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What Night Crawlers, Magic, and Sports Collectibles taught me about List Building

And why the money is in the list!

by **Dale Calvert**

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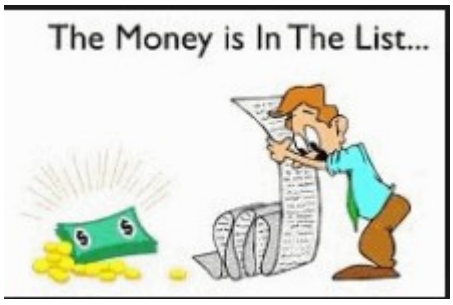
If you have been around internet marketing anytime at all you have heard over and over "the money is in the list" Since Dawn and I have been working various business models together, she will tell you there is not a phrase she has heard come out of my mouth more since we met than "the money is in the list" except maybe "I Love You". :)

List Building has been a foundational marketing principal, long before the Internet



That is a topic I have mentioned many times in the past, but also one I have never really expounded upon and quite frankly I have probably taken for granted. As marketers we tend to not expand on topics we assume every knows and are doing. We usually don't try to teach those things that we personally take for granted. We normally teach at the level we started to have success and usually don't understand the importance of the path we took to get there. Especially if the path was just a natural flow and not a concentrated effort as I talk about in much more detail in the Masses book. List building is not something I have ever thought a lot about, it is just something that I naturally did. I hope that I can effectively communicate why list building is a skill that you must develop to maximize your success in business.

I know this might be hard to build, but I started building my first list in the first grade. In my small community of Stamping Ground Kentucky everyone knew me as "The Calvert kid on Mulberry Street that sold night crawlers". On rainy nights, I would put my yellow raincoat on, get my flashlight, my bucket and I would catch night crawlers until my bucket was full or my dad found me and told me it was time to come home.

When I got home, I would take my bucket full of worms down to our cellar and dump them in a large claw foot tube filled with dirt. My neighbors and relatives saved their cottage cheese containers for me.

Almost daily I would have people come to our house that were on their way to fish somewhere and needed bait. They knew they could get a dozen night crawlers from me for 50 cents. I would go down in the cellar, and fill the cottage cheese container with dirt, and 12 night crawlers and then always give them one extra, just in case I miscounted. They would give me 50 cents and be on their way, but before I let them go I always asked, Sir, can I get your name and phone number? I had a small pocket notebook where I kept the names of the customers who had bought from me (the list). When it rained 3-4 nights in a row and I became overstocked with worms, or business slowed down, I would sit down, grab the phone and say something like, “Mr. Towles, this is Dale Calvert on Mulberry Street, you buy night crawlers from me for 50 cents a dozen. I just wanted to let you know that until Monday I am selling 2 dozen for only 50 cents.”

Within an hour or so after making my phone calls I would have customers lined up at my door, so in the first grade I subconsciously learned the power of having list. I sold Pears, and blackberries, seeds and Christmas Cards as a kid, and my best customers were always the ones who had bought from me the previous year. If I had my list, all I had to do is call them and ask how many baskets of pears do you want this year?

I don't know why I did this, and don't recall anyone telling me to, I think some things are just instinctual. A couple of months ago, my phone rang and on the other end was my granddaughter Chapel. She said, "Grampy, this is Chapel, I am selling girl scout cookies again, and I know your favorites are Carmel Delights, how many boxes do you want?"

MAGIC

As most of you have probably heard before, I performed public Magic Shows from age 7 until my early 20's when I got bit by the MLM bug. I did shows for birthday parties, corporate events, schools, carnivals, and one summer toured the State of Kentucky doing the opening act for a children's theater group. I had a great business that grew year after year. In Kentucky a lot of horse people hired me for their parties. They would put me at a table in the corner and people would sit around around and watch while I did close-up magic.

I was involved in the International Brotherhood of Magicians for years, and other club members could never understand why I stayed so busy and had gigs every weekend. I knew what my secret was, but I never revealed it, I would just say, because I am good!

The truth was, I had a list and I knew how to promote.

I never did a birthday party where every child there didn't go home with flyers to give to their parents with the headline, *Make Your Child's Birthday One they Will Never Forget this Year!* I handed out hundreds of cards and became "the Magician" in the horse community. People are predictable and if the Jones had the magician, then we need to keep up with the Jones and have the magician.

