

45 Ideas:

Money Making Tips

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1. **Before embarking on a new project** – do some relatively simple market research – use your website to gather information about your customers/readers. We are fortunate that equestrians like to talk about their hobby and are usually very willing to provide feedback. You could offer an entry into a drawing as incentive to complete a survey.
- Janet Nittmann
2. **Establish culture of efficiency.**
 - A. Articulate core purpose.
 - B. Invest resources (time, money, effort) in priority areas. The closer to the core, the better.
 - C. Applaud urgency; each action moves either toward or away from purpose.
- Warren Wilson
3. **Have a business plan.** It seems simple, but having a plan tells you what your business or publication is dedicated to doing, what your goals are and how you plan to accomplish them, provides an incredibly, valuable roadmap to success that can keep you on track and provide motivation and direction.
- Teresa Jascob Avery
4. **PR writing and pitching.** Trainers often have neither the time nor the know-how to market their businesses. Hiring someone to write and distribute press releases to local papers can be an attractive idea. Supply regular reports to the local media about their students' success creates good will with existing clients and help drum up more business.
- Kim F. Miller
5. **Internet based surveys are efficient** – low cost and yield quick results. Surveys should look easy to fill in. Do not ask leading or biased questions. The more questions you have the more the drop out rate will increase so limit the length to key questions.
- Janet Nittmann
6. **Enfranchise staff.**
Ideas: Commission-based sales staff. Profit-sharing. Incentives. When it's "ours," it matters more, doesn't it?
- Warren Wilson
7. **Motivate your staff with praise and incentives.** While money – a paycheck or bonuses – is all the incentive some employees need, others respond more favorably to appreciation for a job well done, time off, or other unique incentive ideas. Consider getting creative with your incentives – offer contests for best sales during a month or the most new clients, recognize achievements in a special spot in your office. Above all, don't forget to let your employees know when they've done a great job. Some incentives and a lot of appreciation can mean added productivity and a better bottom line.
- Teresa Jascob Avery

8. **Event PR.** A lot of writers also handle public relations for events ranging in size from a local show to Olympic Selection Trials. The ability to write and pitch stories that might attract the general public is something the bigger show managers consider valuable. The hook for local papers is usually local riders expected to do well in the event.
- Kim F. Miller
9. **Important versus urgent** - there will also be fires to put out, but the goal should be to focus on the projects that are important i.e. develop the business and improve the bottom line, as opposed to urgent tasks that do not have any lasting impact.
- Janet Nittmann
10. **Poll distribution sites.** Idea: Self-addressed, stamped business card survey. Publishing doesn't stop at the printers. Sending bundles of magazines to an address doesn't assure they are read – or are even wanted.
- Warren Wilson
11. **Make time every day for one or two “Low Priority” projects.** We all have them, those tasks that really should be done but they aren't emergencies. The trouble is that they often don't get accomplished until the moment they become emergencies and suddenly these low priority projects become large priority pains. In order to diffuse that possibility, contribute at least some time each day working on these tasks. Consider making it the first thing you do in the morning – no matter what other fires are waiting to be put out. A little attention now can mean less headaches and wasted time later.
- Teresa Jascob Avery
12. **Ghost writing.** Trainers, particularly those in the natural horsemanship field, have become increasingly savvy about supplying magazines with free or traded-out editorial. These trainers often rely on freelancers for help. Articles can lead to books, writing for websites, marketing materials, etc.
- Kim F. Miller
13. **Branding** - do not devalue your brand. It is easy for brand to go down-market – almost impossible for it to go up market. It takes a long time to build a powerful brand – take care of your brand assets.
- Janet Nittmann
14. **Do it once. Do it right.**
Idea: Don't duplicate tasks. Find a way (through a process, training, technology) to streamline. As for ads, have sound proofing steps in the production line for first drafts and finals, and include the number of fixes in a circle at the top.
- Warren Wilson

15. **Utilize postcards for cheap and effective promotions.** Keeping the word “out there” about your business or publication can be difficult when money is tight and the marketing plan isn’t first priority. Postcards offer an inexpensive, quick and effective means to touch your key clients or new prospects. There are a number of printers that specialize in low cost postcards in small and large sizes and many will even do the design and mailing for you. If you don’t have your own mailing list, rent one and start getting in contact with new people in your potential audience!
- Teresa Jascob Avery
16. **Regional syndication.** Non-timely, general interest articles or humor columns can often be sold to several regional magazines. Bob Goddard’s Horsey Humor columns are a great example. The fees may be modest, \$25 to \$50, but if you can place the same piece with enough magazines, and on a monthly basis, it can add up.
- Kim F. Miller
17. **Customer service** - disgruntled customers sometimes just want to be heard. Let them be! Very often just letting a customer vent is all that is necessary. Don’t tell a customer what you cannot do to help – be positive and explain what you CAN do.
- Janet Nittmann
18. **Keep accounts current.** Everyone loses in prolonged debt collection. Find ways to collect promptly. Idea: Pursue prepayments and credit card payments.
- Warren Wilson
19. **Spend time and attention on our mailing lists.** Direct marketing provides you with the opportunity to reinforce your advertising and other marketing materials via a medium that arrives right in the mailbox of your preferred audience. But, if you haven’t spent time making sure your mail list is good, half the mail you sent out may end up right back on your desk! A well maintained list saves postage and assures that your message ends up in the right hands. By adding information beyond the mail data (such as preferred discipline, number of horses owned, etc.) you can use your list to sort out special audiences within your entire group to receive targeted promotions.
- Teresa Jascob Avery
20. **Books.** Articles can lead to books. Marnye Langer’s The Tevis Cup: To Finish Is To Win, started with her articles covering this famous endurance ride. A publisher loved one of her award-winning stories, and pitched her on writing a book on the subject. Much more often, it’s writers pitching publishers on their book ideas.
- Kim F. Miller

