

3 Ways

to Become a Master in Business

Do you know what the difference is between success and mastery? I thought about that question for a while when I stumbled upon a speech by art historian Sarah Lewis. It was fascinating to me because she spoke about success as an *event* — something you can reach. But mastery was described as the ability to duplicate your results by reaching that same goal again and again.

If you play darts, success would be hitting the bulls-eye. Mastery would be knowing that it doesn't mean anything unless you can do it over and over again.

It was a perspective that really made me think: What does it take to become a master at something?

This is what I came up with.

First, we have to **be teachable**. Having a flexible mind and an ability to adapt and grow is absolutely invaluable in life, especially as an entrepreneur. I see so many businesses that don't try anything new because they've "been in business for X number of years and haven't needed to change so far!" And while it's great that it works for them, sooner or later, they'll have to adapt. Failing to adapt means your competitors will outpace you, and you'll find yourself scrambling for purchase. Being willing to learn and grow is one of the best things you can do for yourself.

Also, it helps to be really honest with ourselves about what we're good at and what we're not. What are we spending time on that really should be someone

else's job? What can/should we take off our plates so we have more room for the things that will help our businesses grow?

When we celebrate the small wins every day, we shift our mindset into one of gratitude and confidence.

Second, we need to **celebrate the small wins**. It was Drew Dudley who said, "We spend so much time celebrating amazing things that hardly anybody can do that we've convinced ourselves those are the only things worth celebrating. We start to devalue the things we can do every day. We take moments where we truly are a leader and we don't let ourselves take credit for it or feel good about it."

That rings so true to me. How many times have we accomplished something, only to brush it off later? When we celebrate the small wins every day, we shift our mindset into one of gratitude and confidence. We start to notice the little positive things that happen every day. When my staff was in the office, we had a large gong hung up right in front of my office door.

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Every time someone made a sale — no matter how big or small — they'd come hit the gong and the whole office would take a moment to hoot and holler for them.

I thought we'd done away with the gong since moving remotely, to be honest, but my assistant let me know that the sales team still posts gifs of ringing gongs or bells on Slack every time they make a sale and take a moment to celebrate it together. That is huge!

Third, we need to **get away from the mindset that we'll become experts or be successful once we achieve a specific goal.** There are markers of success, sure, but if we overlook where we are now, we're really selling ourselves short. As Sarah Lewis said, mastery is in the continual *reaching*, not the one-time *achieving*. The more we learn, the more we discover how much more there is *to learn*. Success is a moving target.

With that in mind, as we start planning for 2022, I wanted to encourage you to look back on 2021 with new eyes. Notice and celebrate the small wins. Let yourself feel the victories! Take a hard look at your current task list and ask yourself, "Do I need to be doing this?"

That's a hard ask sometimes. I know I definitely struggle with being the bottleneck in a lot of areas because I have a hard time letting go of tasks I've been in charge of for a while. But I do the self-evaluation every year

regardless because as my company grows, my daily functions *should* look different. And you know what? We're always better off for it.

The last thing I want to touch on briefly is this concept of the moving target. That used to drive me crazy when I was younger! It was easy to think, "Can't I just accomplish something and relax?" But the older I get, the more I realize what a blessing it is. When we always have something we're pushing toward, we *thrive*.

The more we know, the more we learn how much more there is to learn. And I could not be more grateful for that opportunity.

-Shaun

P.S. I have a PDF of my "What NOT To Do" list that I fill out every year when I'm evaluating my task list. If you'd like a copy, just let me know and I'll send you the file.

P.P.S. One of my big goals every year is to help social workers deliver presents to their charges during the holidays. To that end, I started a nonprofit called Fostering Christmas that works to bridge the gap and give these kids some hope. If you're interested in learning more or helping out this year, you can find more information at FosteringChristmas.org.



Setting Goals for 2022?

