

HMA

HIDDEN MARKETING ASSETS

University

INTERVIEW SERIES

**How To Grow Your Consulting
Practice Overnight With Only
One Joint Venture**

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of HardToFindSeminars.com.

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest resource for online, downloadable audio business interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

Michael Senoff

Founder & CEO: www.hardtfindseminars.com

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How To Grow Your Consulting Practice Overnight With Only One Joint Venture

If you make a joint venture with a business that has the right kind of database, you could grow your consulting practice pretty much overnight, and it's easier than you think. Just offer the business-owner a piece of the action in exchange for an endorsement to their list, and you should be good to go. And in this audio, you'll hear all about it.

But first, meet Mark. Mark has 30 years of sales experience and is trying to keep his skills current by taking webinar after webinar. He's got a lot of interesting ideas and knows his stuff, but he needs something to offer potential clients that sells on value and lots of it, like the HMA System does.

So in this audio, you'll hear how to start a value-based consulting practice – and how to grow it practically overnight on just one good joint venture.

You'll Also Hear...

- The vital importance of having a "system of marketing" for your business – and how to create one that stands up to any economy
- The one kind of cold call that could make the difference in your consulting practice – and a word-for-word script you can take straight to your phone
- How to approach a business with the kind of joint venture deal they won't be able to refuse
- All about the power of timing and how to make sure you always get it right
- Exactly where to go to get help finding your first consulting client ASAP
- The one and only time you'll ever want to forego your fees as a consultant – and what you can expect instead

If you start building relationships, the opportunities will come. That's why joint ventures are such a powerful tool for growing businesses. And in this audio, you'll hear all about the opportunities that just one joint venture can bring – and how to use them to kick-start your consulting practice today.

Mark: Hi. This is Mark.

Michael: Hey, Mark. Mike Senoff here. How's everything going?

Mark: It's a mixed bag [INAUDIBLE]

Michael: It's a mixed bag, of course.

Mark: You know, I mean, if I had a business up and running, I'd be a very happy person, but, you know, going through the divorce was a pain in the butt, as you could imagine, and the holidays are coming up, so ...

Michael: Are you just now going through the divorce, or are you almost at the end of it?

Mark: After seven and a half years, the thing's finally over. It would put you to sleep to tell you why it took that long.

Michael: Oh, my god. Believe me, I hear the stories, and we've got friends who are all going through it, and it's crazy.

Mark: It's out of control and just a way to keep lawyers solvent.

Michael: Exactly. The lawyers ... they want trouble. They can create trouble and they turn the two parties against each other and they just milk it for all it's worth. It's terrible.

Mark: Yeah.

Michael: Interestingly enough, I met a guy online and he went through this terrible experience, spent all his money and put together a whole information and consulting program to mitigate divorces without attorneys. He spelled it out. He showed all the steps in the legal process and he put a price tag next to each one and showed a married couple who was considering going through a divorce the attorney way and showed them what they were in for ... really painted a nice picture for them. I don't know what happened to them, but it was very interesting from an information products type view.

Mark: I bought and read Nolo Publishing up in California and a number of books I found on Amazon. So, even though I got hurt in the thing, I didn't get hurt anywhere near as bad as I could have.

Michael: So, you educated yourself on how to mitigate through this with the least amount of financial ... What's the one thing you learned? Did you fight some of it yourself?

Mark: Oh, yes. I mean, I hired attorneys that don't even want to talk about how much money was drawn out when doing that, but I just made up my mind at one point. I said, "Wait a minute. This is negotiation. I've been doing this since I was, you know, a kid, essentially, and if I can't negotiate this thing, you know." But then I didn't take into account the tricks that lawyers play in terms of the biggest thing they got me on was an ex parte hearing in front of the judge. And this is like old buddies day. You know? And the lawyers all wink, wink, you know.

Michael: What'd they get you on an ex parte?

