

# HMA

**HIDDEN MARKETING ASSETS**

# University

INTERVIEW SERIES

**Advice From A Million Dollar  
Marketing Consultant**

*Michael Senoff Interviews Christian C.*

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://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 free 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](http://www.hardtfindseminars.com)

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*Hi, this is Michael Senoff thanks for checking out this recording. You are lucky to be an HMA trained consultant, because what I'm about to share with you can change the way you run your marketing practice forever. I am excited to introduce to you another exclusive interview for the HMA consultants with Christian Cares. He's the founder and president of Cares Cares Consulting. Christian Cares is only 30 years old and runs a multi-million dollar consulting firm. You're about to be a fly on the wall as I dig out all of his consulting secrets. This interview is 90 minutes it's a story you need to hear because it can save you from making many mistakes in your consulting practice. You're about to learn how Christian went from working as a backroom stock boy making minimum wage, to being the CEO of his own international consulting firm. You will hear his opinions on what it takes to make in a consulting business. You'll learn how he used his marketing skills to buy ownership and control of two successful money making businesses. You'll learn how he used reverse engineering to get a write up in Forbes magazine. And finally, you'll learn how to get the driving reasons why a potential client wants helps with business to determine if you should work with him, enjoy.*

Christian: I have done work for client's software companies that are hundred, two hundred, three hundred million dollars a year in sales, and I have done work for companies that almost have no software sales and example of a software industry that I worked in. The principles have all been pretty much the same, but how I dared go after a client; you know who wants to sell 30 million dollars next year in an international market. And then hasn't been through the steps of learning really what it takes, and learning how to task, and then learning how to avoid the mistakes and so on. You're risking your reputation, and you're risking other peoples lively hood.

### *Music*

Michael: When you e-mailed me and had questions about Richard's program, when you said you're doing a couple of million a year, I thought I have to talk to that guy. Where are you in Canada?

Christian: I am in Calgary, Canada.

Michael: You're in Calgary. Okay, so how old are you?

Christian: I am 30 years old.

Michael: Are you entrepreneurial, is this your own company you started?

Christian: Yeah it is. The story happened a long time ago actually, when I was working, going pretty much all through university, that's where a retail company Gap Incorporated basically a pusher of stock in the backroom

moving stuff around. And I came up with a concept of re-engineering a part of the back room on the way the backroom operates because the amount of hours that a retail store spends in non-selling activities typically is very, very high and although they're a necessary evil, they don't generate revenue for the business. And I just thought that there was a better way. So, I paid for myself to go to a distribution centers out east, and see how they actually pack the boxes up and that in return think of a way we can unpack them on the receipt end that would be more effective now. So when they put the stuff together when they select items and merchandise for store, how they package it up, what process it goes through, and how many people, how do the assembly line actually works on the distribution center side.

Michael: Where was the distribution center?

Christian: The distribution center up by Toronto.

Michael: And did they welcome you to come out and check it out?

Christian: I went out as a holiday but I paid by own way, and they were more happy to show me around and show me how it worked. And when I came back and I said you know what there is a better way to do this. And I basically reversed engineered the process, and I said we should do this in assembly line style, we should do it in a format that allows us to work rapidly and effectively we should put things at waist height rather versus working over the board in the back room. And far more organized and coordinated. But within a short period of time a whole bunch of people that were in the backroom in this city in Calgary were re-located to work on the floor and do more productive activity to generate revenue. We started saving a lot of money and it caught the attention of some senior people in San Francisco.

Michael: Alright so you have this idea, you fly yourself out there to go check out how they do it. You were just an employee at that time, what do you say to your manager?

Christian: I made a deal I said, "If I can reduce the number of hours in the backroom, would you pay me more?"

Michael: And what did they say?

Christian: Sure. They didn't believe it was that possible, and I said, "Would you pay me 25 cents for every dollar that you're paying everybody else?"

Michael: Now have you been exposed to Abraham already.

Christian: Not at all, it just made sense to me to make money. Stock person you don't make a whole lot of money, you make seven to eight bucks an hour. They figured I'd save them one person in the backroom.

Michael: Did you get it in writing?

Christian: Yeah I did.

Michael: Really, from who?

Christian: From the store manager that discretion 25 cents raise per hour wasn't that ridiculous of an expectation. Then that's what the assumption was but in the backroom and out in the store, we had six people then went down to two. All of a sudden, things are changing and I said that I could do this at all the stores, and just simply manage a small team and progressively I got really good at over a period of three or four months. There were obviously some little incentive in Canada. And they caught the attention in the US from San Francisco, so I was invited to San Francisco to come talk about what I have done, and they basically put together a specialized team to launch this project across key stores, flagship stores, major locations across the US and Canada. So, I was involved in the project for about two years and stopped going to the University at the time.

Michael: Did they give you your raise?

Christian: A slight raise.

Michael: Okay

Christian: I wasn't doing too bad at the time because basically I was making 25 cents for a whole bunch of people at the time. So I was making equivalent to what a store manager was making with a stock person's title which is not a lot in the retail industry be going on. So I worked at the project for a couple of years, it was highly publicized. You can read about articles in Forbes magazine on how the Gap had gone through this back room re-engineering and I had my picture splattered here and there. So when the project really was running on its own another consulting firm was hired to really take this on further, they hired Andersen Consulting at the time, as it was known, to use their expertise to take it further and to do analysis and time stamp dating for productivity and so on to really get down to the granules and what I learned was a huge amount of information at that point.

Michael: Did you work hand and hand with them?

Christian: Hand and Hand that is correct.

Michael: So you did learn a lot from these guys.

Christian: Oh, I learned massive amounts because I had basically taken a concept and really rough sketch and implemented it, taking the action to do it. But these guys really had the ability to go down and measure productivity, measure functional task analysis, put cameras on people to determine optimum ways of positioning thing. There's a huge amount of knowledge based in these large companies that you really can't take for granted. After working on that project, that project ended, and it was basically on autopilot. It was very easy for the stores to continue to implement. They were taped on videos and you know highly replicatable across the board of the organization. There wasn't really a lot of places to go. I didn't really want to move to San Francisco because of the cost of living and the quality of life here where I am is quite good. So I decided that it was time to learn something else, so I took a six-month project with Andersen Consulting.

Michael: How do you get the job with Andersen?

Christian: Years ago, they knew I couldn't stay at the retail level.

Michael: So they recruited you.

Christian: So they recruited me to work with them.

Michael: Alright.

Christian: However, after about six months you travel a lot, I have been traveling a ton already with, now I am going to cool places and all but still traveling. And I am recently married so I decided that it would be best to try my hand at something else then. It is a bit of comfort and perhaps a bit of ignorance if you decide to go out on your own at that point. Right?

Michael: Right.

Christian: And at looking back in retrospect or in the market place and I went to work for other retail companies locally, to see if I can help them out. I started realizing you can have a fair impact with operations and administrative functions, and organizations that at the end of the day that stuff really matters is stuff that people are willing to pay you the big bucks for has to do with generating revenue, with generating sales. And there's very few people out there, I think or I believe that really like to roll up

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their sleeves and actually get out there and sell stuff and make money in the process. There's a lot of strategists I saw, lots of people that had great ideas but when it actually came down to doing it becomes a lot of theory. At that point I started becoming really interested in how we sell and is there a process to selling and the companies I started working or approaching I made it more on that level is can I sell for you, I will do it on the straight commission basically.

Michael: But have you studied the Brian Tracy and the Zig Ziggler or any of that stuff.

Christian: No, I had no idea those people are existed actually at that point. I became savvier about learning from the people a couple of years later but at first you know it was really really hard trying and learning and going to but figuring there was a better way I was very good at documenting what I was doing. Determining, "Here's what I call a company for" and my thoughts were, "I am not going to sell for one company. I am going to sell for three or four or five companies at a time". And I would document the process of how do I call them, what do I say, how does it work, is there a better way, can I find something else to say, keep a log of objections that I would consistently get when I called companies to do it. And then across the process, I landed a customer who ended up having a very, very big customer base.

Michael: You said, "Okay, I'm going to do my own consulting and try to get my own clients."

Christian: Right.

Michael: How did you start the process from when you first started calling on clients? Who were you calling on? Who was your market? Take me through that process.

Christian: My initial thoughts were to help retail companies. And help them do admin operation type stuff, and I would call them some would be interested, I would do a project for a month here two months there, and a lot of these stores were really small.

