would do.

Michael: Would you inspect the gutters before you decided whether you were going to do the job and how much you quoted to make sure the stuff was dry, how much stuff was in there, etc.?

Kevin: I never inspected it. I just gave them a price based on those gutters being completely full. And there were times I’d get out on the gutter jobs and they would not have a lot in them.

Michael: So they were pretty easy jobs.

Kevin: They were real easy jobs and there’s other times when I’d come out for a job, and depending in the type of roof, the amount of silt that comes off that roof can be quite a bit. When those little grainy pebbles from the shingles come down, it will compact. What I use to uncompact that is an eight foot long stick, I think it’s a one inch by two inch by eight foot long stick from Home Depot and I would just break up that sand and that silt from the shingles and that’s when my back pack blower basically would come in and blow that stuff completely out of the gutters.

Michael: So do you blow all that stuff out of the gutters, let it fall down and then do the yard?

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- Kevin: I would do that, but you know I had a lot of accounts where they just want their gutters cleaned.
- Michael: You don’t bag the stuff? You just get it out of the gutters and that’s it?
- Kevin: When you blow that stuff out of the gutters, it spreads out quite a bit. You want to go around the house and blow off the porch and blow off some of the flower beds and get it off the brick borders and get it off the window sills; make it look good.
- Michael: You never bagged all the stuff that came off the roof unless it was really wet and clumpy?
- Kevin: Right. If it’s wet and clumpy, if it’s been raining for awhile, these customers need it done because it’s blowing into the house, then you’re going to have to get out there. But when I did that, I was up on the ladder and I would take the stuff out and throw it down on the ground in one spot. You don’t really want to carry a five gallon bucket up there because it gets heavy. But if you throw it down on one spot on the lawn, then you pick it up after you’re done.
- Michael: Okay, so that one \$35 job can turn into an extra \$150 right there with an upsell selling the gutter service.
- Kevin: Right, most of the houses I was working on, I would say the prices were \$125,000 up to half a million homes. When you get up to half a million to three quarters of a million dollar home, and you’re looking at those being in the 4,000 square foot range, then you can charge \$275, \$350, \$425. I remember one house I charged \$1,300 for.
- Michael: To clean the gutter?!
- Kevin: I cleaned the gutters out for \$1,300 because it had leaf guards on it. And when the leaf guard’s on the gutters, it takes a lot more time.
- Michael: Do the leaf guards really keep all this stuff out, or no? You still have to get the gritty stuff.
- Kevin: You do, there’s some roofs though that, after three years, they don’t really shed a lot of grit from the shingles. You know, once you get that out, you can still, even with leaf guards on, you can still uncompact by just taking your blower and blow through the leaf guards. Leaf guards work, depending in the kind of trees you have

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and depending on the kind of leaf guard that you have. So you have to kind of analyze that. And if the leaf guards are screwed into the gutters and the stuff is so compacted in there and it’s wet, and you actually have to take the leaf guards off to get the stuff out because you can’t blow it out, that’s when it comes into major time. It’s not like that I wanted to go out and charge them \$1,300.

Michael: But it’s very time consumer.

Kevin: I think the job actually took me almost two days.

Michael: \$600 a day, though.

Kevin: Right, and basically with no gas involved except for my back pack blower. Gutter cleaning is a big, big business that’s overlooked. I averaged probably about \$80 to \$100 an hour on gutters.

Michael: How many times a year does that need to be done?

Kevin: Depends on the home; it depends on how many trees the neighbors have; it depends on how many trees you have and what kind of trees you have. There are certain trees that will shed on certain times of year, so it’s tough to say. But I would say minimum, probably twice a year.

Michael: When you’re pitching a gutter service, what do you tell the customer why they need their gutters cleaned? And if they don’t clean them, what are some of the repercussions that could happen?

Kevin: First of all, if you don’t clean your gutters, number one, depending on the kind of gutters you have, there’s aluminum and there’s galvanized. Galvanized is a metal; it will rust. Aluminum will never rust. If you leave debris a long time in their gutters, it holds moisture, it’s going to eventually rot those gutters out if they have galvanized.

