



ASKJOEPOLISH TELESEMINAR

Hosted by Alex Mandossian and Joe Polish
January 13, 2005



Joe Polish



Alex Mandossian

Alex: This is the AskJoePolish.com teleseminar. It's hosted by Piranha Marketing. If you're on this call, I want to call your attention to the cheat sheet, we call it a notes sheet, and it's there so that you stay with us all the way through the call, you don't multi-task, you don't go downstairs for dinner or you don't leave the room and listen to it on your cell phone, and you don't surf the net.

You just follow along and take notes, because we've done the courtesy of writing out the questions of hundreds that have come in. Joe handpicked 7 of them, plus a bonus question from AskJoePolish.com.

Now, we did a worldwide survey – actually, it's mostly in the United States – of carpet cleaners. And people went to AskJoePolish.com. And of the hundreds of questions that came in, we picked 7 of them. And these are 7 of the most important answers to questions of how to attract high-end clients all year round. So check them out.

There's also a bonus question. You can find them at www.AskJoePolish.com/notes.pdf. Go there right now. Print it out, if you haven't already done so. We've sent out several emails, but email is not always reliable. Go there right now and check it out, print it out so you can start taking notes for this call.

This call may change your business in carpet cleaning forever. Because last time I checked, it cost just as much to come to any client's house or customer's house or office, and if you're getting more money from them – ere go higher end – then you're creating more cash and the cost is the same.

It costs the same to get your truck there. If you make more money, high-end clients mean more profit. Doing it all year round and making your business non-seasonal is what this call is all about.

People kept asking these questions. Carpet cleaners kept asking these questions, "How can I make my business non-seasonal? How can I attract higher-end clients in high-end neighborhoods?" We are forever going to dispel the myth about this business and how to attract high-end clients, because no one does it better than Joe Polish.

Again, www.AskJoePolish.com/notes.pdf. Let me go live again, get some first names and cities you're calling from. Just shout it out and let's see what we can do. Here we go.



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Caller: Brad from California.

Caller: Branson, Missouri

Alex: California, Missouri, welcome. Who else?

Caller: Burt from Florida.

Alex: Florida, welcome. Who else?

Caller: Michigan.

Caller: Texas.

Alex: Michigan and Texas, welcome. Who else?

Caller: California.

Alex: Welcome California and Florida. Miami, welcome.

Caller: Canada.

Alex: Canada? Our first Canadian. Welcome.

Caller: Chicago.

Alex: Welcome, Chicago.

Caller: Cleveland.

Caller: Idaho.

Caller: New Jersey.

Alex: Idaho, Cleveland, New Jersey, welcome all of you.

Caller: Sacramento, California.

Alex: Sacramento, California. Welcome. Who else?

Caller: New York.

Alex: New York, welcome. Nebraska, welcome. Okay, my name is Alex Mandossian, I'm the host of this call. If you are on the call right now, I want to hear a very loud yes, because I'm going to ask you if you're ready to start. We always start on time. And according to Time.gov, it is exactly half-past the hour. It's 5:30 Pacific Coast Time, it's 8:30 East Coast Time. I don't know where you're calling from, but we're going to start right now. I'm going to unmute the call. Let me hear a very loud yes, and then we will introduce Joe Polish, our keynote speaker tonight. Are you ready?

Callers: Yes!

Alex: Joe, are you ready?



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Joe: I'm ready.

Alex: Alright. My name is Alex Mandossian and my job tonight is to grill Joe Polish on how to attract higher-end clients all year round.

There's an interesting distinction here, because we're talking about clients, not customers. Joe, I'll ask you later on in the call what the difference is, if there is any.

Joe: Okay.

Alex: But let me give you a quick story, for everyone on this call understanding where the content of this call came from.

We did a worldwide survey at www.AskJoePolish.com. There was a very simple question. The question is, "What's your single most important question on how to attract high-end clients all year 'round?"

Some of the biggest complaints that Joe's members have given him at Piranha Marketing is, "Hey, my business is seasonal," or "I have a lot of customers and clients, but they're all low-end clients. How can I attract higher-end clients?"

Well, imagine having clients all year round, and imagine having them higher-end. You get paid more with every visit. And that's what the topic is tonight.

So of all the hundreds of questions that came streaming in for the past 3½ weeks, Joe handpicked 7 of them. They're on your note sheet. If you don't have the note sheet, I'm going to give the website address one last time. It's www.AskJoePolish.com/notes.pdf.

When you go to that page, you just print that out. And if you already have it in front of you, grab a pen and we're going to get started. Because these 7 questions were handpicked by Joe. There are a lot of overlapping questions. We tried to pick the ones that were most indicative of all of the questions that came pouring in. And there's also a bonus question.

Before we begin, Joe, I've got to ask you how did you get involved in the carpet cleaning business, for those people who don't know you and are not part of the Piranha Marketing team?

Joe: Well, good question, I guess. Could take me an hour to answer this one, but I'll do it quickly.

I started out in late 1989, early 1990, around that timeframe, where I had a friend that invited me to become partners with him in a carpet cleaning business that he had been working for in Mesa, AZ.

I had no experience in carpet cleaning. Even growing up, my mother died when I was really young, so not having a woman in the household, basically



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we never really got our carpets cleaned. I never much thought about professional carpet cleaning, but I had a friend invite me into it.

I was a carpet cleaner instantaneously, overnight, after I had bought some equipment, some chemicals and got a business card that said, "Professional carpet and upholstery cleaners."

Then, I proceeded to spend the next 2 years living off of credit cards, struggling, trying to figure out how to generate business, begging jobs from friends and family, and really had no earthly idea what I was doing.

And I ended up learning marketing, which I teach today, I guess in a lot of ways selfishly because I wanted to grow my own business and use it to generate more business.

So I'd gotten certified, I gotten training, I was a good cleaner, I was an ethical cleaner, I never would try to high-pressure people in order to buy from me, but I just couldn't generate enough business.

So, I started studying a certain type of marketing, direct response marketing, which is what I now teach. And lo and behold, it really turned my company around. I went from grossing about \$2,100 a month way back in 1992 to, within a 6-month period, doing over \$12,300 a month with one van and one technician.

At first, the technician was me, and then I hired somebody. But basically, that's how I got into the business. And I'm a convert of my own system. Every single thing that I now teach and help other cleaners – we've got over 4,000 Piranha members worldwide that are members of Piranha, that are in the professional cleaning industry, on all levels in all different countries throughout the world that use these systems – but they really started as me just needing to put food on the table and feed myself.

I kind of stumbled into what I do now as an advisor to the cleaning industry by accident.

Alex: I'm not a carpet cleaner. I am a direct marketer, though, and we're friends and colleagues in the marketing industry.

The people who are in your network, they clobber their competitors not because they're smarter, not because they're better carpet cleaners, but because they're better marketers.

What's interesting is once you have a system, you can just duplicate it. And you have actual courses and businesses in a box and boot camps in boxes that have telltale systems with letters and yellow page ads and all that stuff that you've developed, I guess selfishly for yourself initially.

But the biggest benefit for me, as I was flipping through the pages, is look at all the mistakes this guy must have made. Look at all the maybe hundreds of thousands of dollars that he's wasted, until he found the one winner. And



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then you give people the winners.

Why do you do that? Why did you reveal your secrets to possibly competitors?

Joe: Well, again, a lot of it in the beginning was selfish reasons. I wanted to, at first, build the largest carpet cleaning company in Phoenix, AZ. And once I started doing pretty well, I was at a seminar and I ran across a couple of cleaners. One of them was a guy by the name of Don Delew, who still operates a business called Healthy Home in Denver, CO. He's been a member for years.

I told him about one of my concepts using a 24-hour free recorded message, which is one of my favorite strategies from our Piranha members that understand what it is that I do and utilize it, and I gave him a small ad and a script to a 24-hour free recorded message, which is an education-based form of marketing which sifts, sorts and screens consumers, so it eliminates price-shoppers in your advertising, which most people in the cleaning industry have no idea how to do that without talking to someone.

I figured out how to generate business this way, so I sold this ad and the script to 2 guys. One was Don and another was another cleaner. I won't name his name. And Don actually took it back to Denver and did something with it. The other guy didn't do anything with it.

At the time, it's funny, I only charged him \$250 for this ad and this script. In the first year, Don was actually running half-page phone book ads in the Denver phone book. I took him down to an ad a size smaller than a business card and it said, "Warning: don't call any carpet cleaner until you hear this 24-hour free recorded message. Learn 7 questions to ask a carpet cleaner before you invite them into your home and how to avoid 4 carpet cleaning rip-offs. Call anytime, 24 hours a day."

And then it drove the caller to a 24-hour recorded message which, in his case, was a 10-minute long message educating people on how to choose a carpet cleaner.