Mark: By the way, this is two and a half years into the divorce being final. [INAUDIBLE] that it's final and you're still going on about this thing. And I had some Swiss annuities. It was getting a little complicated because they didn't want any more people in the US in these particular annuities, and I was not willing to settle unless it was simultaneous, and they just drag it out. Finally, they put in for this ex parte hearing, which meant I had a hold on everything, because I would have to go out and hire another attorney and I'd just be spending money foolishly. And that's why I lost most of the money.

Michael: I got you. Very interesting. Okay. Well, as I read, you know, some of the answers to your questions and, you know, the update of where you are now, you've got so much great experience, and, I mean, I'm thinking, being a marketing consultant or a business consultant to businesses.

Mark: I would enjoy that. Yes.

Michael: Have you seen any of my HMA stuff ... my HMA marketing consulting system?

Mark: I think I bought it several months ago. Now, I had two of them I went through. One, I bought your Eugene Schwartz stuff, which I went through religiously. I don't even think I finished that, but I feel there was a video in there of Gene Schwartz talking, wasn't there?

Michael: Audio.

Mark: Audio.

Michael: Yeah.

Mark: And I downloaded a number of the ads from him. So, those are the two that I'm up to date on, but you had an offer on the management consulting at one point and I bought it, but I did not yet do anything with it.

Michael: Did you buy the physical version?

Mark: No. I bought it online.

Michael: Oh, Okay. Do you remember how much that was ... was it for my HMA?

Mark: Yes. That sounds familiar.

Michael: how much was it? Do you remember?

Mark: I don't remember, Michael. But in any case, I have it on my computer. I just haven't gotten to it because I thought the logical steps, at least for me, was find a market ... you know, this is why I said I have a hungry market. The people who are sales managers in small to medium-sized companies, that's where the bureaucracy takes over. But, in any case, they are always upset when I take these webinars online.

Michael: How many webinars are you taking?

Mark: Anywher from two to seven a week.

Michael: Where are these webinars? Where are you finding out about them?

Mark: I thought you might ask that question. I'm trying to remember. I've been doing it for so long.

Michael: So you like to go on and learn, to sit in on webinars.

Mark: Well, yeah, and here's the reason why. If I could sell myself just on offline marketing, the thing I talked about, credit unions, which I got a list of credit unions, 1400 credit unions, which is a wonderful experience, and also very inexpensive and used post cards. I just don't think people are going to accept offline. There's just, I think, a prejudice about it. So, I made up my mind about two or three years ago to get up to speed on online marketing, because Obama had just been elected. Everybody was talking about how he used social media, so that was what started that. And I really don't know. I mean, I just went from one thing to another. Some of the stuff comes in and I sign up and, I mean, I was just on a webinar from 9:15 to 10:00. It was from a company called Trada[?] and it was about Facebook ads. Now, I don't want to do Facebook ads for people, but I want to be able to say to someone, "Here's what you need to do to have a good program on Facebook," and so forth, down the line if LinkedIn and a bunch of these other things, so that I appear to be up to date.

Michael: Yeah.

Mark: You know, if someone is talking to me and I'm talking to someone who's 20, 30 or 40, you know, the fact that I'm 70 isn't exactly a selling feature. And does that give you a sense of it?

Michael: Yeah. That gives me a sense of it. What I'm thinking, you know your good at solving problems ...

Mark: And running a business.

Michael: ... and running a business, and you've got all this experience with bootstrapping your envelope business, so you've got a great story. You've got credibility. You like solving problems. It just seems to me like you don't have a system of marketing. So, you don't have a system for how to approach someone, when you approach them, what do you say, what's your unique selling proposition that makes you different from every other smart business guy, how to set up an appointment, what to do when you set up the appointment, is it face-to-face, can you do it over the phone, can you do it through the internet, how to qualify them, how to close them and how to make them an offer for consultative services. You don't have my HMA. You maybe have a special offer on HIMA, Hidden Internet Marketing Assets.

Mark: I can't look it up in my computer.

Michael: Would it be under that Hidden Internet Marketing Assets, maybe?

