

5

Tools that Up
Your Impact
and Lighten
Your Load



Unless you're the hottest new thing in Silicon Valley, your business has limited resources when it comes to money, time, and team. Your own energy and effort can only go so far.

No doubt you started your business with a range of DIY solutions for everything from product development to marketing to analysis. At some point, the sheer effort required to DIY yourself towards success will catch up with you.

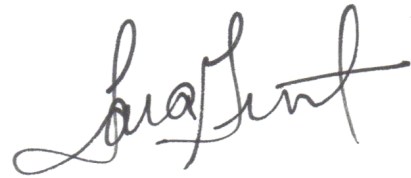
You're probably already feeling it. This "follow your passion" business stuff is hard work! Well, not so much. You've created quite a bit of busy work for yourself since you've started your business. That busy work is hampering your ability to do the work that will really take your business to a point of impact and influence.

And that's exactly what you're ready for.

It's time to dial back on the DIY and use some tools that really get the job done. Soon enough, your business will be making a big impact on your customers, the world, and yourself. And you, my friend, will see a significantly lessened workload.

Read on to find recommendations of 5 tools that will help you make an impact and lessen your workload. These are tools I use and recommend to my clients. We've seen amazing results--now it's your turn.

With gratitude.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tara Gentile', written in a cursive style.

Tara Gentile
November 2012

Broadcast Your Message

Your business has a message. Whether it's that life change can be fun, that original artwork can make a house a home, or that sales never has to be sleazy, **you've got something to say and you're using your business to say it.**

One of the challenges of growing your business is getting your message in the hands of the right people. You're probably already using tools like a blog and social media to broadcast your message. But are you using the single most effective broadcasting tool?

Not TV, certainly not radio, and it definitely isn't Facebook.

It's email.

Turn your blog into an automated email machine using an email service provider. I recommend:

MailChimp

This ESP (email service provider) is tons of fun to use and adds exciting new features every of couple months. You really get the sense that their bottom line is based solely on *your* success.

Here's the best part: **MailChimp** has a *generous* free plan. There's no excuse not to try it.

1st thing to do: Open your account, create a new list, and add the opt-in form to your website. Copy & paste code makes it easy. Plenty of training videos are [right here](#).

2nd thing to do: Set up an RSS-Driven Campaign to automatically send blog posts to your subscribers. Far from being redundant, you'll find that email subscribers are more likely to buy from you and engage in discussions than traditional RSS subscribers or random website visitors. [Instructions are here](#).

[Click here to get started with MailChimp.](#)

Spread Your Message

Of course, broadcasting your message isn't enough. You want your message to be heard from mountaintop to river valley.

Your job is to create opportunities for the right people to encounter your business and its message. Again, you might already be doing this through social media or guest blog posting.

However, one of the most effective tools I've seen for spreading your message (especially for service or information-based businesses) is the teleclass. It's an interactive, fun, and personal way to make a big impact using very little of your energy.

I've laid out my complete teleclass system in [this free tutorial](#) at Kick Start Labs.

And the tool I recommend for the job is:

InstantTeleseminar

InstantTeleseminar makes you feel like a hot radio personality. You host your show and use a control panel to control the other callers. There's nothing like the thrill of saying, "And now the caller from Chicago, IL!"

This tool pays for itself very quickly. There are free tools that do something similar but they lack the features that give you a really professional end product.

You can also use InstantTeleseminar to host and record team meetings and coaching calls.

1st thing to do: Set up your account, pick a date & topic, and invite your list to a free call. Don't over think it. [Use my free tutorial to get it organized.](#)

2nd thing to do: For your next call, invite a friend or colleague to speak on his/her own expertise (related to your own). Set up a landing page for the call, start a new list in MailChimp specifically for the call participants, and add the opt-in form to the page. Now you've got a way to build your list and deliver an exceptional experience.

[Click here to get started with InstantTeleseminar.](#)

Gather Feedback on Your Message

Doing business in the connected age is not a one-way street. It's a conversation. A dialogue. If you don't have a system for listening to your customers' side of the conversation, **you're missing out on big opportunities to do good and make money.**

When you create a system for gathering feedback, it's no longer part of your "to do" list. It's automated.

My favorite tool for this is:

Wufoo

This fun and intuitive tool let's you build complex forms you can use on their own or embed into your website for a professional result. I use them for applications, questionnaires, and general feedback.

1st thing to do: Create your account and your first form. Make this one a follow-up for customers who buy your product or service. Send it out to customers a few days after their purchase to see how they're doing. **Wufoo** has plenty of video tutorials.