Michael: How would you charge?

Christian: I would charge a monthly fee, or I would charge a project fee. I would basically be able to go to the backroom of the store, a retail store and having been experienced and exposed to so many types and sizes, I can quickly see that there is a major inefficiencies here and there. And that would probably take me and eyeball stuff takes me a month to clean it up.

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And we would need to buy a few things here and there and or two months and then be able to document it with some policies and procedures in place for the backroom. I would do it kind of winging it with mistakes in the process.

Michael: Oh, what kind of mistakes did you make?

Christian: Undercharging, not understanding that you really have to get commitment from the customer. They have to be involved in the process. You can't just really come in on the outside, roll your sleeves up, do it, and then expect them to continue doing it, or to see the benefits of those who having to actually participate in the process.

Michael: Alright see give me an example of a particular client that you made that mistake with, what happened?

Christian: A mistake for example where re-engineering a backroom part of the operation and policies and procedures, there might be a best practice it is known in the industry that you might just say, "This is what your guys you need to be doing", and you basically document it for them. Now you ask them to start doing it. But without having them involved and understanding exactly what it takes, they won't do. So for example, in managing shipping and receiving, there should be certain level of logs and audit trail that you manage the shipping and receiving and the logistics industry notorious for being fairly poor in the way they perform their services. And if you don't document things in certain ways and are not consistent, it makes it very hard to claim things. Well you put a policy and procedure, you have a walk through they just see it as onerous task. You know that if they follow these procedures they are going to save themselves a lot of money and they are going to see the benefit of what you do. But unless they understand that, it doesn't matter. So I had a customer where I told them, "You know this you're getting a lot of broken and damaged goods. This is the process you have to go through consistently to ensure that you are protected and that you can recover some of that, and this is part of what you paid me for." And then of course things would show up broken and damaged. And because they really didn't understand why I put that process in place and how to follow it and how to do it and have them involved they just simply said, "Here do it." Continuing having the same problem continuously and they would be calling saying, "Christian it doesn't work, it doesn't work." And it was like, "Well you know follow the process."

Michael: How did you correct this over the years?

Christian: Over the years you learn that the involvement of the end customer, their level of engagement, their level of commitment to the problem is almost as important as the solution itself. So if damaged merchandise is an issue in the case, you know but they lived with it so long and oh well it is just a fact of life. And I don't get through the process of helping understand of what it actually means. Then, it will continue to be an issue for as long as they live. The ability for somebody to change their practices or their ways is very very hard and you probably know from experience lots of people will contact you for information and are going to buy expensive projects or products and never get anywhere with it. And in most cases if business is well you know, help them out, you will change some things but unless they are fully engaged, unless there is a real reason why they want and have to do it, at a deeper level than just we want to be a little better. But there is a real emotional pain if you want to call it that. Then you are really wasting your time and I learned. I have talked to companies that had to be real driving reason maybe they wanted to sell the company, they wanted to retire in three or four years and they knew if they didn't get some things in order and follow some better practices that they were never going to get there. The business was always just going to be worth 40, 50, 100, or 200 thousand dollars, which was nowhere near enough what their goals were going to be. Then, you start telling them to do stuff and you start explaining it better they're far more engaged in the process.

Michael: They're on your team.

Christian: They're on your team.

Michael: So what would you tell my consultants if they're out, they're cold prospecting, they're talking to business and they're trying to decide should I take this guy on as a client. What would you tell them?

Christian: You need to be able to connect and know what the emotional drivers are with the company you want to work with. What is the real reason why though if someone comes up to you and they want to increase their business or they want to improve what they are doing. Then my question is why, and they fail because we need more revenue and so on. But there is another why beneath and you keep, keep digging until you feel got the real reason. Because at the end of the day, it is just a person, and it is a person who's got needs and desires, you understand them and you connect with them and you can relate with them. And you feel you can help them achieve those things, or solve those things. And you'll probably on the right page, but if you can't or just not getting it, or if I, in the case of me if I am just not feeling it, I really understand the real reason why, then it becomes much harder for me to connect and ensure that I am doing the right to help achieve whatever objective that, that individual person

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actually has versus what might be the superficial or topical subject that we are addressing.

Michael: What were you charging at first, do you remember?

Christian: I had to take whatever my monthly salary would have been and increase it a bit, and sell a project and I would dedicate my time, one client at a time. So \$3,000, \$4,000 a month was what I was charging a client and then I would work 60 hours a week to make sure, that I can finish that project within a one-month time line or whatever.

Michael: So you were putting a lot of time into it.

Christian: I was, I was really breaking my back in the process but it is the part of the learning curve. Now I saw a lot of people get burned with Y2 marketing thing. There is a number of people in town here, that bought into it and never really made any money. What people, I think, fail to realize is your going to have to work hard. And your going to have to go through the paces, I never met anybody other than a handful of people who got really lucky who haven't made their money by not really working hard. By putting in the time, by learning, by making mistakes, by really, getting out there and actually doing stuff, and you can't just send out a letter and expect customer to come calling. Use a letter but it is just one piece of a much larger puzzle. So then I realized after doing some retail work for awhile there is just no money in retail for one, and two I was focusing on the wrong kind of stuff, and I had the opportunity to be introduced to a gentleman who was a client of one of the retail stores very, very smart man. Who owned a human resource company, and at the time the dot.com thing was beginning to take flight, there was energy happening around that industry so that I could really look into that market. And he was the first person to give me time and he gave me two pieces of advice, he said, "One make sure , wherever you spend your time that you look at your time as how much can you make per hour. Don't think about how much you can a year, how much can you make per hour. And if every hour you're making more money then it's easier to measure, where you are versus a big picture." And that was a brilliant piece of advice, that at least for me worked very well, and the second piece was learn from other people who have been there and done that. Don't try to figure out by yourself, it will take you too long and too expensive. So take the time he says find people who are in business in town, or whoever you come across that you think is successful and ask them how they got there, you will learn tons, by tapes, by whatever the case may be. And he had a small company, he still has a small company, continues to be a good friend of mine, but he was a multi-multi-millionaire. And he had built simply by following very good business practices. He didn't require to have a 500% organization to have

the lifestyle you wanted and to have the income he wanted. So I did kind of what, what you do perhaps not as sophisticated, for sure not as sophisticated but I went out and I would find a businessman and I would say, “You know what? What would it cost to get an hour of your time depending on what you did?”

Michael: Wow that’s great.

Christian: I started learning huge amounts.

Michael: Give me a story, one that’s specific of one that sticks out in your mind.

Christian: I’ll give you an example, I remembered meeting a lady when I was working for one of these retail stores, an interior design store doing some work for them. And the lady walked in nobody was helping her on the floor so I went into the backroom and I didn’t know a whole lot about selling for this product company. But you know I made sure she was taking care of and her name was Rhonda Belushi. And I said you know you obviously can afford to shop here so you know what is it that you do, and she said well my husband owns a couple of businesses, and that is all that registered with me at the time. And I said, “Oh that’s exciting, great”. So, I called her up and I said, “You know, you told me once that your husband owns some businesses. Would I be able to get some time with him? I imagine he is really business so on and so forth.” She said, “You know what? You treated me really well that time. I’ll ask him.” She did, and I went and met him and his name is Carlos. Again this gentleman invites me to one of his warehouses. This guy collects Ferrari’s. He had about 16 Ferraris. I started talking and he started explaining how he worked as a Banker and a Financer and was making pretty good money but there was no leverage in it. So he decided to get into business and he got into importing and exporting fruits and vegetables from Italy to sell to the Italian Market in the south community. And how he learned to you know best way to sell products for this kind of market through good distribution channels and how he had set up distribution channels and the importance of distribution channels, and why distribution channels don’t work, and why they do work, and the importance of ensuring that if you make a mistake with a client you fix it right away, at whatever the cost might have been. It was fascinating learning on how he had leveraged that and then once he got the business going how he’d leave it on autopilot. He would run it ,manage it on autopilot by ensuring that those processes, systems, policies and procedures that he had learned from being an experienced banker like he was, put those protocols in place so he can go to his next thing. So he had about seven or eight companies on the go at the time I was amazed at how effective how he was at running all of them.

Michael: Wow

Christian: So that blew me away and I remember my hand had such big cramps after that meeting.

Michael: So you were sitting there writing and taking notes.

