

2010 - 2015
“Better Your Best”
Contest Winner Essays



www.technologymarketingtoolkit.com
www.robinsbigseminar.com

Technology Marketing Toolkit, Inc.

2016 Marketing and Money-Making Boot Camp

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USA

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2010 “Better Your Best” Contest Essay



Victoria Myers Myers Network Solutions

Revenues Up 10%
Monthly MRR Up To \$31,698

"We not only survived 2009, but we grew an additional 10%, added to our total number of clients (54) and increased monthly MRR to \$31,698."

Myers Network Solutions Better our Best Contest Essay

2009 will be a year to remember . . .

We had ended 2008 with a bang . . . our total sales way up (\$442,555.), increased number of clients (41), greater monthly managed services income (\$24,074) for the 2008 year was all up, up, up and then year 2009 arrived.

Let us first start out by staying, that without the marketing engine created using Robin's materials, I don't know if we'd be in business today.

In 2009, we lost 7 managed service clients - closed their doors or moved out of the area. The Bay Area, along with the country, suffered through a very challenging 2009 economic year. Officially the unemployment rate is 12.5%, but unofficially (full-time employees working part-time, others taking early Social Security retirement or some who just fell off the unemployment rolls after 73 weeks) the local unemployment rate was probably closer to 19%, even today.

But with Robin's TMT materials, in 2009 we not only survived but grew an additional 10% in Gross Sales (\$495,524), added to our total number of clients (54) and increased our monthly managed services income to \$31,698.

We accomplished this in 2009, by re-doubling our marketing efforts in the following ways and see binders:

- Monthly print campaigns to open/qualified leads.
- Quarterly print campaigns to current clients.
- Canvassing by an intern to local business parks using print campaign materials. This allowed us to identify businesses still open and obtain the name of the IT decision maker. We picked up additional clients who had IT issues or who had recently lost their IT support company.
- Quarterly Lunch & Learns - presentations often created by GL members.
- Monthly mailing of Bits & Bytes print newsletters to clients/prospects

- Monthly mailing of Bits & Bytes email newsletters to all open/qualified leads
- Monthly mailing of email Tech Tip postcards to all open/qualified leads.
- Participated in business expos, trade shows and community outreaches.
- Wrote monthly IT articles for a local Chamber newsletter.
- Improved our Google ranking and SEO optimization – through Robin’s TMT dashboard project.
- In December committed to developing our social media sites – offered by a GL member.
- Nailed down a commitment with a large non-profit association (over 400 members) for a every other month series of Brown Bag Lunch IT Technology seminars.
- Began our first joint venture with a software company.
- Other one-time marketing projects as seen in the binders.
- Hired New Customers Now, recommended by GL member, an outsourced appointment setter - to provide 3 qualified leads per week.
- Joined Gary Pica’s TruMethods (through attending Boot Camp) to tighten our offering, understand industry-wide sales metrics and began to track sales results.

Attendance at the quarterly GL meetings was invaluable. . Fantastic speakers, very relevant Hot Seat topics, help to focus us on our business plans and created additional marketing campaigns.

Considering the 2009 year economy, we’re pleased with our 2009 results.

We learned from our mistakes – \$6,000 for a booth at a large manufacturing trade show was probably not worth it. The jury is out because we did create relationships with 3 possible JV partners and one partner has already recommended us to a prospect that we will close in the next week or so. We’ll see . .

We’ve realized after not closing one of 15 sales appointments that we need to improve our sales closing process. We put together our “shock & awe” package – thanks Robin, listened to a number of Robin’s teleseminars on sales process, attended Randy Hall’s workshop on his fantastic Total-Care

managed services binder, signed up for Martin Howie's seminar and we're reading a number of books on sales presentations, The Wedge, etc.

We've realized this year that building a company is a process . . . you build the service process and then realize you need a marketing engine. Just then you realize your sales process is lacking. And you know from listening to the GL group that shortly we need to improve our employee compensation plan.

Just as we're building our business by process, we've use those new process skills to build in time for a personal life - time with family/friends - time spent on meaningful projects - in our case - charitable groups - time to grow personally.

We expect to continue to build and improve the business processes of MNS and to grow 20-30% every year for the next several years. THANKS ROBIN!

2011 “Better Your Best” Contest Essay



Tom Malesic
EZSolution

Net Profit Up 527%

MRR Up 184%

Gross Sales Up 22%

“Marketing isn’t just about the individual campaigns. It’s a collective marketing effort that returns the big results. Robin, you’ve given me opportunities to learn not only about marketing, but about business!”

EZSolution BYB Contest Essay

“Robin, It Had To Be You.”

It is a rare occasion when I read a tech oriented email newsletter. But it was fate that day when I read your article. I wholeheartedly believe in the law of attraction - that what you think about will appear in your life. Thank you for appearing.

I don't have a rags to riches story to tell you. My story is a journey of marketing discovery and just plain old tenacity. I started my business in 1997. We have increased our gross revenues every year.

Why was I unknowingly looking for you?

In 2006, I bought an IT business owned by my friend Jeff Weaver. It was a nice addition to my web development business. I was referring my clients to Jeff anyway. Why not buy his company? Unfortunately, his business had no sales process. I needed a way to generate sales leads for Jeff. Your “done for you” marketing was just what I was looking for.

What I didn't know at the time was how you and your Technology Marketing Tool Kit would forever change how I thought about marketing and my business.

In November 2008, we bought the Tool Kit. In February 2009, I attended your implementation seminar in Washington DC. I almost didn't go because I would have had to (get this) pay for a hotel room the night before the event. I wasn't much of a traveler. I felt more empowered that day than I had in years. Robin, you sold me on 3 concepts that day.

1. Attend the 2009 Boot Camp
2. Send a monthly newsletter
3. Write a book

We got started immediately and executed all three things. In April 2009, we attended your Boot Camp. Wow! What an amazing experience. We immediately joined the Producers Club. This has been the best business investment I have ever made.

In 2009, we had been a member for 8 months and we had some basics under our belt. Coming into 2010, I was feeling good.

Our next step was to create marketing campaigns and sales efforts in each profit center: Web, SEO and IT.

Robin, you introduced me to a new concept, Monthly Recurring Revenue (MRR). It has been my focus all year and has changed my business. That's all I think about anymore. Here are some big picture MRR comparison numbers.

Total Revenue of MRR	2009	2010	Qty Change	% Change
Hosting	\$ 9,522	\$ 11,137	\$1,615	17%
SEO	\$ 2,817	\$ 23,911	\$21,094	749%
Facebook		\$ 1,861	\$1,861	1861%
MS (includes BDR)	\$ 6,984	\$ 17,936	\$10,952	157%
Totals	\$ 19,323	\$ 54,845	\$35,522	184%

In 2010, I added \$35,522 per month to MRR. This means that in 2011, if I don't grow or shrink I will do **\$658,140** in Annual Recurring Revenue. **This is amazing.**

So let's get to the details of how I shifted my business and implemented a TON of marketing campaigns and strategies. We implemented 130 marketing campaigns.

My IT service manager/idea man (Rich Crockett) had been a key component in getting all the marketing activities implemented. As 2010 progressed, I realized that if we really wanted to do this right that we would need a full-time person dedicated just to marketing. Rich was the perfect one to fill this role. In July, he took over marketing full time. I then promoted one of my techs to service manager. It was a big risk, but it paid off!

The first thing we did was expand our marketing plan. Rich created our Marketing Wall. This is an 7'x8' cork board that groups our marketing activities. The wall is grouped into 5 categories: Permanent, Current, In Development, Completed, and Future Activities. Every day Rich and I meet for 10 minutes to review the marketing plan for that day, the week and the month.

Here are some of the campaigns that we implemented and our results. I hope you are sitting down.

Monthly Newsletter

The first marketing campaign was starting my monthly newsletter. We created our own template, but we followed your advice, Robin, on the newsletter's content. Our newsletter is mailed out on the 1st of the month. In 2010, we mailed out 12 issues to a mailing list that has grown to over 1,100 names each month. The newsletters are printed in black and white, folded and put in an EZSolution business envelope. To see all our newsletters go to <http://www.ezsolution.com/web/newsletter.asp>.

My Book

My next marketing activity was to write a book. It is entitled, "What Your Web Developer Never Tells You." I wasted no time on implementing this idea, and within 90 days of hearing you say, "Write a Book!" I had my book published and in my hands.

This book has single-handedly changed my conversation with prospects. They no longer meet with me to figure out IF I can help them. They now meet with me to find out HOW I will help them. They are no longer interviewing me like a salesperson; they are treating me as an EXPERT in website development and internet marketing.

