



*The Newsletter of SWAN
March 2003*

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Next meeting: Wednesday, March 12, 2003

**Topic: To Have a Web Site or Not to Have a Web Site:
That is the Question!**

- *Do I need a web site?*
 - *What should it convey?*
 - *How do I promote it?*

As self-employed business people, these are three questions we need to ask ourselves. To learn the answers, come hear Jamie Chumas, president of Outsourcery, explain the pros and cons of having a web site and discover ways to promote your spot in cyberspace!

7:15 – Networking and refreshments

7:45 – Meeting

Silas Condict County Park
Kinnelon Road, Kinnelon, NJ
Non-Members: \$8.00 at the door

[What You Missed](#)

***January Meeting:
Taking the Chill out of Cold Calling***

by Eileen Watkins



Winsome Motivator Wendy Weiss

Caricature by Sarah Macy

Cold calling...the term itself sends a chill down the spine! Is it any wonder that most freelancers dread this method of drumming up new business?

Those who attended SWAN's January meeting heard advice on how to overcome this aversion from Wendy Weiss, sales trainer, sales coach and author of *Cold Calling for Women: Opening Doors and Closing Sales* (DFD Publications, 2000). Weiss, who describes herself as "The Queen of Cold Calling," spent the first 15 years of her career making such calls for her clients. Now she helps other businesspeople get the most out of networking over the phone.

First, she offered an unemotional definition of a "cold call"-- one that's made to someone who's not expecting it, usually to sell something, whether a product or a service. If the term puts you off, she suggested, think of it as an "introductory call." You're simply calling to introduce yourself, your company, and your service.

She acknowledged that many of us are afraid of sounding like "telemarketers." We've all heard from folks who interrupt our dinners, offer us products we don't need because they haven't done their market research, talk over us and don't listen. Weiss pointed out that if you don't commit those sins, you have no reason to put yourself in that league.

"Remember that if you have a good product or service, your prospects need you, or someone like you, as much as you need them," she said. "You're not somewhere below them, begging them to hire you. You're on an equal level."

Warming Up

She suggested that SWAN members "warm up" for such calls, and practice through repetition, the way they would for a sport. "Make a plan, and know what you're going to say. Find a buddy to practice with, and prepare for various responses." She added, "If

you're prepared, the words will come out in spite of your stage fright. You'll be able to perform even when you're having a bad day."

If you have a lot of prospects to approach, she said, divide them into A's, B's and C's, the A's being the most desirable. Practice on your C's (making your mistakes where they'll do the least harm), and work up. She recommended using a written script, but in conversational English, not slick ad copy from a brochure.

Weiss noted that you have about ten seconds on the phone to grab a listener's attention. Your introduction should stress how you are different from others who offer the same product or service. You can position yourself as an expert by saying "I specialize in..." or "My expertise is..." You also can mention your credentials, years of experience or prestigious clients. If you have time, talk about problems common to you clients, and add a success story or two about how you've solved these problems. Offer to show your prospect "ways to generate more business."

Most importantly, Weiss says, "Ask for what you want -- most people leave this out. Ask for a fifteen-minute meeting." Don't use the word "just," because it sounds as if you're apologizing for taking up your prospect's time. Give him a choice of "this week or next," so the question becomes when, rather than if, he'll meet with you.

You should pre-qualify your prospect as a person likely to need your services before you call. Then, if he says his company "doesn't do" the kind of thing you offer, you should act surprised and ask, "Why not?"

Getting Past the Screens

Weiss also gave tips on how to get past the "screens"-- receptionists and secretaries. For example, instead of asking to speak to Jane Jones, say "Jane Jones, please." If you're asked, "What is this in reference to?" you can explain the position you're trying to reach, confirming that "Jane Jones" is the person who handles such things, without revealing the reason for your call.

Weiss reminded her listeners that it takes an average of seven contacts to get a meeting with a prospect, and another seven to get to "the next level" of making a sale or getting hired. She adds, "Most people give up after three contacts. Stay with a prospect until they buy or die!"

She explained that we probably feel nervous about cold calls because the phone gives us no visual clues about how our pitch is going over. "It's not an intuitive skill, but it can be learned and improved."

When all is said and done, Weiss advised, don't suffer too many agonies about picking up that receiver. "It's not life or death--it's a phone call."



February Meeting **Creating a Business Plan**

by Eileen Watkins

Serious about achieving those career goals? Then it's high time you drew up a business plan! So says Susan Schear of the Oradell-based company Artisin, LLC.

Artisin provides business development services for the arts, and Schear is well aware that some creative people have trouble formulating business plans. In her program "Plan Your Work and Work Your Plan," she aimed to present the concept to the SWAN membership "in a non-threatening way--as a road map or blueprint."

