AGENCY NEW BUSINESS QUESTIONS





INTRO

"10 Agency New Business Questions" is a series of posts interviewing individuals who've found success heading new business at their respective agencies. These interviews took place over the course of 2014, with each individual answering the same 10 questions on their new business process, tools and reasons for success.

Ideally the contents of this eBook help your own agency or marketing service firm develop a stronger new business program.

ABOUT RSW/US

RSW/US is a full service, outsourced agency business development group that helps marketing service firms (of all types and sizes) get closer to close. We are in the business of finding qualified leads, setting meetings for our clients, better positioning them in the market, and helping them move closer to close.

We only work with marketing service firms, so we know better than most what works and doesn't work when trying to break through to marketing and other decision makers. We give you the manpower of an entire team at your disposal, including list development, marketing support, and strategic oversight.

INTRO I PAUL POMEROY

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PAUL POMEROY has been with ab+c since 1999 and serves as Managing Partner and Director of Marketing, where he provides strategic counsel to agency clients in addition to managerial support. Prior to ab+c, he was a senior communications consultant for a DC-based consulting firm that specializes in marketing communication strategy. More recently, he served as national director of a DC/Delaware-based non-partisan education and lobbying organization.

> Born and raised in Delaware, Paul served three terms as an elected member of Newark City Council, stepping down after his final term. During his time on Council Paul focused on business and economic development issues, founding the Greater Newark Network and the newly formed Greater Newark Area Economic Development Partnership.

> > Paul received a Bachelor of Sciences degree in marketing from Georgetown University, and holds a Master's degree from the GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY'S SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC POLICY.

INTRO I I JEFF FROMM

JEFF FROMM is Executive Vice President & Co-author of "Marketing to Millennials: Reach the Largest and Most Influential Generation of Consumers Ever," and the lead editor of the blog, www.millennialmarketing.com.

JEFF

In addition to his marketing degree from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, Jeff has more than 25 years of brand marketing experience.

On behalf of Barkley, he spearheaded the Millennials research partnership with The Boston Consulting Group and Service Management Group.

Jeff is also the founder of **SHARE.LIKE.BUY**, a Millennial Insights & Marketing Conference in Kansas City, MO.

INTRO I I ROY PAGE

ROY PAGE is the founder and CEO of Third Degree Advertising with offices in Raleigh/Durham, NC, Oklahoma City, OK and San Diego, CA. Page is the author of Credit Union Savvy, a book offering years of marketing credit also the author on a letter of the author of the united States. He is of "A Letter to Evan," a book based written to his son following what he calls "a

and professional life.

Page has served as an instructor of advertising at the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism and Advertising.

perfect storm" that impacted his personal

An avid sportsman and outdoors enthusiast, he especially loves spending time with his children and family on his 17-foot Boston Whaler on North Carolina's Inner and Outer Banks. You can follow Roy's personal and professional journey on his blog at WWW.ALETTERTOEVAN.COM

INTRO I JOE SARACINO

JOE SARACINO, is the Chief Marketing Officer at Erwin Penland, one of the largest full-service advertising agencies based in the South. In the role, Saracino develops and implements the agency's overall marketing plan for all offices and identifies and secures new business opportunities across the country in a variety of disciplines and vertical industries.

Saracino spent more than 15 years at Verizon Wireless, the largest wireless company in the United States, holding a variety of management positions before becoming the first-ever chief marketing officer for EP. He has worked with EP throughout its 20plus-year relationship with Verizon. At Verizon, he had served as vice president of marketing communications at the company's headquarters in New Jersey, where he led brand, advertising, promotions, merchandising, sponsorships and a \$1.5 billion national media plan. Prior to that role, he served as vice president of e-commerce, owning the digital user experience and leading online customer acquisition efforts and customer self-serve initiatives. Saracino graduated cum laude from Drexel University in his hometown of Philadelphia with a Bachelor of Science in business administration with a concentration in marketing. He currently lives in Greenville, SC with his wife Cynthia, daughters Grace and Gaby and their five dogs.

You can follow Joe on Twitter at @JSARACINO

INTRO I I MARK O'TOOLE

MARK'S goal is to keep HB ahead of trends, and to set a few trends of its own, to the benefit of clients, using all the tools available to today's traditional and digital communicator. In fact, we're all in PR, according to Mark. And, despite all the change and disruption, PR is still about helping clients meet business goals.