However my number one Secret was *I kept a list.* I would send a letter one month before the month they had hired me the previous year as a reminder to reserve your date now, before I get booked up.

SPORTS COLLECTIBLES

In the late eighties my brother and I were in the sports cards and memorabilia business. We spent the Summer of 1990 traveling to sports card conventions all over a 4-5 state area, and saw about 35 Cincinnati Reds games that year including the play offs and World Series where the Reds swept the favored Oakland A's in four games! That was an awesome summer.

When we started the business, one of the first things we did was create a postal mailing list. Everyone who walked into our shop was asked to sign up for our newsletter list, and we would give them a grab bag gift, just for signing up.

Guys, obviously this was BEFORE the internet! As you have heard me say many times, Wisdom of the Ages, Success and Marketing Principals, never change!

Back to Sports Memorabilia... Once a month we would mail a newsletter on Thursday, when we knew we didn't have a trade show and would be in town. It would be packed with special offers and what the retail industry calls loss leaders, just to get the foot traffic in our shop. Yes, it was a lot of work and planning, to get the newsletters printed and in the mail but it brought in the customers. We always had record Saturday sales, after the newsletter was mailed.

Another example of the Power of a List…

So when I got involved in network marketing in 1980, building a mailing list was just part of the natural process for me. I would collect business cards, and collect full data on every prospect. I have always used direct mail postcards and letters as a recruiting method, I understood the value of a good mailing list. Over the years I have done more direct mail promotions than any network

marketer I know. For many of you, the first time you ever heard the name Dale Calvert was when you received the postcard below in the mail in the mid nineties.

I am currently testing a postcard system for an affiliate program we promote and so far the results have been remarkable. So when you hear "the money is in the list" we usually associate that to mean email list, and quite frankly that is what most marketers mean, by that statement. However let me give you two things to think about that are very important, If we all know the money is in the list, why do many marketers avoid building List?

#1 The list is your database.
At one time a data base was only postal mailing address. Today when I think "the money is in the list" I think database which means email list, postal mailing list, text number list, Skype list, Twitter followers, Facebook followers, Pinterest followers, Linked In Connections, and every other social media platform in the market.

#2 The real money is in the RELATIONSHIP You Have With Your List
Over the past 10 years or so, numerous guru Internet marketers have burst on the scenes, built huge email list and then spammed the people daily with offer after offer, never providing any real value or free downloads. So because of this many marketers have avoided building list. For most people email has become a time consuming chore. Many marketers don't want another email from another marketer in their email box, so they assume that others feel the same way, so because of this attitude they have avoided building list.

Like every marketing method there is a right way and a wrong way to do it. Writing a weekly newsletter is not a easy task, and not required if you decide to build list. There are only a handful of marketers online that actually take the time to do this. Since the popularity of blogging, very few people still do weekly newsletters. For me, I have been doing it so long, it is hard to stop. From a business standpoint, it makes no sense and there are other things I can do, that would better use of my time from a dollar and sense standpoint, but hopefully I provide value to our readers.

Ultimately your income is in direct proportion to the value you provide to the market you serve.

List Building has always been a fundamental part of operating a successful business and something YOU SHOULD BE DOING…. PERIOD, It is not even debatable! I hope I have pounded that point home, have I?

Since the internet this concept has become convoluted and misunderstood by many. Mainly because of the word Spam, and nobody wants to be considered a Spammer. Remember when most people heard the word Spam and they thought about a uneatable lunch concoction? Next time we will talk about why you don't have to be a guru to build a list, and how the average newbie marketer can start building a list now, and provide real value to their subscribers.

The recorded webinar at http://www.MLMListBuildingWorkshop.com will give you more insights on this subject

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Dale Calvert started his first business from his parents home at the age of 14. For the past 25 years he has been supporting entrepreneurs and marketing professionals with some of the most powerful training programs in the industry.

MLMHelp.com is Dale's Catalog site featuring training articles, quotes and poems, MLM greeting cards, and more. This is where you can subscribe to Dale's Top Rated Ezine.

Dale Calvert is a 25 year marketing professional. A directory of Dale's websites can be found at DaleCalvert.com. His new course will teach you 21 Ways to create leads in your local market. You can get all the details at LocalMLMLeads.com