

Dear Maverick Business Insider,

I've been on a bit of a whirlwind West Coast tour. First stop was Vegas for my buddy, Andy Jenkins, bachelor party. It was great to see some of my Internet pals including Maverick member Mike Filsaime for a quick 24 hours. I got in pretty early so I rented a car and headed off to the Agassi Prep Academy located in a pretty rough section of Vegas beyond the strip.

A few weeks earlier for our Maverick 'Sky's the Limit' adventure we brought in Ben Sayeski, Chief Education Officer and Darian Borowiak, Director of Development for the Andre Agassi Foundation for Education. They really go into our "Hook Me Up, Yo" business session and Ben even wore the infamous clock while explaining what the school does.

We asked Ben and Darian to compile a list of questions from the kids in advance regarding entrepreneurship. Maverick members roundtabled the discussion and provided real-world insights from their perspective as successful business owners. I arrived at the school to deliver the DVD recording of the roundtable, and to get an inside glimpse at what the school was doing.

Agassi Prep (www.agassiprep.org) works with children K-12 in an underprivileged area to assist them in achieving a college education. Last year was the very first year they graduated a senior class and I was excited to learn about a 100% success rate for college acceptance. I'm a huge advocate of education that inspires and gets real results. I popped my head into one classroom taught by Prof. Russell Andrews-EL and it was awesome to see the kids spread out, sitting on the ground, and learning Trig with whiteboards. Prof. Russell tried to create a similar environment to college without the formal desks and structure.

One of my favorite sites at the school is the bridge that Seniors get to cross after graduation. It symbolizes a transition from high school to college and only graduating seniors have this privilege. At the end of the bridge is a turnabout where the graduates write notes back to the next class behind them. I love the symbolism this ritual invokes.



After touring the school and seeing what is going on there, I'm hoping the Maverick members will come back to do a guest lecture on entrepreneurship in the near future, and even be inspired to mentor the kids.

Next stop was Park City, UT for our Maverick team's strategic retreat. More on that in a minute because I want to share our "**Painted Picture**" for 2012 and offer some insight into what I've learned this year for creating an exceptional organization.

2012: A Maverick Space Odyssey

Before we get to that I want to share some of my fun pics from my final West Coast destination; the Mojave Desert. Last Monday was a truly historic event with the unveiling of Virgin Galactic's VSS Enterprise rocket ship - the first commercial space vehicle.

As you might know I'm #144 on the list to go into space with Virgin Galactic. The unveiling was a significant milestone with flight-testing starting on the rocket immediately. The best estimates are mid to late 2011 for the first flight, and then I've approximated I'm on flight #26 if all goes well.

Rolling into Scaled Composite's HQ in Mojave I was hoping the weather would cooperate since it had rained

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for a full 2 hours on the ride up from LA. Over 800 future astronauts, VIPs, dignitaries and politicians came in for this historic event including Governor Schwarzenegger and Governor Richardson from New Mexico.

They told us that day was the coldest day in Mojave with wind gusts of 70-80mph. It was a good thing they gave everyone nice jackets, although that still didn't really keep us warm enough – but who cares. It was amazing seeing SpaceShip 2 come down the runway. They had a pretty major light show and music going to set the scene.

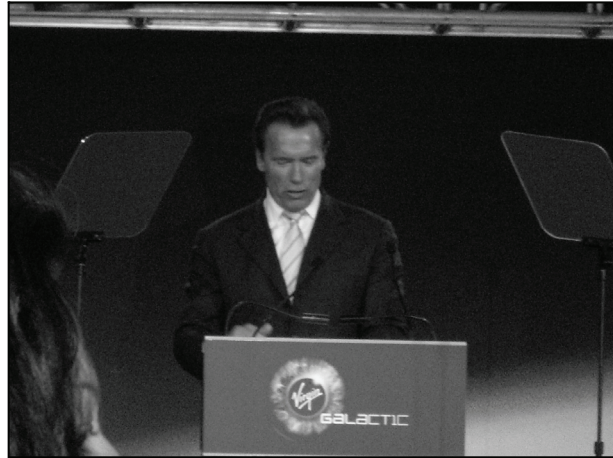
Here's the first glimpse I got of the craft:



And here I am in front of SpaceShip 2 freezing my ass off:



Everything was perfectly choreographed except for the weather. I'm sure they weren't expecting the hurricane-type winds we got. In fact, they shut the party down early at 7:30 and immediately cleared everyone to the busses to get us back to LA. It's a good thing too since I heard later the press tent and the other party tents blew down. Crazy!



I actually ended up sitting on the bus next to Dr. Peter Diamandis, the founder of the X-Prize and one of our previous Maverick Business Adventures® guests from 2008's Vegas adventure. I love talking to Peter to hear what he is up to. The guy is such a big-thinker and visionary. Peter is involved in creating a NASCAR-like Rocket racing league and was showing the first version of the iPhone video game they are producing.

Back to The Future

It's amazing to be alive in a time when you can actually go up into space as a tourist and not be limited to a government space program. As I mentioned, I anticipate 2012 will be my flight and it's a year I've been doing a lot of thinking about.

No, not because I think the world is coming to an end or anything like that. But because I've been working on our "Painted Picture" for 2012 with my business coach Cameron Herold's help. Cameron is the former COO of 1-800-Got Junk and helped build that company from about \$2M - \$100M using this concept of the painted picture.

The way this concept started was using the same methods as Olympic athletes to visualize their performance and then applying it to a business model. Brian Scudamore, the founder of 1-800-Got Junk, sat down on his parents dock when they were a \$1.5M company and wrote out what the future would look like.

And Cameron was the guy to execute it. I'd been working with Cameron for several months and he kept bugging me to get this done, but I kept putting him off – until he finally painted me into a corner to commit.

(Side note: Cameron is an amazing coach and speaker.

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You should pick-up his DVDs before he realizes what he's doing and starts marking them up. Check out www.BackPocketCOO.com)

We've got some big plans for the next 3 years to grow the Maverick brand and merge what we've been doing with other companies.

Quite frankly, the last 2 years has been a serious transition from simply being a "one-man" band, to essentially growing an exceptional organization. (Sometimes it's felt like 3 steps backwards for every step forward.) A lot of my thinking has evolved based on the kind of impact we really want to have. I would never have believed 10 years ago that company values or a mission statement mattered. I thought stuff like that was all bullshit.

I mean, look at a company like Enron. Their mission statement including typical BS words like "Respect, Integrity, Communication and Excellence." Obviously a crock. But when I started hanging out and learning from Tony Hsieh, CEO of Zappos.com, I notice the difference in what he talked about and how he actually meant it. They incorporate their 10 core values into everything they do including hiring, firing and promoting.

That helped form our Maverick "DNA" and core philosophies –

Or reading books like "Peak" written by Chip Conley, CEO of Joie de Vivre Hospitality group in San Francisco. That got me thinking about what we are doing for our team members and customers/members beyond satisfying normal needs; but actually moving to the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

We've also started using Kolbe profiling to figure what our team's natural connotative ability is. It helps to figure out how people instinctively approach a project or a problem. I'm a 4-2-10-2, which is "**Explain, Adapt, Improvise, Imagine**". My score reveals why I'm quick to jump on a project because I'm a 10 in the "Quick Start" category – that's off the charts. And it also reveals why I do so many mindmaps and diagrams when trying to get my point across. (That's the last number "2" which means I'm high in imagination and don't need a concrete model of something.) There are no right or wrongs for Kolbe profiles – it's simply what you are. (It's worth trying it yourself and possibly doing it for your whole team.)

That's also gone hand-in-hand with the work I've been doing at Strategic Coach, created by Dan Sullivan. (btw his book, "Unique Ability" is one of my favorite books on the market.)

And as the saying goes, "When the student is ready the

Maverick Core:

Maverick companies embody the internal and external philosophy of '**Make More Money, Have More Fun, and Give More**'. Business bliss and balance are found where all 3 connect.