Mark: I think it was HMA or something like that. Is that right?

Michael: Do you know how long ago this was?

Mark: Oh, this year some time.

Michael: My HMA stuff, it's like seventy payments of \$99. It's a ... almost a \$7000

Mark: This is a special offer.

Michael: This was a special offer that you had for HIMA. It may have been a \$20 offer I do every once in a while.

Mark: Yes. I'm going to guess that's correct.

Michael: Yeah. So that's different. That was a guy, you may have listened to the interview or the recording, a guy named Dave Preston, who made a fortune of money doing online consulting. And he was putting on non-profit seminars, or one-day trainings where people would come in for a one-day training. It was a non-profit

deal, and then he would present and educate in front of these people. And then he would get consulting work on the back end. But it was all based around building a website that was, like, direct response friendly, putting up a form, where you can capture an email address and a name, doing the emails, doing the key words, how to get noticed on the search engines. That was more internet related.

Mark: That was what I bought, because I looked through it. My view of taking something is going through page 1 to page whatever, and I didn't do that, but I did scan it and say, "Oh, okay." I have a feeling that this is it. But you're right about everything you've said.

Michael: Okay, but the HMA stuff is really ... it's an offline training. It's how to work and consult and sell project work to individual business owners who want to grow their business and the unique aspect is, you're going to show them how to grow the business without them spending money on traditional advertising, like newspaper, radio, TV, val-pack, seo. You can even merge it into online, you know, yellow page advertising seo. That's what separates you from everyone else. You're going to come in and show them how to grow the business and get more customers and make more money without spending more money on advertising. Everyone else has come to them for the newspaper ad, the val-pack ad, the seo ads, the yellow page ad, the radio and all that. So that's where you stand apart. It gives you a system to set up appointments, what to say, how to position yourself, how to qualify, how to meet with them, how to take them through what's called an opportunity analysis, which is basically your sales pitch, and then templates for the projects you offer with suggested pricing. And all of these projects, the whole idea is you're the outside marketing guy for them. Instead of them bringing in an inside guy, you're the outside guy who's going to do it for them. Until the demand builds up where you've got so much work, then you can move over to more of a consultative role, where you just tell them what to do and them and their internal people have to do it. So you become more of a

coach rather than the implementer. And the projects you can sell anywhere from 1500 up to 4500 bucks per project, and you're not painting yourself into an hourly. You're not saying, "Okay, give me \$2000 for the first month and I'm going to do consulting for you," where you end up buying yourself a job for 2000. The expectations of what you're going to do for this client are very clear, because you're going to give them a proposal. Project number 1 is developing a unique selling proposition for the business. It's always the first project in our HMA system, unless they're just dead-set and they want something else. And that project may only take you six to eight hours to do. As you get better and more knowledgeable about it and more efficient, it could take you a couple of hours. You may have their USP right at the time you're interviewing them, before they even hire you for the project. So, you're selling value-based consulting. Now, here's what I'm thinking with all your experience and you understanding the power of a list. Right? You know, with credit unions, you had your list, you had your little post card, and you knew that if you hit them at a certain amount of time, it would make the cash register ring. Right?

Mark: Yep.

Michael: 99.9% of all businesses, they may intuitively know that, but they never do it. So, how do you get to the real money? How do you get to a little bit of control of their customer list, which they're not optimizing? They may not even be building a list. Now, when you go and meet with these potential clients, HMA stands for Hidden Marketing Assets, so you're looking for those marketing assets. You're looking for the clients who are sitting on a database, that maybe have a wonderful product that their customers are happy with, but they never hear from the company. They never hear from the owner. They never hear after the first sale is made. They don't do direct mail. They don't do a post card mailing, but they've got all the names. They've got the whole database in PayPal that they can download in two minutes and have everyone's email address and city, state, address, zip code, country code. It's all right there for them. And, so, what you

can do is you get in the door and get to work with them a little bit. Then you can propose a deal if you're comfortable working with them and you know they're sitting on the gold, all those names. You can propose something like forgoing your project fee for a joint venture, and then you can negotiate a percentage of sales and you just handle it all. You know what I'm saying?

