How to Make $100,000 Every Month

by David Blaise
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Introduction

The Elephant in the Room

When I was originally asked to speak on the topic of *How to Make $100,000 Every Month* I thought, “Wow. Really? That sounds like a pretty hyped-up title.

If I had never actually made $100,000 in a month or if I had never helped anyone else to do the same -- or even if I had not worked with many clients who actually do a lot *more* than that, I might have figured I had nothing to contribute to the discussion and moved on.

But since I have actually done all three, I know the insights I am about to share with you will help, whether you’re looking to make $100,000 in a year, in a quarter or yes, even in a month.

*How to Make $100,000 Every Month* is an inspiring topic, but before we get in too deep, let’s take a moment to get real and to clarify a few things, okay?

1. I do not make $100,000 a month in *personal income* and I only know a few people who do. The times when I have personally made $100,000 or more in a month usually involved the sale of a business or real estate – not the kind of thing you can do every day, or even every month.

   A few of my clients *could* make (that is, take) $100,000 every month from their businesses. However, they don’t. Instead, most reinvest it to grow the business. Some take quarterly, semi-annual or annual disbursements that might average out to more than $100,000 a month. But because of the distribution schedule they are not technically making $100,000 *every* month.

2. I have owned and operated businesses that have generated *significantly more* than $100,000 every month in *gross profit*. However, as most business owners know, gross profit can be a pretty meaningless number unless you have your overhead firmly under control. I’ve done it both ways, and speaking from experience, generating that level of gross profit is a lot more satisfying when you have your overhead firmly under control.

3. In terms of *gross sales* for my businesses, my personal best is $1,000,000.00, that’s *one million dollars* (as Dr. Evil might say,) in less than two weeks. I did it with a highly seasonal business and it accounted for roughly 25% of my total sales for the year. So yes, if you’re keeping score, the other 50 weeks of that year were quite a bit smaller by comparison.
Shortly after I was invited to speak on this topic, I sent an email to my clients and my Inner Circle group asking what they would most like to know about the topic of *How to Make $100,000 Every Month*. Here's one of the first responses I got:

“I think this is getting out of hand. I just got an email from Mr. [Don] Sanders about attending a seminar at PPAI on the exact same ‘How To.’

If you are talking NET profit of 100k per month, that is upwards of 500k to 1 million a month in sales. Very few individuals (if any) will get there and you should let Mr. Sanders take the fall on that one.

I think your products so far are telling the truth and show attainable goals. If you really are able to teach this goal, you should charge tons of money for it and focus on a very niche market of distributors. I’d say charge at least 10k.”

The writer of the letter then proceeded to ask a very good question about *How to Make $100,000 Every Month*.

Her response confirmed my opinion. It is a very provocative title. But it is also a topic that my clients want to know something about. That’s why I asked for their feedback and that’s also why I am answering ten of these questions here.

So to fully clear the air, let’s start with the math...
1. $100,000 in Sales, Profit or Pay Check?

   **Question:** “Hi Dave, I just finished my October selling over $100K in personal sales. Are you talking selling or an actual pay cheque earned?”

   **Answer:** Let’s look at all the scenarios…

   This is an important point of clarification. *How to Make $100,000 Every Month* means different things to different people. Since that’s the case, let’s talk about…

   **Three Scenarios**

   **$100,000 Every Month in Gross Sales**

   $100,000 every month in gross sales means generating a *minimum* of $1.2 million dollars in sales per year -- and if you want to be realistic about it, it probably means generating quite a bit more than that.

   Since it’s very unlikely you will generate *exactly* $100,000 every month, the only way to maintain it, is to exceed it. After all, just one month at $99,997 ruins your record and means you are no longer making $100,000 every month. So $1.2 million is an unrealistic minimum. $1.5 million is probably closer to accurate. In other words, those generating $1.5 million or more in annual sales are much more likely to be doing $100,000 or more every month, (unless their business is highly seasonal.) So if you want to get to $100,000 every month in gross sales, I would say $1.5 million a year is what you need to shoot for.

   **$100,000 Every Month in Gross Profit**

   If you want to generate $100,000 every month in gross profit, that’s quite a bit trickier! It means you have to generate a minimum of $285,714.28 in gross sales per month (based on the industry average 35% gross profit margin.) That equates to $3,428,571.30 in gross sales per year. But once again, if you want to be a stickler about it, you should probably round up to at least $3.5 million a year, or more likely $4 million if you want to maintain the “every month” aspect of this.