Maverick DNA:

1. **A Little Bit Quirky, a Little Bit Rock n' Roll** - not taking ourselves too seriously while having something pretty damn frickin' cool going on!
2. **C'mon Baby Light My Fire** - creating the spark & connection for successful entrepreneurs.
3. **But Wait, There's More...** Obviously taken from a typical infomercial line, this is a driving goal of creating surprise, delight and astonishment beyond expectations.
4. **Ripple** – Maverick is not just a pebble thrown in a pond, but a boulder. We create massive impact with our charitable and philanthropic innovation, entrepreneurship and giving forward.
5. **Banish the Ordinary.** Why have an ordinary life or create an ordinary business? You make the rules and that's what we're all about.

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teacher will appear.” That was the case for me with additional insights formed by the book “Tribal Leadership” by Dave Logan, John King and Halee Fischer-Wright about building incredible company cultures and evolving to a “Stage V” company. One of the biggest shifts from a typical company to an extraordinary one was having a huge mission that everyone on the team knows and can get behind. This leads to a real powerful change of direction, intention and motivation.

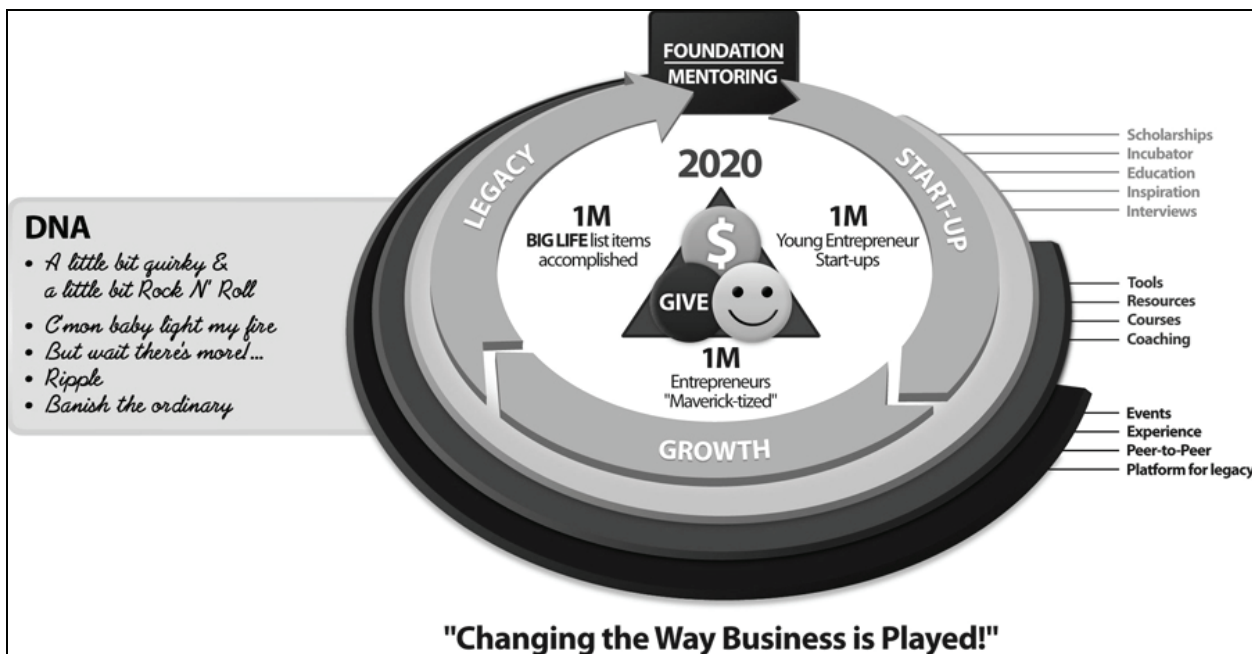
One famous example is Microsoft’s original goal of “A computer on every desk and in every home.” When you create a big vision or goal like that – you’ll find people getting on your team to help achieve it.

Our company’s 2020 goal is 3-fold:

Ultimate 2020 Big Vision:

- 1. 1,000,000 Young entrepreneurs, between the ages of 13-23, impacted, engaged and inspired to create or enhance their own business start-up.**
- 2. 1,000,000 entrepreneurs “Maverick-tized”! 1,000,000 entrepreneur members belonging to the free Maverick 1 Million Association and pledging to run their business via the Maverick philosophy including donating 3% of their increased earnings to a charity or philanthropic program of their choice.**
- 3. 1,000,000 ‘Ultimate Big Life List’ items accomplished. Help inspire, promote and facilitate the checking off of 1,000,000 (cumulative) Ultimate Big Life list items for entrepreneurs. Everything from what you want to experience, do, have or people you want to meet to create a truly meaningful, extraordinary life.**

There’s been lots of thinking, prioritizing and culling from where I believe our companies are heading for 2012. I created a graphic to represent the big picture of the impact we want to have in each area of an entrepreneur’s life-cycle from Start-Up to Growth to Legacy.



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I'd love to share the Painted Picture with you because, quite frankly, I need all the help I can get to accomplish the 3-year picture and our ultimate 2020 goals. Please take 5-minutes to read through it here:

www.MaverickBusinessAdventures.com/vision

And with that – we'll move on...



How To Come Up With A Powerful Name For A New Product Or Service

As Shakespeare said, *"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."*

Bzzzzzz! Wrong!

I think one of the most overlooked aspects in your marketing is naming a product or service. There's a lot to be said of coming up with the right name that helps propel your business forward instead of slogging along. When I talk about new names, keep in mind this applies to domain names and titles equally.

I mean, think about it: in Hollywood, actors have known this since the start. Do you know who Marion Morrisson was? Nope? That's John Wayne's real name. He adopted a stage name because Marion doesn't exactly conjure up a tough guy image. Or Norma Jeane Baker changing her name to a more glamorous Marilyn Monroe.

Here are a few more examples...

Ever heard of a Patagonian Tooth Fish? Sounds delicious, right? Not quite – but when they went with "Chilean Sea Bass" sales soared. Or how about the "Chinese Gooseberry" – wouldn't you like to have that for a snack? No? Oh, ok then maybe "Kiwi Fruit" is a better name.

Names are quite powerful. Here's a historical example to prove my point. Originally, the U.S. was protected by its "Department of War" and later they changed to a more peaceful sounding "Department of Defense." One name brings up the notion the U.S. is constantly waging war on other countries, so, without turning this into a political discussion, renaming it "Department of Defense" is significantly more palatable even if the function is the same.

Yes, there is a lot in a name and I'll share with you what I consider before I give a name to a new product, service or business. In a haphazard way I've known how powerful names can be starting when I was 16 years old and worked with my Father selling medical equipment. We created a private label X-ray film to be sold to our customers, and my Dad tasked me with naming it. I came up with "Ultimate X-ray Film" and it turned into a major best-seller.

Now I got to thinking of names the other day because Missy asked me to help her friend come up with a name for her new speaker management company. She was going to go with her last name i.e. "Sxxlor Management." Yuck! Boring!

I started thinking about what is the ultimate benefit a speaker would want. To me, it would be something about moving up to a higher level of fees or being completely booked. So I came up with "Booked Solid Speaker Services." I thought that was way better and included a serious benefit. I guess not. She went with her generic last name for the company name. In my opinion – big mistake! There's no differentiation and no benefit.

As a copywriter I know words are incredibly important. Each one is distinctly different. If you get the name right, "branding" is the by-product of powerful direct response advertising for your product or service.

Okay so let me give you some of my ideas around naming:

Alliteration – A name needs to sound good being said aloud. A lot of times I like alliteration like "Maverick Mastermind" with the 2 M's. And the converse of this is also true; you need to say your product name aloud and make sure it can't be screwed up on the radio or in conversation. Like does "Computers For You" have a number "4" or just a letter "U" in it? I see this mistake a lot for domain names (btw – all this advice holds true for domains.)

Benefit-oriented – Many times I like to use a name that has meaning to it, so that if you heard it you'd know right away what it is. For my first 'real' book "**Moonlighting on the Internet**" there's an instant benefit with the term "Moonlighting" – it brings to mind a spare time venture and is perfect for my book which is all about 5 ways to make a couple hundred extra dollars online.

