



The Hindsight Chronicles: Mistake Avoidance 101

Mistake #1: My plan is in my head

I call this wishing and hoping, thinking and praying – that's about how effective it is. If you have ideas swirling around your head, they probably look to your customer like angry bees that have been rudely awakened out of a nice nap.

If it's not on paper, it's still only an idea. A plan takes a look at every part of the challenge and details priorities so that you aren't whizzing around chasing your proverbial tail.

Mistake #2: Strategic first, then tactical

The difference between strategic v tactical activity is this: Pretend the strategic is a laser and the tactical is a shotgun. If you aim a laser at a specific target, knowing when, how, and what part to hit, chances are you'll hit it. When you use a shotgun, you'll hit a few but miss many more. The strategic approach first defines WHY you are doing a specific activity, who you are doing it for, what you are doing, how often and using which tools.

Being tactical reminds me of all the teenagers who want to go to a certain college because it's the cool place – not because it's the right fit, or the best for their strengths, or has the best alumni payback – they never take the time to realize that their definition of cool might change.

Mistake #3: I can get it for free or my brother-in-law offered to do my website

You ALWAYS get what you pay for when it's free. Either it gets halfway done and then sits forever or it causes family dysfunction for the rest of your life. It's way easier to understand what a fair price is, define the tasks, and a timeline. Then you have a chance of getting a web presence up and rolling. Aside from all that there is the little detail of expertise that involves a whole lot of things that reside under the website covers that



your brother-in-law probably never heard of when he read the Dummies book. It's time to get out of that scarcity headset.

Mistake #4: My web guy can design my site.

Yes, but if he doesn't have a complete understanding of how marketing works he may produce something that looks quite different from everything else you've got. There are some very talented web designers – no question. You need to make sure that what is done on the web can translate to other mediums before you make that decision.

Mistake #5: I never heard of a marketing budget

This sounds like my cousin in Atlanta. Her husband balances her checkbook every month and at the bottom he writes: "You either have +\$752 or -\$2,647."

It makes it thrilling each month to figure out what's happening. When they said, "keep the excitement in your marriage", they didn't mean this. Having a budget helps you think more entrepreneurially spending only on the highest priority items, and frees you from experiencing that old knee jerk reaction that your credit card gets when you want something.

Mistake #6: Metrics – I was never good in math

Well you don't have to be good in math with all the tools available. You just have to look at them on a regular basis and decide whether they tell you that what you are doing is working. Nothing like answers in black and white to give you a map to more success. But, maybe you would still rather be lost in the forest with the trees.

Mistake #7: I'm too busy

Too busy for what? More success, more profit, more fun? You do realize that you are in business to make money – right? So if you are too busy to work on your business, who will?