Michael: Can you tell if it’s galvanized or aluminum by just looking at them?

Kevin: I can just because I’ve had experience with them. The average person, after they’ve looked at two or three of them, they’ll be able to tell.

Michael: Are they still putting up galvanized gutters?

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Kevin: They are here in the South. It depends on the contractors. Some contractors go with aluminum and some go with galvanized. It just depends on what they want to use. It can rot galvanized gutters out. Number two, if you have a lot of debris in there and then it rains, and then it gets cold outside and freezes; it adds weight to the gutters and actually can start to pull the gutters away from the house. It will unloosen the screws; it will make the nails come loose from the fascia board. And also when your gutters are full, the water overflows and it gets that fascia board, the wood that it’s attached to, and can actually start causing that fascia board to rot. If you have siding on it, then it goes behind that siding and holds water and moisture back there behind on that fascia board, which can basically cause that to rot. Not to mention if the water is running over the gutters and runs down and collects down by the base of the house, moisture is termites, bug infestations. They love moisture; that’s where they come to. So you want to keep that moisture off the foundation and off the gutters, away from the house.

Michael: What is some other easy, natural upsells like, for example, the gutter cleaning service, that you can also offer your existing lawn care customers?

Kevin: I think another good upsell, once again that doesn’t really require any equipment, is mulch.

Michael: What is mulch? Explain that.

Kevin: Mulch goes in the flower beds and keeps the plants healthy and it basically adds to the look of the house. You can make probably, I believe it’s \$40 to \$60, once again, depending on the location, but \$40 to \$60 a yard. And basically a yard is measured by cubic feet. Imagine a cube sitting in front of you that’s three feet wide and three feet long. That is a yard of mulch. It covers 162 square feet when it’s spread out two inches deep. But that’s another good upsell that takes no equipment. A lot of people need that service and once again that’s a service that you can always ask other people for if you’re not even doing their lawns.

Michael: Give me an idea. Let’s say you’re standing in front of my house as you’re looking at homes. How do you analyze the home whether I’m going to be a good prospect for mulch, and then once you analyze that I am, what are you going to tell me while you’re looking at me? How are you going to sell me this service and tell me why I need it and what are some of the benefits of it?

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Kevin: Usually mulch needs to be done once a year; a lot of people do it twice. It protects the plant. It’s a good upsell because it makes the property look better. It makes everything come together in the home. Being spread correctly is one of the key things with mulch and a lot of people spread it too deep. It only needs to be two inch.

Michael: Where is a good place for the mulch to be placed? The homes where you offer the mulch service, do they have any mulch at all currently?

Kevin: Most houses have mulch. You don’t want to put it too close to the plants. You want to keep it about an inch and a half away from the plant because if you put that mulch up too close to the root, to the base of the root or plant, that can cause root rot. Also, when you’re doing flower beds, you want to keep that mulch about five inches away from the brick of the house because, once again, anything that holds moisture is subject to termite infestations or whatever other types of insect infestation, so you want to keep that away from the house. Once again, though, mulch holds water and moisture for the plant. And it also protects the plant during really hot times of year. It keeps it cool in the summer and warm in the winter.

Michael: How much you going to offer me the mulch service? What are you going to charge me? Give me an idea.

Kevin: For mulch you usually charge on a yard basis. And a lot of times if you’re new, it can be kind of tricky. I’d suggest getting a measuring wheel, and once again you can get that at Home Depot or Lowes. And do the length times the width.

Michael: Describe what a measuring wheel is.

Kevin: A measuring wheel has a wheel at the bottom with a handle. You will set it to zero and roll it across the ground, across the concrete. A lot of contractors use it to measure distance. I think you can pick one up at Home Dept for \$25. You can probably get it on eBay, but as that wheel is going around, it clocks the distance of how many feet it’s gone. If you’re in front of the house, you roll this measuring wheel across the flower bed, it’s going to tell you how long this is. And then when you measure the width, you just multiply that. So if you have a 60 foot flower bed, and it’s five feet wide, then you’re looking at 300 square feet. So basically you know that a yard of mulch spread two inches deep will cover 162 square feet. You



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know that you’re going to need a little bit less than two yards. But you can only buy by the yard, so you’re going to have to buy two yards.