With a \$250-a-month cost for that ad, the first year he generated \$62,000 in business from that \$250-a-month ad, cut his advertising cost in half, and quadrupled the response that he was getting from his advertising in the phone book by going from a half-page ad to an ad smaller than the size of a business card.

And that's when it occurred to me that the difference between a \$1 bill and a \$100 bill is the message on the paper. Could be the same size paper, same ink, but much different message. And I'm like, "Wow, I'm on to something here."

Then I thought, "Other than just helping me and Don, this could help a lot



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of people.” And that’s pretty much how I got into the educational advisor position that I am today. It’s awesome. Because every day, I get letters and emails of people who’s lives have been changed. It’s amazing how much making more money gives you byproducts more than money. It enhances all areas of your life when you start doing better. It doesn’t just give people more money to buy more stuff, it gives them tremendous amounts of confidence, it gives them access to better education, better relationships, better clients, freedom.

That’s why everyone wanted to become an entrepreneur in the first place; not because they wanted money, but they wanted freedom. If you’re a slave to creditors and you’re not making enough revenue, then that’s not my definition of freedom.

So I feel, in a lot of ways, I’m able to direct our members to life enhancements that ultimately give them freedom. I’ll just say this, and then I’ll let you ask me any questions that you like before we get into the main one. I determined there’s 2 ways to run a business and to use marketing. You can have an ELF business, which is what I call it, which is doing things that are easy, lucrative and fun, or you can have a HALF business, which most people have, which is hard, annoying, lame and frustrating.

It can be lucrative. It could be hard, annoying, lucrative and frustrating. But my belief is why do anything that, although you make a lot of money, your whole entire day is a constant drag.

So I focused on what are the systems, what are the robotic forms of marketing that can generate business, and they really are easy, they really are fun, and they’re lucrative as heck.

That’s all I sell. That’s the criteria I use when I decide to offer a marketing strategy, teach strategy to our members, is they have ELF. Is this comprised of ELF? And if it doesn’t, don’t do it.

That’s what we’re all about at Piranha Marketing. We’ve got thousands of members to prove that.

Alex: It’s interesting, Joe invited me to grill him and call him on some of the statements he’s going to make and some of the claims that he’s going to make. And rather than grilling him on anything he just said, I want to just point out a few pieces of wisdom.

Sift, sort and screen: when your system, your marketing system to build business and put more bread on your table and to fatten your pocketbook, sift, sort and screen means no more cold calls; it means no more door-knocking; it means none of that awkward cold-calling or meeting someone for the first time and wondering, “Well, can I clean your carpets, please?”

Sift, sort and screen is robotic, automatic and sometimes it’s happening



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while you sleep. And it's systematic. And Joe has created templates, frankly because he's lazy. I know this man. He likes to work less and make more money.

I don't know if you like to work more and make more, but this call is about working less and making more. In fact, it's about doubling and tripling your income, and then tripling and quadrupling your time off.

Everyone likes to double their income, but not a lot of people think about tripling their income.

So 2 things: sift, sort and screen, if you can get prospects who are ready to buy in a systematic way, you work less. Secondly, Joe mentioned the recorded call. Not a live call. Many people say, "Well, this is a live operator, call within these office hours."

Sometimes, that's a mistake because people know they're going to get sold on the other end.

Think about you. Think about when you call someone. Saying "Live operator" is like saying, "Salesman who wants to sell you."

But if there is a recorded message, which you've recorded – and it's usually your best message, then they're hearing a 10-minute message, you're educating them. By the time they're ready to call you, which you should tell them how they're going to get a hold of you as I'll tell you how to get more information about Joe later on today on this call, then the message is doing all of the work. You do that once, it's systematic, and then you're sifting, sorting and screening any cold calls.

Before we dive into question number one, do you have any comments about the whole systematic approach of why you're so darned lazy?

Joe: Well, for one, I think when you die – whatever someone's beliefs are – and you go to heaven, I don't think you get any extra points because you worked really hard, you never flew first class. I don't think that's something that's going to be some attribute.

As far as I'm concerned, if you're going to do something, you might as well pick the lowest-hanging fruit, you might as well have as much fun as humanly possible. And, of course, the caveat is add value. Money earned ethically is a byproduct of value creation. I've come to a real deep understanding that my future income is in the future of my clients and what I'm able to do for them, not how great of an ad that I create or whatever it is that I sell.

So you can have the best marketing in the world, but if you don't deliver on what it is you're promising people, then you're not going to be around for a long time.

So part of it is you're treating people the best that you possibly can and



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doing it as effectively as humanly possible.

Two of my favorite words are productivity and leverage. And productivity is maximum results with the least amount of time. That's the definition of productivity.

The definition of leverage is maximum results, least amount of effort.

So I try to look at everything that do, everything that I can teach to my clients, "How can I make this more productive? How can I really leverage this?"

The fact is you only need a few basic moves to produce phenomenal results. You don't need 1,000 tools in your toolbox. You only need a few tools that you learn how to hone those skills really well, and you can build an enormous business doing it.

Let me also define, before we get into it, what is marketing. Piranha Marketing. People come up to me, "Joe, I'm in the marketing business. What do you mean by that?"

Sales is what you do when you're on the phone or face to face with somebody. Marketing is what you do to get somebody on the phone or face to face with you, positioned properly, so they're pre-qualified, pre-interested, pre-motivated and pre-disposed to do business with you and give you money.

If you do your marketing right, it does all of your selling in advance. The majority of the selling I do is never face to face. I despise cold-calling. I don't like using techniques on people or trying to tell them why they should buy from me or talk them into stuff. I want them showing up already having gotten an education and knowing a little bit about me.

And I realized in my carpet cleaning business, if I want to eliminate people whose only concern is price-shoppers, I've got to give them an education beforehand but I don't want to do it personally. Let a robot do it for me, that works anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It could be a recorded message, it could be the printed version of a consumer awareness guide, it could be online on a website.

There's a variety of ways to robotically educate people. So I'm going to do what I can today to teach people how to get into high-end homes and how to market themselves right, aside from all of the things that I use – and we'll talk about them – I'm not going to talk about anything that I have not tested myself and proven through my own efforts and through all of the efforts of thousands of carpet cleaners. None of this is theory. All of it is has been proven to make millions and millions of dollars collectively for my members.

And it's not only great to make money using this marketing, but it also is time management marketing. All of the types of marketing that I teach save enormous amounts of time. And in my opinion, time is your most valuable



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asset. I will pay money all day long to people that can save me time. Because the more time I have, the more I can allocate that into areas of life that give me productivity and leverage.

So that's my speech on that.

Alex: I want to let everyone know who...*[lots of static on the line]* Uh-oh, is that you or me?

Joe: I don't know. It disappeared.

Alex: It disappeared.

Joe: Maybe it was in the lines. I don't think it was from me.

Alex: It's not from me, either. I want everyone to know on this call, that the reason Joe does this is not for benevolent purposes only. It's for selfish purposes. Because he's created a community. And by creating a community of carpet cleaners, by understanding what works in different parts of the country and different parts of the world, he only makes himself look better. And people come back with all of these case studies and new techniques and new ads and new promotional campaigns, and it just makes them look better. So before you think he's being so benevolent, understand that he's doing it selfishly. But as the tide rises, all of the boats rise. So it's good for everyone to understand that this is not only marketing ideas that have come from his head, but they've come from his network, and everyone gets the benefit from it.

With that, let's dive into question #1, because this was the single most-asked question for the Ask campaign. We asked thousands of carpet cleaners, "What's your single most important question on how to attract higher-end clients all year 'round." Those are 2 problems. How do I get new clients all year 'round, and how do I get higher-end clients? That's huge. If you did that, you could double, triple, quadruple your business with the same amount of work.

1. "I have no contacts or connections in the market I want. How do I find the names and addresses of high-end market clients that I want to target mail? I want to do a direct mail campaign. How do I do that? How do I find those high-end homes? How do I compile my list of prospects?"

So here's the #1 question. It's on your note sheet. The question states, "I have no contacts or connections in the market I want. How do I find the names and addresses of high-end market clients that I want to target mail? I want to do a direct mail campaign. How do I do that? How do I find those high-end homes? How do I compile my list of prospects?" That was the most-



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asked question. Joe Polish, what's your answer?

Joe: This may sound simplistic, but really the first place to start is with your existing client base. Look at your own existing list and determine do you have people on your list that you would consider high-end, the type of clients that you'd like to do business with, and are you communicating with them on a regular basis?

You need to have the mindset that you are in the relationship business, not the transaction business. And in my experience with so many cleaners throughout the world, they spend all this time and effort to generate the customer, which I prefer the word client.

You asked about it earlier, I'll give you the definition of it right now.

