

EXPAND

OR

EXPIRE

Don't believe me? Read on and think about it.

Think back to when you first started your business. How many tools did you have? What about a copy machine? Fax? Telephone system? How many staff did you employ? Where did you buy product? What suppliers and vendors did you have working for you then? — now? Here's a good question, how did you advertise?

Everything grows.

Keep all that in mind as you continue . . .

You built a business, and over the weeks / months / years, you expanded. Now you're thinking, "What did I do?! If I gotta fold, who'll buy this stuff? I could'a gone on vacation." (Jet fuel is soaring – excuse the pun – along with ticket prices.) "I should'a bought that bigger house." (Which has declined in value from 15% to 22%.) "What about stocks and bonds?" (Tanked or tanking.)

Those were some of the options. (Sorry if I struck a sour note with you, but that's the state of affairs in the recessionary / non-recessionary economy – – – you decide.)

Since you built this empire, you're probably wondering why and when exactly it strikes back. The answer is . . . when you quit expanding. YOU have to expand or YOU will expire.

I don't mean going out and buying another truck or van (though the deals are pretty good right now). And I'm not suggesting you tool up for more work than you have in pipeline (though you should keep an eye open for your competitor's sell-offs).

What I'm SHOUTING (as loud as you can read) is that you must ADVERTISE.

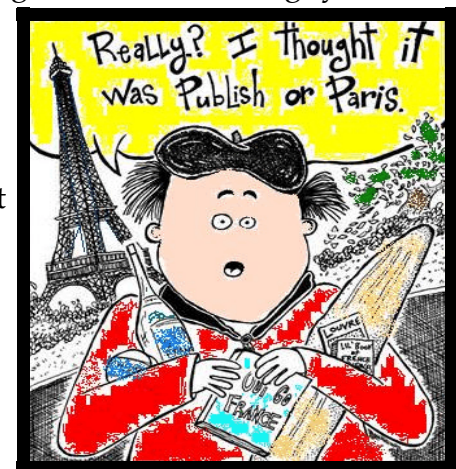
YOU MUST ADVERTISE!

In universities, the art of survival for professors is decided by the axiom of "Publish or Perish." In small business (and yes, Bub, YOU are a small business), the complimentary rule is "Expand or Expire."

In the world of marketing, if you learned that the ad budget is the first thing businesses cut in a recession, think twice. Think about which businesses cut their advertising: Big Biz. Not the little guys.

What kind of advertising is cut? The 'name recognition' kinda ads that tell the consumer nothing, other than *BUY Dell* – or *BUY P&G* – or *BUY Shell*. They can cut advertising any time and glide for a year or two – or a decade. They advertise for market share. You don't.

You're in a different kinda business – the kind of business that doesn't sell based upon maintaining market share. You're in the business of growth. Growth is the **ONLY** goal of small business. You add windshield time to expand territory. You look for areas where there's no good, reliable contractors to service homes and commercial buildings . . . and get your butt in there and go to work.



You **CAN'T** cut back on advertising and accomplish that goal – it's an oxymoron. Never, NEVER, NEVER believe you (small biz) are them (**BIG BIZ**). You do, you'll die.

Quit advertising and YOU'RE beat. The lemmings fill in, and the lines move forward. Your competition will gleefully step on your face to take over your markets, without a second thought. They'll do it by expanding. It's the only way they can do it, and the only way you can combat it.

TIPS

You've learned the ropes. Now, figure out how to make that work for you. Rely on your history of happy customers (get and use letters of recommendations).

Need more happy customers? Do a better job than the buyer expects. What would you be doing otherwise? You can either be working the job to its fullest ("being all that you can be") – making the buyers sing your praises – or bitch about the time you spent and forgo the referral. You choose.

Give 'em something they didn't expect. It's called "lagniappe" ('lan-yap') meaning: something extra – something "left out of the advertising" – more than they paid for. Surprise them. Give 'em that buzz they need to feel when *you've done a great job* and they're sitting down to cut the last pay-out. (And make sure you tell them what you did so they can brag about it to the neighbors.)

Expand your territory. We offer Multi-Show Discounts for just that reason. There's never enough work for any trade in a single town. Use The Home ShowS to broaden your horizons. We offer Multi-Show discounts for just that reason.

Yeah, yeah, I hear that cynic in you saying, "So that's the ulterior motive – another pitch." Wake up! The best damn thing in advertising is face-to-face selling opportunities: B2C public expositions for you; B2B trade shows for industry reps. If you don't think so, tell me what advertising you're doing that produces thousands of contacts over a single weekend.

I believe in SHOW business. If you don't, maybe you should read the other Lil' Johnny papers – it's an education. You'll be pleasantly (or unpleasantly) surprised, depending on whether you're doing The Home ShowS or not. If not, smarten up. If you're already exhibiting with us, then you'll be re-enlightened and amused with what goes on with The Home ShowS and the Other Guys' shows. Either way . . . works for me.

Getting back to the 'tips' ...

The rule for small biz is: *Expand or Expire.*

You can't expand by buying up more labor / tools / vehicles / product / shop and office space. None of that's gonna produce a single "selling opportunity." Don't put the horse before the cart. Get the jobs FIRST! Then bring up the labor and invest in the capital.

You can ONLY expand through GROWTH. And to grow, you have to advertise. The best advertising is home show expositions. The best home show expositions are ours – The Home ShowS.

Here's a "read between the lines" not so subliminal thought:
As strong as we feel about advertising, who do you think does a better job at advertising shows?
The Home ShowS? Or, the Other Guys?
That's a thought you ought to think about for awhile. "Who does the better job?
The Home ShowS or the Other Guys? The Home ShowS or the Other Guys? The Home ShowS or the Other Guys? . . ."

That's the stuff I got today. It's uncomplicated ~ Expand or Expire ~ with compelling results. Once you kick off the objections, you've got the basic truth. Take that and *expand* on it.



Since 1986 . . .

That's my opinion.
Got a different view?
Send it to Lil' Johnny at
John@ChicagoHomeShow.Net

SOURCE: www.ChicagoHomeShow.Net/Lill



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. . . helping small businesses expand.