Michael: So when you buy this stuff, do you go out and buy it and put it in your truck or can you have it delivered to the home?

Kevin: You can have it delivered to a home. Usually they have a three yard minimum with no delivery charge. Sometimes they have a delivery charge, and the delivery charge is waived if you order a certain amount of mulch. You can get brown and black mulch. All that black mulch is, is just brown mulch with dye added. Black mulch to me looks a lot more professional. The only thing is if you have pets, if they’re going to be around and run through your flower bed, you may not want to have black mulch for your customers because those pets can track it into the home and there’s a possibility it could stain the carpet. I’m not saying that it will; it’s just a possibility. It seems to hold color a lot better.

Michael: Okay, and tell me how much can I profit on each yard of mulch?

Kevin: Depending on the volume if you order mulch, where you get it from, I believe that I was paying \$13 a yard for mulch and spread it by hand.

Michael: So what are you going to charge?

Kevin: I’m going to charge about \$60. That’s \$47 in profit, and I’m going to spread that yard of mulch probably within 35 minutes.

Michael: It doesn’t take long.

Kevin: It doesn’t take long.

Michael: Where do you have them dump the mulch if they’re delivering it? Is it dumped directly on the yard, on the driveway, do you put something down before they dump it? What’s the procedure?

Kevin: You know, in the past, I had them just dump it on the driveway. I would not recommend that, depending on the size truck they’re bringing, because if the truck backs up and it’s loaded down, and they have several other stops in his truck, it comes in your customer’s driveway, it can crack the driveway and you’re going to be held responsible for it. What I would prefer doing it, if you’re not in code you can’t dump it in the street, which is against ordinance in

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a lot of cities, you want to actually put a tarp down (a pretty good heavy duty tarp) on the grass and have them dump that mulch on that tarp. And make sure you don’t leave that mulch on the tarp for an extended period of time because it’s going to kill the grass. Ideally you want to get that mulch dumped and in the next day or the same day, have that mulch spread and take that tarp up. I used to dump it directly in the grass but then you have to worry about blowing the mulch up into a pile and it’s just so much easier when it’s on tarp. You pick up one end of the tarp and all the leftover mulch rolls down into the center.

Michael: Alright, that sounds pretty good. Let’s say you’re cutting the yard, when you’re done if the customer’s there, you’re going to need to call or upsell him and schedule that for another time, is that correct?

Kevin: Absolutely. And you spoke about not having the money to get into business. If you want to do mulch until you get your feet on the ground, that’s a viable option. There’s a lot of business out there for that, too.

Michael: Okay, great. Alright, let’s do another one. These are great because these are all independent businesses in itself that are all being generated from going door to door with a simple yard service, just cutting lawns. What’s another one that you found that doesn’t take a lot of time, that’s pretty easy, that you can make a lot of money; another upsell that comes directly from cutting the yard.

Kevin: I think hedge trimming. Hedge trimming is a good one. You need your hedge trimmed probably two to three times a year. A lot of people hate hedge trimming. A lot of people will cut their own grass but just despise hedge trimming. That’s something that you can charge for.

Michael: Hedge trimming is trimming the bushes and shaping the bushes; correct?

Kevin: Shaping the bushes, trimming the bushes. Before you ever start trimming, you need to ask your customer how he wants his bushes shaped. Some people don’t care; some people say I want them oval; some people want them squared off. It probably depends on the structure of the house. If I was left to how I’m going to trim these hedges myself, it depends on how the structure of the house is made. I mean, if it’s a more curvy looking house, then I’m going to put these bushes in oval.

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Michael: So it’s no different than giving the bushes a hair cut, right?

Kevin: Yes, pretty much that’s all it is.

Michael: And what kind of equipment do I need for that? If I wanted to focus just as a specialist doing hedge trimming, what kind of equipment do I need and what’s it going to cost me if I wanted to buy it or what could I rent it for?