A customer is somebody implies somebody that buys something from you. A client implies someone you have a relationship with.

So I'll use the word customer and client interchangeable throughout this conversation, because a lot of people are used to the word customer. I prefer client. And if you market properly, my definition of properly is what's going to give you the biggest bang for the buck and give you the biggest long-term relationship. That is what it is that you're actually pursuing. And you can look at your existing database and determine, "Okay, out of all of these people, who do I want to have relationships with, who I'm going to continually do business with, versus just a one-time shot where they're going to buy something from me once and that's it.

So start with your own existing client base.

When people say, "I have no contacts or connections in the market I want," people underestimate the value of their sphere of influence.

There may be a situation where someone's brand new to a city and doesn't know a single person. But if there's any cleaner on the line that has done business for any carpet retailers, any designers, any real estate agents, any people that own service businesses, any sort of entrepreneurs whatsoever, either on a business level or on a friendship level, you look at areas where you would like to market high-end neighborhoods and you think to yourself, "Okay," this is real simple, you pull out a yellow notepad and you start brainstorming.

There are people out here that have relationships with the people who live in these homes. The greatest thing about being in the cleaning business is you can drive up and down streets and determine what types of homes you'd like to do business with; if you're in commercial, what types of buildings do you want to be in.

My father was a locksmith. That's a tough service business to be in, in terms of being able to target market who you're going to market to. My father couldn't buy a mailing list of people that were going to get drunk on a weekend



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night and lock their keys in their car, or out there getting a divorce and determine who's going to lock the husband or the wife out of the house. It's an emergency service. You can't drive up and down the street and say, "Well, this person needs to have their keys done" or "this person needs a new deadbolt." That's a business that you can't buy a mailing list of.

In the carpet cleaning industry, there are mailing lists readily available by income, if people have allergies, if they have children, if they're new homeowners.

So to answer the question how do you get a list, you can go to MelissaData.com, you can go to InfoUSA.com. I did a whole interview, in depth, a 90-minute interview with Reese Weaver from Melissa Data, which someone can go to GeniusNetwork.com and get an entire 90-minute education specifically just on how to choose a mailing list. These are all the things that we make available to our members.

But the point is aside from being able to purchase mailing lists of high-end homes, there's something much better. That's going out and finding people that have already spent the time, the money, the effort, the energy to develop and nurture an existing relationship with people that you'd like to clean for; i.e., a carpet retail store, a dry cleaner of clothing, real estate agents, interior designers, a roofing company, a pool service company, house cleaning companies.

There's all kinds of services out there that already have a client base that they have good rapport with. And you simply approach these individuals, offer to do a free house of cleaning, a free room of cleaning, just to show your services to them. And if they like it, you will offer a free room of carpet cleaning or they will endorse your services.

It's one of the strategies that you get 2 or 3 solid endorsement relationships working in your cleaning business, I don't care if you're in a big city, a small town, you could add \$5,000, \$10,000 a month to any cleaning business just by several solid endorsement relationships.

One of the best things I ever did was getting a dry cleaner of clothing, in the very beginning, to endorse my cleaning services to people that came into the dry cleaning establishment. And I got a big poster printed up at Kinko's that said, "Ask us about our carpet cleaning services." And they would ask about it, and there would be a flyer that they hand out to everyone.

And I'd approach those people through direct mail, through calling them on the telephone, and through just having them pick up stuff when they picked up their clothing. And I would give the dry cleaner 10% of all of the business that I generated as a result of the endorsement. So to this individual, it was



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found money. So you do endorsement relationships.

In my marketing strategies manual, I have a strategies manual called "105 Moneymaking Marketing Strategies: How To Get More Clients In A Month Than You Now Get All Year." And I have a whole chapter with prewritten letters and it explains the entire concept. But I basically explained it. You just get other people to endorse and promote you.

Alex: Let's go to question #2. This is an interesting one, because many carpet cleaners feel that their business is seasonal. There are others who laugh at that and there are many who cry about that, because they are victim to it.

2. "The bitter cold, snowy, slushy and sloppy winter months are so slow, that I have to save summer and spring revenue just to make ends meet in the winter. Now, many of our high-end clients or residents leave town this time."

But the question reads, "The bitter cold, snowy, slushy and sloppy winter months are so slow, that I have to save summer and spring revenue just to make ends meet in the winter. Now, many of our high-end clients or residents leave town this time." – I guess you call those people snowbirds sometimes, right?

Joe: You got it. In Arizona.

Alex: They come to Arizona. You get them. "They leave town this time of the year and nobody seems to be motivated to use our services. Now, what's the best way to get clients" – there's that word again – "to schedule right now and not wait until spring? How can I stay busy even in the winter?"

People, listen carefully. Grab your pens. This is one of the key questions. It was the second most-asked question in the survey. "How do we stay busy in the wintertime as a carpet cleaner?"

Joe: Okay. In terms of an instantaneous magic pill answer, there really is none. The closest I can tell people, if they do want a magic pill answer, is you take your own existing clients again, the people that are most likely to do business with you, because it's 5 to 6 times more expensive to acquire a new client than it is to service an existing one. So, people that you already have rapport with, that have already done business with you are the most likely people to hire you again anytime of the year, during the slow season or not.

Going to your existing client base and creating a cash flow surge is the best way to do it.

In terms of high return on revenue, every single person listening on the line, if they do a voice broadcast, which I have a company set up that I recommend that is extremely trained and professional in the cleaning services because I refer all of our members to them, is Automatic Response



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Technology, AutomaticResponse.com.

Now obviously, if someone is a member of Piranha member, boot camp in a box, whatever, we have all kinds of ready-done scripts. That's part of the services and confidence, direction and capabilities that we offer and sell at Piranha Marketing is doing voice broadcast.

So just sending out a personalized message to everyone that is an already existing client, not prospects but already existing clients, because you don't want to do anything that's intrusive to people, you can do that and just let them make a special offer.

Now, having said that, if you really want to eliminate slow seasons entirely, then you need to do certain things that if you don't do these, you're not going to have as much success as people that will. And one of the absolute best tools, the most effective tool out of many that we have used and create for our members is a client newsletter, a direct response client newsletter where every single month you mail a newsletter to your client so that you are constantly staying in touch with them.

Alex: Hang on, hang on, hang on. Client newsletter? People listening are in the carpet cleaning business. They're not in the copywriting business. Isn't that a lot of work?

Joe: Oh, it's a tremendous amount of work. It's a tremendous amount of work if you have to create and write it yourself. I know because we put one together every month for our members. But we have one that is available, and literally it works like gangbusters.

For instance, Dave Keiter owns Yellow Van Cleaning Service. Dave probably is even on the call tonight. He has 42 employees, he lives in Carne, Nebraska, which I don't even know what the population of Carne is. It's small, it's something like 30,000 people.

He does a business that does probably I think last year, \$1,300,000. Dave nets over \$300,000 a year. He sends out a client newsletter every month. He sends out our client newsletter. All he has to do is plug in his name and his phone number. We make it brain-dead simple. We even have a printing service set up, so anyone in the United States that wants to not even touch a stamp or a piece of paper can just upload their database to our printing service and they mail it for them. It's brain-dead simple.

I do a call-in day every month for my Piranha members, where people can just call up and ask me any question off the cuff, and I'll do everything I can to answer them. I do it as a service to our members.

And during the call-in day that we had just a couple days ago, he had sent out 1,200 copies of the client newsletter. And we're talking this is the



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slow season right now for the majority of cleaners in the east and parts of the country. And he is so busy right now, that he was out doing production himself, which is a total rarity. He's got so much business.

And just from that mailing, literally a couple of days into it, they've already got 27 jobs that they've done as a result of this particular newsletter that they send out, in the middle of a slow season. And his return is just going to be huge.

But it is every month, and that's because he sends out a client newsletter. Robert Peters, which is arguably the highest-grossing one-truck operator in the world, now he's got 1½ trucks, because he has a truck that he keeps parked there. He owns Genie Carpet Services in the Dallas, Texas area. He's been a member for 10 years. He has not missed sending out a client newsletter in 10 years of being a client of mine, except once where he missed one month.

This guy grosses over \$350,000 with one van. And now, with his 1½ trucks, I believe last year he did over \$400,000 in revenue. And his current job average, I think my figure is exact, \$462 is his average job, which is typically triple what the average carpet cleaner is.

And you ask Robert how does he do this, and he'll tell you, "Client newsletter." He does it every month, consistently.

This guy's carpet cleaning technician, he pays his carpet cleaning technician \$120,000 a year as this guy's income. Most owners don't have 6-figure income. And he loves it. I think he'll take 3 months of vacation this year. And Robert, I think, is 62, 63 years old right now, a great guy.