21. **Track and measure all marketing programs** - so you can see what worked and what did not, this will help with future planning and budgeting. Do not go on gut – set goals and measure the results.
- Janet Nittmann
22. **Good AR-sales communication.**
Idea: Put account info in the sales reps' hands. Reps make terrific "good cops" in the "good cop / bad cop" scenario. But they need accurate, updated info to succeed.
- Warren Wilson
23. **Look for prospects outside your usual market.** The equine industry is a relatively small place, but there's a whole world waiting just outside our doors. Publications might consider soliciting advertising from car dealerships, retail clothing manufacturers, even home improvement stores. Writers may find an audience for their horse stories in publications that aren't traditionally "horsey." In any business, pushing yourself beyond your comfort zone and looking beyond the usual can mean big payoffs in the long run.
- Teresa Jascob Avery
24. **Public stable newsletter or website content.** Large public stables need to promote events and policies to boarders in an efficient, effective manner. Newsletters are a good way to do this. A good newsletter generates good will and communication between management and boarders, neighbors, and important city/county officials.
- Modestly priced ads can offset the printing/mailing costs.
- Kim F. Miller
25. **Multi-channel.** Let customers choose how they interact with your company – through print or online. Make both channels easily available. Do not force customers to use one channel or the other.
- Janet Nittmann
26. **Organize art archives.**
Idea: Well-organized servers with art files (ads, logos, images and layouts, etc.) will reduce time spent on ad builds, as well as layout creation. Plus, accuracy improves.
- Warren Wilson
27. **Read. Read. Read.** It's said that learning is a lifelong process, and truer words have never been spoken. Make reading a priority in your day – even if it's just for a few minutes before bed. Read to learn what you need to make your business even better....tips for financial management, marketing books, new ideas in management, whatever you want to know more about. Read to keep up on what "the competition" is writing and read to experience the writing styles of the many authors in our market. Read for new ideas and use them to improve your business and your days.
- Teresa Jascob Avery

28. **Mini magazine.** A newsletter covering the local equestrian beat with customized pages for a client boarding facility or training barn. In an 8 page newsletter, for example, the inside four pages are general area news and the outside pages are filled with news and events specific to your client stable. Also a great way to meet trainers that might need a writer's help.
- Kim F. Miller
29. **Make your website easy to navigate.** Put a 1-800 number on each page of your website so customers can call for help if needed. Online chat is another very useful feature.
- Janet Nittmann
30. **Incremental rate increases.** Idea: Annual small, incremental rate increases are necessary to absorb those anticipated yet unpredictable increases in costs – sometimes Katrina-like in force.
- Warren Wilson
31. **Subscribe to journals outside the equine market.** Becoming a regular reader of interesting journals outside of the horse world will not only afford you some exciting articles, but can also keep you up to date on the latest trends in layout and design. Business journals of many stripes may provide valuable ideas on how to run a better business, no matter what type of business you happen to be in. Some titles to consider on the business front include *Money*, *Worthwhile* and *Fast Company*.
- Teresa Jascob Avery
32. **Special event programs.** Most big shows, and special events like the World Cup Finals, have programs that need fresh stories.
- Kim F. Miller
33. **Gifts with purchase are extremely popular.** They are a great way to launch a new product and make a spread in a magazine very attractive.
- Janet Nittmann
34. **Give readers – and sales reps – something “special!”** Idea: A special “13th” issue, a directory, a reformatted special “issue”, even a “special section” builds momentum for a sales effort, and it anchors advertisers into the future. You'd better have a finger on your readership's pulse, though, and an understanding of the market. Timing can be everything.
- Warren Wilson
35. **Offer prospects a reason to speak with you.** Cold-calling is an inevitably uncomfortable part of many businesses. Make it easier by giving prospects a reason to listen to your call and your offer. For instance, ad sales reps who call monthly simply asking for ads in the upcoming edition may not find much success. However, the same rep may influence more prospects by offering a promotion that specifically suits their needs or citing an upcoming editorial piece that is related to their products or services.
- Teresa Jascob Avery