In his free time, Mark competes with his kids on Xbox. He still plays basketball (even though his wife thought he'd be done 20 years ago). Mark applies the same strategic determination that he brings to clients to his two-time league champ fantasy baseball team.

Mark grew up destined for PR. He became a regular reader of the Globe, Herald and New York Times at age 11. He attended one of the country's best communications schools, Emerson College. He worked in TV for a dozen years. He has 11,000 songs on his iPod. He spends (too much?) time on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. And he knows that we are all communicators...because PR, and all that it can do, is the future of marketing. Find Mark on Twitter at @MARKROTOOLE.







2 WAS YOUR BACKGROUND IN AGENCY NEW BUSINESS PRIOR TO JOINING THE AGENCY?

No, I started in the business as an **ROV** account executive for an agency serving a national fast-food brand. My initial focus was on project management and local market tactical implementation. New business development came out of necessity in order to establish a sustainable company.

I sold my five-person marketing strategy firm to a St. Louis ad agency in January 2008 and took an active role in business development. Then I left in January 2010 to re-join Barkley. I'm part of the boomerang club at Barkley and very pleased to be back.

Before I joined the marketing industry, I spent a dozen years in the cable television news field. I was part of the sales team, most often in an operational role, creating sales packages and developing programming opportunities that appealed to our clients and prospects.

Far from it. I spent the previous 16 years at Verizon Wireless in various marketing and sales operations roles. My last five years there were spent reporting to the CMO, running the e-commerce business and running all advertising and marketing communications nationwide.

Not at all. I sold wholesale food products **PAUL**. And then technology services. And then other strategic communications services. And I was involved in politics.I unapologetically came from the world of sales and marketing, and not from the world of advertising.



NONE OF OUR INTERVIEWEES CAME FROM AN AGENCY NEW BUSINESS **BACKGROUND.** WHAT DOES THIS TELL **US? THE KEY TO A GOOD NEW BUSINESS LEADER IS SALES AND MARKETING EXPERIENCE. THEY COME TO THE TABLE KNOWING HOW TO SPEAK THE** MARKET'S LANGUAGE AS OPPOSED TO AGENCY **BUZZWORDS. THEY GRASP AND ASSIMILATE MARKETING CHALLENGES BECAUSE THEY'VE** LIVED THOSE CHALLENGES. DOESN'T MEAN THIS **IS AN AUTOMATIC BLUEPRINT FOR NEW BUSINESS SUCCESS, BUT IT** SHOULD BE STRONGLY CONSIDERED, AND IT'S WHAT WE LOOK FOR AT **RSW/US WHEN HIRING NEW BUSINESS DIRECTORS TO REPRESENT OUR** AGENCY CLIENTS.

HOW IS NEW BUSINESS STRUCTURED AT YOUR AGENCY, IN REGARDS TO A SOLO OR TEAM CONFIGURATION AND STAFF NUMBERS DEDICATED TO NEW BUSINESS?

We have over 325 partners at Barkley and all of them support new business by providing exceptional client service and creative work. From time to time, some of them directly work on new business based on the size of the pitch and requirements.

At HB Agency, we have a dedicated new business team that consists of the CEO, the company president, and three more senior leaders at the firm. Once a month, we invite team leaders from various parts of the company for creative brainstorming and goal-setting. New business is at the core of our being, so it permeates our entire agency and our culture. Everyone at the agency touches new business in some way during any given month. We do this by design.

I am the tip of the spear, if you will, and the spear is made up of 350 plus people across three offices. All with their own skills and capabilities they add to the spear. There are technically only 3 employees dedicated on paper to new business, but I think that all 350 are dedicated in spirit.

We're a small company in terms of head-count. New business is a team effort by necessity, however, we have a system that leverages key players in each department when necessary. We rely heavily on the development of thought leadership since we are a specialized firm.



EACH AGENCY CONSIDERS NEW BUSINESS AN AGENCY-WIDE ENDEAVOR AND THIS IS A CRITICAL FACTOR TO SUCCESS WITHIN ANY AGENCY. WITHOUT IT, AN INTERNAL NEW **BUSINESS EFFORT RARELY SUCCEEDS. NEW BUSINESS AS AN OVERALL DRIVER HAS TO PERMEATE THE ENTIRE AGENCY. AS YOU CAN SEE HOWEVER. IN ORDER TO SUCCEED, THERE MUST BE AN ONGOING PLAN-EACH AGENCY** HAS A DIFFERENT INFRASTRUCTURE INVOLVING LEADERSHIP AND/OR KEY PLAYERS. WE'VE SEEN THIS BACKFIRE WHEN MULTIPLE PERSON **ARE INVOLVED WITHOUT ASSIGNING ROLES.**

IN TERMS OF STRATEGY, HOW HAVE YOU FOUND SUCCESS-THROUGH A Specific Niche/Specialty or a more horizontal approach based on Service Specialty, and why?