   **$100,000 Every Month in Commission or Personal Income**

   Earning $100,000 every month in personal income means you’re earning at least $1.2 million dollars a year. Congratulations, you’ve joined the elite! Warren Buffet now believes that you should be paying more taxes. You have arrived!

   Of course, in order to do that as a salesperson (earning a 50% split on a 35% gross profit margin), you’ll need to generate a minimum of $571,428.57 a month in gross sales or $6,857,142.80 a year (better round up to at least $7 million.)
Like it or not, those are the numbers! So how do you get to them?

**The Progression**

Getting to $100,000 every month in personal income is not the most immediate hurdle that most people in our industry will have to face.

First, they'll need to get to $100,000 in a year in gross sales. Then maybe $100,000 every six months. Then $100,000 a quarter. After that, they can start focusing on getting to $100,000 a month. Getting to $100,000 a month in gross profit or $100,000 a month in personal income can only happen after that.

The reality is that the majority of the businesses in our industry (a whopping 89.9%) generate less than $1 million a year in gross sales.* In fact, the average for those companies is $277,336.95 a year.

So to keep this discussion relevant to as many people as possible, let’s start with getting you to $100,000 a month in gross sales, then work from there.

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* Distributor sales statistics provided by Larry Basinait, Executive Director of Research Services for ASI.
2. Who Should I Target?

I received lots of questions about who you have to target in order to get to $100,000 a month. Here is my personal favorite:

**Question:** “Starting from scratch (no clients), how can I get the kind of clients that will get me to $100K/month by the second month?”

**Answer:** “Buy an established distributorship that’s currently doing $200K a month – then make sure you don’t lose more than half your clients in the first month!”

First off, I have never heard of a scenario where someone started from scratch in our industry and got to $100,000 a month by the second month. Reaching enough prospects to get to numbers like that in such a limited time frame would be tricky enough. But building sufficient credibility to close enough of those brand new leads within such a narrow time frame strikes me as (nearly) impossible.

However, the core of this question is what interests me most: How can I get the kind of clients that will get me there? That cuts to the heart of the issue.

Many people in the promotional products industry start out by taking any client they can. They’ll sell to anyone with a pulse – anyone who can fog a mirror.

But the truth of the matter is that it is very difficult to build a successful $100,000+ a month business with just any old clients. (The exceptions to this are companies that have thousands of independent reps selling small orders to small clients. But most people will never build that sort of business.)

As a small business owner or primary salesperson, your best shot to get to $100,000 every month is to target the right clients. Selling to poor people is not a viable business strategy. If you have ever wasted time with prospects who didn’t have the money to invest in promotional products, you know this is true.

Sure, some people have the money and lie about it, but generally speaking, they’re not great prospects either. Instead, we want those who spend money on promotional products and are willing to spend it with us!

So where do we start?
The Top Consumers of Promotional Products

If you have been in this industry for any length of time, you have probably seen this list before. However, it’s likely you have not even begun to fully monetize it.

The top consumers of promotional products spend millions – in some cases billions – of dollars each year, regardless of the economy. They may not be spending it with you at the moment, but they are still spending it.

How Many of These Industries are You Currently Selling?

1. Education/schools/universities
2. Health/medical/hospitals
3. Financial/insurance
4. Manufacturing/distribution
5. Other
6. Automotive
7. Associations/clubs/civic groups
8. Nonprofit/not-for-profit
9. Consumer products
10. Restaurants/travel/lodging
11. Ad agencies/marketing companies
12. Government
13. Construction
14. Technology
15. Retail
16. Professional services
17. Utilities
18. Real estate
19. Pharmaceuticals

* Source: ASI State of the Industry Distributors Report

Important: If you are brand new or have not yet mastered the diagnostic approach to sales, I do not recommend starting with clients like these.

But if you are a trained and competent promotional professional looking to grow your book of business, you should certainly target some top consumers.

In addition to these, you should also target…
Your Own “Personal Best” Markets

If you have been selling for any length of time, take a look at your client list. Pull it up in a spreadsheet and sort it according to how much money they spend with you – with your biggest clients at the top.