He used to have a cleaning company with 68 employees and 28 vans. And now he has 1½ trucks and makes more money and has more of an ELF business than he ever has been. He doesn't have to worry about a slow season. Why? Because he's in touch with people all the time.

The point is if you need to get business in the slow season, you've got to prepare for it. You've got to plant the seeds before the drought. You've got to water.

Alex: Dig the well before you're thirsty, right?

Joe: Exactly. I probably said the analogy wrong, but nonetheless that's the point. And you want to give people reasons why.

So one way is to stay in touch with them. Another is don't sell transactions, sell relationships.

We have a maintenance program where instead of selling somebody to get their carpets cleaned right now, you put them on a maintenance program where you come out and clean their carpets every 6 months, every quarter.



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Then you don't have to worry about them being attracted to another carpet cleaner, because in reality you've kind of got an agreement with them. Nothing like a hardcore "we're going to sue you if you don't have us clean your carpets." People can drop out at any time.

I could take a lot of time explaining the concept of how it works. People can get information on that later.

The point is you set people up on the maintenance program so during the slow season and during times where it's very cold in certain areas of the country, you still have business.

And last but not least, you build referrals. And I'll be happy to talk about referrals later, and you keep that going year-round.

All of the messages you want to communicate to people are not your logo, how many years you've been in business, the fact that you own a truck-mount. People are like, "We have a truck-mount. I'm certified." So what? Who cares? Until you give people a reason why that should matter to them, you're going to look like every other carpet cleaning company that's out there. And if you look at any phone book ads in any part of the country, the majority of the ads are me too, me too, me too. They're everybody's name, rank and serial number. They're not saying anything compelling.

And if you want just a real simple headline, all promotions, from a business card to a van to a yellow page ad to a flyer, should have a headline. There are benefits and reasons why people should get their carpets cleaned in January or February or the middle of summer, whatever.

So a headline might be, "Why January is the best time to get your carpets cleaned... Dear friend," and then you go on with your offer, be it a free room of cleaning, because this is typically not your very busy season you can offer more incentives, a better price, more open schedules, there are certain things that you do that benefit them. There's all kinds of things that if someone just takes a little bit of time to think, or better yet look at what we offer and just use what I've already got done, there's all kinds of ways to never, ever have to worry about staying busy in the winter or in the slow season.

However, you've got to prepare for it, just like anything else.

Alex: I'll tell you, you're all about systemizing your business. It's not a bad thing to be lazy and it's not a bad thing to take time off. I gave an email address earlier. Here it is again, Info@AskJoePolish.com.

Joe mentioned newsletters are a pain, they take a long time. But if you just want to put in your name, your address, and just use the templates that are already proven, you can send these newsletters what, once a month?

Joe: Yeah.



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Alex: Once a month, and they will pay off in the winter months.

Let's go to question #3, and that is this: "What is the best, most effective marketing strategy to introduce myself to new high-end prospects?" In other words, how do I introduce myself to the high-end market? What type of advertising attracts their attention and what is the first way you would contact them, Joe? That's question #3.

Joe: One of the first things that I did in the beginning, and I talked about endorsement relationships where I already have people that have a relationship with a group of prospects that I'd like to do business with, that would recommend my services to them.

Now, not having that in place, I did a lot of 5-around's. What you do is when you're doing a cleaning job in a particular neighborhood, you put promotional door hangers – in this case, I use letters now – flyers on doorsteps.

But it's not just putting a flyer or a door-hanger. Someone can send a postcard and say, "I've done direct mail and direct mail doesn't work." A lot of it has to do with the actual message.

So I really like free recorded messages, postcards that drive people to a 24-hour free recorded message, any form of advertising that drives people to a 24-hour free recorded message.

Now, before I explain other ways that you actually advertise and what the advertising should say and what elements it should contain, I want to explain to the listeners something I think is real important.

The big barrier that we have to overcome in the carpet cleaning business and selling services to people is understanding that there's this huge amount of skepticism and fear and danger that exists inside our prospects' minds.

Nobody really looks forward to having their carpets cleaned. Everyone that is listening to this call right now and in the business as a professional cleaner, they happened to get into a business that nobody really enjoys purchasing. Nobody wakes up and says, "Gosh, I can't wait for the 6-month mark or for the kids to go back to school, so I can get my carpets cleaned."

It's like owning a car. Nobody looks forward to having to change the oil. It's just one of the necessarily evils of owning it. It's maintenance.

If you're going to be offering this type of service, you have to make sure that they trust you. The big question mark in everyone's mind, your mind, my mind, everyone's mind whenever we buy anything, is "Who can I trust?"

So you need to convey, in whatever method that you communicate your message, trust. You need to establish trust. So you need to have a compelling message. You need to make a very powerful offer. You need to include testimonials of other people that you've already done business with,



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that are very much like the people that you're marketing to in high-end areas that are saying, "This carpet cleaner is fabulous. They're excellent. They did a great job. I would endorse them and recommend them to other people. That's called social proof.

So you want to use social proof. You could say all kinds of great things about yourself all day long, but when you get other people that have had experiences with you to say those for you, it's infinitely more believable.

So some elements that you want to do and some ways to do it.

The most powerful offer in the world, bar none, out of my experience – and I think my experience is pretty extensive, it's just true, there's no other individual in the world that has spent more time and focus on developing marketing campaigns for professional cleaners and has over 4,000 people to prove it...

Alex: Give it to me, what is it?

Joe: It's a free room of cleaning.

Alex: It's what?

Joe: It's offering a free room of cleaning. No risk, no cost or obligation of any kind. Put your butt on the line. People immediately say, "I won't give my services away for free, because that's devaluing the service." All I can say is agree with me or not agree with me, it's like arguing against truth.

The point is I've made more money, and so have my clients, offering a free room of cleaning to get our foot in the door and show that we're absolutely everything we say we are than I ever did doing price reductions or doing discounts.

I would much rather give away a free room of carpet cleaning for very high-end, very extensive, very thorough cleaning than I ever would doing cheap price.

Alex: Anyone who doesn't want to give a free room of cleaning, I would want them to be my competitor so I can clobber them in my neighborhood. They're not going to even make headway. Would you agree with that statement?

Joe: Oh, absolutely. I crack up because there's industry bulletin boards where people spend a lot of time talking – more time talking than doing, but for the most part – spend a lot of time talking about free rooms of cleaning and why it won't work, and how that's so stupid.

Unfortunately, that comes out of ignorance. I don't think anyone's in the business because they necessarily want to work hard. There are right ways to do it and there are wrong ways to do it, and it's a methodology.



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So we offer a free room of cleaning with a carpet audit, which is the presentation methodology, the process of how to communicate in the home, how to collect valuable information from your clients so that you can build value.

If you just offer a free room of carpet cleaning and then when you show up you do not communicate effectively why they should use your cleaning services, the benefits of using your cleaning services, then in many cases all you'll do is a free room of cleaning and they won't buy additional services.

But I'm not talking about showing up with a free room of cleaning and then pressuring people into buying more. Like I said earlier, people love to be sold, they hate to be pressured. It's a matter of how you present yourself with no risk.

So the value of how do you get into high-end areas, how do you get to the high-end prospects, you literally eliminate all the risk, because trust is the big obstacle.

How do you get people to trust you? I'm everything I say I am. "I'm going to give you the most thorough cleaning you've ever seen, or it's free. So I'll come in and clean a room for free. And if you're satisfied with it, I'll give you a quote, a carpet audit with a written quote to what it will cost to do more, and I'll let you know – if you do decide to have us do any other cleaning services for you – it comes with a 100% money-back guarantee. If you're not thrilled with our services, you don't pay a penny for them."

So you've taken away all the risk to do that.

Well, there might even be skepticism in that prospect's mind, even if you told them that on paper, in the form of a free recorded message, on a website, whatever.

What you then do is you show them testimonials of all of your other clients, and that's about as close as somebody can come to literally eliminating the psychological fear in the prospect's mind that someone's going to rip them off. That's just a great way to do it.

I've even set up a website called EthicalServices.com.

Alex: Hang on, hang on, let me write that down. EthicalServices.com?

Joe: www.EthicalServices.com. And what we do is we have a code of ethics that our members sign, and they agree to follow the code of ethics and we have a fee that we give the money to charity, that they can be part of Ethical Services.

If they want more information, so I'm not spending this call talking about that, just go to EthicalServices.com, click on the member code of ethics, read the code of ethics. And at the bottom of that page, there's a PDF of an application, where someone has to print it out and sign that they will follow the



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code of ethics. There are things on there that members will not misrepresent facts about warranties or quality of services. Members will strongly guarantee their work. Members will be ethical and honest in all of their business relationships, that they won't use bait-n-switch advertising and things along those lines.