Christian: Writing you know and the next thing I did was I said I have to learn how to speed write or type so I started taking typing classes and I bought myself a little computer to carry around. Then he introduced me to a whole bunch of other power players in the city a guy who owns a series of hotels, people who own restaurants, a guy that manufactured, one of the first manufactures for car bras based of here in western Canada. People in other cities that I would phone up or find ways if I was going through a city on holidays to meet them, and just taking a ton and a ton of notes, and I said at the same time I though anything if I could for you tell me and I will help you. You need some errands done, if you run out of a guy and stuck for deliveries you need some guy to do it you know. Whatever is I am not going to charge you, this is just someway I have to be able pay you back. And of course, he insisted that it wasn't necessary, think another thing I learned from people that that were fairly wealthy they were very giving, and more than happy to share what they have got for information. But you have to be grateful for it and they want to feel appreciated for it, because there is not a lot of things that people can buy for them that they feel a lot of satisfaction for and for some reason to this day, I still talk to a lot of business people. They have this sense of satisfaction from being able to share some of their information. And he kept referring me and everybody I asked they would refer me, and people would refer me to two or three people at a time, and of course, after a while these people become an incredible database of contacts to have. I was religious about networking with people and always sending thank you notes and always being very appreciative again. I was still quiet young at the time you know.

Michael: How old were you then?

Christian: I would have been about 23, 23 years old, 24 years old.

Michael: Okay

Christian: So just learning a huge amount, at the same time I had been exposed a little bit to Jay Abraham and you know I say there is some pretty smart people out there, that package their information up, so I started that. And I didn't have a lot of money either, recently married at 24 needed to really make sure that I spent money wisely. But I started reading this stuff from

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Jay Abraham and others that I started coming across, and I was like wow this is really really amazing. But then I found out in the process of buying all stuff and information that I needed to make it actionable and then I think one thing I learned for myself was whenever I read something, or I listen to something, even the stuff that I listened to on your site. And I will sit there and take notes and I will re-listen to it but I always to try to walk away with one or two bullet points or one or two questions or one or two things that I can put into my master process or my master binder. Of something, I can either tweak or improve or try out, so I have something to do with it. I have learned the more you read, the more you listen, the more valuable knowledge that you have. So I try to read a business book a week, maybe every couple of days, but I need to take something out of it that I can actually use and not just being that was a great book, right. So it was actionable and building up out.

Michael: What one or two business books would you recommend that are just you think are awesome?

Christian: For somebody who has some consulting experience and are moving forward that Jim Collins Cut the Grade. I thought was a very very strong book from that perspective. I think if you're looking at management and your ability to work with people and manage people and be successful with that, now, Break all the Rules from the gallop organization, James Buckingham was a really really good one, good book that I really enjoyed. Michael Gerbers Emyth think people underestimate the value of systematizing things both for themselves and for clients they are working with, clients they want to work with, there is one thing to pay lip service to systemization but the other thing to actually do it and understand the process that is required to get there is very, very important.

Michael: For a year you made all these contacts, you've interviewed these people and just trying to learn everything you can. The same time where you still doing some of the consulting with the retailers?

Christian: I was still with retailers and then odds and ends of other shops but really more on selling. I was trying to focus more on trying to sell products at this point.

Michael: Okay

Christian: For them, and basically I became engaged in the sales process so I could go to a company and say hey I sell for you on commission. What would you pay me if I sold on commission and I will learn your product, I'll learn your stuff, and go out and sell it. So you know I'd have three or four companies that I would be trying to sell at the same time. First, it was all

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over the board you know whatever company I thought I get a hold or I found interest in that I thought I could sell. But then I started getting smarter and saying, “Hey let’s sell products that are similar or in the same vein or same avenue.”

Michael: Give me an example, one company that you went with to sell.

Christian: For example, I was selling an interior designer, I wanted to sell services a little more. Nice firm fair size and didn’t really have outside sales force they were really used to getting business by referrals. So I sold for him, but then I’d also go in one of the retail stores I have done backend work for, I’d say, “Hey I’ll sell your furniture outside. I will go out, I will sell it to market in general, try to approach the market in general.” Then a bathroom fixtures store. So, I’d have a couple companies in the same avenue and some home renovations type guy or something like that. Then after really investigating and working with these people and learning about their business, learning about what they have done. Something began to strike me, fairly, fairly strong. Who were being successful or really were successful had specialized. They weren’t all things twelve people. They weren’t trying to own the entire world. They just wanted to be very very good at one part of the market that they can approach. They might innovate, and they might expand themselves and their business might move forward or more as time progressed. But they were really focused; there was a core part of their business that was very, very strong, and although they might have other ventures, other revenues, and avenues of revenue and so on, they really had one way or had become specialists. And so I sat back and I said you know what really do what I want to do. And what do I want to be really, really good at? What would I enjoy and really pushing myself to think about what I want to do. And at that point, you know I started hearing about all these things about work on the business, instead of in the business, and it didn’t mean a whole lot to me, I really didn’t understand what it means. But I started sitting down for the first time and thinking just going out there and doing stuff, what is it that I want to be a rock star at basically. And I decided that I have this thing for international work, for some reason I just found international business fun, fascinating, and really interesting, and really exciting. Never done it before in my life, I mean I traveled when I was a kid with my parents and I have lived in other countries but I never sold anything international.

Michael: It just sounded glamorous.

Christian: It sounded cool yeah. So I decided that’s what I am going to do and I figured the place to start, because the dot.com industry was still relatively hot was to go and try that industry, try that market. So I did. I approached a company and said, “I want to help you expand your software



internationally.” And perhaps by luck, perhaps by timing, perhaps you know just like what happened with you earlier in our conversation just thing at the right place, right time, they said, “Sure”, and I knew almost nothing about technology really at a deep level, I had done some projects for some training side of this technology for a retail computer store I had done some work. So I knew a little bit but I didn’t know anything about the software.

Michael: What was this company?

Christian: This company was a business process automation company.

Michael: So they sold software that-

Christian: That automates business processes. So they gave me a shot. Again you know was at that point I learned about risk reversal and so on, so I was willing to take on a fairly big part of the risk by making it really inexpensive for them to do it, to basically have some milestones in place, throughout the process so they can say, “Hey you know Christian it’s just not working out.” But I made the determination at that point I was learning a lot more about marketing at the time too, that this was going to be something I was going to be really really good at. And over the years as I was working more and more with some of these people that had been successful you know even today I look at guys that do a fairly good job like, David Fray and Jeff Paul and all these other guys that are out there. They always started out with the spa business or the carpet cleaning business like Joe Polish or financial planning business. They became really, really good in one area and put that process in place and so on. I said and it kind of struck me that you know what, I can probably work along this line here in this market and I couldn’t find anybody else doing it.

Michael: So this company they weren’t selling internationally there were just selling nationally.

Christian: That’s right they were just selling within North America.

Michael: How much did the software sell for?

Christian: It ranged in price from 10,000 dollars to a half a million dollars.

Michael: So it was high-end stuff.

Christian: It was high-end stuff yeah

Michael: And what kind of deal did you negotiate with them?

Christian: So a monthly fee, a monthly retainer fee if you want to call it that and 10% of whatever I sold and milestones. So, you know every three months I had to basically achieve stuff for them and if not they had the right to cancel. So you know I began to dig deep into all of these guys that have all these marketing processes, everything that I can learn, anything to do and really began to systematize the way that I went to market and soon enough international was generating more business than the national. Domestic was one guy selling international was selling more than five guys in North America.

Michael: Tell me the story what happened?

Christian: Basically, it boils down to one of the different avenues you can go to market with. And I will explain it further along what processes I developed along the way to make myself effective I guess as an organization and how I started building my company. But I was looking at what is the shortest path to market? Obviously in international market, distribution channels are very important channel resellers are valuable resellers just distributors for the software industry were critical. So the first question was how do you get these people to be interested in what you have to offer? So one you had to be able to prove to these companies that really basically they work on commission for another company reselling their software because they don't get paid unless they sell the software and then of course they get the margins and they get systems integration work that comes with it or value added services. So you really had to have a good case so one we had to prove that we can generate fees for the companies, the second aspect is we have to be able to find these companies and recruit them and convince them to come on board, considering the whole market is cluttered, the space that I was playing, there was 144 different competitors that can offer similar types product. Perhaps not as good, not as strong or not as capable as the one that I felt I was offering, but still there is a lot of clutter that these companies had to wade through and say you know which one is actually going to be the best partner.