What do they have in common? Are they in similar industries? Do they have a similar number of employees? Similar sales volume? In similar locations?

Highlight your favorite clients and ask yourself, “where can I find more clients just like these?” Where are they located geographically? What types of businesses are they? Who am I dealing with in each organization? Do they have similar titles or job descriptions? (For a brief video overview of the top buyers of promotional products within organizations, turn on your speakers and click here.)

After you have targeted the top consumers and your own personal best markets, you may want to target...

Related Test Markets

The importance of testing different markets cannot be overstated. Any time you target a particular industry or market, it’s essentially a test, because you don’t know whether or not the prospects in that market will be responsive to you.

In Top Secrets of Customer Acquisition I talk about the importance of examining your results and then tweaking and repeating your approach going forward based on the results you are getting. This is really the only way you can bring new clients through the door systematically, instead of just sporadically.

So approach all your customer acquisition efforts as tests that need to be validated or invalidated. Continue with what works, eliminate what doesn’t.

If you currently sell to a lot of banks, look at targeting savings and loans or credit unions. If you have luck selling to hospitals, target a few urgent care facilities. If you’re good at selling to car dealers, approach truck, boat or RV dealers as well.

Recommendations like these may seem very simple, and you might have heard them before. The question is… are you taking action on them consistently?
3. How Do I Get More (and Better) Clients?

In addition to questions related to targeting, I also received a lot of questions related to getting new clients through the door… particularly those with the best likelihood of spending money with us. For example:

**Question:** "How do you get into the door with prospects that order a lot of promotional products but with whom you have no relationship or entrée?

**Answer:** You need a solid process for customer acquisition.

Customer acquisition is the process of converting total strangers into paying clients. Make no mistake, *that’s your job* when approaching people with whom you have no prior relationship.

Anyone who knows me, knows that I am a *nut* when it comes to systems. I am a huge proponent of step-by-step systems and processes to create consistent results. Do something once, and it might be a fluke. Create a system that works over and over again and you’ve got a license to print money!

In every business, I believe that the single most necessary and important process is the customer acquisition process. If you can’t point to a system or step-by-step procedure for bringing new clients through the door, *then you don’t have one*. That means you will never make as much money as you could.

**Here is an overview of the customer acquisition process I recommend:**
1. You start by **Targeting** the business and industries most likely to spend money with you.

2. You do your **Hunting & Gathering** to track down the appropriate contact people within each organization and gather up their contact information.

3. You initiate a compelling **First Contact** with them, and follow-up using our proprietary **3 x 3 Follow-Up** procedure.

4. This leads directly to our 7 question **Qualification** process, and **Segmentation** of prospects into one of five categories: 1. Ready to buy now, 2. Have specific dates in mind, 3. Generally receptive, 4. Rude, obnoxious or belligerent and 5. Unresponsive. *Note: Every lead that goes through an effective customer acquisition system should be assigned to one of these five categories and processed accordingly.*

5. After you’ve segmented out your leads, you **Examine the Metrics** to discover how well or poorly your process worked. This examination will show you exactly where your customer acquisition effort went right and where it went wrong. From there, you…

6. **Tweak & Repeat** the process, based on what you learned in step 5. This ensures that your customer acquisition efforts will continue to improve each time you repeat the process.

For more details on the Six Steps to Customer Acquisition, register for my Webinar *The Five Biggest Threats Facing Promotional Products Distributors (and what to do about them.*) To register now, [click here](mailto:).”

Remember, your customer acquisition process needs to meet these criteria:

1. It is tested and proven. No point systematizing something that doesn’t work!
2. It is documented in print. No “whisper down the lane.”
3. It provides structure without being scripted.
4. It is easily learned, taught and understood (Mensa membership not required.)
5. It can be implemented by *any competent person on your team* (if you are dependent on hiring only geniuses and sales superstars, you’re in trouble.)

It must also include *specific instructions* on how to adapt and tweak the system for constant improvement going forward.

Businesses without a tested, proven customer acquisition system are worth far less to their owners and to any potential buyers than those with such a system.
4. How Much Time Will it Take to Make $100K a Month?