And it's amazing how many high-end clients are attracted to that because they're saying, "Wow, here is a credentialized cleaner that is a member of Ethical Services. And if the people are found, there's a way for the clients to actually respond. They can complain through Ethical Services if they have a bad experience with one of the cleaners, and we will kick them off the site if we find that they are misrepresenting services and stuff.

It's a great thing to credentialize yourself, along with social proof.

One of my favorite things to use the free room of carpet cleaning and the carpet audit with is one of my processes, which is the 3-step letter. I have a whole letter sequence developed specifically just to drop off on doorsteps. It explains thoroughly the free room of cleaning, why you're doing it, the carpet audit, and just call and schedule it.

And some of my members, that's the majority of how they get all of their new clients is through 3-letter sequences using that particular offer.

Alex: I love it. Let's go to question #4. We have about 30 minutes left.

My clients are always happy with our work, and they give us great testimonials. But they don't seem to give us enough referrals.

4. "Now, what's the best way to get referrals and how can I get high-end clients to refer my company to more of their friends, family and coworkers? What bonus gifts should I offer my clients who refer? And how can I contact referrals that I get from these customers?"

What do you say to that?

Joe: Okay. First off, the best way to get referrals, I have to kind of step back and say if you want word-of-mouth marketing, you've got to give your clients something to talk about. People just have this assumption that I can't get more referrals.

Well, have you ever done business with yourself? Are you a company that you would refer to other people, based on the experiences that your clients have?

What an entrepreneur, what a professional cleaner needs to do is think about who are the companies I refer and why do I refer them? What do they proactively do in order to instill referability habits in me. And if they're not doing anything and I'm just referring them, is it just because I'm having such a great experience with them?



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I have a process called The Happy Client Experience, where there's 3 types of experiences that a client can have when doing business with you. They can be an unhappy client... I'm sorry, not unhappy client, unhappy customer, where they just did not have a good experience with either the way the phone was answered, the attitude of the technician, the quality of the cleaning service. There could be a variety of things that could make them unhappy.

However, I think most experiences are not unhappy. Most experiences in any business, even going to restaurants, I would put under satisfied customer, where you got what you paid for, you got exactly what you paid for. What you really want is you want a happy client experience where, when you're done, they have a smile on their face because they feel you've exceeded their expectations.

Business is nothing more than the process of exceeding expectations. And if you only leave people satisfied, you're not really giving them anything to talk about.

So in order to get referrals, you need to deliver an experience. And you need to proactively ask them to tell other people about you. Because if you're getting referrals right now and you do not have a referral program in place, it's just happening automatically, that's good news. It's good news from the standpoint that they like you well enough to where they're telling other people about you.

The bad news is you're not leveraging that happiness of that client at all. The great thing about a happy client experience is there's a way to capture that, package it, leverage it and distribute it through your network of clients, and they become your free salespeople for you. And that's what's fantastic about it.

So how do you do it? You ethically bribe them. For one, there's referability habits. My good friend Dan Sullivan, who founded a company called Strategic Coach, a phenomenal organization, he has 4 things that are referability habits. And I'll tell people to write these down on your note section.

If you don't follow these referability habits, I don't care how great your marketing campaign is or how slick your technician is or how beautiful your cleaning van is or how nice your letterhead is. None of that matters if you break any of these referability habits – you or your technicians.

The first thing you've got to do is you've got to show up on time. Simple, show up on time.

Alex: It sounds trivial, but it's a big deal.

Joe: Yeah. These are all very simple, hearing about them and saying, "Yeah, yeah, I agree," versus really looking at yourself under a microscope and saying, "Is



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this what I'm delivering?"

So show up on time. You're in the service business. Service means service people. Show up on time.

Second, do what you say you're going to do. You make a promise, do it. If you under-quote them or over-quote them or whatever, make it right, do the right thing.

The second thing is do what you say you're going to do.

Third referability habit is finish what you start. Finish what you start. Don't make promises you don't keep.

The fourth thing, and this is critical for referrals, say please and thank you.

Alex: Wait a minute! What? Say please and thank you?

Joe: Say please and thank you.

Alex: That came from my mother.

Joe: Believe it or not, it probably did.

Alex: It's hardwired, I think, into us. That's a great point.

Joe: Yeah. If you think of all the people that are really skilled and talented but you don't tell other people about them, why is that? And if you really think about it, the reason is, on some level, is they're not dependable and you don't trust them.

I have a lot of very skilled people that I know in the marketing business. I know a guy that is phenomenal at building furniture and doing design. And I'm reluctant to refer this individual to other people because he doesn't finish what he starts all the time. He's late a lot. And I don't want to expose other people to that.

So if I'm going to refer anybody, they better darn well give me a stellar experience. I better be a happy client.

See, people are hardwired to do this anyway, the majority of restaurants that you really like and you tell other people about it and they go and eat there, or they go and watch a movie as a result of you saying, "Hey, this is a great movie, you should go see it."

Look at this book that you told me about, Alex, called *The War Of Art*, by Steven Pressfield. One of the best books I've ever read in my entire life. I read it, it's wonderful. I like it so much, I bought a couple hundred copies for my Platinum Plus members. I've sent it out as Christmas gifts. I became friends with Steven Pressfield, who wrote the book. I invited him to do an interview with me for the Genius Network, because I loved it.



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Was I getting paid for that? No, I've got to pay for the books. But I like it so much that I'm telling others about it, because I had a good experience.

So everybody's doing this every day anyway. The thing is they're not engineering it into a system and replicating it.

So how do you do that? For one, you ask people. You explain to them that, "I'd like you to refer my services to your friends and clients. I will give them a free room of carpet cleaning as a result of it, and I will put them on my client newsletter list. Could you please give me their name, their phone number, their email, and I will invite them to have a free room of carpet cleaning?"

That's one way that you do it. And every time that somebody gives you a job or refers a job to you that results in the client actually hiring you, you either give them \$10 in cash, like my client Don Deleeuw uses \$2 bills. After every referral, he sends someone a "Thank you for the referral, I appreciate it, here's \$10," and it's in the form of 5 \$2 bills. People don't get \$2 bills everywhere. So every time they go into their wallet, they can't help but think about that carpet cleaner.

You're not paying people just because they're referring you and rewarding them. You're doing it because once someone refers you and you instantly reward them – not with something conditional like "I'm going to give you free cleaning at your next cleaning," but you immediately reward them with like money or with movie tickets or buy them dinner, a free pizza, whatever – what you're doing is you're instilling referability habits into that client. That's what you want to control. You want to develop referability habits, and you reward them.

Anything that you reinforce and reward, you get more of. And people are like, "Who do I want to get referrals from?" Birds of a feature flock together. You want referrals from high-end clients, you want the home where they have 4,000, 5,000-square-foot home and the Mercedes in the driveway, I guarantee you those people know other people who live in the same type of home, that drive the Mercedes, that have 2 kids and have \$300,000 in their bank account.

So those are the ways that you actually do it. And you just ethically bribe people with great rewards, and you instill referability habits, you deliver a great service, and that's how you replicate yourself.

I can go much deeper into it, but I know we're limited on time.

Alex: Well, we are limited.

Joe: Let me say, I want to focus what I'm doing here on content, so that everybody that's listening absolutely sees that, "Wow, Joe really does deliver value." Because one of the things I want to do, too, is if I can help anybody learn, to



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give them direction, confidence and capabilities on how they can go out and build their business, then I believe the individual, if they see the value in this, are just going to do business with me anyway. They're going to see the value of this.

Alex: And people want new, better and different, as well. Before we go to question #5, let's go back to you were about to say something before I rudely interrupted you.

Joe: All I would say is there are things that you do before, during and after the job. So part of saying please and thank you is really thinking about the experience that everyone has before the job, during the job and after the job. And there are simple things that you can do. The referral program that I teach all of my members is simple: it's literally one page. It cost nothing. It gives you the copy that you would say to someone, that would compel them to want to give you the names and emails of your clients. You collect the emails of your clients.

This is another simple strategy. Collect the email of every one of your clients after the job. Send them a "thank you for letting us do business, we really appreciate it. If you'd like to forward this email to any one of your clients, attached to this email is a certificate that they can print out for a free room of carpet cleaning," and you pick and choose which clients you actually want to send that to.

I've had people literally get dozens of referrals using a referral system like the one that I teach, where you actually reward people and build referability habits.

The average amount of referrals that my members get per job is 3 referrals per job. And people that don't have this, they think that's made up.

Again, I wouldn't have as many members as I have and as many people that go to the boot camps if this didn't work.

Alex: Exactly. Exactly. The funny thing is that really leads to question #5. We have about 20 more minutes on the call. And that is, "How can I get into high-end neighborhoods?"