So at first I needed to prove that it could be sold, and using the phone is really the only mechanism. This company did not have the cash flow to just finance with the international travel up front. I had to prove that there stuff could be sold so, one is identifying the best market, the best charted market who is an easy shot. Who are companies that needed it? Who had big pains and big problems? So that was the first piece was identifying that, so doing a bit of research, doing some calls to potential companies that might be probable avenues for selling. You begin to learn a lot, you

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know without having to actually going to sell anything to these companies, call them and say you know what if you were to ever buy a product like this, what would it be, what would it look like, what would it have, what would you worry about knowing, how important is this, this, this and this. And what kind of things are important to you and then calling the company back two days later and talking to somebody completely different. Because in the sale there are multiple people involved in an enterprise organization. It might be the purchasing organization, it might be a technical team, it might be a line of business managers, and so on. And you have only to call a handful of companies to really start understanding hey you know what there is a baseline here of information that is required.

So then going back and formulating information that met those requirements and then really going back and studying back and taking a broader approach and how can the information that I provide them be as so much value they begin to see me as an expert, depending on how I give them advice approaching them the topic of the subject that I am trying to sell them on. So it wasn't about me trying to sell them a product. It was about me trying to sell them time or a meeting so they can learn a whole lot about what it takes to buy a product. So it is really educational approach at which in my opinion is the most valuable approach in selling any type of product, and then religiously following up, finding different ways to add value to the conversation, using lots of technology tools, like webinars and conference calls and so on.

Michael: Were you using that stuff?

Christian: Yeah, I was and becoming very, very proficient at it. So, once I figured out this first company you know approached to go through it and then of course creating all these contacts international and beginning to get some moment. Then it was, "Okay let's find another company, I think I now have a process where I can walk a company through." I was very particular; I focused for example only on Microsoft based technologies, companies that does stuff around Microsoft technology, so I can reuse the channels, leverage relationships in the market. And then I became very good at recruiting and finding companies that wanted to expand. You know by using messages in the market like "If over 50% of your business comes from North America your business could be in serious risk." Showing the fiscal evidence as to why larger companies also make it point to ensure that 50 or 60% of their business or more comes from international markets because provides certification provides cash flow during slow season in North America and so on and so forth right.

So I became very proficient in finding customers I had developed a methodology for myself where I could easily test to see if I could get these companies to market. I could put them through similar distribution channel and relationships that I had in other places and then you know because I was doing six, or seven, or eight companies at a time, I could leverage one trip to do a whole bunch of things, so saving a lot of companies a lot of money a lot of energy that they might not been able to do on their own or what have to pay considerably more.

Michael: So you were still working with that one company, but you had multiple.

Christian: Yeah and they were all contracts like I took all these works on as contract as a subcontract to the business. With all of them having the understanding that it was my intention to do multiple companies that they would never compete against each other they were complimentary.

Michael: You were representing multiple companies.

Christian: That is correct.

Michael: If you had an international contact, say a company in Australia that maybe a good fit for your business software, you had other complimentary products that you can sell that company once you're in.

Christian: That's right.

Michael: That was your strategy to have multiple things to sell to one client.

Christian: That's correct.

Michael: That's excellent. Give me an example, how much of your product line could be a potential sale to the one company you did internationally.

Christian: A distributor, so I would look at distributors regional resellers and so on. So I set up this whole network of contacts worldwide that I have now. Where I can take a company, a software company from California, from Washington, or from Calgary, Canada, and I can plug them into this process where I can identify where they fit into the market, I could easily call my distribution network now and then determine you know when customers would be interested and we can test and ensure what would be involved, I now after many years of doing this, have experience in knowing what the legal requirements are for getting products into markets and IT protection and so on and so forth. But you know I made sure that okay if I sell these products in my distribution channel, what's the next thing the customer always wanted to buy? And if they wanted to buy

XYZ or if I saw them buying another products, or I was involved in one of the resellers that I work with involved in an RFP, a request for a proposal, That also involved a complimentary product that I didn't distribute or represent, . I would simply call that company up and say, "Hey what's your international go to market position? How do you do it? Are you having any success? I see that you're in these opportunities. How are you being represented? Who are you resellers?", and so on and so forth. And after a while, you begin to get known within a market as being the guy that knows how to do certain things. And you know your resellers recommend you to the companies that are dealing with them, partners they work a lot together in the Microsoft space, everybody sees each other at global trade shows, or regional trades shows.

You really begin to tone the market and I became very very consistent at not only for the software market but system integrators worldwide to be sending them information and find out if there were ways for them to sell there product better, or they can run their business better I would find ways to be the guy that would provide that advice for free, but I remained here stay top of mind with many of these organization.

Michael: Is this what you are doing today still?

Christian: I would be doing multiple software companies at a time. With time, you begin to really increase your fees, and I started to develop my own little staff of people within the organization of doing it. Some organizations really didn't want to hire internally. They wanted me to basically to do the thing alone. So I would hire people who would become international sales reps for one company, or two companies, so that I can leverage it greater and greater.

Michael: It would be your company?

Christian: It was my company.

Michael: But the sales rep, they would just rep-

Christian: Exactly.

Michael: Okay

Christian: They would work for me. And overtime started through this process I started developing my own methodology for going to market. And as I sat back and stripped it down, really the principles I have collected from all of these people that I have talked to from these gurus in the industry who are brilliant at marketing or sales, and I started putting it a thing how to put

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this thing in buckets of information so that is easy for me to reference. So I started building a spreadsheet and a database of information and I used some other people's software in the process to help automate some of it. But how do I get through making sure that I don't miss any steps or I don't forget to put a risk reversal offer, I don't forget to calculate lifetime value, I don't forget to determine what my stadium pitch is going to be for the client and so on and so forth, right, all these different components, so I had them already written done.

But friends who owned business or sometimes these same people that I stayed in touch with would see that I had some pretty good ideas on expanding businesses or selling stuff, that they would come back two years later, and say, "Christian., what is it that your doing that's working? Can I talk to you a little bit now and see what you're up to?" And of course I always made sure you stay in touch with your contact of course, right, and I realized, "Hey if I strip down the technology related question, you know how your technology built and so on and so forth, and substitute it with more generic questions this really applies to a lot of the businesses." So, I ended up doing what a lot of other people who perhaps went into marketing have done is, they started looking at, "Well what other industries can I do the same thing for?", and there came a point a couple years ago I didn't want to travel as much. I had more miles collected than a lot of people I know, so I said, "Can I do this locally? Can this happen with other businesses?", and in the process I became become much at better negotiating, much better at selling myself, my products, and my services. So I started approaching a couple of local companies and a few that interested me quite a bit and started making deals that I could, they were looking to get out of their business and wanted to retire in particular. I could make a deal, where by increasing their sales, I would have an equity stake and then I could buy the rest of their company out.

Michael: Alright can we talk about a specific one.

Christian: Sure, there is a - I own a training center now for example.

Michael: What kind of training center?

Christian: They do training on, in this case they do technical training, soft skills such as time management, and presentation skills, those kinds of things.

Michael: Do people come in for live trainings?

Christian: Live training as in instructor and at the same time they do office training some Microsoft PowerPoint, Word, Excel. We do all that kind of training



throughout the process. And this business had been chugging along at doing alright technology focused mainly as well as they have the soft skills is really to support or compliment the technology piece. And I sat back and I looked at them and I said, “You know what? I think I could do a really good job for this company.” But I couldn’t find any guru in the market who had put together a marketing program for training centers.

So I said I’ll try to give a shot at this by understanding the why, by getting down to the real reason why he wanted to increase his sales, and increase his business, understand that what we really wanted to do was retire. Wanting to retire for many years now, he had a five-year target, but at the rate his business was going there was not going to be enough cash in the business to do so. And I said, “Well can’t really make you any promises because I don’t know exactly your business will work and should work, but I will give it my best shot and I will make it very very easy for us to do business.” And I basically put a full guarantee if within a period of time I didn’t produce X number of results for him that he really wouldn’t have to pay me anything. At this point, it was a bit of challenge for myself and a bit of a hobby; I wasn’t starving for cash like I was a number of years ago.

And then after digging a little further, “What do you want to do with the business, and how much would it take to buy the business? I would offer you cash, how much would you accept for the business.” He gave the figure for the company and although I would have been in a position I was in a position at the time to buy outright, “What if I produced that in sales and then some, would you just flip it over, give it to me?” And he said, “Absolutely if the money is there. I don’t care where the money comes from, but that is money we wouldn’t have had in the past, so go for it.” So again, I went in the methodology I developed around the process that works for me.