2nd thing to do: Create your second form. Make this one a follow-up for new subscribers to your list and embed it into your website. Ask about what frustrations or desires they have around your message. Create an autoresponder in MailChimp that asks for feedback and links back to the form on your site. [Click here for autoresponder instructions.](#)

Here's an example of a [Wufoo form](#) that goes out in an autoresponder to new subscribers after a few days.

Sell Your Message

You know the saying, “You’ve got to give to get?” That’s a great strategy. But **make sure you’re ready to receive.**

Is it easy to buy from you? Can your customers checkout just the way they like? The easier and more convenient it is for your customers to checkout, the more likely they are to follow through with that purchase.

Your product can be extraordinary but, if your checkout process is not, you won’t be getting many sales.

My recommendation here is a one-two punch:

PayPal Payments Pro (+ Wufoo)

Yes, there are more fully featured systems out there (1ShoppingCart and InfusionSoft to name two) but this combination keeps things simple and uses tools you’re already familiar with--or will be soon.

PayPal Payments Pro is an add-on service for your regular PayPal account. It’s essentially a merchant account that operates in conjunction with your PayPal account so that customers can checkout however they choose: logged

in or not logged in. There's no extra "Are you sure you don't want to create an account?" nonsense.

1st thing to do: Set up your PayPal Payments Pro service. There's an application process and you're likely to receive a phone call confirmation from PayPal. [Here's more information.](#)

2nd thing to do: Set up a Wufoo form that acts as a checkout for one of your products. Be sure to take advantage of asking a multiple-choice question or two about your customer's situation before taking them to checkout. Here are the instructions for [selling through Wufoo](#) and for integrating [PayPal Payments Pro](#).

For an example of this process in action, check out the [Kick Start Labs membership page](#) and click through to checkout.

Grow Your Community

Business in the connected age is driven largely by community. Referrals, social sharing, feedback loops, it's all a function of how well your business can mobilize the people who care about what you create to talk about it.

When you make it easier for those who care to do just that, **you don't have to push so hard**. You don't have to broadcast or market all the time. You can relax, listen, and respond. You'll see the message take on a life of itself and your business will be caught up in the midst of that.

One tool I've found that does this extremely well is:

Click to Tweet

This **tool** makes it easy for others to talk about your message. It's as simple as crafting a tweet from a blog post, teleclass, or product, generating your Click to Tweet link, and inserting back into that blog post, teleclass, or product. Voila!

1st thing to do: Add “Click to Tweet” to your next blog post. Take your headline or a particularly engaging line from the post, create your tweet, generate your link, and insert a small link in your piece that simply says “*Click to tweet!*”

2nd thing to do: Add “Click to Tweet” to your next teleclass confirmation email. The next time you host a teleclass, put a Click to Tweet link in the email participants receive after they register for your class. Use that tweet to advertise the class and make a statement.

Here’s an example of Click to Tweet in action on a popular blog post.

[Click here to get started with Click to Tweet.](#)

About Tara Gentile



I'm Tara Gentile. I relentlessly study, experiment with, and teach what it takes for businesses to succeed in the age of connectedness.

The businesses I work with are helmed by **passionate, innovative leaders** and driven by **inquisitive, engaged customers**. They trade in delivering experience, connection, and meaning. They thrive on the coexistence of individualism and collectivism. They maximize their impact while minimizing the effort required to achieve it. They believe entrepreneurship is citizenship.

I work with entrepreneurs to develop business models and ecosystems that are driven by curiosity, growth, and the power of networked individuals. I empower businesses to navigate rapid change and create systems that recognize emerging opportunities.

You are pursuing business as a means of self-expression and global service. You see commerce as the vehicle for your big idea. You are a freelancer in search of a better business model, a solo service provider on a quest for greater reach, an entrepreneur with a team of collaborators & co-creators. You are driven by vision and calling. And you recognize that profit is an important financial indicator of more meaningful success.

I believe you are the new economy. You are a connected consumer. You are a powerful producer. You have the network at your fingertips and you know how to use it.

Solo entrepreneurs, bootstrappers, freelancers, and joint ventures: Ready to get your hands dirty? An Insight Intensive is the best way to start working with me now. Think 6 months of strategy in less than an afternoon. [Click here for more information.](#)

Teams, enterprises, agencies, and startups: Ready to turn big ideas into profitable business models? Think positive change meets positive cash flow. [Email me with details on your project and goals.](#)