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Beware of the Web 2.0 syndrome – For some reason after companies like Flickr or Delicio.us got big everybody wanted to create some sort of mildly dyslexic spelling for their company name that seemed cool. (I still don't know if I spell Flickr with an 'er' or not. And I definitely have no idea how to spell delicio.us without looking it up.)

Beware Initials – Yes, some of the biggest companies like AT&T or IBM have gotten away with initials but I wouldn't hold my breath thinking that'll work for you too. And why would you – it's so damn boring. Along the same lines don't use a generic name that doesn't mean Jack. *Hmm...was I supposed to call "Capital Paper Solutions" or was it "Senate Paper?"*

Use Specifics – I like using numbers, days, etc. My buddy, Tim Ferriss', book has made quite a splash with the title "4 Hour Work Week". It's a pretty specific and compelling name. Other works that have sold well just from their 'specific' titles include "8-Minute Abs" and "5 Hour Energy". Personally, one of my best selling eBooks has the title of "33 Days to Online Profits" – once again playing up the specifics here.

Who is the marketplace? The kind of name will help you define who is attracted to your product or service. You might remember years back when 'Boston Chicken' changed to 'Boston Market'. I thought that was a bad idea because it was more generic – well apparently others thought so too and it began losing sales. They changed the name back but the damage was done already. Personally, I think more people should embrace tight markets with their name and not try to be everything to everybody.

Is it Trademarkable? This is an important consideration depending on how big you want to build your brand – but it's always worth checking USPTO.gov or a new site called Trademarkia.com.

Bonus: Can your name help create unique language? This is a bit more advanced and much of this will come organically if your customers have a high affinity, but it's something to consider. Look at TED, the conference for Tech, Education and Design. Now attendees call themselves 'TEDsters' and have developed

rituals and languaging around the event. (Read "Primal Branding" for more on this notion.) With Maverick Business Adventures®, members use the term 'Maverick Moments' to talk about a funny incident or story that went on during a trip.

Let me share with you a few of the names I've created and give you the strategy behind them.

Instant Sales Letters: Uses the benefit driven name with the prefix 'Instant' added to the generic item I was selling. This was my very first \$1M+ product and I think the name had a lot to do with it.

As a side note: I'm a big believer in using prefixes or suffixes to help you get the domain you really want. (i.e. Instant, Ultimate, Magic, Formula, System, etc. Names like Autoresponder Magic or UltimateDiscountDomains.com)

Underground Online Seminar – The term "Underground" immediately brings to mind something secretive so it was a perfect name for our seminar series around real-world people teaching about how they make millions online. (Note: The very best discounts and bonuses expire January 20th so you don't want to wait until the last minute to attend. www.UndergroundOnlineSeminar.com)

Internet Lifestyle – I like the word "lifestyle" ever since I saw it featured in "Words That Work" by Frank Luntz. People can relate to a lifestyle because it's different for everybody and the 'Internet Lifestyle' embodies a lot of what I do.

Maverick Business Adventures® - this was a name I'd worked on for a long time. Originally the name was going to be "Millionaire Business Adventures" – I definitely don't think it had the same ring to it and I kept brainstorming. I like the 'MBA' initials as a play on a real MBA, and that's when the word 'Maverick' stuck.

I don't think I've ever shown this before but here's the logo for Millionaire Business Adventures. We were going to have different adventure activities on cuff links but alas I scrubbed it.

Hopefully, you'll agree 'Maverick Business Adventures'

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was the better choice. The word ‘Millionaire’ comes loaded with some interesting connotations around who millionaires are. I think it’s a good word for something that helps people achieve millionaire status – we own “Maverick Millionaires” and there’s been an ongoing program called “Maui Millionaires” that has done really well. Though for targeting a group of millionaires, I’m not so sure; even though ‘Millionaire Matchmaker’ seems to defy this.

The ultimate test of your name is your marketplace, and you can always test different names using Google Ad Words. That’s what Tim Ferriss did for ‘4 Hour Work Week’ before releasing it. And I did the same for “Moonlighting on the Internet” vs. “Moonlighting Online” as the publisher wanted to call it for brevity.

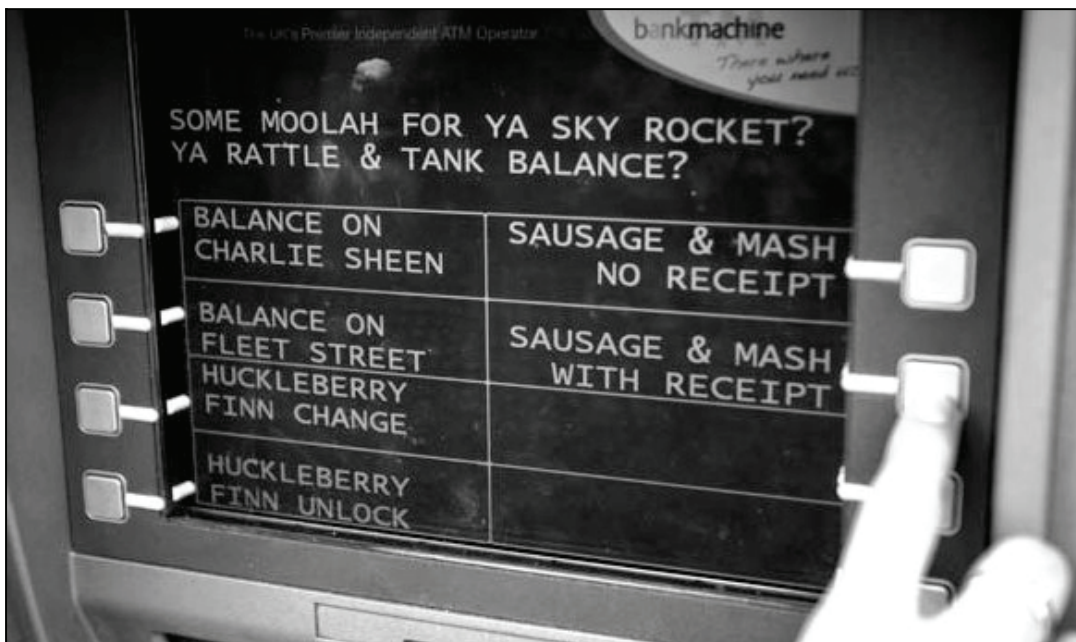
Here’s an interesting case study - <http://www.marketingexperiments.com/improving-website-conversion/domain-product-name-testing.html>

One product name (StockScreener 5.0) performed 17% better than the next best name. They tested 22 different names and the worst performed at 300% worse just by changing the name. Makes you think. And makes you consider that maybe you should not choose a domain name, product name or service without running some Google Ad Word tests.



A handful of ATMs in East London are getting some good PR around using Cockney slang on the ATM banking options.

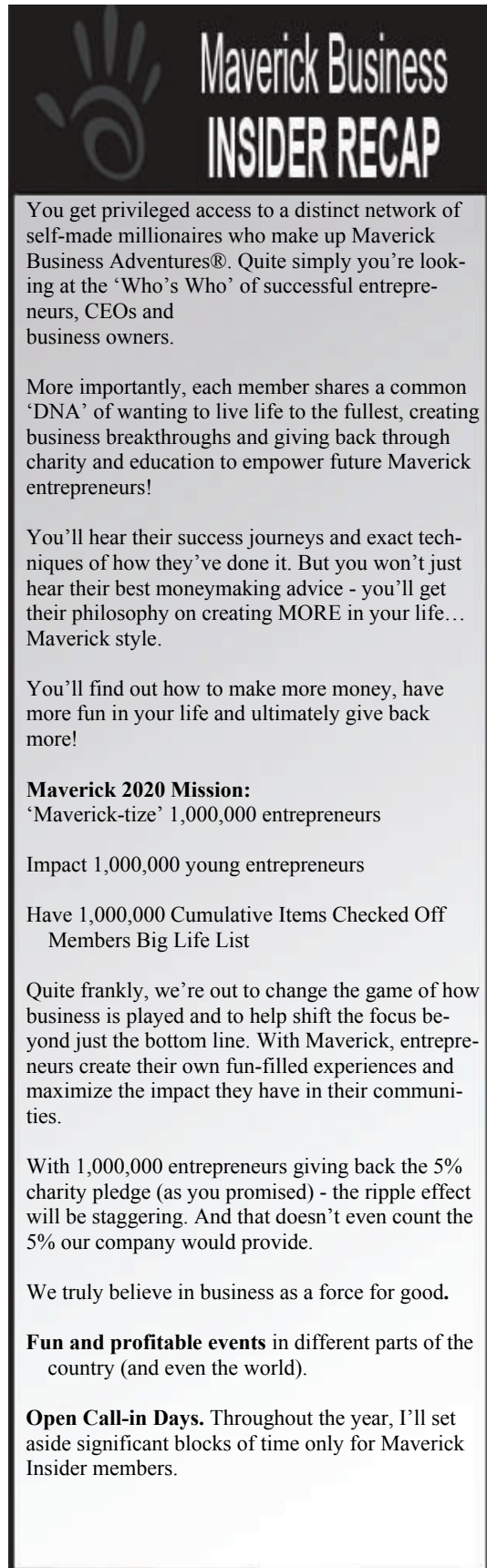
You’ll be asked to enter your “Huckleberry Finn” (PIN) and then select the amount of “Sausage and Mash” (Cash) you’d like.