PAUL We use them all as part of an integrated sales strategy to fill our lead pipeline, and over the past 10 years we have directly linked each of these tactics to successful lead generation. Sales cycles can be long in this industry. So we need to constantly be out in front of our prospects to build awareness and brand value.

HB chose a path of specialization. We focus on complex B2B marketing challenges, and the majority of our clients are in one of three industries: high tech, medical tech or clean tech.

We don't believe in service specialty. People ask me all the time, "what's your core competency?" My short answer: "we're an ad agency." To me, real ad agencies excel at many things. We have always been believers in the integrated approach – being able to fulfill almost any need a client may have.

On a proactive basis we use both a focus on two verticals where we have "historic" expertise and success plus a deep pool of Millennial Consumer and Marketing Trends that we leverage to create demand for Barkley across a broader range of verticals.

As a specialist we tend to see trends and opportunities that are not all that unique to us. They might be unique to a client because clients don't often have the exposure to a broader industry perspective outside their own walls. We have that knowledge and experience as a result of partnering with their peers across the country.



UNSURPRISINGLY, ANSWERS VARY WIDELY AND THIS IS AN AREA **BE FOREVER DEBATED: TO SPECIALIZE OR NOT? FOR EVERY AGENCY THAT EXCELS** WITHIN A CATEGORY, YOU'LL FIND **ANOTHER THAT SPANS MULTIPLE** CATEGORIES. WHILE WE SEE ADVANTAGES TO BOTH. **REGARDLESS OF YOUR AGENCY DIRECTION, KEY IS MAINTAINING OVERALL FOCUS. THAT STARTS** WITH FINDING YOUR DIRECTION AND CONSTRUCTING A GAME PLAN: HOW WILL WE DEFINE OURSELVES, WHAT TYPES OF PROSPECTS WILL WE PURSUE, WHAT TOOLS WILL WE USE AND IF WE'RE NOT SPECIALIZING, HOW WILL **CATEGORIES BE WEIGHTED, IN TERMS OF THE NEW BUSINESS WE PURSUE.**

E WHICH DO YOU FIND MORE SUCCESSFUL FOR YOUR PROGRAM-INBOUND, OUTBOUND OR A BLEND OF BOTH, AND WHY?

BE THE HUNTED NOT THE HUNTER. It is skewed inbound with selective and Focused outbound efforts. Between millennialmarketing.com (one of our blogs), the multiple research reports and articles published on Millennials and speaking at 50+ high-profile events a year, we create interest in our expertise.

We have a robust blog that touches on all types of issues affecting marketers – it is well read and shared. We also place content outside the walls of HB, on media outlets, on partner sites, and on social media channels like SlideShare, Twitter, Google+ and Facebook. Nothing beats new business from within an existing client account or from a client referral. The entire time I have worked in the world of advertising, "sales" has been a dirty word among many agency experts. I think just the opposite.

A blend, of course. You can't just sit around and wait for the phone to ring, because there are times when it doesn't. And you don't want to ignore the phone when it does ring. You have to hunt. But you also have to master balancing your inbound (less predictable) and outbound (slightly more predictable) opportunities.

We seek a balance of both. Our thought leadership is a solid positioning tool. We leverage multiple message channels for distribution. We attend conferences, conduct workshops, webinars and partner with industry associations to nurture our positioning. The goal is to create more inbound inquiries by remaining top-of-mind.



A RANGE OF ANSWERS WITH TWO COMMON THEMES-YOU MUST HUNT AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP MUST PLAY A PART IN YOUR **NEW BUSINESS OUTREACH. IN OUR OWN RSW/US PROGRAMS**, **MIRRORING THE MAJORITY OF ANSWERS HERE, WE INCLUDE** A MIX OF BOTH INBOUND AND OUTBOUND. THE RISE OF **INBOUND AS WE KNOW IT TODAY BROUGHT WITH IT** THE PROMISE OF A COUNTERPOINT TO **"TRADITIONAL" NEW BUSINESS OUTREACH AND FULFILLS THAT PROMISE TO A LARGE EXTENT; HOWEVER, WE'VE** SEEN THAT TO BE TRULY EFFECTIVE AT AGENCY **NEW BUSINESS, INBOUND SHOULDN'T EXIST WITHOUT A BALANCING OUTBOUND COMPONENT.**

C WHICH CHANNEL DO YOU FIND MOST SUCCESSFUL IN WINNING NEW Business: Social, Direct Mail, Phone, Email/Email Campaigns or Referrals ? Feel free to Pick More than one, and why?