Michael: Did you do a contract; did you go to an attorney?

Christian: I went to an attorney. I think there is a couple of things that along the way you learn. One is whatever cost, to spend money with the lawyer to do something right, spend the money with the lawyer to do it right. A lot of people try to do it on their own ad hoc.

Michael: Well

Christian: You can save a lot of time, a lot of money by doing it on your own. But you’ll never fear frustration with grief or challenges. If you have done it right you save yourself a lot of headaches.



Michael: Right, so with this particular deal did you and him meet at the attorney's office to nail this down.

Christian: What I did because I do, do a lot of contracts for my consulting software expansion business if you want to call it that. I do have access to a lawyer that I maintain on a retainer. So I simply had him draft an agreement take it to him. He had it reviewed by his lawyer, the two lawyers duke it out, came to an agreement that we both well liked. So it was straight on, it wasn't long, it wasn't complex or anything outrageous, but we made sure that it was fair, and understood, and at the same time, I was willing to take on a lot of the risk for the twelve months. Basically I can make a lot of money for him but if I didn't hit the targets that we wanted then he would walk away. I wanted to be very very easy for him; at the same, I time I wanted really put my process to the test. Do I really have something that works or am I just lucky? Because luck is a big factor I have learned in a lot of things sometimes.

In going through the process, the process that I developed really boils down to first defining a strategy these experts will tell you to do, the next then strategy by determining the shortest path by test what it is that the market wants, by doing proper market research, by asking them my questions, by really understanding what the best way or the best ways look to be for going to market. And once you have tested it and you feel comfortable that you're on a winning path, the next step is alignment. You really need to get every part of the business pulling or pushing or whatever the case maybe in the same direction. So, the way the sales people act and talk and what they say in the presentations they do it all centered your unique selling proposition or the ultimate strategic position you want to take in the market, with the way that the receptionist greets and handles people. All these different things, the marketing of course, direct response advertising, all those components to the way that the classes are held and run flexibility of scheduling, all the things that were important, we just started making sure we wind up with the customers that actually matter to the customer.

Michael: Okay, how many employees were there?

Christian: At the time, there were nine employees and most of the instructors were contractors so about 12 contractors or instructors on contracts. So we weren't required to pay them every week if there wasn't work for them to do. But you pay a premium in them being at there. So once, you have things on alignment we have people moving in the same direction the next stage is growth really putting the machine to work. And you know franchising, for the lack of a better term, everything you do, so it was really easy to bring in a sales person because you knew it was the lead

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generation call up they had to make. This is what they made to an industry. This is the offer that they made. They weren't trying to sell them the class up front they were trying to get them educated. We had seminars going on every week, and we still do to educate the market on the value of training and the specifics subjects like time management, and how to be more effective as a leader, or as a boss, or how to reduce your help desk cost if you're a large organization with a large help desk. Bring in experts again to cover these subjects and these topics consistently, and then of course offers every month, there's some offers, some promotions or some gimmick there some event going to keep people excited about what's happening. Then, turning the industry on its tables by doing non-traditional things, bundling programs that would have never been bundled before. So if you want to take a technical course you have to take an effective presentation course, you want to take an outlook class on how to use Microsoft Outlook you have to take a time management class as a bundle or whatever, value added service.

So it became part of the competition to keep up and play in the same space because value for dollar although we never discounted we never offered really, really cheap training our prices really were never the cheapest of the bunch, value for dollar and the guarantees we are willing to offer much higher than anybody else's, and so apples to apples was not the comparison people had to make a decision on anymore.

Then over a period of time of course a period of about seven months business begins to ramp and grow and things start to move, business just start to flow through the door like never before. And the training industry is very much, I looked outside the industry to what other organizations do that have inventory expires every night like restaurants, like airlines, like hotels, what did they do and we start implementing similar strategies and tactics that those industries utilize. Ensure that their facilities are full.

Michael: Give me a couple of examples that really worked well.

Christian: Aeroplans type program for the airline are very very effective. The airline industry they keep people very loyal so we implemented one of those. For gym we implemented a membership program like gyms do, gyms have course inventory that expires that every night as well so we implemented a membership program that had a whole bunch of benefits, you sign up at front which creates instant cash flow for the organization. We implemented travel in Europe you can buy a euro pass for the train. We implemented a task where you can buy multiple programs in one shot where you can basically take unlimited training for a year at a fixed rate, except for cost of course components like those really change the way people use it. Somebody will say, "Well I am thinking about two courses

this year, but if I take a \$1,000 dollars more or X dollars more I can actually take a whole bunch more classes and all I have to pay for is the books” and they jump on it. Of course, we would have cash up front.

Michael: Were the classes all day long or just night only?

Christian: We have classes all the time; we have weekend classes, evening classes, day classes. They’re all over the board we really market to the business community not to the individual user.

Michael: So who ends up paying for it the business owner?

Christian: The business owner

Michael: He writes it off, he pays his employees to go.

Christian: That’s right. Really, our approach to the market was by educating companies that if you do invest in training, a lot of the training that companies invest in is very ineffective. In fact, most companies will get a return on investment of about two dollars for every dollar in training that they spend and most people actually the same. So you know if you or I were to buy a four hundred dollar book from one of these experts in most cases most people will only get eight hundred dollars worth of value out of the book back. Because at the end of the day you might only read it once, you may not know how to implement it and maybe out of your actually ability to understand what you actually what to have to do with the information as an example.

So we try to educate the company that you know the clients or the market in general that there are companies out there that get up to 26 dollar return investment, so for every dollar they spend they’re getting 26 bucks back, which is companies like Xerox for example. so they’ll spend a thousand or ten thousand dollars to getting somebody up to speed but they know they are getting \$26,000 back in return because they had a process in a way to make sure that the training is effective and we implemented similar systems to help reinforce, to help validate, to help insure the training didn’t go out the door soon as the person left the classroom yet a huge amount of what you learn in a day anyway.

So, we started doing things that really ensured that people got lots of value out of the programs that they do invest in. And by taking that bit of a higher road approach really helped insure that people saw the value of that they were getting, and understand that the training with us really willing to insure that the training was actionable and they could do something with it in their life to make their business better. And of course we are

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continually following them, sending reminders, we're inviting to webinars or seminars in our center that reinforce what they learn.

Michael: How effective are the webinars?

Christian: Webinars are actually a very, very powerful tool. People don't have the desire to leave the place where they are comfortable in. So if they can do it from home, they can do it from their office if it is short it is 15 minutes, 30 minutes. It's very, very strong and so once you take training if you were going to come to a training session particularly, Mike, and you were to take something of interest for you and you said you want to learn how to design a website.

Michael: Okay

Christian: So you take two classes or whatever a couple of days to design a website and then go off and go back to the races. Well, what will happen is somebody will contact you, to invite you to a session which will reinforce one of the foundation pieces and say, "Well, just log on this date and this time for 30 minutes and we will walk you through what you learned already. But we are going to remind you some of the details that really make it more effective in real life, because you're never going to go back and read that book again if you can avoid it." So you say, "Hey that sounds great because I was trying to work on my website and I couldn't remember how to do this, or it is taking me longer than expected and plus I get a chance to do some q and a on some real life stuff that applies to me."

Michael: So your trainers are online conducting this webinar.

Christian: That's right.

Michael: With all the people who have gone through the classes.

Christian: That's right, exactly

Michael: Let's say any other consultants want to use webinars to train what tools or software have you found are really effective in doing that?

Christian: It probably depends on your budget. There's very inexpensive tools like Convoq.com they have software called ASAP a couple of hundred bucks a year. You can have 25 people on your session and do as many sessions as you want, very inexpensive not super feature rich, but it will get most people to buy a one way presentation were I am presenting to you, you can see what I am doing, you can see my screen, you can see my slides.

Michael: Can you run PowerPoint on it?