Mark: Yes.

Michael: All you've got to do is get in there, establish some rapport. You've already identified [INAUDIBLE] they've brought you on, and you found the gold, and you know the gold is in that list. And you'll have a chance to gain all the intelligence through the opportunity analysis of how they're operating that business. It's not going to be hard for you to see that they're leaving the money on the table.

Mark: I do have that sense that there are a lot. I think I told you, one of the messages that I wrote to you, I was working with my son for the last year and a half to help his businesses get off the floor since they were knocked down by the recession, and it taught me a couple of things that I knew, but didn't know, if you know what I mean. So, what you're talking about is exactly the kinds of things that are sort of tumbling around in my mind, but the thing is, how do I start? I'm glad you thought the letter had credibility. I sent it out to a couple of people and it didn't get a response, so I wasn't sure if it was as good as I needed.

Michael: Oh, it's a letter you sent me?

Mark: Yes.

Michael: I don't know if sending that out is going to get you hired as a consultant. You know, the average Joe out there, they don't know who the hell Jay Abraham is or Gary Halbert or any of these guys. We do, because we're in it, but, you know, we've gained all that knowledge, but that's not going to mean anything to them. The letter was interesting. You know, I knew who all those were and it gave me an idea of some of your experience, but I don't think you could rely on that letter

to make you phone, where you're going to get people saying, "Hey, hire me." I just don't think that's realistic. How do you do it? You know, unfortunately, I know that you're going to have to do some just grunt work. You're going to have to make touches. You're going to have to talk to people. You're going to have to get yourself out there a little bit, whether it's on the phone. You know, you make ten calls a day. Now, when I say don't make cold calls to get clients, what I'd like to see you do is make cold calls or warm calls to set up alliances, to set up joint ventures where someone can endorse you to their contacts of businesses. You first client is going to be your hardest, but, you know, even if you had to kind of whore yourself out, as John Carlton always says in the [INAUDIBLE]. You may have to whore yourself out and act as a ... just a great guy, like, there was another consultant who was having a hard time in Canada, and I said, "You know what you need to do. You need to go to your Chamber of Commerce's website." Every Chamber of Commerce in every city has a website. They have a members directory. The members pay to be on that directory. They have their websites that they're associated with, so you can go to their website. You can find the name of that owner who's the member of the Chamber and you can shoot him an email and just say, "You know, I was at the Chamber's site. I was thinking about joining the Chamber. I saw your website and, Mr. Jones, yeah, I see that you're manufacturing widgets here. And there's something you maybe didn't think of about your website, and that's see you don't have your phone number up at the top, and just wanted to give you a heads up and, you know, if you need anything else, let me know," and shoot him an email. If you did ten in the morning, ten in the evening, just, not even asking for money, but what you're looking for is a chance to have a dialogue and a chance for them to reciprocate and say, "Well, you know, Mark, what do you do?" and then you have a chance to say, "I help businesses grow their businesses 20% within 20 days without spending more money on advertising." "Well, how do you do that?" "I'm kind of swamped right now. I'd love to share some of that information with you. You want to set up a time where we could talk, you know, either by phone or face-to-face, and I'd be glad to show you a few things. I don't know if I can help you, but I'd surely be

