

The 10 Most Important Business Insights I've Had in the Last 10 Years

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As the decade draws to a close, I've been reflecting upon what I've done and learned in the last 10 years of my life. I thought it might be helpful to share my most important insights, year by year:

- Ø **YEAR 2000: Marketers Make a LOT More Than Technicians:** It seems so obvious now, but back when I first started fiddling around with internet marketing, I thought it was all about being a great programmer. I wasted a year filling my shelves with books on PHP, MySQL, Perl, Javascript, etc, and eventually getting a full fledged web programming certificate from a university, only to abruptly learn I could hire people MUCH more talented than me for literally \$1/hr. overseas. (*Ten years later I pay \$10 to \$15/hr for the best quality*). People open up their wallets for well researched and presented BENEFITS, not a technically well constructed site or web application. I've sold hundreds of thousands of dollars of e-books from crappy little html sites my 12 year old nephew could have done, while the software application I spent two years of my life developing largely sits on my hard drive gathering dust. *The question to ask yourself is "How can I spend more time on marketing and less time on technical prairie poop?"*
- Ø **YEAR 2001: Listen to Your OWN Best Advice:** There's a strange phenomenon in almost any profession which is captured by the statement "The Cobbler's Son Has No Shoes". Turns out, it's a helluva lot easier to give advice than take it. In 2001 I began a free fall which would cost us \$2,000,000 by simply not applying the advertising research and competitive intelligence techniques large companies were paying ME for to our own venture. The place I see this phenomenon effect most marketers today (besides not doing their research) is in seeking out, taking in, and acting on feedback from peers and mentors. For example, it's painful to spend 100 hours on a copywriting piece, only to have it ripped to shreds by your coach or mastermind buddy. But you know what? It hurts more if the piece doesn't sell. I have many students who are themselves marketing consultants or advisors. I always ask them "What are you best at pointing out to others?"... then I say "How might you be neglecting to apply that to your own business?". So... *How are YOU neglecting your own best advice?*
- Ø **YEAR 2002: The Bottom is a Lot Further Down Than You Think:** I used to think if you couldn't pay your bills for 60 days, a few big men with white suits and mustaches would show up and force you to declare bankruptcy. But I learned that if you just keep talking to people (and listen while they yell a little bit), you can actually stretch very large bills, especially with trade vendors, out to 15+ months if necessary. Don't get me wrong, I fully recommend being a FAST payer (you get much better service), but the point is it's possible to keep things afloat a LOT longer than you think as long as you remember CASH IS KING and go into *extreme conservation mode with everything but your marketing expenses* so you can stay in the game. I wouldn't wish what we went through on my worst enemy, but I have to say "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger". I've had companies since 2002 where I saw a cash flow crunch coming and, because of my previous experience had the skills to immediately contact my vendors and forecast exactly what they could expect. I react with a LOT less anxiety NOW to any cash flow problem than I did in the past, and I've been able to help my coaching students really put things in perspective. *Are YOU Managing Your Cash Flow Appropriately?*
- Ø **YEAR 2003: Money is Just Money - It's Better to Be Broke Than Fat, Sick, and Broke:** There's no shame in being broke. Pretty much every millionaire I've met has been broke on more than one occasion. But because I THOUGHT it was something to be ashamed of, I gained 60 pounds and made myself sick. It took me years to physically recover. I could have just been broke if I wasn't so caught up in false pride. *How Have You Made Money Larger Than Life?*
- Ø **YEAR 2004: Find a Market Gap and Fill It with a Real "Point of Difference" Benefit:** The "price of entry" to play in any market is delivering on the most frequent set of questions and concerns associated with that market's search behavior. But that's not enough to make money. To stand out and get people to choose YOU, you need to identify (a) what they're looking for that no one else is delivering; (b) what they're NOT looking for which would delight and surprise them.

You get the first by looking at survey response percentages, length, passion, difficulty indicators, etc. You get the second by "getting in there" and talking to the most hyper-responsive prospects and customers. You've got to be willing to find out what they smell like. (With the advent of social media, you can now also get a lot of this by tuning into Twitter RSS Feeds on your primary keywords). Following these principles is what empowered me to launch 17 profitable markets, more or less consecutively. *Do YOU Really Know Where The Gaps Are In Your Market? Can You, and Do You Deliver?*