"Often people don't create a business plan because they're too busy 'putting out fires,' and feel they don't have the time," she said. "But failing to plan is planning to fail!"

With the help of handouts, Schear explained the overall format of a business plan, from the cover sheet to the appendix. She noted that including every step is most important if you're applying for financing. You may not have to go into as much detail if you're drawing it up just for your own information.

A Statement of Purpose

You should begin with a Statement of Purpose, noting whether the plan will serve mainly as an operational tool or as a request for funding. Why are you in business, and what are you providing? Where do you want to be in five or ten years? What are your values, and what will make you say "no" to a customer?

Next should come an Executive Summary, an overview of your business. This, Schear said, should be written after the rest of the plan is completed, when you have a clearer idea of what your company is about.

She divided the rest of the plan into three sections--The Business, Financial Data and Supporting Documents.

In the first of these sections, describe your business in terms of its ownership, the product or service provided and the target markets. Then describe the product or service in terms of its uniqueness and benefit to customers.

"What are your core competencies and passions?" Schear asks. "You can ask people you've worked with to give you feedback on this."

Next, identify your potential customers as completely as possible. What are their weaknesses, and how can you offset them? Is your market growing, shrinking or otherwise changing, and how will you adapt?

A Summary Marketing Plan states what your customers want and how you can give it to them. It also figures in your strengths versus your weakness, and how to capitalize on the former while minimizing the latter. Schear suggested asking your clients to comment on these areas, even if you have a friend call them for you, incognito. How is your pricing--are you the least or the most expensive, compared to your competition?

Take into account the facilities and equipment you need to operate. Also, assess your location--if you meet clients at your home, do you have insurance to cover any accidents?

Rate the skills of your managers, whether that means yourself or someone else. Figure in any payments to employees or subcontractors. Note whether a particular project was worth the cost in terms of hours. If you are applying for a loan, state how it will be spent and why it will make your business more profitable.

The Financial Data should include sources of and applications for funding; any equipment that will depreciate through use; a balance sheet showing the assets, liabilities and net worth of the company; a break-even analysis; an income statement and projections, and a cash flow statement and projections. Look to the future by estimating what your needs will be down the road.

Among the Supporting Documents, you should have personal resumes and balance sheets, a cost-of-living budgets, job descriptions, copies of leases and contracts, insurance information and tax returns.

“Many people are uncomfortable with financial language,” Schear notes. “If you need outside help in this area, get it. When you’re in control of your finances, you’ll have a different, more confident mindset.”

Lastly, do you need an exit plan? Will you want to train a replacement to take over your business when you retire?

Schear acknowledged that drawing up a business plan is hard work, and advised, “Don’t try to get it done over a weekend.” She suggested tackling a section at a time, during a couple of hours a day that are not your “prime work time.” She recommended that you have someone else read and critique your plan, either a colleague, a professional advisor, or someone in a totally different line of work. For further details, she suggested SWAN members

check out the book *The Successful Business Plan* by Rhonda Abrams.

She explained that once the plan is drawn up, it should not sit on a shelf. Pull it out, use it, and make changes when necessary. “A plan should help make you accountable,” she said. “It’s okay if you deviate, as long as you’re still in control!”



Have someone else read and critique your plan – either a colleague, a professional advisor, or someone in a totally different line of work.



ARTISTIC LICENSE

Announcing a Golden Opportunity for SWAN Members

The Licensing Show will take over the Javits Center in New York June 10-12, 2003. And SWAN will be there!

This trade show is where the companies who own licensing rights meet creative types of all descriptions. Object: business! And NJ Creatives.org – also known as SWAN – has taken a booth there as a way to introduce these licensees to the wide range of services our members offer, from photography, design, and illustration, to writing, Web services, and multimedia. To find out more, about the show, visit www.licensing.com.



Thanks to an initiative by Liz Kassler, we already have our Virtual Booth up at the following address:

http://www.licensingshow.com/licensingshow/V33/exhibitor_list/displayEx.cvn?exbID=708

By having NJCreatives represented at the show, members have a chance for their work to be seen by a vast range of businesses. You may display one large sample of your work – but there's a catch (natch!). You'll be asked to contribute toward the cost of the booth (amount not yet determined, but in the \$100-\$200 range) – OR you may volunteer to work at the booth during the show.

(Volunteering on site has several advantages – not only will you have access to the floor, where you may visit the other displays and hand out your business card, you may also bring your portfolio to show to interested visitors.)

There are other volunteering opportunities as well. We need you to join the Trade Show Committee. Members will help create and run the NJCreatives.org. booth. If anyone has any experience designing trade show booths, your design skills would be appreciated. We also need folks to help create signs, handouts, NJCreatives.org business cards, postcards, trade show giveaways – you name it!