Now, this is a very important question because this is not getting a treasure map that leads to a treasure chest, this is finding a treasure map that leads to a treasure chest full of other treasure maps. You have all of these referrals and referents in high-end neighborhoods. So how do I get into a high-end neighborhood? How do I get these homes to respond? What's a 5-around?

Joe: A 5-around? In your case, since you're not in the cleaning business, I can assure you probably every single carpet cleaner listening to this knows exactly



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what a 5-around is.

You have a house. On each side of your house there are 2 neighbors. Across the house, there's 3 other homes – 5 around that one house.

Actually, I don't tell people just do 5-around. It's more just lingo, carpet cleaning lingo than anything. But you can do 20-around, you can do 15-around, you can do 100-around.

So the point is you pick a neighborhood that you want to target, that you want to be in all the time, and you penetrate it. You penetrate it using joint ventures. You make compelling offers. You put out 3-letter sequences. You mail postcards driving people to a 24-hour free recorded message. You establish referrals. You use 3-step sequences, where one client is ecstatic about your service and then you market to all the other people in that neighborhood as a result of using that person's recommendation and name to get into the home, and you bond with people.

Everyone really would be well-served to write "bonding" down under the notes on question #5. This is one thing that people just do not do. They do not bond with their clients.

You're not going to build long-term relationships if you do not develop a bond. Nobody gets married, intelligently at least, if they do not establish some sort of bond with somebody else. And they do not stay together if they do not maintain that bond.

And it's no different with your clients. If you're in a relationship, you just want to develop a relationship with them. And there's all kinds of examples of this throughout the world that we can look at.

Look at Starbucks. Look at Harley-Davidson. Harley-Davidson is a company where their clients actually tattoo the name of the company on their bodies. That's a pretty hardcore form of bonding.

It's no different with whatever you're doing. If you want people to really do business with you, you need to bond with them.

So again, client newsletters, making a very compelling offer, and practicing. You're going to get better and better at these strategies the more that you do them and the more that you implement them. You get a joint venture with a carpet retailer, starts recommending your services, take care of their clients. Treat them like gold. Have the clients report back to the carpet retailer. They're ecstatic. Give them a whole stack of free room of carpet cleaning certificates, have them pre-sell your maintenance programs to their clients as they sell carpets. Do it for interior designers. Do it for real estate agents. Do it for dry cleaners of clothing. You can get into any darned neighborhood you want to get into.



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Alex: That's a great, great, yet simple approach. As the question continues, it's like how can I keep their attention all year round and consistently build my relationship with my customers?

Everything seems to be going back to that free room of cleaning, because I guess you're in the door, right? You're inside the house. And if you have rapport-building skills, then you just take it from there. Is that accurate?

Joe: Absolutely. And if you don't have rapport-building skills, then the client newsletter, the free recorded messages, the consumer awareness guides can communicate all of that for you. There are a lot of cleaners that are total introverts, that are very successful clients of mine, that couldn't sell their way out of a paper bag.

But they do all of this other stuff so well in terms of delivering. When I say so well, really they just do it. The truth is, Alex, maybe I'm making this sound more complicated than it actually is, there's a lot of real idiots that are your competitors, and you only need to do a little bit better of a job than them in order to generate business.

The person that I'm worried about is not the carpet cleaner that has the real expensive truck-mount and all of these patches on his arm because he's been certified and everything but doesn't know a single thing about client services or follows the referability habits.

The person I worry about is the cleaner who's getting the savvy education in marketing. And that's why our Piranha members clobber their competition. I'm all about providing tremendous value, being great and nice to your clients, but the truth is they're your clients. As far as competition, people say, "I like friendly competition," I don't want competition. There's a million other things people can do for a living. They don't have to be in my business.

For all my listeners, clobber your competition. That's capitalism. That's what it's all about. Just do a great job doing it, be smarter than them, provide tremendous service, and get your clients to bond with you so they never want to do business with anybody else and you get the rewards of doing things right.

My good friend Ken Glickman says, "You don't get the proverbial cigar in life until you get it right and never before." It doesn't matter if you're a nice person, it doesn't matter anything. What matters is doing it right.

So the person that runs the business properly and is the great marketer and provides great service, they're the ones they're going to do business with.

And, I haven't touched on this, but the most expensive cost in your business is the cost of acquisition, is the cost of getting that client the first time. So once you've got them, you might as well leverage that relationship consistently, because it just grows from there.



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Alex: Yeah, and you keep going and going. Sometimes, familiarity breeds contempt. But what it should breed is more referrals.

A lot of carpet cleaners, I think any service business, they forget to go back to the family, to the people who love them and like them most and who are treating them as if they are clients, to get those referrals. And when you're in a high-end neighborhood, I think that's where you've got to start.

Now, when we are in the marketing business, I think raising prices is the fastest, easiest and most economical way to increase sales and profits without spending a single penny on advertising or promotion.

So question 6 is "How do I go about raising prices?" And people listening right now are going, "Oh man, I don't have enough clients as it is," or "my business is seasonal. What do you mean raising prices? Are you crazy?!"

Even in high-end markets, everyone is a price shopper. Is that true?

Joe: Yes. Yes. Everyone is a price shopper if you given them no other criteria to shop from.

Alex: Gotcha. Gotcha.

Joe: It's a distinction.

Alex: Okay. So let's say you have competitors and they're all advertising low prices and they charge by the room. How can you possibly compete with raising prices and charging by the square foot? Is that ludicrous? I mean charging by the square foot, everyone else is charging by the room.

I think there's a glitch here, because you're saying give away a free room or give a room away for free and get in the door that way. What's the disconnect here? What am I missing?

Joe: Well, first off, let's say that you don't charge by the square foot and you just charge by the room, but you want to be 3 times more than any other carpet cleaner. The question is "How do I do that? How do I go about raising the prices?"

Well, for one, you can promote yourself.

Let me give you marketing in a nutshell. There's 3 things that you need in order to sell something. Everyone can write this down. And if there's any of my Piranha members on the line, they've heard me talk about this before.

The first thing you need in order to sell is you need a product or a service. Everyone on the line has a carpet cleaning business, so #1 product or service, I'm a carpet cleaner.

The second thing you need is a sales pitch or marketing message. You can put "sales pitch/marketing message."



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And the third thing you need is a delivery system. So product or service, sales pitch, delivery system.

This is what 99% of every service business – not just carpet cleaners – focus on. “This is what I do, here’s how I’m going to tell people about it.”

The phone book is a delivery system. Yellow Pages are delivery systems. Newspaper ads, Valpak type coupons, TV, radio, telemarketing, door-to-door sales, postcards, the website.

The website is nothing more than an electronic brochure. It’s a delivery system. But if the only message that you’re promoting through the variety of delivery systems that are available to each and every business owner out there are focused on this is how much we charge, then you’ve just advertised the only criteria for people to make a buying decision. And in a capitalistic society, where people actually use money as their form of exchange in transacting, if you want them to focus on something other than how much it costs, you better give them another reason to see a differentiation.

So no matter if you charge by the room or square foot, the first key of how do you raise your prices – and that was a question from a lot of the people in the survey – here’s how you do it: you just do it. You just raise your prices. You’ve got to understand that the price resistance is in the mind of the seller and not in the mind of the buyer. This is more of a mindset issue than it is how do I raise my prices, as if you’ve got to justify things.

There’s something that I say in my seminars all the time, which is price-cutting is a self-inflicted wound. Your competitors do not raise your prices. You raise your prices.

The carpet cleaner writes the quote, you publish the price in your advertisements. If your competitor’s prices are lower than yours, that’s your problem. It’s theirs, I’m sorry. It’s their problem, it’s not your problem. Who cares?

So when someone goes to the printer and they’re going to print up a price list, you tell the printer what to print on the price sheet. You don’t consult with your competitor to see if it’s okay that you raise your prices.

If someone’s listening, well, if you don’t believe what I’m saying, then call your competitors and ask them if it’s okay if you can raise your prices. And if they tell you no, then you can decide to listen to them or not.

So before I say what you need to do, I want everyone to understand that. And the only reason I say that is because I have the biggest psychological struggles, myself and my cleaning business, raising my prices. It took one of my technicians to actually convince me to raise my prices because I had a mindset that, “Man, I wouldn’t pay that much money to clean carpets.”



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I have carpet cleaners out there that are charging \$1 a square foot and getting it all day long, and I know there's some people on the phone that, immediately, their paradigm is "That's impossible! There's no way!" We have plenty of members 50¢, 75¢ a square foot.

So how do you do it? You don't sell a commodity. Let's talk about Starbucks as an example. And I want everyone to write these 3 words down: pride of spending. Pride of spending. There's a psychological appeal in the concept of pride of spending, which hardly any marketers ever talk about.