The rhyming slang has been used in Britain, especially London, and including this 'language' on an ATM is a fun way to get noticed and talked about.

Best,

Yanik Silver



**Maverick Business
INSIDER RECAP**

You get privileged access to a distinct network of self-made millionaires who make up Maverick Business Adventures®. Quite simply you're looking at the 'Who's Who' of successful entrepreneurs, CEOs and business owners.

More importantly, each member shares a common 'DNA' of wanting to live life to the fullest, creating business breakthroughs and giving back through charity and education to empower future Maverick entrepreneurs!

You'll hear their success journeys and exact techniques of how they've done it. But you won't just hear their best moneymaking advice - you'll get their philosophy on creating MORE in your life... Maverick style.

You'll find out how to make more money, have more fun in your life and ultimately give back more!

Maverick 2020 Mission:
'Maverick-tize' 1,000,000 entrepreneurs
Impact 1,000,000 young entrepreneurs
Have 1,000,000 Cumulative Items Checked Off Members Big Life List

Quite frankly, we're out to change the game of how business is played and to help shift the focus beyond just the bottom line. With Maverick, entrepreneurs create their own fun-filled experiences and maximize the impact they have in their communities.

With 1,000,000 entrepreneurs giving back the 5% charity pledge (as you promised) - the ripple effect will be staggering. And that doesn't even count the 5% our company would provide.

We truly believe in business as a force for good.

Fun and profitable events in different parts of the country (and even the world).

Open Call-in Days. Throughout the year, I'll set aside significant blocks of time only for Maverick Insider members.



Interview with

Susan Hill

December
2009

Yanik Silver: Hey everyone. This is Yanik Silver and with me for another jam-packed interview I have Maverick Business Adventures member Susan Hill from Fitness-ForGolf.com. We're going to talk to Susan about how she got started in her niche, what she's doing now and essentially how she's come to dominate her field of endeavor. So Susan, welcome.

Susan Hill: Thank you Yanik.

Yanik: Susan is pretty much up for anything. I think the first Maverick trip that you went on was the Baja one, right?

Susan: Exactly.

Yanik: We got a chance to know you a bit there. And for those of you who have never been out to Baja, it's literally in the middle of nowhere and there are certain amenities that aren't found on the road, and you were a trooper and made the most of it. I don't think you complained once.

Susan: I don't think I did either, and I think it was a part of the experience: to go and put myself in an element where I was completely uncomfortable and then embrace it.

I think I mentioned this last year when I was on the stage at Underground® 5 when we were talking about Maverick Business Adventures. I was doing that in business: embracing everything that is not conventional and taking lots of risks. I wasn't doing it in my personal life.

It was really awesome. There was only one other woman and we were in constant search of pink cacti and we didn't come across a lot.

Yanik: [laughing] Right. So why don't you start from the beginning and give us a little background on your story?

Susan: Sure. I like to think of myself as having a couple of different lives, and I'll reference different things in my background. I did start out in business and was the director of marketing for a company. I was always ambitious.

At some point I was ready to settle down, get married and have a child, and I

realized that the level of ambition was going to change; certainly the level of travel. So I started to look at alternatives, and one of the alternatives that I found really interesting and appealing was training.

So I got into the field of business training and worked at a resort. That's what actually launched my whole business on the internet: when I was working with training.

Yanik: And what year was that?

Susan: Let's see...I started on the internet in 2004, and I think I just started training maybe a year or two before that. I really wasn't training all that long. I discovered that a little later in life. It wasn't something where I graduated and said, "I want to be a trainer" like a lot of other trainers.

Yanik: And by training you mean fitness training?

Susan: Yes, exactly.

Yanik: Alright, so you took that path. What was your first site and how did you come up with that?

Susan: At the time I was working at a resort, and this was really interesting: I was working at a golf resort. It wasn't like a typical gym; it was more like a spa and fitness center. There were just a couple of trainers. This place was called the Sunriver Resort and it brought in people from all over the world who would come and want to play golf.

One of the perks and reasons why I really wanted to work there was because I got free golf. So if you can imagine: I work for a living; I chose to be a personal trainer, but my area of specialty was in body transformation like a lot of personal trainers.

When I wasn't working I couldn't think of anything that would be more exciting than playing a round of golf, so it was really cool. They had this package that allowed me to just go jump on the course for free. So what would happen was this: I'd finish my shift and run over to see how many holes I could play before I needed to head back home.

As I'm heading out on the course, inevitably somebody from the gym would say, "Oh my gosh, you're the trainer in the gym! I didn't know you golfed; maybe you could train me for golf."

I thought to myself, "No, no, no. I do this body transformation stuff over here. I just like golf. I don't know anything about training golf." But I kept getting asked that so much that I thought, "Maybe there's something to this."

I always feel like it's a secret, but it's so obvious to me, is that I don't think I created anything. I think everybody around me has given me ideas and I saw them as an opportunity to move forward. I didn't create the idea of training for golf; I let my customers, that and continued feedback from those customers who were saying, "Boy, it's too bad that when we leave this resort that we don't get to keep training with you. It's really too bad that we don't have a place to go where we can continue to get your advice."

“Everybody around me has given me ideas and I saw them as an opportunity to move forward.”

That's where it came from. I can't really give credit to myself except as a good listener.

Yanik: You were smart enough to say, "Aha! There might be something here." And took your passion and your interest and smooshed them together. How important do you think passion and interest are for a successful business?

Susan: Passion is the place to start, for sure. If you're not passionate about it I can't imagine why you would want to do it. But I hear so many people talk about passion and I think they talk about passion like it's the most important thing, but I think passion without action is...I don't know. They have to go together.

Not only did I have the passion, but I was willing to take action. And then there's continued action, even when you have those days or moments when you don't believe in yourself. That passion, I think, keeps you moving forward, but you have to keep taking the action steps even when you're not having a good day or you do not believe that it's going in the right direction.

Yanik: Right. So you had some people from the gym see you out on the course and ask you to help train them to get fit for their golf game. What was the transition to online business and your first product? Was it an info product?

Susan: My first product was actually a membership site. Again, if you look at the context in which I was training people, what would happen was that I would have local people who would book me on a regular basis.

I was also working at this resort. So people would come in, they'd check into their rooms. They'd be on vacation for a week or so, they'd bring their families or they'd come out for golf tournaments. All I would see on my books was that Joe in room 243 booked me for this hour and so-and-so booked me for this hour, so a lot of my base was transitional, which is different from a traditional personal training situation.

So they would say, “Wow, that was a really cool hour, but I’m flying back to Michigan tonight and it’s really unfortunate that we can’t continue this.” And I think that’s when it started to click for me. I said, ‘Wait a second. There’s a whole base of people who, for whatever reason, aren’t connecting with their local trainers and are not feeling like they’re getting the information. They’re saying they like what I had to give them, but now if I could put it in an environment where they could download it...’”

The only thing that came to mind was the idea of a membership site where they could pay just some sort of a reasonable fee. You put it up on the internet and I could put all of my...what you refer to as “intellectual properties”. It was training programs that I used every single day in my business.