Christian: Yeah, you can run PowerPoint on it. So fairly, fairly effective you don't need far more sophistication, far more power, I use WebX a lot, but WebX you have to be spending some cash, and I think an organization is going to use it for you know 50 people presentation so on consistently, you're looking at eight to ten thousand dollars a year. You need to have some definition that Microsoft Live Meeting is pretty strong and feature rich but more expensive if you become more creative you can do some sharing with Microsoft Messenger. You can learn to be sophisticated with that and you can do some sharing of files and documents that way too. When it comes to web session quality is important in my opinion. If you use a weak tool it doesn't meet all the requirements that you need and you don't practice doing it. You have to sit there and if you're a one-man shop and sit your wife down in across the table at another computer better off then have her listen to you doing it so that you nail it because unfortunately you can't gauge your audience you're making a lot of mistakes if pages are hanging, if you don't know how to use it, you're going to come across really really poor.

Michael: And how long did it take you to buy it out?

Christian: About nine months.

Michael: Was he pretty surprised?

Christian: Yeah he was. He was quite excited about what had happened, but at the same time he sat back and said man I wish I knew years ago what I know now about spending the time getting the business operating on auto-pilot, and having processes and systems in place, and policies and procedures that are actionable versus doing things the way I had done things in the past.

Michael: So, that is just one business, did you do the same thing with another business.

Christian: Yeah, I bought a carpet cleaner with the same process.

Michael: Tell me the story about that. This is great.

Christian: Very similar again, pretty fascinating I actually hired a person in my company about a year ago now, who all he does he looks for businesses for sale in the newspaper. It's amazing how many people you know finally get fed up of running their company. They got great intellectual

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property. They might have invented something. They might have in the case of this carpet cleaner they just logged at it for years and they did ok, they made a living, got by and said enough is enough I'm going to work for somebody else or I am going to get somebody else and they might have been smart and instead of spending all of the money they made they put some stuff away and now can retire.

Michael: So you got one guy looking in the paper scowering for potential businesses.

Christian: Right and I walked them through a process, an audit process so he calls companies up and find out why they want to sell, and what the problems are, and what's working on people.

Michael: Where are you looking, in the paper?

Christian: Yes, just in the newspapers just in the classified ads.

Michael: So are you getting the business brokers?

Christian: Yeah we talk to a lot of business brokers as well and many times you ask them, "Well what if somebody offered you double, but you had to wait a year to do it?" With those kind of concepts, alright, but the situation of carpet cleaners was going to talk to him and this was when I'd on my own. And I just called him up and said why do you want to sell, I just gone through an experience where the service for my carpet cleaner in my home was less that spectacular as usually it is in the industry and being the guy that likes to sell and there has got to be a better way there has got to be a better company. So I started researching companies out of curiosity and realized they all did a pretty mediocre job at doing it. I went out and had bought.

Michael: Joe Polish.

Christian: Polish and spent two grand or fifteen-hundred dollars or whatever to buy it. First one was, "The Five Thousand Dollar Winner". I said, "Hey lets try this. So, I called up this guy and there was a couple for sale and one guy, what kind of capacity are you run at now. Was your customer happy? What is your customer base? What is your strategy? How do you get into a market, so on and so forth. I thought, "Hey, there is probably a better way to do this." So we came up to a deal, and in this case, I gave him a bit of cash up front. But I said the rest is based on what this company will do, and if this company doesn't provide the money with in a period of time I think we can do for you, and of course I gone out and tested, I gone out



and called and talked to neighbor right around the corner of my neighborhood as to who was doing what.

Michael: Did they have a good customer list?

Christian: Yeah they had a database, they have been in business for twelve years and they have been doing carpet cleaning.

Michael: How many trucks did they have?

Christian: He had two trucks. He had a database of about exact number in this case was about 3,000 that he had done work for. There was a small percentage there would repeat, once every two years was the average that people were coming back to get there carpets re-done. So I looked around and I looked at my community what if I can own the community. What if everybody in this neighborhood that I live in, and I live in a fairly nice neighborhood if you want to call it that, only got their carpets cleaned by me, so I started practicing more of my own copywriting skills. I had been outsourcing a lot of the copywriting to other people in the past and I sat down and I bought a copywriting, learn how to copyright overnight kind of concept you know one of those binders that you pay 500 bucks for and really started getting down and figuring out how to do it. And sent a letter out to the neighbors and it was charitable and behold with an offer a few came in requesting information and my first step in the lead generation process and got better at it, got better at it, and people start taking you up and then you starting putting programs in place to get them to buy more regularly, and soon enough I saw competitors truck in the neighborhood, go and talk to the neighbor hey haven't you got any of my letters, you know and driving down the street and my back to my office, and soon enough people started seeing the truck, they start getting to know you, they start seeing that there is quality, and then after what is the next thing I can add onto this right. About a year later, I paid this gentleman out for the trucks, and what is the next thing people have.

Michael: Do you were just doing this systems and the marketing?

Christian: That's right just that piece of the puzzle. The next step was what else am I getting down in my house, so I am getting windows cleaned, so I looked for someone who does window cleaning and I did a joint venture said, "Hey if I can get you into these houses where I have got a relationship established will you do it, and will you give me 20%?" And sure enough I started making offers to the same houses that were either paying monthly fees for you know this maintenance program we put in place in order to get their carpets cleaned throughout the house and then who does your house cleaning, and so on and so forth. So I kept building up on that and

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then once it started working really well in one neighborhood basically put the same concept to the neighborhood just down the street which is similar demographic to the one I live in. And making sure that I can run those vehicles and the people that work for the business at 80-85% capacity so that there is always good enough margins to make sure the business is satisfactory.

Michael: So was your main driving lead generation a direct mail letter.

Christian: It was and follow up calls; people do actually do phone calls.

Michael: What was the offer, do you know it?

Christian: The first offer was actually for the carpet cleaning was on “How to improve the quality of air in your home?”, that really was, was the first offer and you know research that really explained how the quality of air in your home has a huge impact on how healthy you are, you’re eating habits, you’re sleeping habits, and so on and so forth.

Michael: And that was more of the driving force for someone rather than the dirt in their carpets.

Christian: That’s right, I think the dirt in their carpets everyone has done that one, it’s overdone. So I wanted to take that another approach and by that token be able to generate again a lot of leads, in a very soft way but once people were approachable level is other offers. For example, we did an offer that was very, very successful we just basically had one of the sales guys at the company, I said, “Walk around and I want you to go and talk to 20 houses next week, and find out how many have Persian rugs.” It turns out of all the houses he was able to talk to only one didn’t have a Persian rug in their house. We looked at it and said you know how much does it cost us to clean a Persian rug, and really, it was very, very inexpensive to clean one Persian rug.

Michael: Do you take them out, or do you do it in the house?

Christian: Take them out, we roll them up take them to our shop.

Michael: Okay

Christian: And clean them up. So we made an offer you know it, “Free Persian rug as long as it’s under 6X9 or less in size. We’ll come, we’ll gently move your furniture we will put stoppers under whatever you’ve got so it doesn’t scratch your hardware floor. We’ll take the rug. We’ll wash it, clean it, bring it back but you have to get it done in February.” Wonderful

lead generation piece, for every carpet that we cleaned, I think after every ten, eight people got their homes cleaned and we taught them why Persian rugs get cleaned a certain way and why it is dangerous to just to send them anywhere and how they usually get cleaned by your average carpet cleaning Joe, and what kind of insurance we have in place, and where our guys went to get training on Persian rugs to clean Persian rugs so on and so forth. And you know so when we go and pick up the rugs of course you know we scope what their carpets are like, how much carpet they have in the house, how much furniture they have, is it is synthetic fabric on the furniture, is it natural fibers on the furniture, do they have drapes that could be cleaned so on and so forth, right, all those other things that we come back we have got a nation to sell them on, the values of the rest of the house.

Michael: So you still have that business going.

Christian: Yeah, absolutely it is a very, very profitable business that operates, again very much on auto-pilot again, you always have to be innovating and that's the funnest part of my job now, what is the next gimmick, or widget or offer, or whatever you want to call it, that you can up, we even have increased the number of trucks we have now, we are up to four trucks, you know we will continue.

Michael: How do you like the Joe Polish's course was that helpful?

Christian: You know, I think the key and you know when I look at people who take training or courses, and I am even considering investing in your program. I think what people need to do is one, you got to take action. I know a lot of people in town, when I was doing research on other carpet cleaners, they bought these programs but they never did anything with it. So, I think one is action. But two you have to be strong enough to form your own opinions, you should follow people's best practices but you should also be willing to go and say, "What is it that works for me? or how can I tweak this to really work for me?"

Michael: Right

Christian: One of the guys take something out of this I listen to those things that Richard you taped with Richard if you're not a good cold caller find someone who is.