5 Goal-Setting Tips for Business Owners

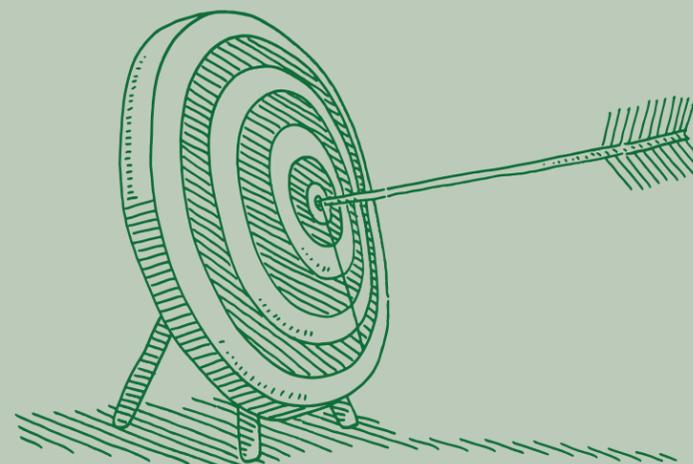
Is your company headed in the right direction? If you want to answer "yes" to this question, then setting clear, concise goals is the secret to an even better year in 2022. With the end of the fourth quarter upon us, here are some tips for goal setting that will help you monitor your company's progress and keep you and your team accountable.

No. 1: Find a place (or accomplishment) to start with.

Even ambitious entrepreneurs struggle to come up with just one goal to start off with. To narrow things down, let's talk about goals that are worthwhile to focus on. First, you need to decide whether your next year's goals can actually push your business forward, and whether they will actually be worth your time. The big picture isn't the only important thing in goal setting; acknowledge the power of small goals for your business and your staff, too.

No. 2: Be specific! Vague goals are expensive.

The more time you spend describing and visualizing your goals, the more achievable they become. When setting goals for you and your business, don't hesitate to be as



descriptive and clear as possible. A road map with no clear directions leads to a lot of wasted time — and money.

No. 3: Commit, then commit some more.

All goals require commitment, and commitment depends on goodwill. But it also depends on your designing each step along the way, tracking results, and doing whatever is needed to stay motivated throughout the process.

No. 4: Meetings help measure progress.

As a business owner, you need to inform your team of your goals and learn what isn't working early on. A great way to do that is through meetings to update the team on progress. You can also utilize other tools to measure progress weekly or monthly. This will help you stay on top of the process and brainstorm ideas to help overcome obstacles or make the process more efficient.

No. 5: Take deadlines seriously.

Making your goals time-sensitive is crucial to getting the work done. Without deadlines, projects can fall apart or even get put off until the next year. Motivate your team to meet deadlines whenever possible.

Finally, don't forget to celebrate your victories and milestones, no matter how big or small they may seem! Rewarding yourself and your team can help you leap ahead when you need it most.

3 Resolutions Your Whole Team Will Love

Creating a company culture is an evolving process. It's no surprise that it's easy to get bogged down by what you *should* do versus what's right for your company.

This new year, set realistic goals for your company's internal personality and take actionable steps to make these goals possible. Here are our top three suggestions, with "how-to's" built right in.

Improve Communication

This is a two-way street. Encourage your employees to speak up and share their opinions, while you provide regular feedback for your team. Here's how you can avoid all-out war.

For starters, send out regular surveys. Ask employees what's working well and what they are struggling with. Be sure to include multiple-choice *and* short-answer questions, and keeping it anonymous may help employees open up. Similarly, sharing feedback with employees about ways they could improve their work and encouraging them to set goals can provide greater support. Plus, it keeps you engaged with employee impressions and growth.



Create Professional Development

Employees who strive to perform better and learn more make for better team members, and when you provide opportunities for them to grow, you're not providing them with an exit plan — you're giving them an *incentive to stay*. Create clear and organized professional development opportunities, be they monthly workshops or opportunities for higher education. Your employees will feel supported in their personal goals, and you will retain talented, knowledgeable employees.