PAUL We use them all as part of an integrated sales strategy to fill our lead pipeline, and over the past 10 years we have directly linked each of these tactics to successful lead generation. Sales cycles can be long in this industry. So we need to constantly be out in front of our prospects to build awareness and brand value.

Client referral is always best. Former clients that land at a new job is also great because they know us.



We are using social a lot. Many of these things have worked for us, but we have now essentially abandoned a lot of the older tools for the newer ones. Except for picking up the phone and meeting with people in person.

Referrals are always best, aren't they? But we cannot control the pace of referrals – it would be wonderful if we could! The other channels listed above supplement our referrals. Of those, Google AdWords is typically our most successful channel for delivering a quantity of leads, though quality can vary.



ROV It's all of the above. However, we DO NOT cold call. Phone calls are conversations based on warm leads. Our thought leadership is regularly distributed through blog, email, and hard-copy mailing. We try to re-purpose content for multi-channel use wherever possible.



REFERRALS ARE ALWAYS FANTASTIC AND SHOULD BE PURSUED, BUT YOU CAN'T LET **THOSE BE YOUR ENTIRE STRATEGY, JUST TOO UNPREDICTABLE. THE COMMON THEME HERE AND ONE WE STRONGLY ENDORSE: USING EVERY CHANNEL IN CONCERT WITH EACH OTHER. YOUR PROSPECTS ARE IN VARYING STAGES OF CHANNEL SOPHISTICATION, DEPENDING ON YOUR CATEGORY FOCUS. DIRECT MAIL IS STILL ENTIRELY** VIABLE AS ONE TOOL IN YOUR OUTREACH, FOR EXAMPLE, AND ONE WE USE IN **RSW/US PROGRAMS. SOME OF YOUR PROSPECTS LIVE ON SOCIAL CHANNELS LIKE** TWITTER, WHILE OTHERS STILL PREFER EMAIL AS THEIR PRIMARY TOOL OF INTERACTION. POINT BEING, DON'T OVERLY RELY ON ONE CHANNEL TO THE DETRIMENT OF OTHERS.

WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM IS MOST EFFECTIVE FOR YOU IN TERMS OF NEW BUSINESS, AND WHY?

GOOGLE. We are widely searched on Millennial and Marketing related topics in addition to our core verticals. You will have no trouble finding us on LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, Google Plus, Facebook and more.

LinkedIn is our most powerful social platform. We keep our company page fresh, sharing content regularly and using engaging graphics. Our staff is active on the platform too, sharing information, keeping their profiles current and participating in groups. SlideShare is emerging as a new channel to drive leads.



We try to build brand through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. We use LinkedIn as a prospecting tool quite a bit.

Hands down, LinkedIn. Twitter deserves an honorable mention, but LinkedIn is almost built for this job. You can research industries, companies, people, networks. The perfect tool for agency new business, really.

Again, there is no one platform better than the other. For us, each platform has a specific purpose. We tend to focus our Facebook posts on company culture, Twitter is more informational and a channel for sharing our insights and thought leadership. We also try to leverage credible industry association platforms and digital channels.



LINKEDIN CONTINUES TO BE THE PRIMARY CHOICE, NOT JUST FOR OUR INTERVIEWEES, BUT FOR AGENCIES AS A WHOLE, AS WE SEE IN OUR QUARTERLY SURVEY REPORTS. IT'S **UNDERSTANDABLE, GIVEN THE BUSINESS-CENTRIC NATURE** AND THAT MOST PROFESSIONALS ARE ON THE PLATFORM. ALSO NOTABLE-A POSITIVE TREND FROM PREVIOUS ANSWERS, AND ONE YOUR AGENCY SHOULD EMULATE-THE **USE OF MULTIPLE SOCIAL PLATFORMS. THE ONE CAVEAT-YOU HAVE TO BE JUDICIOUS AND NOT JUMP ON EVERY NEW PLATFORM. WITH A BIT OF** HOMEWORK, YOU CAN FIND OUT WHERE YOUR **PROSPECTS ARE AND FOCUS ACCORDINGLY.**



We track all of our new business efforts much the same way we track client campaign efforts. We go with what works and we change and adapt when needed.