Our Referral Program

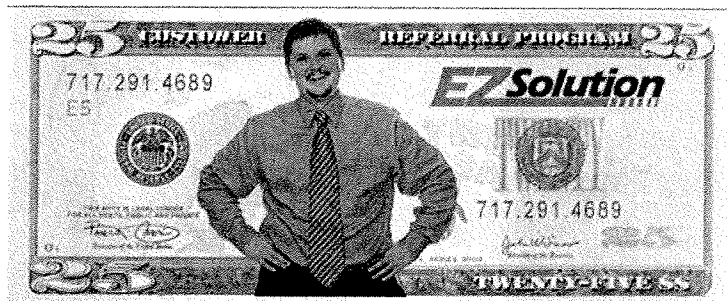
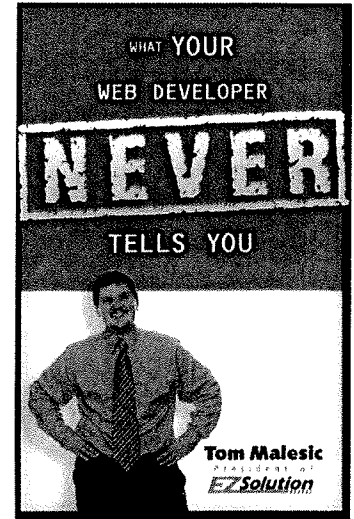
This is a HUGE success. Robin, I heard you once say that, "If everyone is doing it one way, it's probably not the best way." I feel that this statement applies so perfectly to how I was handling my referral marketing strategy. I have always received referrals, as I'm sure all your members do. I would send handwritten thank you cards, small personal gifts, and gift certificates. You know, all the standard stuff.

I decided that I would make a real commitment to turn referrals into a strategy and a campaign, and not just a haphazard lead source. Everything I have ever read or heard says, "Don't pay for referrals; it is insulting." But in the Tool Kit, you have a section on referrals that talks about compensating people for giving referrals—and so far my personal experience has been 100% aligned with your advice. I combined several of the items that you recommended, which includes:

1. Create a reward for the referral regardless of the outcome (I think this is huge)
2. Pay a fee when we make the sale
3. Constantly promote it to your clients
4. Hold a referral contest

So here's how I explain my referral program to my clients: I will pay you \$25 for any referral that I get an appointment with. If your friend becomes a client, I will pay you an additional \$50. I will also give your friend \$100 off our services. This creates a 3-way WIN. You made \$75, your friend saved \$100 and I got a new client. Now, here's how I promoted it:

1. \$25 EZSolution Dollar Bill handout
2. Our monthly newsletter
3. Video emails
4. I explain it in every sales presentation
5. I explain it with every sales contract



As an excuse to talk more about my referral program, we held a contest. We gave away a 50" HD TV to the person who gave us the most referrals from January through April 2010. During that time, we received 57 referrals, which converted into 19 sales. That equaled \$156,450 in sales!

I really feel the cash reward for the lead makes all the difference. People get pretty excited when they get an unexpected check in the mail. In some cases, I'm sending a check to an employee and not the owner. I always call the owner and make sure that it's OK. They are always thrilled to have me send their employee the check. I have actually had a case where the person who made the referral didn't want to give me her mailing address so that I could send the check. Well, of course I found her address through another source. She was thrilled to get the check.

Robin, I couldn't be more excited to have truly found a way to make referrals into an actual campaign. I have sent my Illustrator files to well over 200 members. If any other member would like the files so that they can make their own referral dollar bills, I will happily email them the files. I can be reached at tom@ezsolution.com.

Weekly Video Tips

Every Tuesday we email an educational direct marketing video tip to our mailing list. I get great feedback from clients and prospects that they love the video tips.

<http://www.ezsolution.com/web/tip-of-the-week.asp>. I closed 4 Facebook deals as a result of the Facebook video emails. This added \$1,200 per month or \$14,400 per year of revenue.

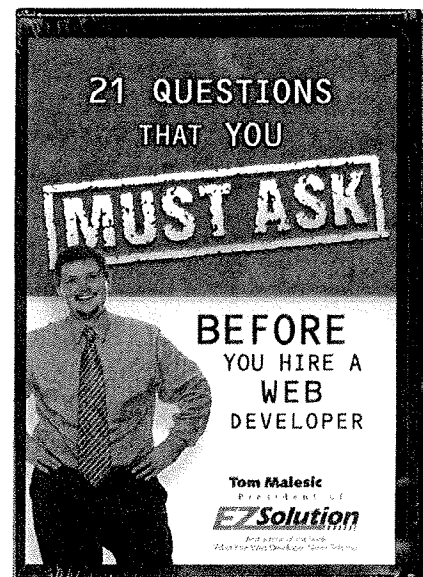
DVD

At one of the Producers Club meetings you passed out an example of an audio CD by Nate from ThinkTech. A big light bulb went off in my head. I'm not sure, but I might have even jumped out of my seat over this idea.

I had just recently shot 21 videos that I added to my website called, 21 Questions that You MUST ASK Before You Hire a Web Developer. I was using this as my free report.

I knew I had the content already done for this project. The first thing I did when I got back to the office was call my video guy to have him prep the files. \$1,500 and 30 days later I had 1,000 DVDs in my hands.

The DVD builds on the book. They go hand in hand.



Presentations

During the spring of 2010, I made three presentations. Two of the presentations were made for clients' dealer events. These presentations were to help our clients' dealers get a better understanding of what they could accomplish by improving their website.

The third presentation was for Lancaster Newspapers, the daily paper in our area. I was the guest speaker for their seminars promoting their online marketing solutions. The ads they ran made it look as if the seminars were mine, not the newspapers. I spoke at three of these events.

As a result of this relationship, in January 2011, I signed a contract to be their SEO vendor. I have trained five members of their sales team to sell our SEO service. This never would have been possible without all the marketing and branding that we did this year. The book and DVD were big factors.

Partner (JV) Referrals

To a very small degree I had been working on Referral Partner/JV relationships for years. But after this year I have a much better understanding of how to structure the relationship and find partners. Thanks to you, Robin, we currently have 30 partners and 21 of these partners had referred business by the end of 2010. We received 37 leads and closed 14 sales for \$72,550. This is a Monthly MRR of \$1,345 and an Annual MRR of \$16,140.

Other Marketing Campaigns We Completed:

- Facebook Campaigns
- Open House – Client/Prospect/Vendor Event
- BDR Cross Sell
- Website
- SEO
- Canvassing
- Bad Date
- Upsell IT Clients to Managed Services
- Comcast
- Yellow Pages
- Vehicle Wraps (4)
- Video Testimonials
- Client Gifts
- Inside and Outside Sales Staff



I was going full steam ahead. Then you guessed it. A HUGE problem occurred. In the first week in November my friend (whose IT business I bought) resigned. Two weeks later my lead tech

resigned. That left me with 1 tech and a service manager. To make matters worse, I had just hired an inside sales guy to set appointments for Managed Services.

Now what? Should I sell the business? After all, I'm not a tech. I can't spec out a server. I never sold a Managed Services deal. My sales focus has been on web, SEO and Facebook.

But, selling is selling. In December, I closed my first 2 appointments within 1 week. One for \$750/mo. and one for \$300/mo. I guess it's not that hard. I hired 2 techs to replace the 2 that I lost.

I feel stronger about my business today than I have in the last 5 years.

In all this marketing frenzy, what I really learned from you was how to be an expert in my market. Marketing isn't just about the individual campaigns. It is the collective marketing efforts that return the big results. It is not enough to have 3 lead generation sources. The more activity the better.

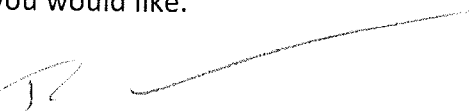
Robin, you have given me opportunities to learn not only about marketing, but about business. I have learned from your guest speakers, created BHAGS, used the daily plan book (Ned Hallowell) and got off my Butt (Sean Stephenson).

Here are My Top 5 Goals for 2011

1. Keep my eye on the MRR (grow it from \$54,845 per month to \$100,000 per month)
2. SEO – 250 clients by Dec 2011 (grow it from \$23,911 per month to \$50,000 per month)
3. Managed Services (grow it from \$17,936 per month to \$48,000 per month)
4. Hire 2 more Staff members, bringing the total to 21 employees
5. Buy the first floor of my office building

There is no doubt I will achieve these goals with the support of you, your staff and my fellow Producers Club members.

Robin, I can't thank you enough for how much you have taught me. I hope that my story can be an inspiration to others to implement your marketing strategies. It is my passion to share what I have learned with other business owners. I know I would be an excellent spokesperson for this reason. I look forward to the opportunity to travel with you and your team on any events that you would like.



Tom Malesic
EZSolution

P.S. I hope you enjoyed the music video. If all else fails, I can always turn to my singing career.