I just loaded them up on the website and said, “Okay, pay a fee and have at it.”

Yanik: And where did you get the idea or the gumption that you could do something like that?

Susan: [laughing] Great question. Where does that come from? I guess I always believed that I guarantee that I’ll never be successful if I don’t ever give it a try. I guaranteed that I won’t be successful one way, and I have no idea what will happen if I go the other way.

For me it’s never a choice. You have to honor your intuition. You have to honor direction. You’ve got to take a step or you’ll never know. And I was dying to know.

Yanik: Right. So give us the evolution. You started with FitnessForGolf.com or was it something else?

Susan: Yes, it was FitnessForGolf.com, and then I just started catering to golfers. I put all my information up there. I built a membership site, and then I just sat there twiddling my fingers thinking, “Oh my gosh. I just spent six months of my life writing down everything that I knew or thought that I knew or guessed that I knew, and I put it all up there.”

I was sitting there waiting and they weren’t finding me. I thought if I’d put it up there the least they could do was come on over and give me a token. I think one of my friends bought in, so I got a taste of what it’s like to push that button.

It was at that moment when I realized I’d put a lot of time and a lot of money into this, and at the bare minimum I deserved to get that money back. Even if it turned out to be the stupidest mistake I’d ever made, at least I was going to get back whatever I’d put into building this site. That was the least I could do.

There was a guy in the fitness business that was learning about internet marketing. A lot of people know him; his name is Ryan Lee. He was creating this niche where he was teaching personal trainers to empower themselves through marketing, so a lot of us were finding him because he was doing a great job at internet marketing and that was helping us to find him.

“What would I do if I had a message and I wanted somebody to listen to my message?”

So I put up this website and I started following his little tidbits of information and different things so I could at least try and stay on the right track.

Yanik: What did you start doing to go out there and get the word out?

Susan: That’s when I fell back to traditional marketing. I thought, “Back in the days before the internet and all this crazy stuff, what would I do if I had a message and I wanted somebody to listen to my message? What would I do?”

I didn’t have money to invest. I had been reading about pay-per-click, but it was intimidating because I would throw out all this money not knowing what I was doing. I didn’t know if I would get it back or not. I was nervous about doing that.

So I thought, “How about good old fashioned press releases? Aren’t there ways to do that?” In the olden days I didn’t even know how to write my own, but I was given a marketing budget and I could go out and hire somebody and have them do it.

So I said, “I wonder how you could do that?” That’s when I discovered Elance. I think I was one of the first people there when Elance started. I went over to Elance and found this gal who had worked for a major media outlet. She had just quit because she had just had her first baby and wanted to stay home. So for \$75 she was going to write this killer press release and put it out there.

She went to work, and I thought, “Gosh, for \$75 – that’s nothing. She’s going to save me, she’s going to put out this message to the world, and then everybody will come and buy.”

She then took it a step further and said, “Who are you going to send this to?” Oh gosh, I hadn’t really gotten that far. So I started making a list of all of the golf magazines that were out there. She said, “Listen, for an extra \$50... I do this every day. I’ve done this for ten years. How about I just do this for you?”

Oh, this was great. \$75 for the press release and \$50 to do the rest. She came back with this list of like 100 golf magazines. Anybody that had ever written a word in a golf publication. She wrote down all these websites. And to take it a step further she called all the magazines and said, “Who do I need to send this to and how do they prefer to get it? By fax, email, by courier – how does Bob want to receive that?”

Wow, I had never even thought about that. She delivered this list that said, “Bob at Golf Magazine, only by fax, and only at this number. And it has to say Bob or he’ll throw it away. And this other guy says never email, etc.”

So we printed it all out and the point was that they received exactly how they wanted to receive it. Sure enough the first phone call came within 24 hours from some golf magazine and said, “Hey, I like what you’re all about. How about I run a little story on you?”

Yanik: And you were like, “No, I don’t think that would be necessary.”

Susan: Yeah, exactly.

Yanik: That’s great. So PR was the first thing that you did, and also, in a weird by-product kind of way, was your first taste of outsourcing, which we’ll definitely talk about. You’re doing a lot with outsourcing.

Susan: Yeah, it was and it all really came together.

Yanik: Right. So walk us through what happened. What did you do to keep growing it? Actually, let me back up a step. You were a trainer. A lot of people get hung up on this notion of, “Well, I’m not really an expert” or “I don’t have the authority” or “What are my credentials to do this?” How do you get over that? How do you make that so it’s right in your own head?

Susan: I do think it’s a message that gets repeated, unfortunately, in people’s heads. It’s not a message that I ever play in my head. I never, ever play that message in my head, and I’m trying to remember if I ever did.

It’s hard for me – if I could flip a switch and tell somebody, “This is how you need to change it”. I’m not sure. I can just tell you as a person and as an entrepreneur, I do not see roadblocks. I do not see barriers. In my mind they don’t exist.

I think some of it is taking the risk and letting it pay off, and knowing that if you take ten risks that logically ten risks will not turn into ten rewards. It just won’t, because nobody’s perfect. But if you take ten risks you sure as hell are going to get two or three, maybe even five significant rewards beyond your wildest dreams. And the other two risks – you know what? Nothing ventured,

nothing gained.

When there are odds and this time it didn't work, that just means next time it will. Or the third time. Because nobody has it all, the best of everything and nobody has the worst luck ever. Do you know what I mean? It's a balance, I think, in life.

**“I just said,
‘I’m going to figure
out what people
want.’”**

Yanik: That's a great answer. One of the things that I always go back to is this book that had an effect on me. It's called Winning Through Intimidation. I don't necessarily like the title, but there's a chapter in there called "The Leap Frog Theory". People are waiting for someone to anoint them this expert. "Susan, you are now the expert in fitness for golf. Go out and do that."

So many people just sit back and wait for that to happen, but you essentially proclaim yourself as an expert. As long as you've got the chops and the knowledge to back it up then you're good.

Susan: I was watching a couple of people come out, and they do the chest pumping and say, "I am the greatest expert that ever lived". And I thought, "You know, a lot of people might believe that, but I don't believe that." That sounds corny to me.

So actually, I didn't as much do that as I just said, "I'm going to figure out what people want." So I put up this website that had my information. I was able to secure a couple of interviews, and I did a couple of interviews with people I knew in the business because I personally thought it was interesting.

I probably don't want this on tape, but it looks like it's going to happen anyway. I love reading People Magazine and these things because there's this part of you that knows that logically it's not interesting; it has no impact on your life. You're never going to meet these stars. But at the same time, you can't put it down.

Yanik: [laughing] I like reading People, too. It's okay.

Susan: [laughing] Now we're both on tape.

So I started thinking, "Wouldn't that be fun, weird and sort of voyeuristic?" So I started telling stories. I knew like one person out on tour and asked them, "Would you just talk to me? Tell me anything you think people don't know."

And so they tell these random things that in and of themselves are nothing, but

the fact that I was getting this inside story about something that was all hush-hush – we can't tell anybody what these guys secretly do.

So I started getting that, and people were going nuts and were saying, "Oh my gosh, this is incredible. You just found out what this player does, what he eats and when he eats, and he did a workout before he showed up on the course!" And I'm thinking, "Do we really care?"

But they did! And so every person that I interviewed, I asked, "Is there anybody else that you know that might be open to talking to me?" And I would say 100% of the time they would say, "So and so wouldn't mind."

When I came out with that angle of doing interviews and telling stories, it took the emphasis, I think, more away from me being the expert, but made me the girl that was so connected in golf that she could land these interviews and bring them in like they were all my friends.

It was like an implied relationship, even though for the most part it was the first time I'd ever talked to these people and I would probably never talk to them again. But they granted me an interview, so it looked like we were all in the big circle.

Yanik: Yeah, absolutely, and that's a great technique that a lot of people can use when they're getting started. They essentially get the credibility rubbed off on them by the interview and by association. That's a perfect way of doing that.

At the same time, you had a lot of content around the fitness stuff. But it also brings up a point around the little inside details and these things that we think, "Who really cares?" But people love that, like you said, in a voyeuristic way, and it makes you that inside person which gives you even more status and credibility.