Michael: Yeah

Christian: But don't try to make yourself become a good cold caller, find someone who can do it, learn how recruited people who are good at cold calling and

pay them you know ten dollars for every meeting they get you or whatever the case maybe. If you know, what the value is of that meeting, and if you are really good at presenting but you can't get in the door then find someone who can get in the door for you. You have to form your own opinions and build your own system that works for you.

Michael: Did you buy out another business this way?

Christian: I am in the process of working with another firm that. It's actually is a high end consulting firm that does consulting for enterprise clients of Fortune 2000 type companies. And they specialize in a very specific niche of strategic planning for technology, which has become a bit of an interest with me. it's a business that has been around for many years they were very successful at one point and they kind of whittled away. So I am in the process of looking at all the assets that this organization has that they really don't tell the market about. So doing some testing and learning in the process about that, we're going through the early stages of seeing can we do this, can we actually find a way to make this scale to the level, level of intellectual property and knowledge this organization has mind boggling, but their not marketers and when the market was really hot they were really hot, but their not anymore, their quality of their knowledge is.

Michael: You're definitely a hustler. What did your dad do, was your dad a hustler?

Christian: He was an entrepreneur our family is from Chile and my dad owned a series of business, and then of course if you understand what happened to Latin America and Chile in particular in 1975-76 basically you lost everything. As refugees we came to Canada, I was very young at the time, no language skills no knowledge of English.

Michael: How old were you when you came to Canada?

Christian: I would have been two years old background he was, you know he taught at a University there as well part time, that was of course was not valid in North America they don't recognize necessarily your education level when you come from a third world country. So, he had to really sit back and find ways to generate money. And a couple of things that he was very good at, was one that he never believed in getting in debt, which I think was a great lesson. So, we lived very much a cash life. So weren't, we never were rich or wealthy. We always had more money, our high net worth was more than anybody else that we knew because everybody else was in so much with mortgages and so on. He always found creative ways to be able to buy things and so on that really required little cash outlay. And then of course they operated a small business, a service business, home cleaning. Then he began to specialize in cleaning airplanes, very

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much a service business but they found ways to insure it was profitable and they were responsible in the way that the business was managed and always encouraged us to be entrepreneurial we didn't get allowance. So if we wanted to make money you had to, or wanted money you had to find a way to make it yourself.

Michael: So when you were younger as a kid were you hustling greeting cards?

Christian: I loved selling stuff in retrospect, I was the guy that carried extra pencils at school. I would teach myself a sport of some nature, and then I would do it in school and I would say, "Hey you know I learned it better I will teach you some more." So I have always been an avid learner I just love learning with anything, give me a chance to learn something and I'm interested but then I want to go apply it, I want to go do it.

Michael: Oh yeah

Christian: If I can actually do something with it and not just be, book smart.

Michael: Right

Christian: And it was kind of fun that way, but sometimes I just want to sit back and say ok I really need to read or buy another one I said, I was laughing this week because I got a whole bunch of packets in at the same time.

Michael: Yeah

Christian: Of all these programs that I keep buying.

Michael: Yeah

Christian: And I get through them I took a speed reading course probably the best investment I made but it's at the University of Calgary here they have a speed reading course.

Michael: Was it really helpful?

Christian: Yeah, I think of things that people are going to ever learn stuff, the best thing that you can learn are speed-reading and typing. If you do those two things, you can read almost anything and you can send information to almost anybody. I am obsessed with efficiency. I love productivity, you know how high is high, to go from how much money can you make per hour to how much can you actually accomplish from a tangible thing, and as I started breaking things down as I started getting better at time management, I started getting better at things I did, I started looking at

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more of the granular details, or the functional tasks going back to what I learned from Andersen Consulting. And what is the actual functional task, how do you make that better, and I was looking at myself going you know what, “I type a lot, I spend a lot of time at the computer, how much better, how much faster can I be? How many e-mails can I go through in an hour, if I can type twice as fast?” But I made a determination you know, I took typing classes, and I bought typing software and I have administrative assistant and a personal assistant and I could out type both of them. And because I made it a mission to be able to very effective at it.

Michael: Yeah.

Christian: So I also have along the way, I think, one fortunate thing I have also had a lot of the software companies I worked for as a part of the deal I did I get to used their software perpetually. Deal for the software and very low maintenance fees, so I have been able to automate and systematize and buy, or get access to great products that can really make life easy, with unified messaging, listen to your e-mails via calling into a phone or listen to your voice message via e-mail collaboration tools so that you can work with people remotely, web based tools so on and so forth.

Michael: I see what you get as far as being a generalist consultant.

Christian: So I think there is two things that I would do. If I was in a job right now and I was fortunate enough to come across information, like what you’re presenting, I think the program is very valuable. I would take that program and I would try to apply it to the job that I am doing now. Particularly if I am in a sales role, whatever I was selling, whether I was selling carpets, whether I was software, whether I was selling bathtubs, I don’t care what it is, but find a way to ensure that I got some practical, or have some practical application of it, it might take me six months it might take me a year. In any case all it is going to do is make you better at the job that you are doing. But then you’re going to learn some real practices, you’re going to go through the pain of actually implementing it, then you’re going to through the pain of learning it, you are going through that process.

I think one thing that really blew me away and over the past two years, I have gone and cleaned up some messes that some people who called themselves marketing consultants because they took the three-day course had done for clients who had spent money and say, “Now what? I threw this money and I don’t have anything to show for it and I still meet the same results.” And I think people should be responsible and humble enough, you have to realize it that you got to learn it first.

Guys that are doing it, looking Jay Abraham and you're looking at any of these other guys, the amount of stuff they had read, the amount of people they have communicated with, the amount of people they have exposed themselves to learn and find their best practices is astonishing. Hundreds of years of information you know you look at redeeming at one of the top process re-engineered guys in the world you then read stuff from Clay Hopkins, and like you've got that site up or things like that. I mean you don't learn by osmosis overnight, so you take somebody's program, you hear somebody's for a day or two to have that expectation you're going to go out and solve somebody's business, unless you've got lots of experience in consulting in the past, or you've got analyst experience and so on. You really should be smart about it, and take the first step to see how it works for you first, if you're in a job already great, use it that way or can you put things together that allow you to practice this at low risk with your sister's business or whatever the case maybe with dry cleaners down the street till you learn it. Because once you learn it, I think the principles you can apply to anything I mean.

I have done work for client's software companies that are hundred, two hundred, three hundred million dollars a year in sales, and I have done work for companies that almost have no software sales and example of a software industry that I worked in. The principles have all been pretty much the same, but had I dared go after a client; you know who wants to sell 30 million dollars next year in an international market. And then I hasn't been through the steps of learning really what it takes, and learning how to task, and then learning how to avoid the mistakes and so on. You're risking your reputation, and you're risking other people's livelihood. You don't really want to do in my opinion.

Michael: Yeah, that's good advice.

Christian: So if I was a guy I would take that program I would learn it would I listen to it 30 times every night instead of watching whatever show you watch, put the tape on try to work with it on, lunch hour sit with it was good until you recite it backwards cold so you know that information. And then of course begin to round out with other information as you see fit, as you learn more you become exposed more you never should really should stop learning. But once you can practice it, if I was the guy selling bathtubs and I put this information in place and I applied it to myself and I started selling more bathtubs than anybody else, then maybe you know what maybe I can help another guy, another company for a fee sell more bathtubs I can go as a consultant and apply it.



But I have got some real life tangible experience, I know what it takes, I understand the customer, I understand the problems, I understand bathtubs are heavy and expensive to ship and it is hard to find a contractor to install them but I know how to work all around those thing I am a bit of an expert and who is to say you couldn't do that in a couple of quadrants in the city were they don't compete against each other anyways. So you might have four clients on the go, I don't just is example. But then you got some experience, and then you can branch out to other companies and so on and so forth.

If you can find something you can replicate within the industry that's probably where your going to make the most money, it is easier to find customers who you will pay. This very very slim chance I could call a software company that fits the profile of companies I can really good work for and not get the deal. Even if they already have an international practice, because I have enough experience I know enough of the pains they are probably going through. I know the market very, very well, I have credibility, I have got references. I've got testimonials. I've got all those good things that you're supposed to put in place anyways but if I wasn't and tried to call a manufacturer of lawn and gas part tried to convince them to expand in China, I might get the deal by just sheer sales ability, but really I am going to be that effective? Am I going to make a lot of money off of it versus if I just went after another software company.