Improve Perks

This seems vague, but employee perks go beyond dental benefits and pizza parties. Look for ways you can strengthen your team's bond while also improving the benefits they get for working for you.

For example, if your company loves a local sports team, host a yearly outing to one of the games. This is a chance for your employees to bond while also providing a perk they will love! Another example could be providing more personal days. This is a great idea for employees with young families! To find what works for your business, search within your current culture to find clues as to what employees may want. (Or, create one of those surveys we mentioned!)

Have You Tried ABM Marketing?

5 Steps to Hook Bigger Clients Faster

Imagine you're back in high school. There's a dance coming up, and you want to make sure you have a partner. Since your school is big, there are dozens of people who could fill that role. So, which approach would you take to secure a date?

Option 1: Project your availability to the entire school. Flirt with everyone you meet, from the jocks on the basketball court to the kids who hang out in the choir room (even if you have nothing in common) and hope that someone shows interest.

Option 2: Choose two or three people you think might want to go to the dance with you because you have common interests, personalities, and schedules. Focus all of your attention on them. Spend time together. Find out their preferences and show them how you fit the profile of someone they'd like to date. Then look for signs of interest.

There's a good chance that back in high school, you tried Option 1 at some point. We've all been there! But with an adult's perspective, it's easy to see that Option 2 is the way to go. Courting someone by catering to their interests and

needs makes them feel special, and they're a lot more likely to see *you* as special, too. This is true in high school, and it's also true in the business world. In fact, it's the premise behind an extremely successful marketing tactic: account-based marketing (ABM).

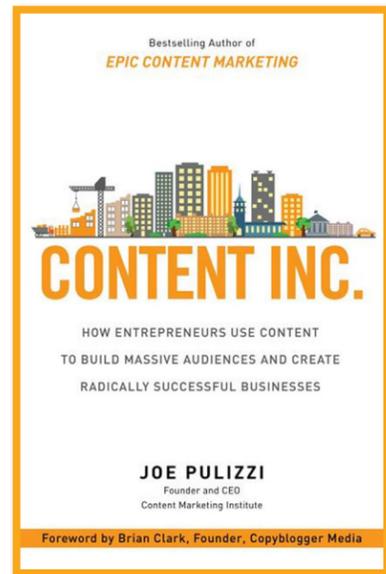
ABM is exactly what it sounds like. Instead of casting a broad marketing net, businesses using ABM select a few high-value accounts and market directly to them with highly personalized value propositions.

This might seem risky. After all, what happens if you blow your marketing budget and all of your selected "dance partners" turn you down? But case studies show that if you choose the right target accounts and pursue them correctly, ABM can be a lucrative strategy that helps you hook bigger clients faster so you can generate more revenue. According to one 2016 Information Technology Services Marketing Association survey, 84% of companies that use ABM have found it has a higher ROI than their other marketing efforts.

ABM is often considered a B2B tactic, but many of the strategies can work in B2C companies as well. You can launch an ABM campaign with just five steps:

1. **Open channels between your sales and marketing teams.** For ABM to succeed, your sales and marketing

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Can Content Marketing Build Your Business for You?

Expert Joe Pulizzi Says Yes in 'Content Inc.'

Can a business work if you get your customers first and develop products later? Yes — and, arguably, it'll operate more profitably than if you did it almost any other way. That's the radical idea behind "Content Inc.: How

Entrepreneurs Use Content to Build Massive Audiences and Create Radically Successful Businesses" by Joe Pulizzi.

Even if your business has something great to offer customers, today's markets are dynamic, and customers are fickle, researching Google reviews and constantly getting distracted from your Facebook ads with their latest local marketplace notifications. So, how do you

capture their attention? The best way is to construct a solid, long-lasting business that is positioned for today's content-driven world.