Susan: It's so funny that you say that Yanik, because I remember I worked very hard to be this very specific trainer. I wanted to know that I wasn't just taking people through a bicep curl and a lunge, that I was giving them this really great, quality information.

I went through this training, and there's all this stuff I learned that said, "When you get this person he has to do 'A' and he's not allowed to go to 'B' until he finishes 'A'. Then we'll graduate him to 'C' and then he gets to go to 'D'." So it's really kind of comical when I look back on it now, but that's how I set up my website. Like, "This is level one."

I even had language in there, which is hysterical, like, "You may not graduate to level 2 until you complete all the reps in level 1." I wanted to be this expert and I was afraid that if they didn't get the results...

So I was charging \$99 for a year just to come in and see, and I started getting these emails. This guy would say, “Listen, I’m 69. Your exercises are stupid. Can you just give me a stretch?”

I said, “No, no, no. You’ve got to do level 1 and then we’re going to graduate.” I found myself not really arguing, but just not wanting to give him a stretch because I didn’t think it was right. But he kept saying that’s all he wanted.

“That’s where I started expanding into tons of different products and services.”

So I finally realized – he was willing to pay me \$99 to get a stretch? Was that really what that was about? And the truth was it was. That’s when I had to re-position and think, “Susan, the most important thing here is that your customers are happy, and if Bob wants to pay \$500 for a stretch that’s Bob’s decision, that’s not your decision. You just need to give him what he’s asking for.”

That mental shift was a big eye-opener for me in how I grew my content over time.

Yanik: Cool. Talk a little bit more about that. What do you do right now or have you done that’s really imperative to listen and make sure you’re giving your members and customers what they want?

Susan: Playing off the story that I just started, when I needed to relax and just give people what they wanted. I’d get emails and just put them aside. If one person asked for a stretch I gave them what they needed, but that doesn’t mean I’d go out and do anything about it.

Then you hear it a second time. And about the third time, I said, “You know what? I’d better do something about that. Clearly there’s a market here.” And that’s actually where I started expanding into tons of different products and services.

This is some of the stuff I’ll share at Underground® 6, but I’ve written over 14 books now, and a lot of them are “sub-niches” of golf fitness. A lot of people would say, “Jeez, golf fitness is small enough. That’s already a small niche.” But I heard so many people asking for stretches that I said, “I’m just going to write a stretch book.”

So it was flexibility for golf: 101 Stretches For Golf. So if you didn’t want to do a workout or do that, you could just get the stretches and you’re happy. Sure enough, that took off.

Then I started getting emails saying, “I’ve got this 12-year old. I’m pretty sure he’s going to be the next Tiger Woods and I’ve got a 16-year old – he’s tall, when should he start? What should my 5-year old eat and can he train for golf?”

I said, “Ah – a junior product! Clearly this is a junior product.” So I took the actual golf fitness niche and just started “sub-nicheing” it. I literally came out with, I think, six or seven sub-niches within that golf market. That was crazy to me that I could have done that. I didn’t see that when I started; I just responded to what I was hearing in the marketplace.

Yanik: I think that’s a perfect testament – so many people have the “I want to get everything to everybody” mentality. “I’m a fitness trainer, so let’s create a course for everyone on how to get fit.” But you niched down. You took golf, which is a pretty passionate hobby for a lot of people, and you combined fitness. And now you’re slicing it thinner, which I think is awesome.

Susan: It always comes back to listening. I know that sounds elementary, but I swear I think most things go over the top of people’s heads and they’re just not engaging with their customers. I think if you just listen to what they’re saying, like, “I really like what you do here, but give me more of this.” In effect you’ve just made me think of creating another product.

With the interviews I never actually created a product, but so many people have done that in other fields. Now I have this huge collection of interviews, and I could probably start when we hang up today and create a product of all the golf-star interviews and have them just be able to download that and inspire people as to what they can do in golf like all these different pros. That’d be kind of exciting.

Yanik: Yeah, that would be a pretty easy one to create. What’s really interesting about your story is that almost everything that you do creates a by-product. Like, “On my way to this I saw this.” And that creates something, and then on the way to that it creates something else, even from the very beginning.

Susan: It is true, and this is an actual true story. I got the one little article in Golf Magazine. I thought I was going to get something big, but it was really small. Nonetheless, do you know what it costs to get an ad in Golf Magazine? It would have been prohibitive. And here these guys are even writing a couple of blurbs. The fact that I would even be a blurb was an honor.

Another magazine, a smaller magazine called Golf Illustrated saw me. They went over to my website and said, “You’ve got some really good content. How would you like to be our fitness advisor?” I actually got a column in their magazine, and I also got to run some simultaneous ads. They also had a large database, and we just struck a deal.

That little blurb led to this now-big opening at a smaller magazine dedicated to golf. Within a week after that was published I got a phone call from one of the announcers at ESPN. He said, “I was just on my flight from (wherever) to Las Vegas. I grabbed a Golf Illustrated at the airport, and here is this big story from you. I think it’s really interesting. Could I feature you on ESPN?”

“I can’t imagine ever running out of ideas.”

It really was the domino effect. A lot of times when I did something I was thinking, “Maybe from the magazine I’ll sell a million.” I didn’t. I sold some, and it helped me, but I got just one interview, just one phone call. But it was life changing. Somebody was listening in on that interview and contacted me to do more writing for their magazine.

So it really was that everything I did led to one other thing that opened up a brand new door.

Yanik: Yeah, I always love seeing that. And it goes back to what you said at the beginning of our call here – it’s about the action. And I love your take on it. You’re going to do ten things, take ten risks and not all of them are going to pan out, but they all create something else – another action. It just keeps going from there.

So give us a fast forward. What does the business look like today?

Susan: I’m having a blast. I’m really having a blast. I think once you learn, or at least for me, once I learned that I could make money in a field using a skill and using the internet, doesn’t that in fact transfer to any potential market using that same skill; just a different product?

Once I opened myself up to that possibility I think the world has opened up to me. I can’t imagine ever running out of ideas. I can’t imagine ever seeing the world differently, not filled with possibilities.

My biggest challenge today is to stop myself from thinking. Some of the Mavericks that have seen me in action just crack up. If I woke up in the middle of the night on Tuesday with an idea and didn’t have a website with a product up and running by Friday I would be devastated.

So it’s difficult for me to understand when people mull stuff over and wonder if they should do it and they call twenty people. I say, “No, no. This is good.” And what’s really cool is that I don’t get married to anything and I use the

smallest amount of money to get as far as I can.

I have a certain amount of money that I will spend – let's say risk, because technically every idea that I have is a risk, right? Because who knows? As smart as I think I am, in a lot of cases I'm not. Or I'm just wrong.

Let's say I have five different ideas on the same thought. I will put equal amount of dollars into each of those and I will make them happen. The truth is I can't control it. I don't know which one's going to take off. It's always the law of averages. I can guarantee you if I launch five things that one of them will work.

Let's say I built something for \$250 or \$500. I won't get my \$500 back. Oh well, there you go. There will be two others that give me back \$500. They'll give me back my investment.

But what will happen with the other two is that the one \$500 investment will turn into \$20,000. People aren't blown away by that, but if every time I handed you \$500 you gave me back \$20,000 that's not a bad way to grow.

Then of course there's the fifth one. I won't be able to control going into it which one that is, but that's the one that turns into the seven-figure business. I couldn't have predicted that.

So I think it's a really exciting environment because there are so many possibilities and opportunities and you can literally continue to build. What I see is people getting really fixated on their one idea and they won't leave that one idea and it's almost like they're forcing it to work. And sometimes, in some places, the mix just isn't there. Do you know what I mean?

Yanik: Oh absolutely. There are a couple of key things that you just talked about. A) having a very low dollar amount that you put into something, having multiple ideas that work and not getting vested into it, and B) that there are going to be one or two that are going to be the big home runs. That's definitely pretty exciting.

So on the flip side of that, do you take those ideas and go back to your existing customer base or are those new ideas and you go to a new place?