2012 “Better Your Best” Contest Essay



John Motazedi
SNC Squared

Gross Sales Up \$824,047

Net Profit Up 1,444%

Monthly Recurring Revenue Up \$19,418 per month

“We lost our entire building, over 50% of our clients’ buildings were completely destroyed and overnight we lost \$13,000 in recurring monthly revenue as a result of the Joplin Tornado. And yet we never stopped marketing.”

SNC2

2012 “Better Your Best” Contest

ESSAY

“There is no silver bullet.” Robin said this again and again. Eventually I got it. There is no one campaign. There is no one media. There is no one technique that will bring you reliable success. The only thing that is reliable is using lots of different things, over and over again, testing and checking results. If there’s one thing I got from Robin, this is it. And boy is that valuable.

I ended 2010 with net profits up 30%. Not bad, really. But I knew I wasn’t playing full-out. So in January of 2011, I set a goal which was way outside my comfort zone – 52 marketing campaigns in 52 weeks.

I developed a year-long marketing plan. Our biggest challenge - differentiate ourselves from our competitors. Create something different and unique for our clients and deliver services better and faster than anyone in our market.

My marketing initiative was simple - communicate to as many people as possible what we were doing differently, and how and why we were doing it. In my January 2010 accountability group meeting we challenged ourselves to produce 52 campaigns in 52 weeks. This actually became one year-long marketing campaign with over 100 total touches.

For the first half of the year, no matter what we did, we got the same response. (Cue the cricket noises.) People either said all their IT needs were covered or they didn’t know who we were and weren’t willing to give us a chance to show them what we could do. Admittedly, that was discouraging. But a commitment is a commitment. We continued to send out our marketing materials each week and I drove home this message to employees and clients alike. We say what we will do and we do it **period**. We do what is right and we do it better than anyone else, and we never skip, falter or ignore our responsibilities.

Then it happened. On May 22nd at 5:41 pm, the city of Joplin was hit by a tornado, one of the most devastating on record.

- We lost our entire building, and of the 1,000 machines we manage, 467 of them were destroyed, never found or damaged beyond repair.
- Over 50% of our clients’ buildings were completely destroyed or damaged beyond repair.
- 80% of our clients experiencing significant damage were physicians with 350,000 patient records and millions of dollars in accounts receivable not yet billed.
- Overnight, we lost \$13,000 in recurring monthly revenue.

And yet, I remained calm. I wasn't worried about our clients' data. I knew what had to be done and I believed something good could come out of something this bad. We had an opportunity to take a lead in the recovery and show what SNC² really stood for.

We started recovery efforts the very next day and had our clients up and running within 72 hours. We had done the seemingly impossible. The morning after the tornado hit, I contacted our Chamber of Commerce, told them our servers were up and running and offered to help anyone who needed it, whether they were our clients or not. The Chamber immediately put our offer on Facebook and, for days, we dominated the local tech community and marketed our services to everyone who would listen.

The phones never stopped ringing. Many of the calls were from new prospects we had been marketing to since January. They didn't need us then, but they needed us now. They wanted a real IT service company, not the IT company that let them down. Many of these new prospects are now clients with long-term contracts. The new influx of business offset our loss, raised our revenue to an all-time record and increased net profits by 30%.

And these clients love us. They married us and divorced their current provider. In fact it's very much like a marriage. You have to keep dating, bring flowers, tell them you love them and renew your vows every year.

Clearly I attribute the new business to the marketing efforts. But that was only part of the benefits of my participation. Everything else Robin brought to the table was gold. It was learning about best practices and how to manage my business better and about human resources and cost containment and how to write a business plan. Since we began working with Robin three years ago, there hasn't been a meeting, a Boot Camp, a teleseminar, a forum, or a Q&A call that I haven't walked away with something valuable, something that really made a difference for me and for my business.

I remember John Jantsch asking us at Boot Camp last year, "When was the last time somebody surprised and exceeded your expectations?...Create a business that does that...and you won't need to ask for referrals." And Randy Hall when he said "Make sure you do what you say" and Nido Qubain demanding that we "show people value." I took these lessons to heart and implemented them in my business.

The Producers' Club and my Accountability Group impacted me the most. The interactions I had with them and their ideas and support for what I was doing was invaluable. I didn't have to re-invent the wheel. I got direct feedback on campaigns without having to do each one. Where else could I get this kind of hands-on help? We are now raising the bar and planning campaigns along our entire 10 member accountability group. We had great luck with only one company campaigning we should have Astronomical results with all of us driving the message regionally.

1802 W 32nd st suite E
Joplin, Mo. 64804



www.sncsquared.com
Tel 417.622.0933
Fax 417.782.1099

So, did I find that silver bullet, that one marketing campaign in the Toolkit that answered all my prayers? Was it that Worry Doll campaign or the hundreds of letters that went out to promote our Joint Venture Event? No, it wasn't just one campaign or one marketing idea. It was over 100 of them. It was invaluable advice from experts. It was peer support and advice. And it was never, ever quitting. You don't need a silver bullet when you have gold.

Thanks for the gold, Robin.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Motazed', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

John Motazed
CEO

SNC Squared

2013 “Better Your Best” Contest Essay



Jennifer Holmes
MIS Solutions, Inc.

Net Profit Up 2,968%
MRR Up 134%
Gross Sales Up 143%

"Investing in the Producers Club Coaching Program has clearly been the best business and personal investment we have ever made."

January 17, 2013

When the Student Is Ready, An Amazing Transformation Becomes Possible

Dear Robin,

Before finding you, we were isolated like castaways on a deserted island. We didn't know how to get leads, who to ask or where to begin. It's been an amazing journey. To see just how far we've come, let's start with some history:

- **The early years.** In the mid-90s, our first clients came exclusively from referrals. 1999 was a stellar year for MIS Solutions. We sold over \$300,000 in products and services — while Lliam (my business partner/husband) and I both worked full-time jobs elsewhere and I applied to medical school. However, our workload demanded everything we had. We sacrificed on many fronts, financing the business through credit cards and rarely seeing our family.
- **A life-altering decision.** My medical school acceptance letter arrived. Should I pursue my dream of becoming an OB/GYN or become a full-time entrepreneur? Disturbed how insurance companies dictated patient care for profit instead of healthy outcomes, I worried about how imposed limits would impact my focus on quality patient care. I rejected my medical school acceptance and then quit my virologist research job at the Centers for Disease Control in 2000 to become our company's first full-time employee. Lliam stayed as a developer with his employer, using his salary to support the business and hire our first field engineer.
- **Client loss.** Two months later, our main client constituting 90% of our revenue announced they had hired the owner's son, who had been laid off by Microsoft. In crisis mode, we accrued debt. I networked, joined leads clubs and went to every business event I could find, trying to meet people and uncover leads. From 2000 to 2003, I networked, served on boards and relied on referrals to get business. Although we closed most referrals, they were our only lead source but not a reliable one. New leads were sporadic.
- **Loss of funding and referrals.** After 9/11 and the ensuing economic crash, Lliam was laid off from his high-paid developer job. Should he seek full-time employment to continue funding MIS Solutions or should we go for it? At that point, we had two full-time engineers. Our CPA encouraged us to take the risk, helped us secure a line of credit to pay off our credit card debt and provide working capital, and gave us lots of referrals. We grew. In 2003, motherhood ended my networking — and the CPA opened a technical services division so he could keep the leads for himself. Overnight, our main lead source disappeared.
- **Living on the edge.** Because we rarely secured a new lead outside of sporadic referrals, we held onto every client like life depended on it. Some took advantage by paying late or negotiating rock-

bottom rates, and we took what clients dished out. It was painful. We were vulnerable, trapped, and desperate because we never knew when, where or how the next client would arrive.

- **Delegating sales and marketing.** So we hired a sales person. For the next six years, we progressively hired and fired salespeople and business coaches, falsely believing that a salesperson would generate a consistent flow of leads. Delegating didn't work. In 2009, we faced the facts. Our salesperson wasn't generating leads, closing business or even covering costs. We were losing money each month – it was painful. Our strategy had failed — and we had wasted thousands of dollars.
- **When the student is ready, the teacher appears.** Since we had no more cash to pay a salesperson, I finally realized and accepted that I'd have to do sales and marketing myself. I found your Technology Marketing Toolkit online. After listening to the free CD, I was convinced we needed this program, but Lliam was skeptical. It was a lot of money and we were bleeding cash. I convinced him that if we were ever going to learn how to sell and market, we had to do it ourselves. With zero sales experience or training, the idea of becoming a salesperson scared me to death. Selling to very qualified referrals was easy — like taking an order — drastically different from convincing someone who does not know or trust you to buy from you. I had no idea where to begin to generate leads. How do you climb a ladder when you don't even know where the first rung is?

The toolkit was a lot of money for us. We justified it by firing our sales and marketing person, knowing we'd break even in three weeks. I promised Lliam that I would learn how to do this. Thus, a marketing student was born. I bought the Toolkit in February 2009.