Good question, tough to answer…

**Question:** "How many hours a month does it take?"

**Answer:** "It depends on you, and how you have your business structured."

If you create a “you-centric” business (that is, a business that is entirely dependent upon you to do all the work,) that will take more time. If you hire others to do the work, that will take more money.

On the one hand, much of the industry spends 40 to 55 hours a week to generate $250,000 in annual sales.

On the other hand, I have clients who generate $1 million plus in 20 to 30 hours a week.

If I had a third hand, I’d talk about a few business owners I know who spend very little time at all in businesses that generate $10 million or more in annual sales, because they have other people doing all the work.

So how much time will it take you? I really can’t say. But I can tell you that the best way to reduce the amount of time wasted on poor quality prospects (so that you can better invest your time with highly qualified prospects) is to implement the type of system I described in question 3.

If you have proven, functional customer acquisition systems in place to attract new clients, and if you have customer retention systems in place to keep and escalate the clients you have, and if you have customer reactivation systems in place to bring back clients who have fallen away – and if you follow those systems meticulously – you will waste a lot less time on non-productive efforts and make all the time you spend in your business much more productive and profitable for you.

With such systems you will also be able to delegate those tasks to other people much more quickly, easily and effectively, further reducing the amount of time you have to spend doing it all yourself.
5. How Much Staff Will I Need?

**Question:** "How can I hire and staff to make $100,000 a month?"

**Answer:** "Like the previous question, it depends on you, your strengths and how you have your business structured."

Are you bad at managing money? If so, you’ll need someone to do that. Have trouble selling? That’s a key area, so someone has to do it. Poor organizational skills? You’ll need someone who’s organized...

Since I don’t know your strengths, weaknesses or capabilities, I can’t tell you how much staff you’ll need. But before I reached even $500,000 in annual promotional products sales in my business, here’s what I did:

1. Bookkeeping and accounting work bored me to tears. I also knew I couldn’t afford to risk messing it up, so I hired someone to do it.

2. I hated and lacked the patience to do my own paperwork. I would have hired someone else to do that as well, but I didn’t know how to delegate it properly. So I continued to do it myself (poorly) until much later, when I learned how to delegate important, but routine tasks effectively.

3. I love selling and marketing, and since that’s what brings in the money, I focused on that. I also hired commission sales people to sell as well. One of them liked managing, so I paid him an override to be my sales manager.

My approach was to build an organization rather than trying to do it all myself. That meant I pocketed LESS money up front, but I was able to grow faster than if I had tried to do it all myself. Since the business was not entirely dependent on me, it was also much easier to find a buyer for it.

However, other people do it differently. For example:

- I have a client in Canada who does around $1 million a year as a franchisee for a large distributor company. He does nearly all the selling himself and lets them handle the back end while he spends his time coaching his daughter in hockey. While he pays a percentage of sales to the company, it’s worth it to him, because his business supports his lifestyle.

- One of my clients worked for a large distributor company for years. She got to nearly $4 million in annual sales with a couple of assistants. When the large distributor went belly up, she started her own business and now has salespeople and a staff of her own.
A client in California has a small group of clients that spend a lot of money with him. He does $1 million a year in sales with just one other salesperson. It’s his business, so there’s no back-office staff. Somehow he manages to get it all done in less than 30 hours most weeks. My theory is that he is actually an alien from another planet.

Each of their stories and several more are documented in my training program *Top Secrets of Multi-Million Dollar Producers, Vol. 2*. To access excerpts from the program and hear more about how they did it, [click here](#).

Those with a lot of time and no money have to do it themselves or come up with the money to hire others. Those with more money than time have to hire others or find a way to free up more of their time to do it themselves.

There are a lot of things that will determine your staffing requirements. Most of them have to do with the kind of business you want to build and the kind of life you want to have.

If you are primarily interested in growing through your own personal sales efforts, [click here](#).

If you are primarily interested in growing your business by hiring a sales team or independent sales representatives, [click here](#).
6. What Kind of Facility Will I Need?

**Question:** "Are most distributors working from home or do they have an office?"

**Answer:** "Most distributors don’t make $100,000 a month, so knowing what they do won’t help you. The real question is “what do I need to do to make $100,000 a month?”"

If your setup consists of you and maybe an assistant or two, then yes, you can certainly do that from home. Or you might have assistants or virtual assistants who work from their own homes (assuming they are very reliable and structured.) However, working with a remote or virtual assistant requires its own set of skills.