Kevin: You’ll need some gas handled hedge trimmers. If you want to start out with electric, that’s just fine, too, but make sure they’re double bladed or double sided. I’ve seen hedge trimmers out there that just have blades on one side and those aren’t efficient because you’ll do one half and you’ll have to come back, start in the same spot that you began at to make another pass. So if you have a double sided hedge trimmer, you use them in a sweeping pattern to cut back and forth. So hand held hedge trimmer or electric hedge trimmers, which are fine, too to start out with. Then you’ll need some probably some pole hedge trimmers, which are for big trees or big bushes, big shrubs. They have a pole on them probably about six feet. And they can be extended out and the blades of the hedge trimmers can be put at a 90 degree angle up to 180 degree angle, which is basically even with the pole. If you’re trying to get back into certain areas behind bushes you want to set that at I’d say a 45 degree angle to get the right kind of cut. That’s really all you need. Now if you want to start out with hand held hedge trimmers, just regular clippers, you can do that, too. It will take a lot longer, but if money’s a problem when you’re beginning, that’s always an option.

Michael: Now what are you going to charge for a yard? Give me an idea of what you’re thinking for charging for the hedge trimming services.

Kevin: I think for hedge trimming, you have to ask yourself how much you want to make an hour. I think for hedge trimming, once again, I believe that \$35 an hour is fair if you’re just starting out. Obviously I’ve been doing it a lot longer and I charge the same as cutting grass. You can charge more when you’ve got better equipment.

Michael: You can make more because you’re more efficient.

Kevin: Exactly. You can get the job done a lot faster so you tell your customers, I’m charge a dollar a minute, some of them may be thrown back. But you have to look at what kind of equipment you’re

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running. Because you’re running equipment, it’s twice as efficient as what somebody else is running.

Michael: It doesn’t take long to trim, but what about the cleanup? Are you raking and piling and bagging and removing all the debris on that type of job?

Kevin: You are. When you’re actually done trimming, what some people have done is they’ll put tarps down around the base of the bush or bushes, if it’s a big bush. That way it will collect the small branches off the tree or off the shrub. What you want to make sure, though, is when you get done trimming the shrubs, you want to take a rake and rake the top of the shrubs and get the top of the shrub and bottom of shrubs. Rake the sides and the top, get all the dead debris off the shrub. Because if you don’t; if you trim them and leave it there, that debris is just going to die and it’s going to be resting in the bushes and it’s not going to look very professional. So you want to make sure you get all the loose debris off that you can.

Michael: Okay, so hedge trimming can go pretty quick as well.

Kevin: Hedge trimming can go quick.

Michael: That’s a great upsell right there. What’s another service that you’ve upsold that all came originally from your lawn cutting service that was profitable and easy to do?

Kevin: Leaf removal.

Michael: Alright, let’s talk about that.

Kevin: Leaf removal, I wouldn’t say it’s the easiest thing. It’s not very hard, but it’s time consumer. You’ve got to know how to price leaf removal jobs and once again, I get asked that question so much. How do I price leaf removal jobs. You know, I wish I had the answer to that. It depends on a lot of things. It depends on how thick the leaves are; it depends on how wet the leaves are; it depends on the last time they had their leaves done. You want to check the corners of fences, you want to check where the leaves stop blowing; you want to check the depth of the leaves there.

Michael: And so these leaves have to be bagged and totally removed off the property.

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Kevin: Sometimes customers will let you bag the leaves and put them at their curb. Sometimes they insist that the leaves get taken off. If the leaves get taken off, you’re going to have to find a place to dump the leaves. You always charge them more when you have to haul leaves away.

Michael: How often is leaf removal job going to be done?

Kevin: Once again, it depends on their yard and trees and the neighbor’s yard and trees. Because if the neighbors aren’t doing their leaves, then they’re going to blow over to your yard. So it’s something that you’re going to have to monitor. Leaf removal, I would say, if you’re just doing it not on a weekly basis, probably three or four times a year with someone that has a fair number of trees, I think that would be enough. A lot of people do leaves on a weekly basis. They will charge maybe two times what they would charge to cut the grass. If you’re doing the grass for \$35, the leaf removal job every week’s going to be \$70. And what a lot of people make the mistake of doing is they blow those leaves out of the flower beds every time they do a leaf removal job. You need to explain to your customers that that’s not good for those shrubs. Because what those leaves do when they’re bunched up around those shrubs, they actually protect the shrubs. When you’re putting air against those shrubs, it’s not healthy for them.