- **The catalyst.** I eagerly opened your Toolkit like a child on Christmas morning. After reading the first three chapters, I froze. How was I going to do all of this and continue to work 80-100 hours per week with a 6-year-old and a 3-year-old who never slept? I didn't — I moved through chapters at a snail's pace and didn't do the work. Overwhelmed, I didn't know where to begin. Analysis paralysis nailed me.

Thankfully, you held an implementation session. I attended, hoping to learn how or where to even start. Your energy ignited my flame and I immediately went home determined to launch a Robinized website. (The Pronto Done-for-You Website package was not yet part of the program so it took five months to launch our site.) To stay energized, I consistently read your Marketing Strategy Brief and participated in monthly Q&A calls for Apprentice Members.

- **Let's sell something.** In November 2009, I ordered the Backup Disaster Recovery Kit and studied your implementation recording where you closed from the front of the room. I told Lliam the whole purpose of seminars was to sell something. Prior to you, we held an annual Tech Exchange event to educate clients on how to prepare their businesses for technology industry changes, but we never even considered selling. We had a false belief that if we positioned ourselves as experts, the sales would come. But that didn't happen. I learned from Robin's coaching that our belief system was so

wrong. Sales don't just show up. You have to work systematically to get them. So I told Liam that our annual Tech Exchange was the perfect venue – we had to sell. Brainstorming, we decided to sell managed firewalls.

In January 2010, we held a two-hour Tech Exchange and sold one-third of the room, walking away with \$39,480 in net new sales. Going from never selling from the front of the room to \$39,480, I was forever changed. This selling stuff and solving real problems was fun, exciting and tapped my passion for servanthood and the stage. I was hooked and ready to do some more selling. For the first time in my life, I was actually excited about the possibility of selling! I immediately wrote to Robin to share how she had changed our course — transformed me from somebody who hated sales to a sales rock star. Our story was featured as The Marketing Genius of the Month in your April 2010 Marketing Strategy Brief. (See the campaigns and lessons learned in Appendix A.)

- **Antidote to not marketing consistently, with no consequences.** Now I was on fire to make this new-found success systematic. If you have a steady flow of new leads and can sell effectively, you have options and ultimate freedom. Then I received your invitation to the 2010 Sales & Marketing Boot Camp and Producers Club Coaching Program. It was over \$1,000 a month — a huge commitment for us. I drooled over the sales letter and Producers Club benefits. Liam pointed out, “You haven’t implemented 5% of what you already have. How is more ‘stuff’ going to help?”

I knew we needed the accountability the Producers Club Coaching Program required. Skeptical, Liam agreed we should invest the money. The event was amazing. I was introduced into an accountability group thanks to Doug Johnson. That was another turning point: We had to make weekly and monthly commitments and goals. It stressed me out, but it was the push I needed to get results and begin building lead generation systems. I started tracking my numbers, doing a print newsletter and running campaigns including a referral program. I set a Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG) and set my sight on securing \$100K in monthly recurring revenue (MRR). Through the Pitbulls Accountability Group, I connected with Debi Bush and began working one-on-one with her to get things done. No excuses.

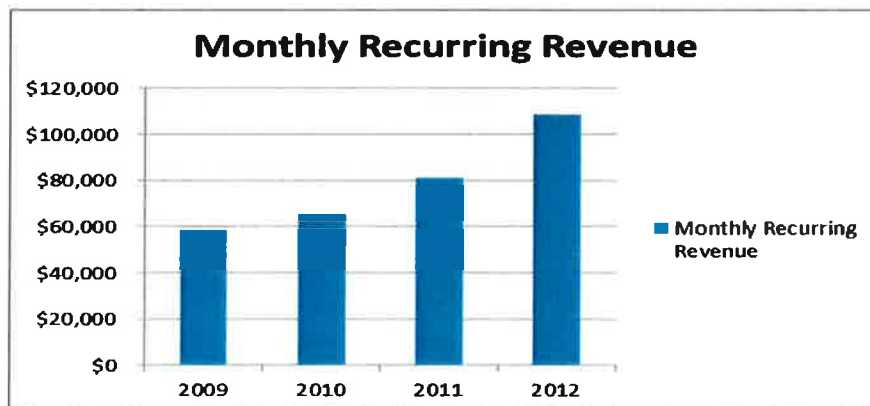
- **Thirsty like a sponge.** In July 2010, I attended my first Producers Club meeting. I met amazing people who were getting new leads and closing MRR consistently each month. I modeled the rock stars and implemented many of their great ideas, as well as asked Marketing Geniuses of the Month lots of questions to learn their routines, activities and strategies.
- **Total focus on marketing and sales.** At my first Producers Club meeting, Tom Malesic revealed his secret weapon: his marketing manager – Rich Crockett. I decided I needed my own secret weapon — I had to fire myself from everything except sales and marketing. In September, I looked for a part-time marketing person to help implement the strategies I was learning. A good friend, Shannon Smith, called saying she was looking for a full-time position. But we didn’t have funds for a full-time marketing manager — even part-time would have been a stretch! I proposed to Liam that we cash

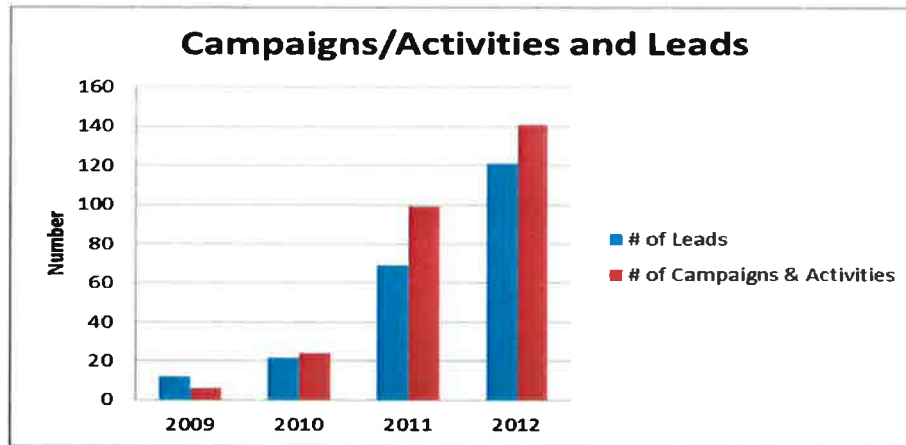
out our last retirement account, which would cover six months' marketing salary. We had to make significant traction in six months or less because there were no more reserves. (We had been taking withdrawals the last few years to make ends meet and there was no more money.) We were literally at the bottom. Talk about pressure. If I failed, not only would I have blown our remaining retirement funds, but also I'd have to lay off my dear friend who was supporting her family. However, I was convinced that if you do the Robin work, you will get results. Failure was not an option.

I was totally transparent with Shannon. I told her that this was a huge risk, but I had faith. Although she had other great job offers with guaranteed stability and our offer was risky, somehow she felt she was supposed to be with us. I was shocked that she accepted. Now we had our secret weapon. Rich Crockett mentored Shannon and me. His help was invaluable. Rich encouraged us to implement a systematic referral program. He and Tom graciously shared their recipe and Tom's "referral dollar" template. In late 2010, we added \$3,169 in net new MRR and \$5,818 MRR in 2011 – thanks to this referral program. I'm so grateful for both Tom and Rich's referral program and their encouragement to use it.

Shannon and I began marketing like crazy people — it was messy. We screwed up, but learned. We did several campaigns, learning, applying our lessons and trying again. It worked. Our MRR increased from \$63,906 in September 2010 to \$69,429 in March 2011. I was counting my lucky stars because this meant we did it and we could afford to keep Shannon. Our numbers tell more of the story:

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Monthly Recurring Revenue	\$58,375	\$65,126	\$81,098	\$108,659
# of Leads	12	22	69	121
# of Campaigns/Activities	6	24	99	141





In 2012, we added a net new \$27,561 in MRR. Since our agreements are for three years, this increase meant an unbelievable \$992,196 in new revenue over the next three years and we broke through the \$100,000 MRR barrier. **We sold nearly one million dollars in new MRR last year — unbelievable!** If you would have told me that number was possible three years ago, I could not even have imagined it. Profits were up too. **From 2011 to 2012, our MRR increased by 134%, gross sales were up by 143% and net profit increased by 2,968%.**

So how did we consistently generate new leads every month? Not with one magic campaign but with many activities per your advice, sales practice, doing the exercises in the Toolkit, Managed Services Blueprint and participating in the Producers Club program. In short, we committed to an activity or campaign, implemented, documented, debriefed, noted the lessons learned and tried again.