Susan: Like I said, I've got a new idea pretty much every day that has nothing at all to do with the market I was in yesterday and the market I'm going to be in tomorrow. I guess my whole business philosophy now is to find common solutions and simple solutions to everyday problems.

Unfortunately there are a lot of everyday problems that people face despite the fact that there are millions and millions of websites. People are still not finding

their solutions.

So every time that I see or overhear conversations where people are struggling with a solution I think, “Huh. I should check out that market.” Obviously in most of these cases I’m not an expert, so I either find an expert who knows nothing about marketing and I bring my marketing expertise to their content and create a situation, or I find someone through outsourcing that has that knowledge and then write it as a ghost-written project.

“I started having fun with outsourcing.”

Yanik: Right, right. Are there any of those projects that are outside the golf world that you feel comfortable enough talking about? I think it’d be cool to just walk people through a few of the steps that you do.

Susan: Sure, on the sports side. Once FitnessForGolf.com was up and running it was pretty obvious that it was a model that worked. I used the interviews, I had the insider’s view, and I had some great workouts and nutrition. Basically a holistic approach.

The training fee that I was charging was \$100 an hour, so for \$100 a year it would be embarrassing not to take that deal. Seriously, how much less could I charge?

So that model just worked. People were happy to pay it; they know what trainers cost. I was off and running. So now you’ve got all this income, all these things are happening, and it’s like, “Wait a second. Gosh, is golf the only sport in the world?” As it turns out it’s not. And some people would argue that it’s not even a sport at all.

[both laugh]

I’ve heard that one. So I started thinking, “What are other really cool sports?” Soccer, football, baseball, volleyball, hockey... So just out of curiosity, I went back in and said, “Well, why can’t I build an enterprise? How about that?” So I start typing in all these words, and would you believe it – nobody owns any of them, so I bought them all.

I bought FitnessForFootball.com, FitnessForSoccer.com, FitnessForHockey.com, FitnessForFieldHockey.com – I bought every FitnessFor site out there and decided I was going to build that membership site for all of them. Then I purchased FitnessForSports.com which would serve as a portal.

I built up FitnessForSoccer, and since I'm not a soccer expert I was able to go out and find some people who were out in the field training and doing a phenomenal job but knew nothing about marketing. So I've got that operational.

Then I got bored with sports, and I thought, "What about the rehab market? When you're in sports, people are getting all these injuries. What if I did a couple of the biggest problems in sports?" So I started looking.

Well, back injuries, knee injuries, shoulder injuries from sports, so I started Googling what's out there. I wasn't finding any solutions to these problems, so I said, "Wait a second. I'm a physical therapist. I know physicians. I know people. Let's do that."

So I started writing different sports injuries guides: a golf injury guide, again another golf product; a soccer injury guide; a back injury guide; a knee injury guide; all of these injury guides. And then you could take that forever, right?

And with creating all these different products I started having fun with outsourcing. I said, "How come I've been doing it every day, and thankfully I've been doing it for five years, but how come nobody else seems to be doing it? Or if they are doing it, they're getting burned or they're getting frustrated. They're not getting the same results that I'm getting. How can I teach that?"

Since I do so much work with Elance, I just wrote a book. I literally wrote this in three days. It's called ElanceMadeEasy.com. It teaches people how to log in and not get frustrated. This is exactly how I hire a writer. This is exactly how my job looks when I post it. These are the kinds of people that I look for.

I started with different outsourcing projects, so I built ElanceMadeEasy.com, I built Outsourceaholic.com. I'm going through that whole process.

Yanik: Awesome. Let me back you up just a tad, and then I want to get into outsourcing for sure since you have so much history and background on that.

Let's take the FitnessForSoccer.com that you talked about. You've got no soccer list I assume. There might be a couple of people hiding out in your golf list that play soccer, but not many. What do you think about as far as getting the word out for a brand new site? Is PR again the first step, or is it pay-per-click...?

Susan: What's really cool is that I study success. I'm fascinated by success. These are some things that I wanted to talk about; specific things that I've done and that I've learned from others that have been successful. It all comes back to building a system.

Obviously when I built FitnessForGolf.com I did not know what the heck I

was doing. It was literally taking it step-by-step, and then I would make a mental note of the really bad decisions and the really good decisions and started building this system around it.

I said, “Okay. The golfer’s system could technically apply to any product.” So I really went through the same exact steps with FitnessForSoccer.com and I went through the same exact steps with Elance-MadeEasy.com.

“I find out who the leaders are.”

Those exact steps are things that I learned six years ago. Again, I think most people know them, but I would challenge people listening to this: How many of these steps have you actually gone through? You’ll go, “Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. I know that. But I never actually did that.”

Those steps are: I always write a press release and send it out. There are all kinds of different media outlets, so I send it out to all of them. I then Google to find out who all the players are in that business. So for Googling soccer, I’d say, “Who’s leading soccer? Are there different training sites? Are there people that sell soccer balls? Who’s dominating? Are there blogs for people just all over soccer?” Then I start penetrating every single one of those, saying, “Hey, I’ve got this great content. Are you interested?” And the majority of the time, everybody gets bored of listening to themselves write about stuff so they’re always looking for fresh content.

So you start to form these relationships, and every relationship then takes on a life of its own. I guess I’d call it “good old-fashioned sales”. Back in the days when people were pushing computers, it seemed like everybody had a computer in the back of their car and there were a million computer salesmen on the street. You’d have a little territory, and basically you’d go and knock on the door and say, “Hey, what’s your computer situation? Can I show you mine?”

Do you remember that whole field? That’s kind of what I do; only I’m not going door to door. I Google, I find out who the leaders are. A tool that I use, and I don’t know if other people use this but it’s been super-helpful, is a tool called Marketleap.

Marketleap gives you a quick penetration. It’s all free, of course. You can type in yourself and other competitors and it will tell you who has the most number of links and where their links come from. You can do this really quick competitive analysis and you can find out who the players are and what their rankings are.

When I find out whom the players are I just go knock on their doors. Of course I'm not showing up like that, I send an email or place a phone call and say, "Hey, this is what I'm doing. Are you interested?" And back to the law of averages, there is a small percentage of players who say, "Yeah! Where've you been? I'd love to talk to you." And of course a few will blow you off and a few that will go nowhere.

Yanik: Are you proposing content to them that they can use for free? Is that your foot in the door?

Susan: Yes, it is. And again, I think people look too literally at things. There are a lot of vertical markets which are being exploited and with today's market it's even more important that you're creative.

For example, going to golf shops. If you go to a golf shop, almost always they have the driver and their selection of woods and their selection of shoes. Why aren't they talking about how the shoes fit? If you wear it like this, or there are certain wear patterns then people end up with foot problems.

And what about the driver? Wouldn't you love an exercise program that actually showed you how to get an extra 20 yards using that awesome driver?

This whole idea was that wow, this could really enrich our content. So I actually go to these people and say, "Hey, have you ever thought about this? And I'll tell you what: If you'll only talk to me," and of course I'd only go to the big players, "then I'll do an exclusive deal."

In other words, if I went to one of the big players and they took my content I would then offer to do an exclusive. So that makes you look like a great guy, but if they have a huge database it pays off for them and it pays off for you as well. Right?

Yanik: How do you leverage that relationship? Getting the articles out there and the content gives you authority, probably a link back to your site. But do you then leverage that into an affiliate relationship where they're promoting you?

Susan: A lot of times I've found – and this might just be the golf niche – that they're not really savvy. They don't really understand the affiliate relationship. Even saying the word is a little intimidating.

I tried telling them they could make money, but they'd say, "Well, I want to make sure I get really good quality information and that my guys are taken care of." And again, listening to what they want, I'd say, "Well how about if you don't make any money and I'll just write all this really cool free stuff for you. I'll give you a code so you can put it on your website so that if you customers want to come over and buy it I'll give them \$10 off." And they'd say,

“You would do that?”

It still looks like I’m really giving, but they felt guilty taking money so I said, “Well let me give it to your customers.” That helped me grow.

Back to the door-to-door salesman. I looked up these statistics and they said that 26 million golfers were out there. I thought, “Well, what normal people do is go out and find people who have golf lists and they do the affiliate thing and the PPC thing. No, no, no. There’s got to be a better way, a more creative way, a more interesting way. Where are those golfers? Maybe they’re sitting at their computers, but where are they?”

