



How to Make
\$100,000
EVERY MONTH

By David Blaise



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Author of *Top Secrets of Customer Acquisition and Getting Started: How to Launch a Wildly Successful Career in Promotional Products Sales*

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Introduction

The Elephant in the Room

When a well-known organization in the promotional product industry asked me to speak on the topic of *How to Make \$100,000 Every Month* I thought, “Wow. Really? That sounds like a 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 consistently 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 personally 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 consistently 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 meaningless number unless you have your overhead firmly under control. I've done it both ways. 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 they invited me 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 in the following pages.

First, 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 will 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 must 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, 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.

* Distributor sales statistics provided by ASI Research Services.

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.

“Selling to poor people is not a viable business strategy...”

Sure, some people have the money and lie about it, but 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 now, but they are still spending it.

How Many of These Industries are You Currently Selling?

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

* 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, 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

If you want to grow your sales consistently, you need to test different markets to see who is receptive to you. Whenever you target a particular industry or market that is new to you, it’s essentially a test, because you don’t know if or how the prospects in that market will respond to you.

In our [Top Secrets of Customer Acquisition](#) course, I discuss 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 like clockwork, instead of just sporadically.

So, approach all your customer acquisition efforts as tests that you need to validate or invalidate. Continue with what works and 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: You should assign every lead that goes through your customer acquisition system to one of these five categories and proceed 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.

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 salespeople 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 must be an alien from another planet.

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

There are a lot of factors 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 live*.

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?"

In recent years, many people who used to work from an office have discovered that they can work from home. The answer depends on your own self-discipline and that of your team.

If your setup consists of you and a reliable assistant or two, then it might be much easier for you to work from home. You might have assistants or virtual assistants who work from their own homes (assuming they are reliable and structured.) However, working with a remote or virtual assistant requires its own set of skills.

If you can work from home, do so. It will keep your costs down and you're much better off having your business "rent" space 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. Having a showroom can also tie people to it, preventing them from getting out and selling.

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 businesspeople 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 out perform 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 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 much 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 their strengths.
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 any single sale to close.

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 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 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 self-imposed 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 you set conditions that it *must* be you, with one assistant, and you must do it all yourself except for art and digitizing, you may be focusing too much on the limitations you're setting and not enough on the results you want to achieve. 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 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?" *Fuggedaboutit*. You can't.

Sure, if you have unlimited funds, you could always hire people to make it happen. But with no sales experience, you'll go through a lot of trial and error.

To make \$100,000 in a month, you must get in front of a sufficient number of prospects, make credible, coherent presentations, recommend promotional solutions, and then write a significant amount of business. Doing all that doesn't just *require* sales experience, it *creates* sales experience.

If you are in a production-based business, like screen printing, pad printing, embroidery or any other "manufacturing" process that requires you to do the printing or decoration, delegation becomes essential. Because if you must go out and sell it, then come back and printing it, then deliver it and bill it before you can start the process again, you won't have enough "feet on the street" to hit your desired numbers. Instead, you'll need a sufficient selling presence in the market to generate numbers like that.

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 to do if you want to differentiate yourself and your company effectively is to identify your primary skills.

What is your core strength? What is your core competency? Those are the primary traits 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 can do well* on a consistent basis, it won't match your reality and you won't be able to live up to 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 determine what you do exceptionally well, hammer that message home with your target market as clearly and frequently as possible. This will allow you to quickly see how well your message is resonating.

If your core skill or competency is not something that enough 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.

In our work with clients, we utilize a step-by-step process to create a "primary positioning statement" or "unique selling proposition" that is perfectly suited to our clients' personal strengths – along with a marketing plan to communicate it.

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 can manage all the details of a \$100,000 a month business single-handedly, most of us are not so lucky.

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 difficult 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, then get to a certain sales plateau and struggle to maintain it. Plus, operating a "you-centric" business gets more and more difficult 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 allow you to attract and retain a sufficient number of clients to generate that level 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.

[*The Top Secrets Manual System*](#) – Recommended for business owners who need to take control, reduce anxiety and eliminate excuses in your business. The system contains a fully customizable Sales Manual, Operations Manual and Employee Handbook, plus agreements, job descriptions and forms.