Highest-yield MRR and ROI Campaigns and Activities

We implemented 99 marketing activities and campaigns in 2011 and 141 in 2012. In 2012, the following campaigns and activities provided our highest yield in net new MRR and Return on Investment (ROI):

- **Section 179 followed by the Producers Club Done-for-You Book.** We used your Section 179 campaign (direct mail and email) in November 2011. Although no prospects opted in, 20 on the list were opening emails as tracked by Vertical Response. In late December, we mailed them our new book entitled “21 Questions You Must Ask Before You Hire an IT Consultant.” Two called for an appointment, and we closed one in January for \$4,322 MRR and another in February for \$4,975 MRR. In late February, a third called and we closed another \$2,391 MRR. Combined, these three wins total \$11,688 MRR and \$420,768 over the life of the agreements. These three — in one quarter alone — accounted for almost as much as the entire previous year (\$15,972). We were now enjoying the snowball effect of our marketing efforts that began in 2009. New to marketing, it was hard to get started. However, combined consistency and persistence yielded great returns. Activities and campaigns work in a synergistic way to produce some pretty amazing results.

- **Cloud Computing Strategy and Sales.** Using your Cloud Blueprint, we implemented our own cloud platform. We had been talking about cloud computing in our monthly newsletter since 2010. (This highlights the importance of a monthly newsletter.) In June 2012, we held your standard cloud computing webinar, which started active conversations with existing clients.

In July, we sold a new prospect our cloud services for \$1,470 MRR. In fourth quarter 2012, we sold three existing clients cloud services for a total of \$8,798 MRR. The newsletter and webinar started positioning MIS Solutions as the first company to call when considering cloud computing. Had we not been positioned to sell cloud services, these clients would have left — taking \$6,149 existing MRR with them. Altogether, the four cloud MRR wins represent \$369,648 over the life of their agreements. We anticipate transitioning another two clients in first quarter of 2013.

- **Google Adwords Program.** We started the Adwords Beta Program in June 2012. That year it generated 23 leads, three new clients and we closed \$8,611 in new MRR, which is \$309,996 over the life of the contracts. As of January 2013, we closed another \$2,048 MRR and we have a preliminary “yes” on another deal for \$3,673 MRR. Because we’re in a large market, this strategy has been one of our most effective to date. A big thank you goes to Tim Conkle and Robin Robins for creating this pilot beta program. I also appreciate the following individuals of the Genius League for being guinea pigs on the beta program: Tim Shea, Tom Malesic, Sitima Fowler, John Motazed, and Linda Lynch. In 2012, I spent \$14,027 on Google Adwords to sell \$309,996. This is an amazing 22 times ROI! This program alone accounted for 30% of our net new MRR in 2012.
- **Client Upsell Focus and Strategy.** We followed your advice to run at least one client promotion quarterly, keep a record of services not yet sold to current clients and target them to buy more services. This is low-hanging fruit. In July, we hired an account manager and began systematically talking with clients outside of service calls. Our account manager started calling clients each month to talk about how we could help, how business was, etc. (relationship building). We also ran promotions in our newsletter for managed firewalls, phones systems, cloud services, two-factor authentication, secure passwords and our backup disaster recovery services. We upsold eight existing clients, for a total of \$6,802 in MRR — \$244,872 over the life of the contracts.

Several activities contributed to this success: monthly print newsletters, monthly e-newsletters, webinars, email marketing, ask campaigns, account management calls, business technology reviews for clients, email hardware promotions, and a laser focus on looking for opportunities within our client base for services not yet purchased. We developed an ascension path for our client base. If they are not using all of our services, we consistently engage them in conversations and when trigger events occur, we consultatively sell to get more services sold. Our biggest win was selling managed firewalls/UTMs (unified threat management) that provide automatic fail-over for Internet connectivity, content filtering, traffic shaping and detailed reporting on surfing activity.

- **Seminars.** Beginning in January 2010, we began selling at our annual client Tech Exchange event and sold \$39,480 in a two-hour event. Eager to develop my seminar selling skills, I participated in your two-day speaker training held in July 2011. This fantastic event helped me put work into action for our next Tech Exchange. In 2011, we marketed to 483 folks, had 40 RSPVs and 30 in attendance. We scheduled 12 technology business reviews, sold seven upgrades for our Backup Disaster Recovery (BDR) Service, one BDR trial, positioned ourselves as experts on cloud computing, social media and marketing, and obtained four video testimonials. Three of the 12 technology review meetings generated \$8,000 in project revenue, \$45,400 in product sales and \$4,541 MRR — for a grand total of \$216,876 over the life of the contracts. We spent \$7,200 for 30 times ROI. When I shared the details of this event at the 2011 October Producers Club meeting, I competed and won the first-ever Golden Cone Award.

In 2012, we focused on a soft consultative sell for our cloud services (I could have sold the room but wasn't ready as we were still beta on our cloud services) and provided insight into industry changes that most impacted business. Distilling what's going on in the industry for clients grows their trust in you, deepens your relationship, and breeds brand loyalty and advocacy. Our topics were cloud computing, wikis, password management, phone systems and email marketing. This event contributed to our cloud conversions of existing clients. The results were one phone system deal for \$14,343 and four clients thanking us for all we do, which translated into contract renewals of \$9,851 MRR or \$354,636 over the life of the agreements. This event contributed to our 97% renewal rate for contract clients in 2012. Our seminar track record clearly demonstrates that seminars are a powerful strategy for selling, trust building, generating leads and referrals, and client retention.

- **Shock and Awe Box + Sales Process.** Leads don't automatically convert to paying customers. In fact, securing a lead is only half the battle. Once you secure a new lead, you must successfully close it. A proven sales process encompassing differentiating techniques, minimal risk for the prospect, credibility, professionalism, and fun is required to convert your leads into good, paying customers. We used your Slippery Slope Sales Program, Sessions 3 & 4 from the Managed Services Blueprint and information gained from various Producers Club meeting sales trainers (Gary Pica, Randy Schwantz, Tom Hopkins, Robert Stevenson, and Steve Miller). These helped us standardize our sales process and develop our closing tools, including our Shock and Awe Box, our "17 Reasons Why You Want To Outsource Your Computer Support to MIS Solutions" booklet, "12 Reasons We Are Better" document (directly from the Blueprint) and Apple Basket Technique. In 2012, our sales process enabled us to **CLOSE** new prospects totaling \$20,299 in MRR or \$730,764 over the life of the agreements. I'm not sure we would have successfully closed these leads had I not participated in the 12-week implementation session led by Jeff Johnson in December 2011.
- **Monthly Print Newsletter.** To build relationships with clients and prospects beyond just services, we have consistently mailed out a printed Tech Times newsletter to our list of 367 clients and serious prospects since May 2010. Initially, we used lumpy mail (Legos) to launch our print newsletter and

continue to use lumpy items 3 or 4 times per year to engage readers, have fun and generate demand.

Clients and prospects tell us our content is informative, educational and fun. In fact, when debriefing a prospect-turned-client (a gain of \$4,095 MRR in 2012), he stated that our newsletter had helped him BEFORE he was a customer. He said it was good content, sparked ideas and illustrated we were the real meal deal. Photos and stories of our kids and community involvement snag the biggest readership. Many clients feel connected to us and, therefore, share on a more personal level, which leads to referrals. Although it's difficult to show a specific ROI, our print newsletter generates active client engagement and deepens our relationship — resulting in 18 referrals in 2011, and 20 referrals and eight leads in 2012.

Winning Marketing Activities and Campaigns

Our success stems from many different marketing activities and campaigns — not a single silver bullet. Below is a list of additional activities we used to get results. (See Appendix B for a complete list and calendar of activities used in 2012.)