“At some point you don’t have to do that work anymore.”

So that’s again where I got really creative and I started playing with Google saying, “Where are those golfers?” It turned out they’re basically in four states. They are all over the US, but they’re mostly in California, they’re mostly in Florida, they’re mostly in Texas and they’re mostly in Arizona. That’s where the golfers are.

Every single one of those states has a Golf Association and you have to register in order to get a handicap so you must go through them. So I started contacting them individually and saying, “What can I do?” Some of these guys had lists that were several hundred thousand golfers just in one little location. I said, “Do you send out emails to these guys?” “Yes, of course we do.” Well there you go.

So I would start approaching them, something nobody else did in the business. How come nobody ever thought of that? Here these people have this captive audience of hundreds of thousands of golfers sitting in a database and I’ve got information that I think would be useful and helpful to them. And nobody thought of them.

I’ve got a deal now with the State of California; I’ve got a deal now with the State of Florida and many, many others.

Yanik: That’s a perfect example of an overused term, of thinking outside the box, but really just thinking laterally. Where are my customers hiding, who else has them and what benefit can I provide to the people that are the fiduciary holders of that group? That’s awesome.

Susan: I think what happens is like when I first started: I launched it, it was official, and then I sat and waited. I see other people do that and it’s natural, because

people think, “Well gosh, I wrote a couple of key-worded articles.” Then you sit there scratching your head because you don’t understand why you’re not on the first page of Google and you don’t know where to get them.

I think when you’re starting a business you have to go get your customers. You need to say, “Where are they?” And if it’s PPC traffic then you go reel them in. And if they’re in organizations, they’re in industries and they’re in forums you’ve got to get them. You’ve got to tell them to come on over.

Once you do that groundwork that creates a momentum to bring in more and more and more. At some point you don’t have to do that work anymore because you’ve already built that business.

I don’t know how people do it if they’re not going out and grabbing them and bringing them in.

Yanik: Right, that makes total sense. Let’s cover outsourcing because you do that so well and you’ve written a couple of books on it like the ElanceMadeEasy that you mentioned. Like I said at the beginning, and I love looking at these by-products that come about from things that you do, your first outsourcing was with the PR writer and that was how you... Like you said, you were one of the first people in Elance to do things and now you’ve been doing it quite a bit. What do you use outsourcing for, and then let’s get into a couple of strategies for people?

Susan: I think that once you mature a little bit in life and you’re able to get involved in something you can get perhaps a little bit of perspective.

When I started my business there were so many things that I didn’t know how to do, or I thought that if I did them then I wouldn’t do them well, or at least as well as they could be done. So I just went with a basic philosophy: If it was possible that I could pay \$50 or \$75 for someone who was qualified and knew how to write a press release, why would I even try? That’s just a no-brainer.

There were a lot of little pieces that I just didn’t know how to do. That’s where it started and it really grew from there. But once I got a little more seasoning and experience I started having all these ideas. I realized that this is no longer about golf and it’s not about soccer and it’s not about rehab; this is about life. And there isn’t anything that I’m afraid to create; there isn’t any market that I don’t feel like if I really worked I couldn’t dominate if I wanted to.

You start working that system. I’m not a good task person. I can do tasks, but I think I’m more of a visionary. I can see the products; I see products everyday. So is it a good use of my time to do all the little stuff? So the way I look at outsourcing is that I’m the person with the vision and I have a specific outcome that I want to achieve and I don’t want to do anything in between.

I call my team a “vision support team”, and all of them have a little role. They do all the tasks, but their big role is to support my vision. It’s in my head and I want them to do it.

“There isn’t any market I couldn’t dominate if I wanted to.”

The other analogy I think of is, and we talked about this, I think, on a Maverick call, is that I picture myself as sort of the conductor. I can see the audience, and hopefully they’re clapping or laughing and enjoying themselves. I can picture them. I don’t know how to play the French Horn and I seriously do not get the beat of the drums, but I know that if I get the right guy to play the drums and I get the right person to play the horn I can conduct the piece.

That’s really how I think of outsourcing now.

Yanik: Do you make a dream list of who you need or do you, as projects develop, think, “Oh, I should get a Facebook Fan Person to do my stuff. I should get a Twitter person, I should get a copywriter.”

Susan: At this point I have a really solid team. It does change because players are always changing, but I’m just working a system. I have found that I’ve got a staff of writers. Some of them are really good at certain subject matters and not as strong in others, so I know what everybody’s good at and they know what my level of expectation is. We communicate really well.

I have a technology team. I’ve got specific media people. That’s my team; they love the business. I don’t know if anybody has not tried it or has not tried it lately, but people are starving. They’re very, very hungry out there right now, and I think that there is a ton of super-talented people that could really use the business.

I think that today’s environment is one of the best that I’ve seen in five years for outsourcing.

Yanik: Awesome. For about two minutes or three minutes, let’s talk about Elance tips. People go in there, and the way it works is you place a project up for bid – let’s just say it’s a writing assignment. Maybe it’s writing an eBook. Do you place the entire thing up there when you’re trying to find an outsourcer, or would you give them a little project first and hire multiple people? What are your recommendations about placing projects?

Susan: Two things with the writing: I must say that when I first started I did that. If I

wanted 50 articles then I would post that I wanted 10 articles. These days I can get 40 or 50 people to bid on a product or one of my projects. I will choose the top five writers and give them all 10 articles.

I'm starting to repeat myself: It's that law of averages. I always feel like it comes into play. No matter how good, people will say, "Oh man, you're going to love me as a writer." And I'm like, "Yeah, NOT!" They sounded like they were going to be perfect, but they weren't. The one guy that was the quietest but sounded like he might be okay, he blows me away.

So you have them each do 10 and you're minimizing your investment. You double up and triple up and that's how you find your team. But once you have your team you hang on to it.

The other big tip that I think nobody really thinks about, but I do every time and this is what allows me to move in different markets, is that writers usually weren't writers their whole life. Usually they had another job doing something else and then maybe their family situation changed and they needed a switch or whatever.

Most people have an underlying expertise and then they write on the side to make ends meet or whatever. For example, let's say I had a photography site and I wanted somebody to write good quality articles. Instead of just saying, "Who wants to write some articles?" I'd say, "I'm looking for these articles, but anybody with photography experience would be a preference for me."

People will come out and you won't believe it. One guy will be like, "I own three studios but I'm trying to have this big breakthrough in my writing." This guy might even have more experience than I have at my own subject matter, and he can write some that day.

A lot of people just don't put in enough. "Please tell me if you have experience in this subject matter." That can make a huge difference if the person is an expert, like you in your field.

Yanik: That's a nice tip. That's pretty good. Cool.

So Susan, if anyone wants to find some of the stuff that you're doing that would make sense for them – obviously ElanceMadeEasy.com looks like a great resource for people. Is there anywhere else that you would tell people to check out?

Susan: I just started a blog, and it's all free. It's just a ton of great tips and information, and it's called Outsourceaholic.com. That's my new name for myself.

Yanik: Okay, perfect. So Outsourceaholic.com, ElanceMadeEasy.com, and Fitness-

ForGolf.com where they can check out your original site.

And also, for people who are coming, you're going to be one of our featured speakers at Underground® 6 which is coming up in March. I'm really excited to have you come up there and share in even more detail what we were talking about, to be up there and present your whole story and what you've been through and what you've accomplished.

It's really exciting just talking to you and hearing about how quickly you get stuff implemented. It should be an inspiration for people out there.

Susan: Ooh, very nice. I can't wait, Yanik. I have already started working on my speech. As you know, I speak almost never, and I plan to never go back and repeat it. I thought a great goal would be to just lay it all out, give it all and give everything I can in the time that you give me, and empower people to go out and make changes in their own lives. That's what it's all about.

Yanik: Absolutely. I look forward to seeing you on another Maverick trip soon.

Susan: Perfect!

Yanik: Alright, thanks Susan, I really appreciate it.

Susan: Hey, thank you Yanik.

Yanik: Alright, bye bye.



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