Michael: So you want to leave those leaves in?

Kevin: Yes. You want to leave the leaves in. If you want to blow it out close to the end of the season, it’s just fine. A lot of people are meticulous about not wanting leaves in their flower bed. You don’t want to leave a ton of leaves in there, but you want to leave some in the flower bed to protect the bushes. When I was doing leaf removal, I would charge \$250 a time, \$300 a time. A lot of people undercharge for that, too. A lot of people can get a lot more money than what they think they can get for their jobs. You want to make sure that, if you don’t know what to charge, I would recommend charging by the hour. You’re going to underestimate leaf removal jobs and most of the time it’s going to take you quite a bit longer than you anticipated.

Michael: Okay, let’s do one more. Give me another service that’s easy to do and great money that’s resulted from just cutting the yard.

Kevin: I would say aeration.

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Michael: Describe what aeration is and what are the benefits of it for the homeowner.

Kevin: Okay, what aeration is, it pulls holes out of the ground. It basically supplies air to the ground and allows moisture to get inside the roots of the grass much better. And what that’s going to result in is a much healthier lawn; a thicker lawn. One good thing about aeration is you want to do aeration twice a year. It’s not something that has to be done on a weekly basis like the grass cutting. You can schedule all your aeration jobs in one day and go to a rental place and rent an aerator for \$75-100 a day. And an aeration job should bring you a minimum of \$75 because there’s not a lot of people out there doing it. I know the big commercial spray businesses will do it, like your *True Green’s*, *Scott’s*, they’re big in aeration. But a lot of people don’t know the advantages of aeration and what it can do for their lawn. That’s something that is easy to upsell and something that you don’t have to go out and buy one for when you can rent one and schedule six to seven jobs in one day and you can make \$700 on one day, and only pay \$100 for your aerator.

Michael: I want to interject something because if someone’s out there doing this and they don’t want to mess with aeration and they don’t want to go buy their equipment, you being at the home, you could partner with someone in the aeration business and sell the job for them and take a piece of the action.

Kevin: Absolutely.

Michael: And that goes not only for aeration, but for any of these other services. Have you done that before?

Kevin: I’ve done that in other areas. I’ve done that with mulch, actually. It’s funny you brought that up. There’s companies out there, and you might have seen these, a big semi truck and they blow mulch. They have a hose and it blows mulch out of the truck. So they’re able to blow mulch at high speed. I think their minimum is five yards of mulch, but they can do five yards of mulch in like an hour. If you’re a lawn care company, they will contract with you and say our normal price is \$38-40 but we’ll do it for you for \$26-27. So you’re making \$14 a yard and you don’t even have to do anything except just say, hey, this house needs six yards of mulch; go over there and do that job. And then you can collect a check for \$100.

Michael: You can do the same thing with the gutter cleaning service.

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- Kevin: You could, but you just want to be careful about gutter cleaning because if you contract someone, you want to be sure that their insurance is in place. That’s something that someone can get pretty bad hurt on of they don’t know what they’re doing. So I would be careful about hiring someone that’s going to be on a ladder.
- Michael: So let me ask you this. Let’s say I’m just starting up and I don’t have insurance and I need to make some quick cash. Have you ever had a customer ask you for your insurance papers, a residential one?
- Kevin: One time. This is unbelievable. It was the very first yard I had ever given a quote on after I started driving. He was the only one who ever asked me if I had insurance. Other than that, no one ever asked if I was insured.
- Michael: So if someone wants to go out and make quick money, don’t let having insurance be something that gets in the way. It may be a good idea, but it’s not going to stop you from earning money. Is that correct?
- Kevin: No, it’s not going to stop you from earning. If someone doesn’t have insurance, I would recommend that they don’t let kids play around them while they’re working. I know of one situation I had, I had a rock that was thrown across the customer’s window and I was just happy that the kids weren’t playing in the yard at the time. That’s the only thing. If someone doesn’t have it, I would just recommend that everything’s out of the yard that they can physically see and that no kids are out playing.
- Michael: We’ve covered a lot of ideas here, Kevin, on all the potential jobs that you can charge a residential client once you get into the door for cutting their grass. The important thing is getting that first account for a simple job like cutting the yard and building a relationship with them, and then adding on all these services for more profits. Keep in mind that these are recurring services that you can provide. And if you concentrate on an area and you treat your customers well and you work hard, you can make yourself a great living working on your own or with a couple people; it’s something you can start immediately, as soon as today. Would you agree?