- Monthly print newsletter and email newsletter
- Referral campaigns: cruise contest, iPad contest, valentines, free turkey/ham offer
- TMTK's Done-for-You Tech Tip Postcards and email teasers (with opt-in landing page)
- Online marketing including search engine optimization (SEO), Google Adwords PPC, website video enhancements, home page redesign, Robinized Done-for-You Website
- Direct Mail: three-step backup disaster recovery (BDR), Best of Gwinnett Winners BDR campaign, Whale Campaign with books mailed bi-monthly
- Nibblers (We mailed our Done-for-You Book to those who were active online but didn't call.)
- Telemarketing by inexpensive Odesk person (scrub lists, webinar invites, direct mail follow-ups)
- Email Campaigns (Section 179, hardware promotions to clients)
- Webinars and seminars including our Annual Tech Exchange (topics included network security, BDR, efolder, email marketing, a Joint Venture BDR breakfast, cloud computing, and a wiki titled: "How To Avoid Pointless Meetings")
- Public Relations (Guest columnist in Gwinnett Business Journal, recognized as Best IT Consulting Firm in Gwinnett from 2006 – 2012, Best of Gwinnett voting contest by local magazine. Note: We encouraged clients and readers of our newsletter to vote for us and we'd thank them with a free ice cream cone.)
- Community activities (winter coat drive, two FREE computer recycle campaigns, canned food drive)
- Client Upsell/Relationship-building (offers in newsletter, email hardware campaigns, monthly account manager calls to clients, monthly health score/dashboard trending analysis, Business Technology reviews, random thank-you notes and gifts to top clients, Godiva chocolates to clients, holiday cards to clients, client interviews/client of the month features, pet of the month contests, Client Praise Wall, customer satisfaction surveys and formal complaint process)

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- Tracking critical numbers monthly (gross sales, net profit, leads, lead sources, close rate, new MRR sold)
- Shock and Awe Box
- Done-for-you book: “21 Questions To Ask Before You Hire An IT Consultant”
- Sales document: “12 Reasons We Are Better Than The Rest”
- Robin’s Slippery Slope sales process and free network audit for consultative sale
- Training: one-day implementation session, two implementation 12-week sessions, Speaker Training, Cloud Summit, Toolkit, Managed Services Blueprint, Quarterly Producer Club Meetings
- Monthly marketing calendar worksheet and 90-day marketing plan
- Testimonial book
- Guarantees: full 90-day money back, pay for performance for guaranteed response time to critical issues, network health score guarantee with financial penalties
- Quarterly Marketing Report Card (located on the TMTK dashboard)

Producers Club and TMTK Programs: an Absolute “Must”

Participating in the Producers Club and the multitude of programs offered by TMTK is definitely a critical ingredient for our successes. (See Appendix C for a snapshot of our involvement, participation and recognition in TMTK/Producers Club.)

Key Benefits and Breakthroughs

Our investment in the Producers Club Coaching Program has clearly been the best business and personal investment we have ever made. It’s provided the environment, tools, people, examples, systems, proven track records, and resources for me to develop as a leader, salesperson and marketer. It has delivered 15 major benefits and breakthroughs to make Liam and me smarter, more strategic business owners:

1. **First you have to undergo a mind shift and belief system transformation.** It’s challenging running a business — doubt knocks at your door often. Quarterly Producers Club meetings inspired, motivated and encouraged us. Being on the phone or in the room with other successful IT business owners who gave ideas, challenged us to stretch, and encouraged us forward really empowered us and helped change my belief system about sales. Deep down, I believed sales was not a respectable profession. Learning that it’s really connecting solutions to people with problems and ultimately about serving others transformed me. I realized and experienced that selling was reputable, fun and exhilarating.
2. **Generating new leads every month is doable even if you have NO sales or entrepreneur experience.** Your material, especially the Slippery Slope program and the sales trainer programs featured at Producers Club meetings, can help you become a student of sales and marketing, train and continually improve. Every time we go to Nashville for a meeting, Liam tells our kids we’re

going to work on our MBAs. It's true — there is a ton of practical real-life education at each meeting.

3. **There is no one magic campaign or activity.** Marketing activities are like the ingredients of one mouth-watering, delicious chocolate cake. Combined, they work together synergistically to generate great results not possible separately. To get real momentum, you have to do lots of things consistently, constantly build your list, and match each marketing activity's message to the target. In the beginning, I thought, "How in the world can we do more than one campaign a month?" Although the first newsletter and campaigns were hard, each month they got easier — and then fun.
4. **Build and display confidence to get sales.** You told me that you cannot fix the world with broken hands. Taking this as a personal challenge, I read books, trained, practiced my sales process, and built my confidence through experience. If you want to get confident doing sales and marketing, get going. The lesson is in the doing. Last summer I was sharing our numbers with my fellow Pitbulls Accountability group when Adam asked how we were getting such traction. Michael Mellott said, "Look, she's confident now and prospects are buying because of it." It's true. My new confidence was a game changer for us.
5. **Embrace failure as your ally.** Before Robin, I was a perfectionist afraid to fail. Now I'm a recovering perfectionist. I realize when you fail, you learn and you can't learn unless you try. Keep trying, repeat what works and stop what's failing you. If you do the work and follow Robin's advice, you will have success — as well as failures that make you stronger. Reading Brett Harward's book "The Five Laws That Determine All of Life's Outcomes" or listening to your interview with him is a "must."

After you pointed out that I was NOT going on enough appointments, I hired an appointment-setter. At first I failed miserably at selling, but I learned each time and revamped our sales process to create a winning formula. I never would have developed this proven process had I been afraid or unwilling to fail.

6. **Exclusive access to winners and rainmakers is worth its weight in gold.** When you are a member of the Producers Club, you have access to high-profile, successful people, their stories and secrets for success. Through your programs, I've personally talked with Mark Sanborn, Lou Ferrigno (the Hulk), Joe Polish, Patrick Thean, Verne Harnish, Bill Rancic, Nido Qubein, Arnie Bellini, Robert Stevenson, Sean Stephenson, Jim Camp and Tom Hopkins — they all shared their secrets and were a great inspiration. (In addition, connecting with Bart White from your circle of friends will save me over \$50,000 in 2012 taxes.) It pays to be in TMTK's circle of influence.
7. **Better toolsets translate to higher managed services profits.** Pre-Robin, we had no sounding board for products and vendors — we made educated guesses about the best PSA, backups and ticket management tools. You introduced us Connectwise, eFolder, Sophos, and RapidFire Tools. Connectwise transformed our business and empowered our team to deliver, helping us keep a

pulse on customer satisfaction, response times and ticket counts. Before implementing a new tool, Lliam seeks opinions, perspectives and invaluable advice from fellow Producers Club members.

8. **Super-implementers get results.** You round out your communications with frequent client success stories. The common thread: They all implement your material frequently and consistently to achieve amazing results.
9. **Skate to where the puck is going to be.** Your most successful clients constantly do market research and ask campaigns, stay up to date on industry trends, and prepare. In 2011, we studied cloud computing, thanks to your Boot Camp speakers and following the Cloud Blueprint Series. Those events and programs helped us develop our own cloud offering. Without this, we would have lost over \$6,802 in MRR in 2012 (or 6% of our MRR). When our first qualified lead from Google Adwords wanted to fire its cloud provider, we were positioned — ready and able to sell \$1,470 in new cloud MRR.
10. **We claimed freedom.** Now that we have a consistent flow of new leads and close MRR on a regular basis, we have freedom to fire bad clients (and “weather” a client’s leaving). In 2012, we fired one client totaling \$2,189 MRR. This freedom is priceless.
11. **Telemarketing is key for direct mail.** Your direct mail campaigns generate leads if you include telemarketing to scrub and build a highly qualified list. Now, we use voicedrops and telemarketing in all direct mail campaigns.
12. **Tapping the power and resources of the brain trust is a huge benefit.** There is real power in belonging to a group of IT business owners. No matter what problem you face, someone in the Producers Club program has not only been there but survived. Call Robin Central — Jeff, Andrea or Robin Yost will connect you quickly with someone to help you avoid pitfalls and mistakes. Last year, one of our top clients was doing a job for their biggest client near Memphis. They needed boots on the ground and called us. I called Jeff Johnson, TMTK’s Head Marketing Coach; he connected me to Jon Parks, who had someone onsite immediately. Likewise, we’ve put engineers onsite in Atlanta for other Producers Club members as well.
13. **The Shock and Awe Box is one of many available tools and a very powerful Producers Club benefit.** Adding it to our sales process warms up the prospect, shortens the sales cycle and even has prompted some prospects to sign at our first meeting. Other tools that have greatly helped us are: the Done-for-You Book, Pronto Robinized Done-for-You website, Point of View Persuader, Disaster Recovery plan template, and the monthly e-tech tip campaigns with Done-for-You landing pages.
14. **This degree of personal and professional growth would not have been possible without your help.** Your Producers Club program has taught me that I truly love to teach, sell and grow as a leader. Our

company's growth in leads, revenue, MRR and profits are proof-positive that your programs build and grow IT business owners and their companies.

15. **Quality of members is one of the biggest advantages of being in the Producers Club.** Prior to you, I had never been in a room of competitors who are warm, generous and willing to share their wins, failures and things they would do differently, and challenge and support others. This creates an amazing, safe environment to grow and develop your business. For example, at the January 2010 Producers Club meeting, Sitima Fowler shared with me how she maps out and tracks campaigns. (Appendix B, tracking our campaign activity by month is a direct result of Sitima's guidance.) Through the Producers Club, we have met absolutely brilliant people and built friendships that extend beyond business.