Many now recognize Pulizzi as a content marketing pioneer. He knows that old clickbait tactics won't work. If you want to create ideal content and capture the attention of desired customers, you'll want to read how Pulizzi breaks down the business-startup process into six steps, making it easy for any new entrepreneur to visualize, launch, and monetize a profitable business.

- **The "Sweet Spot":** Identify the intersection of your unique competency and your personal passion. This first step is important.
- **Content Tilting:** Determine how you can "tilt" your sweet spot to find a place where little or no competition exists.

- **Building the Base:** Establish your No. 1 channel for disseminating content (blog, podcast, YouTube, etc.).
- **Harvesting Audience:** Use social media and SEO to convert one-time visitors into long-term subscribers.
- **Diversification:** Grow your business by expanding into multiple delivery channels.
- **Monetization:** Now that your expertise is established, you can begin charging money for your products or services.

This six-step process is not only smart and simple, but it's also practical, is cost-effective, and works nearly every time. In fact, it helped Pulizzi build his own successful company, Content Marketing Institute, which has been listed by Inc. magazine as one of the fastest growing private companies for three years in a row.

Remember, if you can build your audience, you can sell almost anything you want.

This model has worked wonders for Pulizzi and countless other examples detailed in the book. Connect these six pieces like a puzzle, and before you know it, you'll be running your own profitable, scalable business.

Help Save Christmas

FosteringChristmas.org



THE Good News

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.'"

-Luke 2:10

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

-John 3:16



teams must work together seamlessly to choose target accounts and execute marketing campaigns. To facilitate this, encourage joint meetings and have both teams use the same project management software and communication tools. That will make it easier to share data and track progress later!

2. Set shared step-by-step goals. Once your teams are aligned, nail down exactly what you hope to accomplish with your ABM campaign. How many clients do you need to add this year to consider the campaign a success? Exactly how much do you need to boost your ROI? Record these details and make sure everyone is on the same page. Don't forget to be SMART while goal setting: Choose goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.

3. Identify your target accounts — and their key players. HubSpot recommends that when picking dance partners, you look for accounts that fit your ideal customer profile, have growth potential, and will add credibility to your brand. You can figure this out by analyzing your current and past customers. Who is the happiest with your service, and who is getting the most out of it? Who generates the most revenue for you? Identify potential accounts with those characteristics and avoid those that remind you of your problem clients. A high-tech platform like 6sense, which uses AI and big data to identify potential customers, can also help you build a list.



B2B businesses can focus on fewer accounts and get even more specific. After choosing your ideal accounts, zero in on their decision-makers — the people with the power to say “yes” to your proposition. They are your real targets.

4. Create unique value propositions. What sets ABM apart is that the campaigns are personalized. Once you choose your target accounts and identify their key players, you need to learn as much as you can about them. Are they on TikTok or are they in the Facebook generation? Where do they do market research? What do they care about and believe in? Once you know these things, you can create marketing messages tailored to their needs so you can reach out to them with confidence.

5. Launch, then relaunch, then launch again. Now, it's time to set the wheels of your campaigns in motion! You can use your existing marketing channels, including social media accounts, email, events, and print marketing. (For print, simply segment your newsletter list and include an insert ONLY for your target accounts, or launch a postcard campaign. We can help with both.) You can also test out new tools, like the DemandWorks Media email platform or LinkedIn account targeting, which let you set “top priority accounts” and target them with sponsored content and emails. According to LinkedIn, this tool helped SalesLoft reduce its cost-per-conversion by almost 50%.

ABM isn't for everyone, but if a few high-value customers could revolutionize your business's bottom line, you can't afford to ignore it. Start planning today for your first campaign in 2022.

A Campaign for the Dogs!

Jinx's Marketing Ruse Targets Canines (and Their Owners)

When Jinx, a pet-food subscription service, launched in January 2020, it promised direct-to-dog products and marketing. No one realized just how far they would take that promise until the mini billboards started popping up.