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glad to take a look at some of what you're doing." So, you could be in their corner, at first, and get in the door and learn a little bit about them and kind of start building a little bit of a relationship as a mentor or someone in their corner. Everyone needs someone in their corner for their marketing. So, you could be that corner man for a lot of businesses without asking for anything up front, but start building a little bit of a relationship and then opportunities will open up, if you're consistently doing that. Then again, you could go the hardcore route. You know, introduce yourself and say, "You know, I'm a marketing consultant. I'm going to be in your area and I wanted to see if Mr. Jones would be interested in doing a 30-minute strategy session on how to grow your business without spending more money on advertising." You know, you can go that route. Now, that's going to be brutal doing it yourself. You could hire from Craigslist. You can get someone who's done some telephone work from home to make a couple hours worth of calls for you during the morning and see if they can set some appointments up. But I'd like to see you go after an alliance, where you're calling on a business that has the potential. See, you can approach a business who has customers, business customers, that may be could be a match for you to do consulting work for them. So when you approach that main business who has access to customers, you know, introduce yourself and say, "Hey, basically, how would you like to do a deal. I'm a trained consultant, thirty years in the direct mail industry, envelope business. I know how to grow a business, and I be you've got a lot of customers who could use some expertise in this struggling economy. Would you be willing to endorse me and for any of your customers who sign on with me, I'd be willing to pay you a piece of the action?" And even if you pique their curiosity, they're going to want to know, "Well, what is it you do?" and maybe give you an opportunity to meet with them and you're going to have to take them through an opportunity analysis so you can show them what you're going to do with their customers so they aren't going to look bad to their customers.

Mark: Right.

Michael: And it gives you a chance to get what you do in front of them. They may end up bringing you on rather than even endorsing you to the customers.

Mark: Are you thinking accountants, people like that?

Michael: Accountants could be, if accountants have a good book of businesses. A lot of accountants' accounts are, you know, if they're small business related rather than just individuals. A book of individuals who need to file their 1040's at the end of the year, who are all employees are going to really do you any good, but if an accountant has a book of small businesses, that could be very good. Man, you can position it to an accountant, how an accountant could stand out and be unique compared to other accountants, because most businesses, even mine included, the only time I hear from my accountant is when he needs a form, he needs a report on the gross sales, when it's time to do an extension and when it's time for him to send me the tax documents that I need to get mailed. Has he ever called me and asked me how it's going or, you know. He's saving me money by trying to mitigate me to pay the least amount of taxes as possible, but imagining an accountant taking a whole new proactive angle in the business owner, and not only is he going to save them on taxes, he's going to train his clients with some outside expertise, which would be you, part of his team, even though you're outside part of the team, to grow the business and increase revenues without spending money on advertising through effective and proven marketing systems. Now, imagine how he could look like the hero to all his customers and do something a little different for a change. So, it's a win for the customer. It's a win for him, because he gets to differentiate himself and add a little more value to his customers. And it's a win for you because you're an outside guy who's going to work with his people and everyone's going to be happy.

Mark: Who else besides accountants?

Michael: Well, let's look at online businesses who have a database of names. What you really want are those names. Now, I've done this in the past. You can go to paypal.com or search PayPal shops. These are PayPal members. They've got 50 million PayPal users. eBay owns them now. And you can look and search through all the PayPal users who have stores, where they'll feature their online business. It could be computer related, computer supplies, any topic or category you can imagine. And on the PayPal stores, it give you a number at the bottom, which looks like blue hyperlink text, which shows you the number of transactions they've done using PayPal. Now, if there's a transaction done, and most of these businesses are in the business of selling something, they have an email address. They have a first name, last name. They have a phone number. They have the city, state, zip code. They have a database of names, of buying customers. You also know exactly what they have purchased, because it's all categorized. So, most of these businesses ... 99 out of 100 of these PayPal shops ... don't even realize that they can just go to PayPal and download their entire database right there. So, you have a complete buying history ... date, time, product, everything ... just waiting to be called on. You could employ yourself fulltime. I'll give you a crazy example. I've got a good friend here in San Diego. He's unemployable. He's a great salesman and he doesn't need to make a lot of money, but he met up with a guy who is in the orthotic business. He manufactured orthotics for runners. And so the guy go and schleps out to big running events and sporting events and he set up a tent and he sells orthotics to the people who come to the shows an he'll sell them for a couple hundred bucks a pop. And over the years he keeps all the printed an written orders. He had about five banker boxes full of past orders. So, my friend met up with him. The guy had put an ad on Craigslist looking for someone to help sell. And so, my buddy called the ad and then ended up kind of building a relationship, proving that he could stay with the guy and make calls and make sales. So the guy gives him his five banker boxes of all the past customers who have ordered orthotics ... the names, the phone numbers, addresses and everything. And my buddy, he's a biker and he's an athlete, so he doesn't like to work too hard, and he just wants to cover his expenses. So he