Using Starbucks as an example, I love this example, you take a 2¢ commodity, a coffee bean. You take that 2¢ commodity and put it into Folger's crystals or you put it into a convenient store like 7/11 or Circle K or a Quick Mart, and all of a sudden you've taken that 2¢ commodity and you've turned it into 50¢ to \$1.00. You put it in Denny's, you turn it into \$1.50.

You then take that 2¢ commodity and you put it into a Starbucks soy latte or a cappuccino, and all of a sudden you've taken that 2¢ commodity and you've turned it into \$3 to \$5 for a commodity.

Well, is it that they're really selling coffee or are they selling something else?

So you've got a whole country of people driving around, especially in the service business because we all use gasoline and drive the vehicles around, driving the truck-mount around all day long, putting gasoline in it, and you've got a whole society of people bitching about the price of gasoline as they drive to Starbucks to spend \$4 on a cup of coffee.

Alex: What about Restoration Hardware? It's the same thing. You mentioned that example yesterday, when I was talking to you.

Joe: Oh yeah, it's absolute packaging. You go into a hardware store and buy a hammer for \$7, and then you take it to Restoration Hardware, you write up a piece of copy talking about the history of this hammer and you display it in a really nice display with nice lighting, and all of a sudden you're selling a \$7 hammer for \$27 because of how you've packaged it.

So how do you go about raising your prices? One, you just do it. Secondly, you sell and deliver an experience versus a product or service. If people perceive you as the same, they're going to do business with you and expect you to be like everyone else. That's why I always tell cleaners, "Never give estimates. Give carpet audits." Everybody gives an estimate. All of your competitors are giving an estimate. If you want to be viewed like all of your competitors, then do all your competitors are doing. If you want to differentiate yourself, do something, deliver something, offer service packages, communicate and educate your clients in ways where they have never had that type of exposure.



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We have Piranha members that take one of the tools that we have with our carpet audit presentation, we have one of our members that literally videotaped his entire presentation on how they do a carpet audit in the home.

Obviously, I've created this whole process where people go into a home and they have PowerPoint presentations, where they'll walk in with a laptop computer and we have a PowerPoint presentation that educates people on how to choose a carpet cleaner. They've never seen a service business provide theater like this. It's amazing.

So it's just what you do to differentiate yourself and do something different. Sell something different, so they cannot compare you by price. If someone says, "I can get my carpets cleaned for this price from this guy," and they have no other criteria other than price, I don't blame them for choosing the lower price."

I'm a price shopper when they've given me no other reasons but price. So the point is reasons why. Give them reasons why.

And then a couple last things that are more philosophical when it comes to pricing.

Every single person, if they just get off this line, even if they don't change anything, they all go out and raise their prices 10%, the margins that you will increase in your revenue, you can lose up to 40% of your business with a 10% price increase and still maintain the same net bottom line profit, just by raising your prices 10% in an average cleaning company. And I know that because I'm friends with Larry Steinmetz, who wrote a phenomenal book that I highly recommend called *How To Sell At Prices Higher Than Your Competitors*. Larry Steinmetz.

And again, I've done an interview with him, 90 minutes on the subject, specifically for carpet cleaners. He's one of the top pricing experts in the country. People can get that by going to GeniusNetwork.com or contacting our office, whatever.

But you have to be willing to lose people that are 1's, 2's and 3's, if you want to get to 8's, 9's and 10's. If you look at a criteria of the best clients that will pay high dollars are 8's, 9's and 10's, you can't service 1's, 2's and 3's. If you expect them to pay an 8, 9 and 10 price, you'd better deliver an 8, 9 or 10 service.

If you have very low prices, you don't make enough margins to deliver the quality of service that will justify a higher price and will deliver it.

There's a philosopher that said, "The last thing that a human being ever gives up is their suffering." And I'll tell you, this is probably not a marketing strategy that anyone really wanted to hear about. The truth is there's a lot of people that are very much attached to their suffering. And if business is not a



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struggle and very hard for them, they have a real hard time with it. And if I teach cleaners how to raise their prices, teach any entrepreneur how to raise their prices and all of a sudden they start making more money for basically doing the same thing and in many cases it becomes a lot easier, they get very uncomfortable with it because they grew up with this nonsense drilled in their head about a work ethic, that you've got to work really hard.

It's just nonsense. It's total nonsense.

Life is a vacuum. The people that all they care about is price are the ones you don't want anyway. You're going to do business with people that are battery-chargers or battery-drainers. You're going to have employees who are battery-chargers or battery-drainers.

If you want people to charge your batteries, do it with people that respect paying great money for great service. I'm a \$10,000-a-day consultant, not because I just consulted with a bunch of marketing consultants, I charge that because I can get it.

Here's the secret to how much you charge. Here's the formula. If everyone wants to know how do you charge, what's the formula for charging higher prices, how much you charge for something is based on your ability to sell it. That's the formula. The better you get at selling and marketing it, the more you charge.

Anytime someone spends more than \$50 for a watch, they're no longer buying a watch they're buying jewelry.

Why do people buy Mercedes? Why do they go to very nice restaurants? Why do they wear designer clothes? Pride of spending.

Cater to the pride of spending. The affluent tend to associate value with higher prices. So you'd better darn well become aware of that and realize you are not your own client. Just because you won't pay 75¢ a square foot to have your carpets cleaned with wonderful service does not mean there's not a lot of other people out there that do it.

Alex: Joe, I can't argue with that. That is really, really insightful, and it's a very simple question, "How do I go about raising my prices?"

I had a mentor who once told me – he was in a service business – "You know, I'd rather explain price once than apologize for poor service forever." And I think that's a pretty good comeback for any carpet cleaner who gets that response from someone. "Hey, you're expensive." "Well, I'd rather explain price once than apologize for poor service forever."

Joe: Exactly. When they say expensive, expensive compared to what?

Alex: Yeah, exactly.



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Joe: I totally agree with you, and that's a great line. Everybody should use that.

Alex: #7, "What is the best way to spend my marketing dollars? I have X number of dollars per month to spend. What percentage of my income should I direct towards marketing, and how should I distribute the money? Yellow pages, client newsletters, voice broadcasts, 3-step direct mail letters? Joe, if you could only use one strategy, what would be the best strategy used and what's the least expensive and most effective marketing strategy there is?"

You know what? Everyone always wants that magic bullet, and there never is one. How do you respond to that question?

Joe: The closest thing that you can get to a magic bullet is just getting very, very skilled at what it is that you do, and honing your skills. It's like any professional athlete, they practice. They get really good at something and they get better results than the next guy.

So the bottom line is first understanding that you're in the arithmetic business. So the best way to spend your marketing dollars, education. Before I say, "Well, you should use the 3-step sequence, you should use the compelling Yellow Page ad with the headline, with the powerful offer, with testimonials and with a powerful guarantee or clean 3 rooms, get one free, or 20% off," there's a million different ways that you can communicate a message.

However, you need to understand how to formulaically set up and do these types of strategies.

If I had my druthers and I was really intelligent in the beginning, which I wasn't, I bumbled around like an idiot, we can talk about all these successful, great, wonderful things I've done and have had and have discovered and what I've offered people and what I've taught people and that's what most people want to hear about, the truth is I can give people the horror stories, which are far bigger than all the things I did right.

So in the beginning, if I could have changed anything in the very beginning, I would have looked at what others were doing and I would have done it the same way they were doing it if they were successful.

And I would have looked at all of the things that people were doing wrong, and I would have not done it.

Some people's purpose in life is to serve as a bad example. And the majority of people's competitors are very bad examples. And the problem is when you don't know what's working and what isn't and you start following what everyone else is doing thinking that that somehow works, that's one of the advantages of that's how most people actually are in business.



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So the best way to spend your marketing dollars, first off, is get an education. If you're limited in your amount of funds, before you go and blow money on a Yellow Page ad and you don't even know how to construct a message, figure out how to construct a Yellow Page ad right. There are lots of successful ones out there. I happen to have the majority of all of them.

Percentage of income directed towards marketing was one of the questions. What should you direct? Well, as much as you can justify. And how do you determine if you can justify it? Your marketing should be like a slot machine – you put in a dollar, you pull the handle out, if a dollar or more comes out you keep putting it in the slot machine.

When people in business school say you should only put 10% of your budget into advertising and marketing, what an idiotic statement is that? Let's say, for instance, you have a slot machine that you put in a dollar and \$10 comes back out every time you pull the handle and you're bringing in \$1,000 a month.

So based on that criteria, 10%, you can only put \$100 into the slot machine. Give me a break! It's totally moronic.

So you want to rig your business so it is a slot machine where you can control the flow of the clients that come in, based on your ability to manage it.

The great thing is when I teach this to people and they actually get it, their problem is not how do I get more business during the slow season, their problem is how do I hire a technician? How do I manage the logistics of all of that?