36. **Covering the sport for your local paper.** Equestrians sports are a bit of a tough sell to mainstream newspapers, but if you can break through that barrier, you will be valuable to the editors because you understand a sport that most of their staff are unfamiliar with, and often not too interested in. If you are already covering the show for an equestrian magazine, it's easy to re-tool your piece for a general interest audience. A great inroad for pitching more equestrian stories to your paper: you can become their resident expert.
- Kim F. Miller
37. **Targeting.** Targeting is key today to cut through the clutter of marketing messages which our customers are faced with. The most important factor is who is the right target market for your product/service.
- Janet Nittmann
38. **Communicate inexpensively with the internet.** Idea: Reach your clients regularly with e-mailings for anything your staff uses the telephone for – copy changes, re-runs, editorial contact, even accounts receivable. E-mail augments telephone communication, but it doesn't replace it. The percentage of clients who'll respond favorably to this communication method, though, will prove the method a worthwhile investment.
- Warren Wilson
39. **Know your customer very well.** Time spent learning about your customers is never time wasted, even if you can't report the return directly on the balance sheet. Formal activities such as survey responses can be part of the mix, as can informal conversations on the phone, at dinner, tradeshow or at the point of sale. The more you know your customers individually, and as a group, the better you can anticipate their needs and meet them.
- Teresa Jacob Avery
40. **Think synergy.** Many equestrian freelance opportunities offer only modest pay, but most of them have lots of synergistic possibilities. At the very least, any type of writing you do for an equestrian or an equestrian event builds a knowledge base for story ideas and background for your "regular" freelance reporting assignments.
- Kim F. Miller
41. **Consider entering marketing partnerships on a project by project basis.** Working together with another company can be very synergistic.
- Janet Nittmann
42. **Develop strategic partnerships.** Idea: Relationships with associations, events, even other publications can create "critical mass" for new business. These relations must augment your "core purpose", not detract from it.
- Warren Wilson

43. **Invest in existing customers.** Though even many large companies don't like to recognize it (think cell phone providers!), in most businesses it's cheaper to expand your relationship with existing customers than it is to find new ones. Spend time with these critical consumers and consider offering loyalty programs or special promotions just for them.
- Teresa Jascob Avery
44. **Reprints.** There are a handful of companies that handle marketing and/or representing editorial for reprint sale. Here is the one that *California Riding* had worked with successfully: Wright's Reprints, Brian Kolb. Ph: (281) 419-5725, Ext. 121.
- Kim F. Miller
45. **Look for trends overseas.** When looking for new products/ideas look at the equestrian markets overseas to see what is going on. There might be some ideas overseas which you can adapt for your needs.
- Janet Nittmann
46. **Hire people better than yourself.** Idea: Nothing influences success the way personnel does. Reach for individuals who do things better than you can, define the expectations, and get out of their way.
- Warren Wilson
47. **Send sincere notes.** Gather the business cards you collect during shows and send each individual a personal note letting them know you appreciated the chance to meet them. Send thank you notes to vendors for jobs well done or special services rendered. Offer written congratulations to those whose accomplishments have been recognized – even if they're competitors! This simple form of networking helps expand your contact base and solidify existing relationships.
- Teresa Jascob Avery
48. **Copy editing and proof reading.** Needed skills for any magazine, and jobs that can easily be done from satellite offices with today's technology.
- Kim F. Miller
49. **Look for trends in street fashion and other sports.** These often come into the equestrian sport with a slight delay.
- Janet Nittmann
50. **Look for perspiration, not inspiration.** Idea: It's one thing to draw a line from A to B. Hard work gets you there, and there is no substitute.
- Warren Wilson

51. **Know exactly what you want to gain from events you attend.**

Having a game plan is a critical part of business. This idea extends to each of the many shows and events most businesses in our marketplace attend each year. Carefully choose each event you attend and have a written guide that states why you are attending and what you want to gain while there. Think strategically and this simple document can help make the large investment in booth space and travel more worthwhile.

- Teresa Jascob Avery

52. **Make offers compelling.** Response rates and lead quality are in direct proportion to the appeal of your offer.

- Janet Nittmann

53. **Sell packages – a “win-win”.**

Idea: Whether it's multiple runs of a classified ad, a 12-time display advertising stallion package, or an Internet banner campaign, get advertisers to commit. When the advertisers' phones ring, they win – and so do you when it's discovered your pub did the trick. Frequency gets results.

- Warren Wilson

54. **Figure out what you do best and do that.**

The advice sounds somewhat silly, but most people get into business because they have a particular talent or passion for something. Unfortunately, they often get so wrapped up in the details of everyday business that they spend little time actually doing the thing they got into business for in the first place. If you're a writer, do everything you can to spend 80% of your time writing. If you're tops at layout and design, focus your time and energy on that. Find others who excel in the different areas of your business and delegate additional tasks to them as much as possible.

- Teresa Jascob Avery