goes in his little Honda Civic for about three hours a day and parks right by the park under a big shady tree and he's got his big banker box right there next to him and he's got a three-hole punch loosely fed and he's got his pen and he's got his cell phone and he makes calls and he sells orthotics and he makes himself a couple grand every week in about two or three hours a day calling on past buyers for reorders. How many businesses are out there that have their entire database that no one's ever called on again. No one's asked if they need another one or additional or another non-competing product. So the gold is in the list. How do you get to the list? That's your question. How do you get to those names that are waiting to be sold for someone to actually do the work? There's so much opportunity out there. The gold is in the list. Look, if you didn't have your list of all those credit unions, was it? Tell me that whole story. How did you discover that?

Mark: Well, I looked in my customer list one day, and I had been doing this informally. I guess I have to go back a little bit. I knocked on doors and, you know, I found publishers and knew I couldn't sell banks and savings and loans, but I could sell magazines. There was a thing called Western Publication Association here in Los Angeles, so I signed up and got a list of all of the small publications. There was one called Argus Publishing ... did a number of sort of like Peterson Publishing books [INAUDIBLE] magazines, but they were smaller and, in any case, I had a number of those. There was one called Gymnasium Magazine and another called, I think, Swim, and so forth. And I just said to myself, "Gee, how many of these people am I missing when I'm knocking on doors?" So, this was when I started back thirty years ago, and you could just go online and find people who sold compiled lists. Now, compiled list people usually look down upon those, but in b to b I found it didn't make any difference, because if eight out of ten people were still in business, I was fine. And that was usually higher than that. So, basically that's how it started. I started going to publishers. And, you know, publishers in those days had their renewal series that was the big money maker. And I did this for a number of other things. I think insurance and I don't remember some of the other SIC codes that ... I did the same thing, it was like a PSA

repetition cycle. Then one day I just said, "Gee whiz. I really like dealing with the people at credit unions." They were real people. They weren't buyers. If you took care of them, they were forever grateful. You were just doing your job, but, for them, this was an unusual experience. And so I wondered how to get the list, because I was already familiar with lists, yes, I knew intuitively I had to have lists and the gold is in the list. And there was a guy in Florida who had a \$400 list, which had all sorts of great information. It had the president and the marketing person and the address and the most important thing was the number of, I think they were called, members. In any case, they had 20,000 members, which meant that, in those days, they had to buy 20 times 4 because they sent out, or 20,000 rather times 4 because they sent out quarterly statements. So that encouraged me more to look on, and I didn't want to pay the \$400 dollars, because that, for my business, was just not effective. And I found, I think it was in the library, a directory of credit unions, and bought one online, which wasn't that easy to find, but I did find it and I started. Then I had the directory and I handed it over to a gal from high school or college. I can't remember. And she put these all in to the database and then I realized, "Oh my god. I've got a problem. I can't afford to send out a letter in an envelope," which was \$500 a thousand in those days, probably still pretty close to that, "and make any money from this list," because while I knew all of these credit unions bought envelopes, which was what I was selling, I had no way of knowing when they were going to do it. And I couldn't send out, with fourteen hundred plus other names that I had in the computer, I would be spending, you know, \$2000 or so a month, and that just wasn't possible in my business. And that's how I decided ... it just came to me ... I said, "Oh, I'll send out post cards." And then, you know, I went through a whole bunch of stuff. I printed post cards, had them chopped up, but then I found that there was a way to do them on the computer. My son set me up on that, and I was running these things through my computer, and if I wanted to do specials, it was no problem.

Michael: Was it a laser printer?