Without these rock stars' contributions, we would not have the success we enjoy today — and I'm not sure we would even be in business: Robin Robins, Andrea Welch, Jeff Johnson, Robin Yost, Debi and Phil Bush, Tom Malesic, Rich Crockett, Sitima Fowler, John Motazed, Diana Spurgus, Doug Johnson, Andrea Woolf, Michael Mellott, Chris Freeman, Adam Morris, Dave Johnson, Dan Izydorek, Daniel Wang, Nathan Viverios, Tom Andrulis, Randy Hall, and Tim Conkle. Others who supported our journey are Jan Spring, Ted Hulse, Regina Vignone, Tim Shea, Linda Lynch, Tom Conway, Victoria and Brad Meyers, Jon Parks, Peter Verlezza, Alex and Jennifer Bleam, Jeff Brodie, Dennis Barry, Brian Guenther, Elizabeth Hill, Matt Carter, Wayne & Gloria Klug, Courtney Kaufman, Wendy Gaunt, Jim Stocker, Marc and Cami Ross, Robin Cole, and Erik Havens.

My marketing pros at MIS Solutions helped execute like crazy to make our success possible. Thanks goes to Shannon Smith, Chelsea Coggins, Betsy Wynkoop, and my entire MIS team (including my mom, mother-in-law and brother who take turns looking after our kids while we attend Nashville meetings).

I send a big thank you to the Kaizen group (Fred Holzager, James Gast Jr., Gary Habel, Kirsten and Steve Smith, Nancy Bradley, and Kendall and Elisa Reinford). It's been a true pleasure mentoring the Kaizen Accountability Group. They are absolute rock stars! Through our time together, I've become a stronger marketer, leader and salesperson.

Our incredible profits enabled us to pay off all business loans in 2012. As for the future of MIS Solutions, I anticipate a steady growth rate of 30% in 2013 and beyond. Going forward, my goals are to sell \$8,000 to \$10,000 new MRR per quarter and build a team and processes that can sustain our new marketing machine.

In five years, I anticipate MIS Solutions will be one of the top MSPs in the Atlanta market. Ten years from now I hope to continue growing at 30% per year so we can philanthropically give back to our local community in bigger ways than we do today. I plan to use my gifts of speaking and marketing to lead, encourage and grow others. Humbly and in gratitude, I thank you. Thank you for having the vision, commitment and relentless red-headed determination to train and build 250 millionaires through your programs.

Words of Wisdom

A true marketing system is like a chocolate cake recipe – it delivers a consistent and reliable outcome, repeatedly. Engaging with Robin through her Technology Marketing Toolkit, Managed Services Blueprint, Producers Club and supporting programs is like baking an award winning chocolate cake. She gives you the exact recipe, a comprehensive ingredient list and the techniques (in order) to produce a true sales and marketing engine that delivers consistent results, reliably. If you are serious about transforming your sales and marketing results into an award winning chocolate cake recipe, then engage with Robin and her team. Our results are proof positive that anybody, regardless of background or current situation, can get unbelievable results by working with her.

Final Thoughts

My Papa TJ said, “Get an education because it’s one of the most valuable things you can get and nobody can ever take it away from you.” Robin, by investing in your programs, I’ve gotten an incredible education on how to generate leads, make sales, speak on stage and be a confident role model for others. Our business will continue to thrive and succeed because we’ve mastered marketing and selling. You say most problems can be solved with money and new sales. Thank you for teaching us how to accumulate both. We are in the best position we have ever been. You’ve given us the freedom to become financially stable, enjoy our work, balance our lives and focus on what matters most.

I hope our story can be an inspiration and encouragement for others to implement your marketing strategies, join your Producers Club and succeed. As a teacher at heart, I will continue sharing what we’re learning to help other business owners reach their full potential. I would love and be deeply honored to serve as your 2013 Spokesperson. I look forward to continued opportunities to help you achieve your mission of developing 250 IT business-owner millionaires.

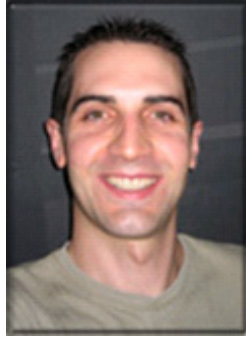
Your marketing student,



Jennifer Holmes

P.S. I believe I’m an excellent candidate for your 2013 Spokesperson position. But don’t take my word for it. In Appendix D, hear what 32 fellow Producers Club members are saying about Jennifer Holmes and her team at MIS Solutions, Inc.

2014 “Better Your Best” Contest Essay



Tom Andrulis Intelligent Technical Solutions

Gross Sales Up \$2.1 Million

Net Profit Up 231%

MRR Up \$82,915

“We Grew Organically From \$1.7 Million to \$3.9 Million In 12 Months. More importantly, net profits went up by 231% during this same time. Having an effective marketing plan not only allowed me to get more clients, but also more PROFITABLE ones; further, it allowed my sales team to be far more effective at closing new managed recurring revenue contracts.”

Tom Andrulis
Intelligent Technical Solutions

In April 2003, I opened Intelligent Technical Solutions after a lot of cold drinks, video games, and loud music. In the first few years, I spent a lot of time scraping the bottom of the barrel for leads; attending early morning lead group meetings (barely awake) and waiting for referrals to fall out of the sky. Finding Robin Robins was one of my first steps towards running a real company. Listening to her monthly interview series enlightened me on various parts of my business and running her direct mail campaigns literally saved my ass when the going got tough. I was always looking for the “super, secret” campaign that made money rain from the sky. While I did eventually find some amazing campaigns, I spent the first few years of my membership mentally denying the fact that I needed to get a list of leads, clean them up, and send things to them on a regular basis. (It’s amazing how stupid I can be...) Once I accepted that fact, we got to work on cleaning our list, sending out campaigns, hiring sales people, and before I knew it, our company grew from \$1.7 million to \$3.9 million in 12 months!

Did I mention I dragged my feet? I’m sure you all can think of a few marketing campaigns you’ve stored on your computer, just waiting until you have time to work on it. Here is a great lesson I learned, there is never enough TIME!

Make marketing happen no matter what!!! Robin made me realize that there were a few things like newsletters, sales letters and calls that I needed to just MAKE IT HAPPEN. So, I made a commitment to mail a company newsletter to a list of 300 contacts for a full year (my mistake). It was some hard work and I didn’t get the ROI I expected. I thought, I’ve FAILED. Does this really work? Then a call came in from a prospect I didn’t even know was on my newsletter mailing list. He said he wanted a face-to-face meeting to see how I could help him resolve his technical issues. He told me, if I could send out a company newsletter like that for 6 months, he figured I was still in business. *I gained over \$10,000 annual revenue from an ice cold contact I didn’t even know existed!*

Send your marketing to a good list. This success motivated me to push my marketing efforts even further. I was curious what I could get out of a good list with thousands of prospects. So, I spent roughly three years building my list through campaigns, newsletters, and telemarketing. It was quite a trial, but now we mail our newsletter to about 4,000 local business each month. The return on investment we received from just this one simple campaign has been ridiculous. Looking for that one campaign that keeps on giving? This is it! Don’t underestimate the power of a consistent monthly newsletter.

Consistently get things out the door. Year after year, I would send more campaigns including letter series, lumpy mail campaigns, and newsletters increasing the number of touches to my contacts annually. Robin always says it takes something like 11 touches to rope in a cold prospect. That’s why all my new lists automatically go on the newsletter list, in the campaign mailers and on our telemarketing roster. I am continually amazed by the increased response and ROI from the campaigns.

Keep them spinning! For some reason, I’ve always compared marketing campaigns to spinning plates. The first one is rough while you figure out how to get it going. Paying attention and consistently maintaining it is critical! The last thing you want to do is spend a bunch of money on broken dishes while having to start over, again and again. Although once it’s in motion, spinning a second and third campaign takes a little less effort than the first one. As you get more proficient, maintaining the previous campaigns will take less energy and you will soon have multiple campaigns in motion, leads coming in, and happy sales people around you. All of the campaigns in our attached Marketing Matrix were built over time and evaluated on a regular basis for improvements.

People just hand over their money when I show up! Well... Not really, I had to get out of my comfort zone once again and learn what a sales process was all about. Throughout the years, Robin provided numerous sales techniques, but one of my all-time favorites is the Shock n' Awe box. Sending it out before meeting a prospect for the first time has dramatically improved my results. I can definitely see a difference in the way new people treat me on the first meeting after receiving it. They are much more relaxed and ready to talk about the issues that are going on in their business.

Client appreciation, keep in touch. One of the biggest lessons we've learned is how to stay in touch with our current clients while we're building our MRR empire. It seems like I hear about Quarterly Business Reviews at every conference I go to but what didn't make sense was the idea of seeing a client that pays us \$23,000/mo and a client that pays us \$500/mo once every 3 months. In our experience, bigger the client, the more attention they require. And because of this, we created a Client Contact Matrix (See attached) that breaks down the types of contact into Face to Face Meetings, Phone Calls, and Thank You Cards. The more the client pays per month, the more often we do Face to Face Meetings (and lunches!). This has helped keep our sales people on track and no client feeling lonely.