If you are able to work from home, by all means do so. It will keep your costs down and you’re much better off having the business “rent” from you than from someone else.

An office or showroom can be extremely expensive, and unless it brings in business off the street – sufficient to cover the monthly cost of rent, fixtures and utilities – it may be very hard to justify financially.

If you need office space to house your employees, make sure they are producing for you sufficiently to cover their pay and overhead.

What do most people do? It depends on the size and structure of the organization. The larger the business, the more likely they will have an office and a sales team. Businesses in the $1 million to $2 million range can go either way. Businesses in the range of 2 million dollar a year and up generally have sales teams and commercial offices. Showrooms are largely a matter of choice and preference, but keep this is mind:

Promotional products sales is a B-to-B (business-to-business) business. That is, we sell primarily to other businesses. So having a showroom or kiosk in a consumer shopping area or strip mall probably won’t help you, as most retail consumers (i.e. mall shoppers) are not in the market for promotional products and retail space is often quite a bit more expensive.

Focus on getting your information and capabilities in front of qualified business people and you’ll do much better.
7. Characteristics of $100,000 a Month Producers

**Question:** "What are the main characteristics of companies at this revenue level that allow them to outperform their smaller counterparts?"

**Answer:** Here are some of the top characteristics as outlined in the original *Top Secrets of Multimillion Dollar Producers* system:

1. They are able to leverage their time to make each hour count for more. They invest their time in high leverage/high dollar tasks (that they are good at) and delegate other important tasks as much as possible.

2. They spend the majority of their selling time interacting with established clients, but still allocate time to new customer acquisition.

3. They position themselves clearly in the marketplace and do not attempt to be all things to all people. They become known for what they’re good at.

4. They know their numbers inside and out. They know what they need to generate on a monthly basis and they know which clients they are likely to generate it from. They know their profit margins (gross and net), so they understand which orders to take and which to refuse to take.

5. They have a sufficient flow of leads and sales in the pipeline, so they are never dependent on one particular sale to close.

For more details on the specific characteristics and activities of multi-million dollar producers, click here to check our the original *Top Secrets of Multi-Million Dollar Producers* system or click here to check out excerpts from *Top Secrets of Multi-Million Dollar Producers, Vol. 2.*
8. Can I Do it Under The Following Conditions?

Quite a few people asked me questions about making $100,000 a month, while operating under a very specific set of limiting conditions. For example:

Questions:

1. "Can I achieve that as a company with one person (owner, me), one assistant and no outsourcing except art and digitizing?"

2. "How do you do that if you are a 2-man show?"

Or this particularly interesting one:

3. “How can I make $100,000 a month in sales with no sales experience?"

Answers:

1. Maybe.

2. With great difficulty.

3. You can't.

To some extent, applying conditions up front forces you to think through what your business would have to look like in order to achieve your objectives. It helps you to clarify your vision, and dictates many of your decisions.

However, applying too many conditions, or applying conditions that reduce or eliminate your likelihood of actually achieving your stated goal can seriously undermine your efforts.

It’s one thing to say, “I will do whatever it takes to climb Mount Everest within the next three years.” It’s another thing to say, “I want to climb Mount Everest next week -- naked, with no training, carrying only a towel and a spatula.”

Trying to attain a high level of sales while simultaneously applying an arbitrary set of (in some cases impossible) conditions undermines you from the start.
More often, you’re better off asking yourself what you realistically want to accomplish and what you’re willing to do to make it happen.

If your conditions are that it has to be you, with one assistant, and you have to do it all yourselves except for art and digitizing, you may be focusing too much on the limitations you’re placing on yourself and not enough on achieving the results. If you had to have two assistants to reach your goal, would you do it?

If your goal is to get to $100,000 a month every month, do everything you can possibly do to achieve it. You’ll learn along the way whether or not your strengths and abilities will allow you to do it as a solo, as a “2-man show” or whether you’ll need more help than that to get there.

Regarding the question “How can I make $100,000 a month in sales with no sales experience?” *Fuggedaboudit.* You can’t. Because in order to make $100,000 in a month, you will have to get in front of a sufficient number of prospects, make a sufficient number of coherent presentations, recommend enough promotional solutions and write a significant amount of business. Doing all that doesn’t just require sales experience, it IS sales experience in and of itself.