- Ø **YEAR 2005: A Winning Advertising Formula Does NOT Equal A Winning Business Model:** Knowing how to open up a profitable front end for a business is a big deal. I'm very proud of this accomplishment. Trying to develop 17 markets simultaneously is, well, just plain stupid. By the end of 2005 I was flooded with opportunities for back end development, partnerships, and more... none of which I could remotely take advantage of because I was pulled in 17 different directions. Pick ONE, possibly TWO markets and DIG IN TIGHT. (Hindsight is 20/20). *Are You Focussed Enough?*
- Ø **YEAR 2006: Teaching And Being Famous Is Fun And Honors Your Skills – But It's A Lot More Profitable To USE Your Skills—OR—Do It FOR Others:** Being a "guru" has been a mixed bag for me. I LOVE the challenge of having to organize my thought into systems, having these systems constantly challenged, and figuring out how to teach them. I LOVE hearing from all the people I've helped. But in retrospect I've learned I make a LOT more for my time by either just doing the marketing myself, or having a team which does it FOR others. Because market research and competitive intelligence aren't "bottom line functions", they're just not that sexy. (The truth is they ARE bottom line functions, even more important than learning free traffic techniques, etc., but just aren't perceived that way). *What Is The Highest and Best Use of Your Time?*
- Ø **YEAR 2007: Do The Math:** On the internet, most marketers look at whatever numbers are just put in front of them. Click through, conversion, etc. Hardly anyone... and by that I mean, like, fricking no one, takes the time to think through the BEST metrics for the system they're trying to optimize. For example, AdWords shows you Clickthrough and Conversion, but they don't show you PROFIT PER IMPRESSION, which is the best number to use in split test decisions when you have a high enough volume of traffic. (See www.SuperSplitTester.com) When you measure opt in percentages you're ignoring situations where lower opt ins would yield higher values per visitor. For example, I've consistently found if you add a long list of testimonials to the bottom of an opt in page, you drop the opt in rate by 20% but raise the dollars out to dollars in ratio by 30%... most likely because the people who DO take the time to read the testimonials are more convinced of your credibility and therefore more likely to buy. I could give you another half dozen examples. Most people never ask themselves... *What's The Single Most Important Metric for Your Sales System?*
- Ø **YEAR 2008: Sometimes It's The Thing You Least Want To Do Which Opens The Floodgates:** In 2003, I had finally left "dollars for hours" client services "for good". I stopped seeing patients. I told all my Fortune 100 consulting clients I was no longer doing the work. I was NEVER going to get into the service business again, so despite literally hundreds of requests for "done for you" services, I beat my head against the wall trying to get people to do their own research, competitive intelligence, and internet marketing. Finally had a little moment with Jeff Hughes (now my partner in www.RocketClicks.com) where he said he could handle ALL the service if I just helped build the systems, supervise the quality, and generate the leads. Bingo! (Opened the floodgates). Later that year, I also opened a personal coaching program, something I swore I'd never do. I really don't make much money from it directly, but it's taught me how to help people develop to the level where they can become a full fledged Rocket Clicks client, which is where my biggest payoff will be. So I ask you... *Is There Anything You've Been Refusing To Do Which Might Open The Floodgates For You?*
- Ø **YEAR 2009: Fewer Keywords = More Money:** The opportunity to audit over a hundred business models, AdWords accounts, and systems while I was doing all the initial selling for Rocket Clicks *in the middle of an economic meltdown* (at the end of 2008) was a real eye opener for me. Because I saw the companies which survived-- *even thrived*—in the meltdown had one thing in common... FOCUS. That meant fewer keywords, adgroups, and campaigns. In essence, they were focussing on fewer "keyword conversations", so the ones they marketed to, they understood much better than their competitors. In turn, this meant they attracted the more "hyper-responsive"

customers in their market. Early this year, this all led me to formulate the FIVE HYPER-RESPONSIVE MARKETING PRINCIPLES which now form the basis of everything I do, teach, and how I run my companies. (See the 5 hyper-responsive principles on www.HyperResponsiveMarketingSecrets.com ... just a few paragraphs down the page. Yes, I know it's a salesletter, but I laid out the 5 principles in full... you don't have to pay to read them)

And last, there's a VERY important insight which pervades and ties together ALL the above insights, and gives them all integrity. Unfortunately, it's one no one wants to hear, and one which people always answer with "yeah, but what about_____"

So please know I won't be offended if you reject this out of hand. It took me a long time to really "get it" myself. But here it is:

Ø **THERE REALLY ARE NO SHORTCUTS:** (I'm so sorry).

- ü I've had hundreds of students come to me with some variation of the following "You're obviously the guy to work with for building a solid foundation for a long term, profitable, growing business. But who do you recommend to make money NOW? I NEED money NOW!"
- ü Believe me, I've tried everything. I have access to many of the top courses and launches just for the asking. But EVERY time I get excited that there might be a better, faster way, I wind up wasting time and money, and actually setting myself back, wishing I never did it.
- ü This really is a "tortoise and the hare" game. My friend David Oliver says "*I can't beat you NOW, but I can definitely beat you 12 months out with focus and determination*". Well, I'm kind of like the "ultimate tortoise with x-ray vision".

What this means for you is, decide on a model you believe in, dig in, and put your nose to the grindstone. Keep the dream alive, and do whatever it takes to stay in the game until you win the game. Here, let me say it 20 more times so maybe it'll sink in:

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For what it's worth,

Glenn :-)

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PS – Can I entice you to consider my offerings one more time?

DO IT YOURSELF: www.HyperResponsiveMarketingSecrets.com

PPC DONE FOR YOU: www.RocketClicks.com/Management.htm

EVERYTHING DONE FOR YOU: www.RocketBullsEye.com

PERSONAL COACHING WITH GLENN: www.GlennLivingston.com/CoachingLetter.htm