For Christmas, we wanted to impress our clients. My marketing manager found a great local bakery that has a multitude of flavored cupcakes so we ordered a dozen and had an executive tasting meeting at the office. We couldn't very well send out horrible deserts, right? Well, not only were they delicious but the cupcake company said they could even print our logo on them. We thought, "Our logo would be cool, but what about our faces??" We ended up sending out 852 cupcakes in December with a picture of our company logo and a different headshot from our staff on each cupcake. It was a raging success! We received a dozen or more thank you emails with great testimonials too. One of our best clients even sent in a great pic of him biting my head off!

In the end, sending anything works. Keep in touch with your current clients to let them know you are there for them. Set up a referral system and stick with it. One of our best referral campaigns was giving away Kindle Fires to referring clients who sent us a new client.

Lessons I've learned for marketing success...

1. Make a goal, then crush it! Improving just 2% per month doubles your company in 36 months! Imagine what a 5% increase can do...
2. Keep up the momentum! Don't get bogged down thinking you have to do everything. Start one campaign, make it "good enough", and then move on to something else. Perfect is the enemy of "good enough".
3. Surround yourself with great people. Building an amazing company may start with you, but it ends with a team. Find the best people you can, train them well, and motivate them to do their best work.
4. Keep learning, keep pushing ahead, and never give up! Success is not magic, the recipe is out there. All you have to do is put in the time and effort to find it.
5. You're not alone! Find people that are on the same path and enjoy the journey with them.

2015 “Better Your Best” Contest Essay



Jay Ryerse
Digitel

Revenues Up \$1.3 Million
Monthly Recurring Revenue Up 94%
Net Profits Up 185%

"In Just 5 Years Since We Purchased The Toolkit,
Our Revenue Has Gone From \$175,000 To
Over \$2.6 Million In 2014"



A Success Story



As the runner-up in Robin's 2013 Better Your Best contest, many have asked why I'm submitting again. The Rolex Robin gave me is a daily reminder of how important it is to never stop marketing. And while the car would be nice, it's more valuable to me to associate with the best minds in our industry. I want to hear their stories and implement that success into our business. That's truly the biggest reward I received from competing in 2013 and why I am entering today.

The fact of the matter is that we've never stopped putting Robin's tools to good use. I've seen competitors kill themselves for a year to compete for the car. We do it to continually improve ourselves and our business. And because of that effort from our team, our numbers show that like investing for retirement, investing every month in our marketing has consistently helped us grow our business.

It's been five years since we first purchased the Technology Marketing Toolkit. The year before that business purchase, we did about \$175,000 in annual revenue and we had no idea what recurring revenue would do for our business. I say we, but I was a one-man band in 2009. In 2014 WE did fifteen times our 2009 revenue :-)

This packet is a testimony to all the non-believers and critics that say, "Robin's material is ugly and doesn't work because it isn't professional enough. And even if it worked for you one time, you probably got lucky." Five years later, our business is living proof that consistent marketing and hard work is more valuable than some get rich quick scheme.

Here are the important numbers:

	2013	2014	2013 – 2014 Increase
Revenue:	\$1,268,000	\$2,600,821	105%
MRR:	\$81,920	\$158,794	94.6%
Total Clients:	180	201	12%
MRR Clients:	151	149	-1%
Net Profit:	\$105,305	\$300,300	185%



2014 was truly a remarkable year!

We hit those growth numbers and did so with fewer monthly recurring revenue (MRR) clients.

We “Pumpkin Planned” the noisiest, least profitable customers and replaced them with high margin, high value clients.

We sold new products into our existing MRR client base – each with their own sticky, recurring revenue. When Robin advises us to add two new products to our arsenal every quarter, just do it. It’s the easiest new MRR you’ll ever get!

If you need ideas for products to roll out, just walk outside at Boot Camp or a Producer’s Club meeting. You’ll find several great vendors that Robin and her team have already vetted.

After we upgraded our client base and picked new products, **we mapped out the entire year’s marketing plan.** It was a summary overview of the clients and markets we wanted to hit, the tactics we were going to take to reach them, and a timeline for those campaigns. To be fair, it changed a bit throughout the year. We had to be nimble enough to capitalize on what was working and adjust plans to meet the needs of what wasn’t. Before each quarter, our Marketing Manager Betsy would **review the results of campaigns**, the return on investment on the campaigns we sent, and suggest improvements to the next quarter’s initiatives.

Through the quarterly review process, and after hearing stories from last year’s Better Your Best winner and runner-up, we decided to **increase the number of newsletters** we were sending. We started the year with a list of about 600 contacts and finished the year with over 1,600. That increase paid off for us with five large signed deals that came directly from our newsletter. **We can directly attribute \$204,658 of revenue in 2014 to the mailed newsletter.**

Thank you Robin Robins, Tom Andrulis and Mike Clemmons!

The next big 2014 Marketing Success Story came from a combination of **Robin’s LinkedIn training** and an often over-looked set of instructions from **Robin’s Dashboard on “Selling to Larger Clients.”** I shared this story at the January 2015 Producer’s Club meeting. That presentation was the third time I’ve presented winning ideas on how to use Robin’s strategies to tackle big goals.

The best result of using LinkedIn and the “Selling to Larger Client’s” campaign came toward the end of the year. I had received a LinkedIn request to connect with the office manager of a local competitor, who should become a client of Robin’s. I waited a few days and then connected. I took a look at her connections (they were all public) and noticed that the CIO of a VERY large organization was connected with her. I reached out to him on LinkedIn and scanned for friends of mine that knew him to help me connect. While searching, **I learned that the spouse of one of our employees is a VP at this company.** I immediately called to get more details.

It turns out that **this company has over 4,000 employees and their IT staff was larger than ours**. While I may have known that, I wouldn't have considered reaching out to him because they were "too big" for us. Long story short, our first project for them is a roll-out of a 500 seat virtual desktop implementation of VMware. We are working on several other projects for them for 2015.

Learning about and using some of the techniques that Robin shared with us about LinkedIn and selling to larger clients worked for us on several other deals too. In fact, **we celebrated 5 new recurring deals worth \$23,700 per month and \$853,200 worth of contract value!**

The last big thing that we did in 2014 to have our best year ever was to **consistently market** to our lists. In the end, **we sent over 26,000 pieces of direct mail**, tens of thousands of targeted emails to our subscriber list, and networked every chance we had. **We printed, folded, stuffed and stamped every one of those campaigns.**

Excluding the newsletter and LinkedIn marketing, we **sent out 39 other campaigns**. Those campaigns included Tech Tip postcards, Dream 100 campaigns, Wedge letters, VoIP & BDR emails to existing clients, campaigns for every holiday, and wrapped up the year with Section 179.

We earned \$317,385 from those mailings with a cost of just \$19,012. That's a whopping 15X return on our investment in one year using direct mail. Hopefully you are starting to see why I consider marketing an investment in our business.

In addition to direct mail campaigns, we also benefitted from:

Google AdWords	Trade Shows (4)
Robinized Website	Marketing Automation
Pronto Holiday Emails	Genius League
Technology Book	

Shock & Awe (online and mailed) including targeted online S&A campaigns for BDR, HIPAA, etc.



While investing in our team and business is an integral part of our culture, the part I appreciate the most is our willingness to give back. Our entire team is dedicated to giving back to our community and those we are blessed to serve. As a team in 2014:

- 1) We **helped raise over \$50,000 to provide wireless hot spots** for our local schools for families that can't afford internet access. We also collected, repaired, and delivered laptops and tablets to those families in need.

- 2) We continued to work with our friends at Stick it 2 Cancer to raise money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. In the last three years, our team has helped **raise more than \$300,000 for blood cancer research and LLS.**

Other highlights for the year included:

- 1) Chosen as Continuum's 2014 Rookie of the Year
- 2) Named as one of MSPmentor's 2014 Top MSP Executives, Entrepreneurs & Experts
- 3) Named as Best of Forsyth by local voters in our market
- 4) Sold JTECH Networks to Digitel Corporation and chose to stay on to run the MSP division of Digitel
- 5) **Improved our margins by improving our processes** so that we could finish the year with the **same number of employees we started with ;-)**



I mentioned early on in this essay that my goal is to learn from the best. The biggest benefit that I get from my Producer Club membership is something that is often overlooked. That's my **Accountability Groups**. There's no way we would have had the year we had without them. They pushed me, held me accountable, and encouraged me when things didn't go as planned.

The biggest advice I can share is something that Robin speaks about every time I hear her. **"There is no magic campaign that will make you rich. It's consistently investing in your business with marketing, testing, measuring your numbers, and adjusting from what you've learned. "**

I want to **thank Robin, Jeff and the entire Technology Marketing Toolkit team** for all they do for us. They made this year possible! With Robin's help, you can grow your business 15X in 5 years too!

Looking forward to our Best Year Ever in 2015 ;-)

Sincerely,

Jay Ryerse