In the spring of 2021, Jinx strategically placed small, dog's eye-level billboards in canine-populous areas of New York City and Los Angeles, encouraging owners to subscribe to the mail-based service or to purchase its products from Target. The billboards are simple, with clever phrases, like “Treat Yourself” or “Freshen (P)up,” but the real selling point for dogs everywhere is the scent that wafts from these tiny pieces of guerrilla marketing.

That's right — Jinx is using dog-friendly billboards that smell like your pup's favorite scents. While we

haven't received official word from the canine community on whether the billboards do smell good enough to entice their patronage, owners are sure to remember the clever marketing and their dog's incessant need to sniff every last ounce of goodness from the billboards.

It's a tactic co-founder and CEO Terri Rockovich says has been in the works since Jinx began, but the acceleration of COVID-19 after the company's founding caused the startup to pull back on its clever advertising and marketing.

Jinx promises to provide healthier kibble, treat, and supplement alternatives that are sure to please dogs and dog owners alike. And while January 2020 may seem like poor timing for a new business to begin, pet food experts cite tremendous industry growth during the pandemic as a sign of bolstered sales and opportunities in the years to come. Jeff Harmening, the CEO of Blue Buffalo (owned by General Mills Inc.), explained that companies fully expect pet food to have an elevated demand due to the number of pets adopted during the pandemic.

So, if all goes well for Jinx, your dog just might be in for more “treats” and healthier options courtesy of Jinx and their clever marketing team.



Resource of the Month

In the Marvel Cinematic Universe, superheroes like Captain America, Spider-Man, Dr. Strange, and The Hulk work together as a team to rescue people from deadly situations. The browser-based Marvel design platform isn't quite as epic, but it can still rescue your business from badly built digital products (instead of Thanos).

Whether you want to design websites, landing pages, and apps for your own company or develop them for clients, Marvel's suite of features can swoop in to save the day. It will help you access all the core functionality you need, and it offers tools to create wireframes (aka website skeletons), mockups, and website and app prototypes all in one place.

With Marvel, you can access a plethora of stock images, create interactive prototypes without worrying about coding, automate your design-to-development handoff process, gather user testing data, and collaborate with your team on new and

Never Fear, Marvel Is Here!

Rescue Your Digital Products With a Cutting-Edge Design Platform

ongoing designs. To make this possible, Marvel integrates with more than a dozen other platforms including Slack, YouTube, Microsoft Teams, Dropbox Paper, Sketch, Jira, Confluence, and more, so it's easy to add to your toolbox.

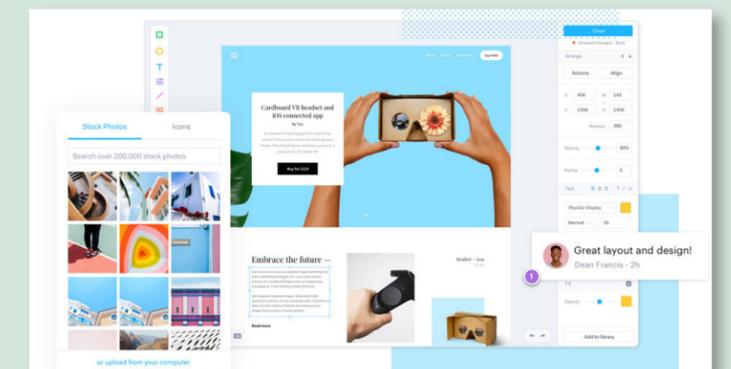
Marvel isn't the only digital product design tool out there. Wondershare Mockitt, Canva, Axure RP, InVision, and Zeplin are just a few others with similar functionality. But Marvel's accessibility through Windows, Linux, Android, and Apple products; automatic backups; and prototype commenting set it apart. On Capterra, Marvel has a 4.5-star rating and 79 reviews, most of them positive.