Once you get into smaller business having to focus on smaller market, an area like that you have to be flexible, you have to be able to work for other companies, but you've got some experience started with, you've got some background, you say, "You know what I've done it I was the top sales guy, I was the top guy who sold mundane things like bathtubs, or shoes, or whatever the case may be? And then the second thing that I would recommend is people are have not gone through professional training to find a good trainer in town, go to good training. Every year I make a commitment to go and take consultant sales training for some organization. And yeah I hear about the 90% of the same stuff every year at the end of the day what happens a lot of people - you can sell stuff over the internet, you can sell things, I have seen guys that have been very, very successful at building there business around selling information products and so on and maybe that's the goal of some of the people that take some of these courses, that is not really the business I want. I want to become a 100 million dollar company I don't believe that you're going to become that by selling information products in this day and age still.

Michael: Right.



Christian: Maybe in the future, but I don't think it would work for me at this point, and I still have some information products that I have done or I am working nowhere near sophisticated to the level that I like them to be.

You have to know how to sell, and to sell a big deal, if you want someone to pay you a hundred or two hundred thousand dollars for a year worth the work, you have to be able to sell them on it. You have to understand what the sale cycle looks like, how you build a credibility, what kind of things the buyers are going to be involved in looking at, how to understand their business pains and processes and so on. And if you get really good at selling then you know you can use that marketing to generate all the leads you want. You can use these processes to generate a big database, but at the end of the day, and you have to talk to someone and you have to get them to sign on the dotted line, and you got to give them the reasons why to do it. And of course you have to execute, execution you can sign a lot of deals, but if you don't know how to execute then you're going to be in a lot of trouble.

Michael: When you first started out, you charged very little, you worked your butt off 60 hours. What have you learned over the years as far as pricing your services, how you price it contingency vs. fee, project any advice on that or any lessons you've learned?

Christian: Yeah, I think what I've learned is especially if you begin to understand the market, you begin to really know the ins and outs of the industry if you specialize in it, in the case of the advice that I would give somebody. You should charge more; people respect you more I found that upfront. Sometimes you don't know how much money you leave on the table. I heard a couple of people say that, you don't know you can always lower your price in a negotiation scenario but you can't raise it. When you told someone that you're going to them \$50,000 or a \$100,000 for a year worth the work for them, you can't go back and say oh well it is actually \$300,000, you have to start from a position, but you also have to know the value that is your offer. So if I know and I am fairly confident if you go into an organization and you have some experience and you know what you can do for them, and you know what kind of results you can produce and you're fairly comfortable charging a premium for that as long as you know you know you can deliver. Never get into a situation where you can't deliver, but if I tell a company that I can sell a million dollar worth of their product and I am going to ask them to pay me \$10,000 a month commission of gross, or sales, or total sales for the product that I am working on, and I know I can deliver then no problem.

In many cases I am more than willing to give it 100% guarantee within a 12 month period or 18 month period or two year period I don't produce

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the results that I promised and they at the same time fulfill what I ask them to do they meet the milestones and requirements then I am more than willing to give them their money back if I fail. Over the years I have only had to do that once, but I am also very reasonable about the expectation of what I am going to deliver you can't be an eternal optimist which is unfortunate for a lot of people who like to buy these products to learn. I have seen a lot of guy simply believe that people are willing to give away money, and people aren't you have to produce something for it.

So I think the one thing I have learned is you charge and you charge the top premium dollar you can charge, but you have to provide value. You have to justify value, and you have to show that value very, very early on from the beginning. And you have to act like a consultant. Some people still act like employees their consultants and their far too, "The customer is always right, well if the customer is always right", then why do they need to hire an outside assistant or outside advice. So the next to nothing you think you're doing the wrong thing, you've got to be willing to say you know what, Mr. Customer I don't think that's right and you're paying me to provide you the best advice I can so don't go there. I have seen lots of consultants come in and say, "Oh, yes sir" because they don't want to loose the contract.

Michael: It seems like you offer risk reversal in a lot of the deals that we have talked about, is that something that is pretty consistent with your consulting clients.

Christian: I believe that's one thing, there is a few things that stand out from what I've learned from Jay Abraham stuff and going through the information that he provides. People always assume somebody has to take the risk, and in my case and when you get to a level of proficiency with something and you know what the client has to do to help you get there you should be willing to offer guarantees. It would make it so much easier, I remember the first time, you know I charged a client \$10,000 a month to sell their software. Now it is not uncommon for a software company to pay a sale guy \$10,000 a month as a salaried employee I figured why not charge \$10,000, why not \$15,000 for a year, year and half, two years worth the work. But it made it so much easier for them to say yes without blinking, when you say, "Hey by the way though unlike the sale guy you were looking at hiring or thinking of hiring, this is what I am willing to offer." It became a no brainer decision. You know you make it easy so but I think when you are getting started you may not know what the milestones or requirements are from the client prospective, so be careful alright, so be willing to offer some kind of risk or guarantee.

But at the same time be clear about what the milestone the client has to fulfill as part of the process, and if you don't know what it is, then don't offer it because you might just end up having to eat your shirt in the process. So you know you kind of go and have to test think that is a brilliant concept that people should practice is, learn how to test, learn how to go through you know the fine pick method applied to marketing, in regards you know going through what happens if I do this, what happens if I do this, and let's go to the market and asking them what they think.

Michael: What's the process from the first time the call comes in a potential client? Is it a long meeting over the phone, Q&A that you have systemized or is it just?

Christian: No it is, it really is, the things I want to do, I want to get an understanding of their business, really understand why they picked up the phone, get down to the root. I will go through a series of questions there, what is that they are trying to achieve, why are they trying to achieve it, what have they done in the past, those kinds of things. In the process I also want to begin to do some positioning, I think that's the best sales technique that you could ever do I, whether you're selling software, or you're selling my consulting services or your consulting services, whatever. If you position yourself and do by educating them the customer on the things they really need to be aware of and understand based on the situation they are looking at, you really begin to set up a relationship of trust.

So, it is not about selling. If you were to call me, you owned a software company and you know you really recognize you spent a lot of money trying to going international and it hasn't been working. You've got a few guys that are responsible for it, and it is just not happening or you don't have anybody doing it. I am going to be wondering, "What have you done? Why have you done it? What kind of relationships do you have? What kind of distribution channel do you have? How stable is your software?" and I am going to get into some of the technical details of it, "Whose your ideal customer? Why should I buy products from you rather than company B?", and I go through a series of questions that help me really nail down. One is this guy a good fit, does this guy have an emotional need to move this board or is just nice to have, or need to have. And it could be because the board has told him that he has to do, it could be that he realizes that the American market might not have the stability for his product, or he really wants to grow his business and their tapping out some of the markets they know how to do, whatever the case may be. Or they simply might be getting a lot of requests for international and they might get burnt, they afraid their technology is going to be stolen by somebody else who just reverse engineers it, and it becomes some part in Asia or wherever.

Michael: I think that's great advice, and you have mentioned it several times is really getting to the core reason, why the hell are they calling the real reason and if you could find that out that is going to give you a good idea if you should be working with them or not.

Christian: Yeah and it really, I see a lot of proposals I help companies do a lot of proposals in the software industry for the sale of the purchase and when you find the real drivers you realize at the end of the end what this guy is trying to do when he buys your software or buys your services or whatever the case maybe. He wants to get a promotion and he wants to make his company look good whatever the case maybe. And you know it might not go right out and say it and you can address it in your proposal, when I do consulting work and now dealing with the VP of sales or the CEO of business or the founder of companies and the part of my proposals says "And the objective of being able to get you to the 50% market international sales for your total business is because you want to be able to sell this company to a large organization" then it matters to him, he doesn't care what the sales are at the end of the day.

Michael: Yeah

Christian: He really doesn't but he knows that once the sales he gets this and that is a real value and interest to him.

Michael: I really appreciate your time.

Christian: No problem Mike it was good chatting with you as well.

*I hope you enjoyed this interview with Christian Cares. We covered a lot of material in this recording, and I would advise you to listen to it over and over and over again. Print the transcripts, read them, underline them, mark them up. Take this audio recording and download it from the site, and put it on to a CD-ROM and put it in your car, transfer it to audio tape because Christian has done it and he gives you a lot of advice that I hope can save you frustration, time and effort. So, thanks for listening and we'll continue to have more great content for you, the HMA Consultant. Enjoy.*