



Paintertainment



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STREAMLINE IN YOUR DOWN TIME!

by Gretchen Fleener

I's a new year, and for many of us who live in the north anyway, business slows down a bit. Some of us dread this season, while I personally relish it! This is pretty much the only chance I get to really focus on tackling side projects and improving my business practices. (If you're not sure how to maximize this slow season to boost your business for the year, definitely get your hands on a copy of the winter issue of Wet Paint Magazine as the entire issue is packed with valuable ideas!) If you're still paralyzed with options on what to do with all this free time you have on your hands, my hope is this month's newsletter will help you get the ball rolling by improving your business practices!

If you're not sure where to start with improving your business practices, one good place to start is **streamlining!** This is one of those things that sounds so simple and obvious, yet it is so easily overlooked because we tend to get into our routines, doing what we've always done because it's the way we've always done it, focusing our time and attention on tackling the new challenges that come our way. It's easy to miss the fact that looking backwards at our old routines can actually give us more time moving forward!

Maybe you haven't changed something because it's working fine so far. Or maybe you know that there are better ways to do what you're doing, but you don't want to invest the time into figuring out a new system. I've been in that second boat many times! But figuring out how to streamline even one thing you do regularly in your business can have a positive domino effect on your entire year, giving you more of that precious time back in your day-to-day, weekly or monthly routine. Here are some things to consider looking back on, and changing how you approach them going forward.

Streamline your Email

Chances are your email provider offers all kinds of time saving features you've never

taken the time to learn and try out. Do you ever feel like you are writing the same emails over and over again? Client thank-you's after a gig, responding to inquiries about future gigs, or even nicely telling yet another well meaning person that no, you are not able to work their event for free? We all have those emails, and chances are, your email provider has ways to save those "canned responses" as templates to use again. Wasting time sifting through new emails or trying to find old ones? Many email providers allow you to create folders where your email can automatically be sorted into subjects, like quote requests, repeat clients, etc. If you don't already utilize these features, look into your own email provider and find out what they can do to make your life easier!

Streamline your workday

Artist, agent and business coach Diane Spadola recently sent out a great newsletter about organizing your day and how multi-tasking isn't actually helping you be more productive. This is because as you shift from one task to another (known as "context shifting"), you are wasting time shifting that focus rather than being productive. It is actually better to set aside a block of time, or a day, for each task when you can really focus on it and get it done well!

Think about how you structure your day or your week. Maybe you don't at all! Or maybe you've been doing it all wrong to begin with. Try something different today or tomorrow, and see if it improves your productivity. And be sure to subscribe to Diane's newsletters....I know I get a lot out of them! (visit www.bellafacciapainting.com and click on "newsletter archives")

Streamline your business processes

The whole process of booking gigs can be very labor and paperwork intensive, not to mention running a business itself. There are many applications out there that can help you

with organizing and streamlining this process, and it's important to find the right ones that are helping and not hindering you. I found myself so frustrated with Quickbooks, yet kept using it for years because I didn't want to deal with the time it takes to re-enter all of my store inventory, contacts, etc into a new software. I even went as far as to take an online course in Quickbooks and in accounting, thinking it would help me learn how to use it more efficiently. Nope. Finally I broke down a couple years ago, said good riddance to Quickbooks, and found a new online accounting software that was simpler, easier, and did everything I needed for less money and WAY less stress. I moved on! This year I'm working on moving my entire website to a new platform, which is a HUGE undertaking, but in the end will save me SO much time day to day, I'm sticking it out and am excited to come out the other end taking advantage of new technology that is designed to help me out. Sometimes you need to invest time to save time, and the slow season is a great time to do that!

Streamline your client base

Do you have clients who are sucking the life out of you, more high maintenance than they are worth? I have great news: if you are your own boss, you have 100% control over this! You have the power to cut ties with them, or raise their rates to a point where the headaches they bring are worth the money. (yes, "P.I.T.A. charges can be a real thing!") It may sound like a counterintuitive business practice, but successful business people know that parting ways with some clients can be just as profitable as gaining new ones. Remember, time is money, and your time is precious! If the time isn't worth the money you're getting, either get more money or re-allocate that time to quality clients.

There are SO many ways to streamline your business...these are just a few! Find out what opportunities you have to streamline, and start tackling one today. You'll be glad you did! 

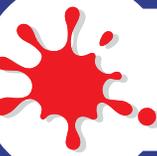


What's News?



Northern Stars Summit

Learn with me and other awesome instructors Feb 27-Mar 1 in Minnesota! Find out more at www.taletta.com/nss



Coming Soon to the Shop!

Svetlana Keller's awesome Sparkling Faces Practice Boards are on the way! Find them soon in our shop!



Wet Paint Magazine

Got a creatively designed paint kit? Visit WetPaintMagazine.com to submit your own design for a future magazine feature, "Show us your kit!"



KAWAII TACO!



January Coupon Code!

10% off

Enter code **STREAMLINE** at checkout. Shopping cart must total \$25 or more before shipping and taxes.

Offer expires 2/20/20