“It was so understandable that I didn't even need any tutorials to get started. New interactions at prototyping are great and give a sense of how the real product will interact,” one reviewer wrote. However, reviewers raised concerns that the platform doesn't have an offline setup for every operating system or doesn't add new features often.

Marvel works particularly well for small finance companies, consultants, and creative agencies. But travel companies

Get Inspired

“APPROACH EACH CUSTOMER WITH THE IDEA OF HELPING HIM OR HER SOLVE A PROBLEM OR ACHIEVE A GOAL, NOT OF SELLING A PRODUCT OR SERVICE.”
- BRIAN TRACY



like Cabify and media giants like BuzzFeed use it, too. There's even a version of the platform called Marvel Enterprise (yes, we're getting really geeky now with the superhero and “Star Trek” references) that lets bigger companies design, test, and ship digital products at scale.

To learn all about both versions of Marvel, browse prototypes from a variety of industries, and see whether the platform is the hero you need, visit MarvelApp.com.

Get Catfeinated

The Adorable Story of Tacoma's 1st Cat Cafe

Have you heard of cat cafes? They originated in Japan, but they've become a worldwide phenomenon where customers can enjoy their favorite latte while surrounded by furry, adorable, adoptable cats. For residents in Tacoma, Washington, there happens to be one in town, and it has one of the best origin stories around.

Catfeinated, located on 2515 Sixth Avenue, features an enclosed cat lounge and a separate cafe area with its baristas and store. The vision all began when Kristi Martin and Melanie Weaver met in 2011, during an MBA program at Pacific Lutheran University.

Martin, a major cat person, really enjoyed her first visit to a cat cafe in Washington, D.C. "I fell in love with the model," she told the News Tribune. Meanwhile, Weaver wasn't so much of a cat person. But despite the fact that both women have full-time jobs in the health care industry, they were just as excited about developing a cat cafe business plan and crunching the numbers. After all, the public appeal was already there, Martin said. "Two cat cafes in Seattle are doing really well, so people were already familiar with the idea. We are the first and only here in Tacoma."

At Catfeinated, visitors can either watch cats from behind the windows or reserve time in the cat lounge, where 6-8 cats sleep and play. It's easy to reserve with their online reservation system, which books



hourlong sessions in the cat lounge for \$10. Today, they even have a membership that costs \$15 a month for one hourly visit and any 12-ounce coffee or tea valued up to \$5 per month.

Catfeinated sounds great for humans, but what about the cats?

The cat lounge's large, custom-built structure gives the cats plenty of space and opportunity to rest and play whenever they choose. Thankfully, the volume of visitors is no bother to the cats due to their young age and "kitten energy," according to Martin and Weaver. Also, a "cat guardian" is always there to ensure all the cats' needs are met, including food and water.

The cats come from the Auburn Valley Humane Society, where they are screened for temperament. After all, not all cat personalities would be happy with the new cat- and human-filled environment. "We do want the right personality for a cat to do well in this environment," says Martin.

Before arriving at Catfeinated, every cat is neutered/spayed, microchipped, vaccinated, dewormed, and given a flea treatment. All adopted cats also come with a coupon for a free, full medical check-up by a local vet. That way, the cats at Catfeinated are super easy to adopt!

According to Julia Sauer, the Humane Society's director of public services, the cat cafe actually helps potential cat parents spend more time with the cats before choosing their new furry friend. "Typically, in a shelter, you'd get 15 minutes with your pet of choice." The cat lounge offers visitors an extended opportunity to see how cats interact with people and other cats as well. Six visitors are able to stay in the cat lounge at any one time.



Even after the pandemic, Catfeinated has survived and is open to new customers! If you're nearby or have a cat cafe in town, give it a try. In the cafe area, patrons can order capurrccinos, meowchiatos, hisspressos, similar cat-themed drinks, and even alcohol.

If you stay long enough, you might even become a cat person, like former combat medic Weaver has: "I'm actually loving the cats. It's been a great turnaround." That's a fur-tastic love story if we've ever heard one.

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