And you know what? Those are good problems to have because it's a lot easier to solve problems with money than it is to have problems that exist because of the lack of money.

Many problems in life you can solve with money, so those are the types of problems that I actually want.

So percentage of income directed towards marketing? You've got to track it. Everything measured improves.

One of the great things about doing this type of marketing, I don't know if everyone's picked up on this, but everything I've talked about is trackable. There's always offers, so you know specifically where they came from. You can drive people to free recorded messages and know who came off the free recorded messages. You make specific offers to people.

So you're not shooting promiscuously, wondering where it's landing. You actually know specifically what came from where.

There's a great law that I'd like everyone just to write down so they remember. Write down "Pearson's Law."



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Alex: Pearson's Law?

Joe: Pearson's Law. And that basically means everything measured improves. So you want to know where to start spending your money? Well, what are you currently doing right now that's working? If you're having success, even if it's not something I mentioned, even if it's something that completely is the opposite of something that you may think I believe or don't believe in, if it's working, replicate it.

Look at everything that isn't working and cease doing it, or tweak it and change it until you get results, and measure it.

So Pearson's Law is everything measured improves. But here's the better part. Everything that's measured and reported on improves exponentially. So whenever you have a reporting mechanism, that's the greatest thing in the world.

For instance, I do a contest every year where I give away cars. This year, we're actually going to give away my brand new convertible Mercedes. How would someone win that? Well, as part of my Platinum Plus members, they not only have to document what it is they're doing, they have to report back to me and literally compete for the Piranha spokesperson contest and ambassador to the industry, which happens to come with the prize of winning my convertible Mercedes.

At the last seminar, I gave away a brand new Corvette. The year before that, I gave away a brand new Hummer. And the year before that, I gave away my convertible Jaguar.

The point is people come to me and say, "Joe, I want to make more money." So I'm like, "Okay, you have to track your results. You have to measure them. You have to see where every dollar you're spending is going and what's coming back in.

Is it grueling work to track the numbers if you haven't done it before? Yes, it is. But you know what? I'm giving everybody what they say they want anyway, which is "I want to be more successful." "Okay, track it and then report back to me."

And just by doing that, by applying it, the results go up exponentially. Exponentially. We have movies from our cleaners that have done this. This is not just Joe talking about stuff that works. You want a proven system that works? Track what it is you do, measure it, identify the winners, identify the losers, do more of the things that work, get rid of the things that don't, and find people that already are doing really well and associate with them. There's a ton of successful people out there, if you just avail yourself of these people.



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Alex: Amen to that! Joe practices what he preaches, so you'll see what he's doing is exactly what he's talking about. And I want to thank you for that, because Joe says, "Say please and say thank you." We'll sandwich it with those 2 words.

Bonus question: "In what order should I send out strategies you suggest? What's first, what's next? In other words, how do I get started? And knowing what you know today, what would you do different if you started all over again?"

Joe: Well, there is no right or wrong way to do this. The fact is what people want is results. So my favorite definition of marketing is the quickest path to the sale.

People really want results. The best way to get result is determine what you want you business to look like.

If everyone, after they got done listening to this, which is just a few minutes, sat down with a notepad and just wrote out a rough draft, just whatever comes to the top of your mind, "What is my marketing plan? Send out a client newsletter every month."

One of the things that we get out of my boot camp every year, we have a Cash Creation Calendar. And I've tried to make this so brain-dead simple for people, we even include little stickers where they go to this big wall calendar and they plan out their entire year. They say, "On this date every month," whatever, they pick the date, they put a little sticker, "Client newsletter." We have another little sticker that says, "Send voice blast, send a promotional flyer," whatever it is that you want to do.

First, develop a marketing plan. Sit down and think. And then measure it. Like I said, everything measured improves. And give yourself a reporting mechanism.

Absolute essential items that I think should be in the toolbox of every cleaning company, and I don't mean like tangible tools, I'm talking about marketing tools, not just wands and truck-mounts and chemicals and sprayers and carpet blocks and booties.

Which is that another thing, too. Everyone should be wearing shoe covers and booties on their feet, which they can...

Alex: It shows respect. It shows respect.

Joe: Yeah. JoePolishRecommends.com, you can find all of these services that I recommend to get all kinds of stuff.

But have a consumer awareness guide and have a consumer awareness message.



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One of the very first tools I created was a consumer guide to carpet cleaning. It's real simple. I've got one sitting right here, to remind myself to talk about this and I waited until the very end to talk about this. It says, "Read this guide and you'll discover how to avoid 4 carpet cleaning rip-offs, 6 costly misconceptions about carpet cleaning. Crawling critters and crud, a guide to the slime, grime and livestock that's seeping, creeping and galloping through your carpet. Which method cleans best? 8 mistakes to avoid when choosing a carpet cleaner. The importance of value and price. Do you want a clean, healthy carpet? 100% no-risk guarantee. And 4 steps to a fresh, clean, healthy carpet."

Before anyone even opens the cover of this thing, I've just made them aware of all kinds of things that they didn't know they didn't know, but they now are thinking about them because of this. And what does everyone else offer in their promotional materials? A logo with a picture of a guy cleaning carpets, with a phone number and "commercial, residential, we'll beat any advertised priced," all kinds of nonsense.

So when they open up the consumer's guide it says, "Dear homeowner, choosing a carpet cleaner isn't easy. Why? Because you're bombarded with misleading advertising, confusing claims, and simply bad information, from super-low prices and high-pressure sales to unqualified technicians and near-worthless methods. How do you ever find a qualified, competent, professional carpet cleaner? You start by reading this consumer guide. In this fact-filled booklet, you'll discover blah, blah, blah," all the things that they'll discover so that they can make an intelligent and informed decision.

You have a consumer awareness guide so you have a vehicle that robotically educates your clients. You put it on your website. You put it in print so you can use it as a lead generator. You can give it out to endorsement relationships, so it does all of your communicating and educating for you. You put it in the form of a 24-hour recorded message, so you can advertise it on your van. You can put it on your business cards, so whenever you hand out a business card, "Call this 24-hour free recorded message, anytime, 24 hours a day."

When someone calls up on the phone, the first question out of their mouth is, "How much do you charge," and you have a person answering the phone that really is not as skilled at understanding the delivery of your services as you, you have them give that out to the consumer. So you say, "Go ahead and listen to this 24-hour free recorded message and it will teach you everything you need to know about hiring a carpet cleaner. And if you do want to come back to us, remember our services come with a 100% money-back guarantee. If you're not thrilled, you don't have to pay anything."



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Another strategy, free room of cleaning. But don't just give a free room, learn how to do the process right. There is a method to this process. And if you implement it properly, you will get great results.

Differentiate the way you present yourself in the home. Do a carpet audit. Don't do what everyone else does, do something different. Guarantee your work. There may be people that want to take advantage of you if you unconditionally guarantee your work, but I will just tell everybody, and I don't have enough time to go into it, the amount of business that you will generate as a result of the guarantee will far outweigh the amount of people that take advantage of you.

It works not only in carpet cleaning, it works in every business. Everything that I offer, in terms of services to our clients, our members, is guaranteed. If someone buys something from me and they're not happy with it, I don't want their money. I only want to have relationships with people that want to have relationships with me. And I believe everyone should be the same way.

So make it real easy for people to do business with you. That hopefully answers that question.

Alex: It does. It does. This has been a great interview. You haven't given me a lot of opportunity to grill you, but you've given some great answers. Very tactical and no-nonsense, this is what Joe Polish is all about.

If you have any questions about this interview, if you want to learn more about Joe, send a blank email to Info@AskJoePolish.com. You can also call at **800-275-2643**.

Any final words?

Joe: First off, I want to thank you for taking the time to do this. I very much appreciate it. I want to thank all of the listeners for all of the wonderful questions that they asked. I am actually going to personally go through every one of the questions and I will personally answer them, and we'll post it up on one of my websites. We'll notify everybody that we've got emails for when I do that, at some point in time.

But that's what Piranha membership is all about. I really hope that a lot of people end up associating with us. I put on our annual boot camp every year, so it's the biggest mastermind group. And the boot camp in a box that you talked about, that has every tool that anyone would ever need to build a multi-million-dollar business. And it works, and I guarantee it.

So I hope this answered the questions for everyone listening. And again, I thank you, Alex, and I thank everyone for participating. And I hope that everyone has an absolutely wonderful and successful year, and that's all based on your ability to choose what it is you want to do and what you're going to implement and who you associate with.



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Alex: Absolutely. And go out there and attract more high-end clients, and know that it is possible to attract those clients all year 'round.

This is Alex Mandossian calling in from San Francisco, CA. Joe Polish is in Tempe, AZ. And I hope our paths cross again.