Mark: Yes, it was. They just sent them out every month religiously. I had to write copy for it and I think I mentioned in the thing I sent you, the one that was the biggest success was “the secret to making people like you”, and then I added “for 24 years” or whatever the years were for a particular customer. And the reason I did that, Michael, was that one of the unspoken concerns of envelope buyers was, “Why should I change to this guy? Yeah, the person I have now is not performing, but this new guy is just not going to perform either.” Well, when it comes across someone’s desk that I had customers for, in one case, 24 years, in other cases 20 years and so forth, it was clear that this guy, me, was doing the job that these people needed done. So it was, in a sense, you know, this thing from the Collins book, talking to people about what’s already on their mind, that was a very successful post card. But I had a total of seven of them. I had a number of customers that asked for testimonials and Bear Mountain Printing was one of the ones. And they said, “Oh, he caught a mistake on one of our envelopes that would have cost us a fortune.” There was a guy who was a photographer, whose name I don’t remember, and he said, “Oh, you know, there’s always a risk in trying someone new. We’re very happy with Golden State Envelope.” And that was another postcard. Then I sent out one with prices ... usually not a good thing to do, but I do. Everybody buys number 10s and I was doing those basically as a loss leader. And I think those are the ones I can recall off hand. There were other ones, because I knew from my reading that in b to b you have to assume that you’re going to contact people seven to ten times, and since I knew in the case of credit unions, they were absolutely envelope buyers, you know, I could just keep rolling those post cards out. And I had colleges, all the colleges in California. And there was one up north. I can’t remember the town. It begins with a “P” in northern California. In any case, this person hadn’t been contacted by an envelope broker or an envelope salesman probably since the dawn of time, and, so, that was an easy sale. So, I don’t know if that gives you a sense of how I did, why I did it and that sort of thing.

Michael: How often would you mail the post cards?

Mark: Once a month.

Michael: And you would rotate them? You'd do seven different in a series?

Mark: Yes.

Michael: So, you'd do one and then the next month you'd do another? And then you'd rotate back to the first one?

Mark: Yeah, or write a new one ... didn't matter. I mean, [INAUDIBLE] a good headline. A headline that I had, "The Secret to Making People Like You," was a successful headline. I forget ... I'll find out later who did that particular ad, but, in any case, I just knew that if you got a post card in that said, "The secret to making people like you," was like the book on how to make friends and influence people.

Michael: Right.

Mark: They'd certainly read that post card. So, anyway, if I found a new headline that I liked, I'd write another piece of copy and send it out. And the reason that I did it every month was that in b to b, especially in envelopes, if the buyer didn't have a request for envelopes on his desk, he might save my card, and I certainly tried to maximize that, but at the same, he's not going to buy envelopes if he doesn't have a requisition. So, it was absolutely mandatory, in my view, to send out a monthly something in post cards, where they're cheapest. I was doing it for 28 cents. I showed you one of the post cards I was thinking of using in this new business of mine, "The 28 Cent Salesman". And it worked wonderfully.

Michael: So, how many years did you do that?

Mark: About five or ten. I don't really recall.

Michael: And why did you stop?

Mark: I ... No it's when I started. I didn't start right away. You know, when I first started, and, like the case of Western Publishing [INAUDIBLE] association, I just got their

list and just picked up the phone and called these people. But at the point that I started to do the post card thing, you know, I was not very good at delegating, so I did everything. I wrote up the orders. I followed up with plans to make sure things came out on time. I eventually got some people that did some of that stuff for me. But my view of my business was that I guaranteed you that the job was not going to get screwed up ... a big deal in printing ... and that it was going to get out on time ... an even bigger deal in envelopes. So, I didn't need it at first. I could just pick up the phone and talk to people. Another thing I did, which I didn't talk about in the letter that I sent you, was that, because I was calling on people, you know, going around and parking my car, I realized that people that I wanted at that time in the business's life were people who were buying envelopes through direct mail, not big direct mail people, hundreds of millions of envelopes. I couldn't afford that kind of risk in my business. And so, I bought a list of people doing direct mail. Again, probably a compiled list. I don't really recall. And then I took out a Thomas map. Let's say I was going to Santa Fe Springs. I would have the page for Santa Fe Springs, and I don't really recall if there was, at that point, a lot of envelopes there, so that I didn't waste my time. In other words, if I drove to Santa Fe Springs from Hollywood, which is where my office was then, I didn't want to get there and go, "Huh? What do I do now?" And so, that was another use of this sort of thing. So, you're absolutely right about the list. I was obsessed with lists.