If you are in a production-based business like screen printing, pad printing, embroidery or any other “manufacturing” process that actually requires you to do the printing or decoration, delegation becomes essential. Because if you are going out and selling it, then coming back and printing it, then delivering it and billing it before you can start the process again, you'll never have enough “feet on the street” to hit your desired numbers. You need to have a sufficient selling presence in the market in order to make numbers like that happen.
9. How Do I Differentiate Myself?

Question: "You can’t swing a dead cat without hitting a promotional products seller in this town. What are several ways to differentiate my company?"

Answer: “Thanks for the lovely imagery. You need to differentiate based on your strengths.”

The first thing you have to do in order to effectively differentiate yourself and your company is to identify what you are best at.

What is your core strength? What is your core competency? Those are the primary things that will differentiate you.

Some people think it’s about coming up with a “catch phrase” – something designed to sound good to a large segment of the market. But unless that catch phrase clearly articulates who you are and what you are able to do well on a consistent basis, it won’t match your reality and you won’t be able to maintain it.

So first look at what you do best. Are you best at:

- Coming up with creative ideas?
- Sourcing and delivering the right products super-fast?
- Finding and implementing low-cost, high-impact promotions?

After you’ve determined what you do exceptionally well, hammer that message home with your target market as clearly and frequently as possible. That will allow you to quickly see how your message is resonating.

If your core skill or competency is not something that a sufficient number of people want, you may need to restate it. Continue to tweak and adapt your message to appeal to your audience and look for better ways to express it.

If you need a step-by-step process for creating a “primary positioning statement” or “unique selling proposition” that is perfectly suited to your own personal strengths – along with a marketing plan to communicate it – click here.
10. Can I Make $100,000 a Month and Still Have a Life?

**Question:** "Can you really make $100,000 a month and still have a life?"

**Answer:** “You can if you haven’t created a ‘you-centric’ business.”

While the universe occasionally turns out an individual who is able to manage all the details of a $100,000 a month business single-handedly, the majority of us are not so lucky.

Generally speaking, if you have a “you-centric” business (that is, one that requires you to personally handle every single detail of the business from start to finish), then it will be really hard for you to make $100,000 *every month* and still have a life.

Most people in a “you-centric” business do as much as they can, get to a certain sales plateau, then struggle to maintain it. And operating a “you-centric” business certainly doesn’t get easier as you get older.

If you want to generate the income and still have a life, it’s best to set things up correctly from the beginning.

You will need:

- Proven systems that will allow you to attract and retain a sufficient number of clients to generate that sort of revenue on a consistent basis.
- People (either inside or outsourced) who can follow, tweak and update your systems on a daily basis to handle important tasks.
- Cost controls that allow you to accomplish this, cover your overhead and make sure the business is profitable enough to *pay you*, so you can go out and have that life.…

Over the years, I have had the pleasure of helping *thousands* of professionals in the promotional products industry to increase their sales, improve their profit margins and grow their businesses on a guaranteed basis. To see and hear some of their own stories in their own words, [click here](#).
Resources

Getting Started: How to Launch a Wildly Successful Career in Promotional Products Sales -- Recommended for those who are new to the promotional products industry or generating less than $250,000 a year in annual sales.

Top Secrets of Customer Acquisition -- Recommended for those who need to get new clients now. A step-by-step system for customer acquisition.

Internet Marketing for Promotional Advisors -- Recommended for those who want to use the internet to get promotional products clients.

Top Secrets of Promotional Products Sales: The Salesperson’s System -- Recommended for those who want to grow their promotional products sales through their own personal sales efforts.

Top Secrets of Promotional Products Sales: The Owner’s System -- Recommended for those who want to grow their promotional products sales by hiring a sales team or independent sales representatives.


Top Secrets of Multi-Million Dollar Producers and Top Secrets of Multi-Million Dollar Producers, Vol. 2 -- Recommended for promotional products professionals generating $250,000 or more in annual gross sales, looking to jump to the next level.

Sledgehammer Marketing -- Recommended if you need to create a primary positioning statement or unique selling proposition that is perfectly suited to your own personal strengths, along with a marketing plan to communicate it.