We are also planning to put together some portfolio books by discipline. We want to have ALL of our members in these books, so there is NO CHARGE for this service. Contact Liz Kassler as soon as possible and send her up to three printed, non-returnable 8 1/2" x 11" promotion pieces, numbered on the back in order of preference. We will keep these books for future trade shows.

To assist either prior to the show or on site, or to submit your work for the portfolio books, contact Liz Kassler at 201-384-9784 or lizard@lizkassler.com

Remember, think LICENSING! That includes brands, products, licensable art, advertising, cartoon characters, entertainment industry, Harry Potter, Nickelodeon, Sesame Street, Barbie, Lord of the Rings, designer fashions, Santa Claus and other holiday images, religious icons ...

Please note: This fabulous opportunity is open to current SWAN members only! If you have not yet sent in your membership dues for 2002-2003, now's the time! Or if you've allowed your membership to lapse, this is a great time to come back on board,

- **DEADLINE FOR ENTRY NOTIFICATION: MARCH 14.** By phone or e-mail, but if you call, please send written confirmation via e-mail.
- **WALL DISPLAYS: E-MAIL LIZ A JPG IMAGE BY MARCH 21.** The size will be determined in the near future. All images will probably need to be mounted on foam core.
- **DEADLINE FOR ALL ENTRIES: APRIL 30TH.** You can bring them to a meeting, drop them off at Liz's home office, or mail them.

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Picnic!

After months of planning – and after unrolling a hefty-size roll of bureaucratic red tape -- we've finally managed to secure the site of this summer's SWAN picnic...

The Pavilion Campsite at the Silas Condict Park, right next to the building where we have our SWAN meetings!

The date is Saturday, July 26th, and the time is noon to 5pm.

More info will follow, such as food and drinks (no alcoholic beverages please).

Please mark your calendars, and let's make this a good turnout. The park, rarely seen by SWAN members in daylight, has a lake with paddleboats, a baseball field, and a hiking trail. Our group will have a roof over our heads as well as barbecues and chairs! Good for hot or rainy weather. Bring the whole family!

From the Members

Let SWAN members know what you're up to! Report your successes, publications, deals, and other accomplishments here. If there's a Web link to your work, please include it! Send submissions to Ron Schaumburg (rons2@optonline.net). Next deadline is May 1.

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Three SWAN Members Team-up to Deliver Agency-Quality Product

Writer Susan Brierly-Wills, Designer Wayne Pollack, and Interactive Media Specialist Peter Kean recently teamed up to produce a 115-page marketing proposal and PowerPoint presentation for Delta Air Lines. "We had about a week to produce what usually would require a month," explains Brierly-Wills, a former SWAN Vice President. "As the deadline approached, we worked long days and into the night to turn out a set of complex marketing materials that surpassed our client's expectations."

This small but stalwart team also created a web site for a New Jersey-based health management organization. Pollack, a former SWAN President, says, "I've worked with this healthcare client for years, and introduced him to Susan and Peter. Working with a creative team you know and trust makes a big difference."

Kean adds, "As founder of the New Media Association of New Jersey (nmanj.com), and a new SWAN member, I rely on networking for a big percentage of my business. By teaming up with Susan and Wayne, we were able to provide both of these clients with an 'agency-quality' creative product for a more reasonable price."

At the 2002 SWAN Awards, Kean was recognized for “Best Electronic Presentation or Interactive CD-ROM,” and Brierly-Wills earned an award for “Web Site That Best Communicates Its Message.”



Once again, I'll remind SWAN members and visitors to our meetings and website that networking WORKS!

As an art teacher, I met a student who attended several SWAN meetings and got to know some of the other people there. She remembered that I had done some caricature work, and a few months later she referred me to a large pharmaceutical company where she knew someone that needed my type of work. I met the client, landed the assignment, and got more than double my going rate. What affected my price? The fact that this firm's lobby was larger than my entire house!

So, the moral of this story is that networking is still a vital tool in getting work, and attending the monthly meetings is a great way to accomplish that goal.

-- Dave McCoy, SWAN President



Although I keep pretty busy four days a week at Medco Health in Franklin Lakes, I still accept freelance assignments. In the past month two new clients found me through SWAN's Web site, which is so great because it requires no cold calling, no postage and no photocopying. Better even still is the fact that I've been afforded opportunities to do the work I enjoy best: research-based health care writing for lay audiences. And since both clients were very happy with my first assignment, there is the promise of more personally satisfying work in the very near future.

-- Jane Byron



I thought I would share with you a marketing idea I've been using lately in my business.

Over the last few months I have been producing and emailing to clients, friends, and just about everyone whose email address is in my directory a short newsletter--Communicating on the Job. The newsletter enables me to stay in touch with the people who are responsible for most of my business. (Keeping an existing client is much easier than winning a new one.) Sending people this letter with useful information, rather than a direct sales pitch, seems to be more acceptable to people.