Michael: Now, you first started using an envelope and then went to a post card. Right?

Mark: Yes, Well, actually, phones.

Michael: First you did phone. Voicemail came and it got harder and harder. So then you went to ...

Mark: Number 10 envelopes. Yes.

Michael: And tell me what you said about the first line of the envelopes ... if you didn't know who it was supposed to go to. How did you address the first line of your envelope? You didn't do it by a person's name, right?

Mark: That is correct. And, again, I spent a lot of time on the phone getting names of people, you know, who were at these particular businesses. And I realized these people were changing jobs at a furious rate, at least from my point of view. And I thought, "Oh my god. What am I going to do?" And then I just started to address them to "The Person Who Buys Your Envelopes".

Michael: That's brilliant right there.

Mark: Yeah. And it got through to people. I mean, the other thing is, it really got through to people because the thing I knew from actually knocking on doors is there was no doubt in any company who bought envelopes. I mean, I never ran into somebody scratching their head saying, "Who does that?"

Michael: They know who does that.

Mark: Uh huh. And the other thing was, and I did mention this in the letter, is that, both in the letters that I sent out and in the post cards, you know, Halpert[?] always made a big deal about going First Class so that they have to deliver it. Now, what I knew, and I think it's still true in businesses is that Third Class mail in major companies is not delivered internally. So ...

Michael: Really?

Mark: Yeah. No, they just save the money. They don't have to do it, so they don't do it. And this piece of information is, like, twenty years old, in the sense that I found this out. I mean, I always sent the stuff out First Class.

Michael: When Third Class mail comes into an office building, you know, with 500 people there, Third Class mail goes down to the mailroom. The mailroom guy doesn't distribute it to the people?

Mark: Doesn't have to, and probably doesn't.

Michael: Just gets dumped.

Mark: Just gets dumped.

Michael: So he filters the junk.

Mark: Yeah. And it's his judgment. I didn't like that. Now, First Class mail, especially the post cards, that was one of the really great things about post cards, is it's First Class mail. I don't know what the law is, but you're going to violate the law if you toss that post card. So, they too got through, and I knew they got through because I would always follow up, not always with everybody, but one of the things that we'd do every month is follow up with, you know, a phone call and say, "Hey. Just wanted to make sure you got my post card," Yeah, whatever it said, and seldom had anybody say to me, "What are you talking about?" because that got delivered internally. And if I had a good enough message on the post card, which I certainly strove to do, it worked.

Michael: Why aren't you doing that now?

Mark: Well, I'm thinking of doing it. I sent you one of the post cards. I think the headline that I wrote on there, and I'm getting this from memory, was ... remember these are going to sales managers ... "How I Got All The Sales-Ready Leads I Needed For Thirty Years Using A 28-Cent Salesman".

Michael: Okay, okay. So you wanted to do a post card to sales managers to get them to call you to ...

Mark: Yes.

Michael: ... what?

Mark: Well, they're desperate for sales-ready leads, for good leads. Marketing companies, generally when they deliver leads to sales, what they call a sales-

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ready lead, but [INAUDIBLE], only 20% of those are followed up on across the board. In other words, most companies' sales force will just pay no attention, or almost no attention to marketing's leads that they provide. And that's across the board. I've had that on so many webinars that I'm sure that, if you're a sales manager at, you know, fill in the blank company and you're not making quota, you're going to blame it on marketing. And if, on the other hand, you could generate your own leads

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