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Kevin: I agree. I’d like to add, though, that when you get in with these customers and you do a great job for them, whatever service you offer, you build that rapport with them and you build that trust with them, and there are so many other services that we haven’t touched on that could be added. If they’re looking for painters, and you know one that’s good, trustworthy, you could recommend it to them. If you know a roofer, you could recommend a roofer to them and you could get a percentage of that from the roofer or painter. These customers, a lot of them rely on you, not just for the maintenance of their home, but when it comes to contractor work, a lot of people have asked me, who can I get to do this or where can I find this. They trust you and it’s your job to keep that strong relationship with them going and always maintain integrity. Don’t ever hire somebody just because you’re getting ready to make a dollar. If you don’t trust these people and you haven’t seen their work, don’t hire them. Because they can kill your relationship with your customer.

Michael: We’ve covered a lot of different services that you can charge a homeowner, but there’s a lot of stuff we haven’t talked about as far as getting the client. You’ve put together an entire system that will show someone that wants to get into the lawn care business how to do this based on your, how many years of experience?

Kevin: Over 18.

Michael: What made you decide to put all your secrets and everything you’ve learned over the last 18 years into this system? Where did that idea come from?

Kevin: Well, number one, my love for the business. I have a passion for this business. I have since I was 12 years old. Frankly, a lot of the books that are written, I’ve thumbed through them and I’ve read through them, they don’t tell you things that someone starting this business needs to know. It’s a lot of generalization. I want people to know that the freedom that comes with this is amazing. It’s something that, once someone experiences being an entrepreneur, if they have the drive and the desire to go out and keep their business going, it’s something that brings true happiness to your life. You’re never going to look back, unless you’re completely broke in life, you’re never going to look back and say I wish I would have worked more. So it’s just something that I enjoy and something that I feel I could give back to people.

Michael: How long did it take you to put this system together?



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Kevin: You know, it took awhile. I’m kind of a perfectionist. It took me probably the course of, I would say, a good four months to put this together. Because I would go back and add to it. And then I would find more information and I’d go back and add to it. I’d be walking down the street one day and I’d see somebody cutting, and an idea would come to my mind and I’d say I have to go back and add this. I remember there’s trade magazines that you can subscribe to, will give you a lot of information about this business. And I said I need to round all of my magazines up, get the addresses and phone numbers and put that in my system. So it was over the course of maybe four to five months. When I released this system, I wanted it to be right and be the best that it could be. I’m always going back in and I’m always adding new things to it.

Michael: I’m looking at the Table of Contents to this system. I’ll read through a little bit of it. You’ve got the Introduction; The Perfect Business; Naming the Business, which you talk about the importance of that; Logo Design; Equipment; Servicing, and we’ve talked about a lot of these different services you can offer and generate income from once you’re in and have a trusted account; Equipment Maintenance which is very important if you’re going to get serious in the business; How To Buy a Used Motor; Growing Your Business; and the all important Advertising and Marketing. You also have hours of audio recordings from some of the world’s best experts on referral marketing, which is how to get referrals from your clients effortlessly. You’ve got one of the top pricing experts who describes how to price your products and services at a higher amount which is going to give someone who picks this the confidence to not undersell themselves. When you price a job, you only have one shot to price it and if you price it too low, you’ve under priced yourself every time you go out and do that job.

Kevin: Absolutely.