Quality of lead flow related to prospect interest in our thinking and work product.

Knowing that in this role you have to play the long game. Chasing clients for revenue reasons only will get you nowhere. Building relationships for lasting successful partnerships is where we put most of our focus.

Structure. We commit to a formal business development program and sales methodology. For us, that methodology is based on one specific system. Almost all staff receives sales training. We are dedicated to quickly qualifying prospects or empowering them to disqualify HB if we are not the right fit.

We track multiple lead generation metrics. However, the ultimate measure of success for us stems from the number of inquiries and conversations that result into presentations or meetings.



YOU SEE, AGAIN, THE SUCCESSFUL TRAITS OF AN AGENCY NEW BUSINESS PROGRAM IN THESE ANSWERS: STRUCTURE, METHODOLOGY AND ADAPTATION (WHERE NECESSARY). WITHOUT ALL THREE, YOU SIMPLY CAN'T HAVE LONG-TERM SUCCESS.

WHY DO YOU THINK IT'S SO DIFFICULT FOR AGENCIES TO RUN SUCCESSFUL NEW BUSINESS PROGRAMS ON THEIR OWN?

Impatience and/or lack of focus. Ultimately, I'm not the "Horse Whisperer" of new business, but we follow a disciplined process with great team participation.

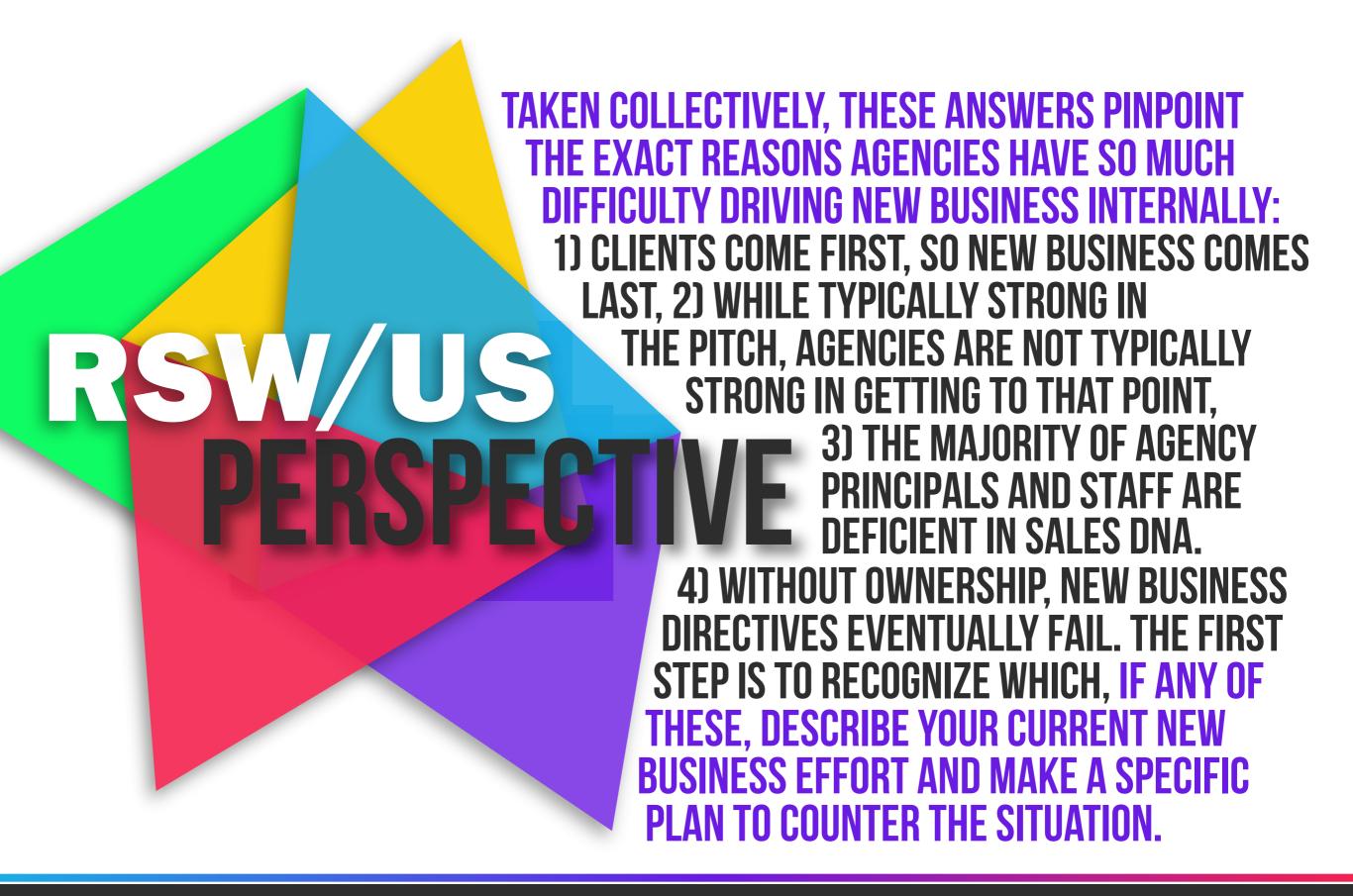
When you're a service-based business, solely dependent on the professional relationship of the client engagement. . .your priority is... serving the client. After all, that is the business model. A majority of the agency's resources tend to be directed toward the client so the agency takes a bit of a backseat. I've more often witnessed tension between the business development staff and creative and service staff in the agency realm. Since the majority of agency staff is committed to meeting deadlines of the client, supporting business development seems to be perceived as a chore and not a vital part of doing great work. It's an unjust perception, but it is real in my experience. Perhaps we are too focused on the art of the business vs. the business of the business.