I don't charge for it and I encourage people to copy or forward it. They have the option to unsubscribe, but very few have. A number of people have responded quite positively. I've even had a few referrals as a result.

If you'd like to receive a copy, let me know (cos@cosferrara.com).

About the production: I realize it's pretty crude from a design standpoint. But I'm promoting myself as a writer, not a designer. Sending it out by email is relatively easy and inexpensive.

Just one man's input into the never-ending struggle to market our businesses.

-- Cos Ferrara

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ROCK -- Recycled Old Computers for Kids -- is a nonprofit group founded by a firefighter and board of education member in Ridgewood. They collect old computers, refurbish them, and give them to families who don't have any (and provide training as well).

The computers should run at least a 200MHz Pentium and should be less than 4 years old. For more information contact ROCK's founder Mark Bombace at markfire@aol.com.

--Donna Meyer

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You can see my illustration "Wild Billy's Circus" and 3 others on great bar glasses at <http://www.tenthavenueproductions.com>. And if you'd like to hear a friendly voice, call me at my new number: 215-766-9911.

-- Deb Hoeffner

From the Editor:

The Web We Weave

The other day we discovered that my 15-year-old daughter had had her navel pierced. She hadn't told us she'd done it. We asked why. She said, "Because you would have said no!" It's so hard communicating with teenagers. We wouldn't have said no. More likely we would have said, "Of COURSE you can have your navel pierced. Just a few simple conditions: You have to undergo a month-long ritual purification, have the piercing done by the top navel-piercing surgical team, who works in a facility in the Swiss Alps, and pay for the procedure and for our plane tickets, since we have to go to supervise. Oh, and there's a two-year waiting list."

We can be reasonable. If only she'd give us a chance.

Naturally my wife decided to amass a collection of horror stories about navel piercing to convince my daughter that she'd made a mistake and that she should have the device removed, or at least that she should feel miserably guilty and should fear the inevitable life-threatening consequences for the rest of her born days. Long into the night, she scoured the Web, searching Google for such terms as "CRIPPLING DISFIGUREMENT NAVEL PIERCING" or "LIFE-THREATENING CONSEQUENCES NAVEL PIERCING" or "BELLY BUTTON LINT HUGE PROBLEM POST PIERCING." That kind of thing.

What she really wanted, though, were pictures. Pictures of gashed omphali, infected umbilici, inflamed innies, outraged outies. THAT would show the little tramp what she'd gotten herself in for.

When she came up empty-handed, she asked me to search for the images. And I found them. In about 12 seconds. My source? The "Image" feature on Google. I typed in "infected navel piercing." Bingo.

I love the Web. I love looking for stuff. Even better, I love finding stuff, even if it is nothing more than Polaroids of pustulent wounds on some teenager's tummy. In the past few weeks, I've tracked down:

- The chords and lyrics for a dozen songs I'm learning for the two rock bands of which I'm a member
- A list of words with more than one meaning, for a friend who's creating a game to play at a company sales meeting
- The title of the movie that the New York Times called the best film of 1941 (which incidentally was the year of *Citizen Kane* and *How Green Was My Valley*, among others)
- A collection of "I Hate Barney the Purple Dinosaur" images (I added this to my "favorites" list in my browser)
- Pictures of the triglyceride molecule
- Biographies of George Ferris (the wheel guy), Franz Mesmer (the hypnotism guy), Ferdinand von Zeppelin (the Zeppelin guy), Charles Macintosh (the rubber raincoat guy), and Candid Jacuzzi (the Jacuzzi guy)
- A list of all the gadgets in all the James Bond movies
- Theories on the origin of the term "kibosh"
- An anagram web site that gives you a list of words spelled from any phrase you enter. ("NJCREATIVES" can be rearrange to spell such useful phrases as A SCRIVEN JET, REST CAN JIVE, NAT JEERS VIC, and VERA INJECTS)

Anyway, you get the idea. What you probably don't get is my point. Which is this:

The Web is wonderful. The Web is a word-searchable, picture-searchable library that will give you anything you want. If you can think of it, the chances are that others not only thought of it, they put it on the Web. WHY they put it on the Web is another matter. I

don't care. The fact is, everything I want (well, lots of what I want) is available to me with the push of a button. I'm in heaven.

The next SWAN meeting is all about how to make your own presence felt on the Web. As our members discover daily, having a Web presence is the sine qua non of marketing. It costs virtually nothing, but the rewards are phenomenal, simply because people can find you without lifting a finger. (Okay, they lift ten fingers, but only to type in a search term.) And you can send them samples of your work at the speed of light. You can deliver the final product in an instant. And best of all, you can send invoices – lots and lots of invoices – all through the miracle of digital technology.

You can even post pictures of your inflamed belly button. If you do, I'll be sure to find them.

-- Ron Schaumburg