Michael: If your confidence is low and you price your job 50% under, you’re losing 50% of that income every time you go out and do the work. I’ve heard this recording from the pricing expert and this is one of the easiest ways, if you’re in an existing business, a service business, to start generating immediate income. And also, with your low priced customers, usually these are the ones that give you the hardest time and are the biggest pains to deal with, so you’ll be cutting out a lot of stress and hassle with your lower priced customers. And generally the higher priced customers are usually the nicest ones to work with. Have you found that to be true?

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Kevin: I have found that to be the case. And also with pricing, you don’t want to go in and undercut the competition by much because you don’t want to drive the market down. If price comes in the factor, I don’t think it’s the main reason that people choose somebody. I think a lot of it has to do with the relationship or the rapport they feel with somebody right off the bat. It’s not something that needs to be always the main focus.

Michael: You’ve also got hours of recording on joint venture deal making and we’ve talked a little bit about this; how if you go get the account, you’re the trusted advisor providing the service for your residential customer, how you can just be like, have you read the story Tom Sawyer? Tom Sawyer didn’t do anything; he had other people doing the work for him. He just set up the deals. And as long as you’re the guy who gets the account, you can set up all the deals. You can set the deals up with the mulcher, the leaf removal specialist, you can set up the deals with painting contractors, with stucco work, with roofers. There’s many services that you can offer your trusted client and you just have the list of trusted partners that you can farm those jobs out to. And you’re going to have to do some work and make sure that they meet the criteria and that they’re honest and do what they say they’re going to do. That’s going to be the hardest thing to do. But you can be selling multiple services to your account without even having to do the work. And I know you’ve got hours of audio covering this topic as well. And in the marketing section, you’ve got hours of audio recording on how to market your service. And there’s a step by step system that shows you how to position yourself in your community against other services. It will show you how to stick out and be remembered by your potential clients. There’s also audio on how to sell your services, as well. But the referral marketing is something that any person in the service can really rely on. How much of your business do you find is based on referrals once you start establishing yourself?

Kevin: I’d say about 30% would be based on referrals. Now, when you get in a neighborhood and start doing work, whether that customer you’re doing work for is giving your name and number to the lady down the street, sometimes I don’t know if that’s the case, but people in neighborhoods talk and if you’re doing a good job for someone, a lot of times they will refer you or they will see your work and pass your name on to the neighbor. So I’d say that’s what you want. You want those customers to come off referrals. Those customers that come off referrals have an idea already of what

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you’re going to charge them and I believe any customer that comes off referral, you can actually charge more for. Just the fact that you basically have already got a rapport with that person because of the uptalk that you’re customer has already done for you.

Michael: That’s well stated; I would agree. You’ve also got a section here on money management, which you get into. How to get professional help; your resources for Internet and web sites if you really want to get dig into the business when you get beyond just supporting yourself, starting out small and you want to grow your business. And then you have professional associations and publications directory that you also offer for anyone really wanting to get serious and really become even more efficient at the business. You also have professional lawn equipment manufacturers and supplies where you buy your supplies and reduced prices and get the best equipment, which would leverage your time by getting through your jobs faster. And then you have a closing section on final thoughts. I would encourage anyone listening to this to give Kevin’s system a try. At the end of this description of this recording there will be a link that you can go to and learn a little bit more about it. You can see the pricing in the offer. I really appreciate it. Is there anything else you want to say, Kevin, to anyone considering getting into this business to make some fast money?

Kevin: There is. I’d like to add to a lot of people that are going into business come to me and say how do I start? I’m scared and I’m afraid that it’s not going to work out and that something’s not going to go right. But you can’t be afraid. The good thing about this business is there’s not a big investment. You can sell off everything that you bought and probably even your money out or maybe lost a little bit, but you’ve got to take the step and you’ve got to give it a shot. If you never give it a shot and you never try. But I’m telling you this is not a hard business. This is a very easy, very lucrative business to do. My advice to you is just go for it and don’t think twice about it. Just do it.

Michael: That’s the end of this conversation with Kevin. I hope it’s been helpful and I hope it’s given you some ideas and maybe the confidence to go out and try and start earning some money. If you’re interested in Kevin’s one-on-one consulting, you may contact me at 858-274-7851 or you can e-mail [Michael@michaelsenoff.com](mailto:Michael@michaelsenoff.com)