Two main reasons: First, if one person doesn't have responsibility for a program's success, then nobody does. Somebody needs to have complete ownership of it. Second, some agencies are reluctant to embrace selling. Every company in every industry needs to sell to stay successful.

If people are on the same page, it isn't that difficult. Where it gets tricky is if people don't have clarity around their roles. You also have to have some discipline around what types of new business opportunities make sense for your agency. Sometimes, strategy is just knowing when to say no.

At the core of the new business challenge for marketing firms is that everyone from the CEO on down is typically a marketer first, new business professional second. And new business requires a different way of thinking.





10 IF YOU COULD GIVE ONE PIECE OF ADVICE TO A MID-TO-SMALL SIZE AGENCY LOOKING TO KICK A NEW BUSINESS EFFORT INTO GEAR, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

PAUL You need a sales and marketing plan—one that is documented and shared throughout the agency. Regardless of the size of your agency. Make one person responsible for its successful implementation. And then be patient. As I've already noted, our sales cycles can be long. If you're not sure where to start, consider soliciting consultative advice from an outside expert.

Never think you're in a good place with prospecting. An old boss once told me, after several quarters of quality leads and big wins, that we should pull back on our new business efforts because the leads will just keep coming. You know how that story ends.

Act bigger than you are. Shoot higher than where you think you should be shooting. Bite off more than you think you can chew. You will probably find that you can actually chew it.

Build on a foundation of serious research vs your views. Think about this they way you would think about a client's business. When we started working on Millennials in 2010 there was almost nothing available on Google. The absence of any authoritative content led us to believe it would be a good opportunity to plant our flag and provide expertise to our clients and prospects.

Be the experts your clients want you to be. Be the experts you claim to be. Live it. Write about it. Share it. Make the investment in it. Present your positioning in the same manner and with the same passion you would advise your clients.

ALL EXCELLENT ADVICE THAT STANDS ON ITS OWN. IDEALLY THE ANSWERS FROM EACH OF These 10 questions provide your agency with inspiration and momentum to drive your new business further. If you found this eBook helpful, there's a wealth of information on our site, www.rswus.com. Specifically, you can access survey reports taken from our quarterly surveys of marketers and agency principals, webinars, white papers, infographics and case studies, all dedicated to helping your agency improve its new business process.

While we strive to deliver insightful content to marketing service firms of all types, at our core we're an outsourced new business development firm. If you'd like to learn more about how we can help your firm, please contact Lee McKnight Jr. at lee@rswus.com or Mark Sneider at mark@rswus.com.





RSW/US is a full service, outsourced agency lead generation and new business development firm that helps marketing service companies (exclusively) find and win new business. We help Agencies by better positioning them in the market, finding qualified leads, setting meetings and helping move them closer to close.