

# **Selling Swag 2.0**

***Leveraging Internet Marketing &  
Technology to Easily Take Your  
Promotional Product Buyers from  
Offline to Online***

**By Josh Frey aka The Swag Coach™**

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# Preface by Josh Frey



My name is Josh Frey and I have been selling promotional products for almost 20+ yrs.

I used to hate the promotional products business. I was doing millions in sales and wanted to run away from it—far away.

The profession didn't represent who I was, nor how I saw myself. It wasn't modeled in line with my own values and interests. It felt like a "traditional promo company" and made me feel ordinary, like everyone else.

And I was very jealous towards all of those people making money online, over the internet. I sold products yet cracking the online sales "code" escaped me.

To top it off, my business wasn't making me the type of money, cash in the bank, that I felt worthy of and deserved.

So I did 2 things:

1. I revamped my business model by outsourcing and taking it online.
2. I partnered up with an internet marketing guru to help me get the word out.

## **The Revamped Business Model**

Truth be told, it wasn't the sales side of the swag business that upset me. It was the "other parts of the business" – collecting money from clients, reconciling invoices from factories, managing cash flow and deciding which vendors I would pay that week (usually the ones I needed to place more orders with), tracking orders and dealing with the endless customer service issues. What a drag!

As the owner of a full-service distributorship, we had a sales team, an administrative team, bank lines of credit, office space and showrooms, a lot of sales and even more headaches! Too many, in fact.

I found myself working 80+ hrs a week, on the parts of the job I didn't like, and not generating enough positive cash flow to pay me the money I had "earned" through the sales I made.

And that's when I discovered outsourcing! For my own mental health, I NEEDED to find someone or some company that would handle the parts of the business I abhorred—an entity that acted like a bank so that I could get paid, even a portion, of what I had rightfully earned!

I turned my business from a cash flow nightmare to a cash cow. I freed up 50% of my time to do the things I liked and wanted to do (sell and hang with people), and handed off the rest. I gave up some of the overall gross profits, but was getting paid on the booked sale, not the collected sale. My bank account started to grow, by leaps and bounds!

I know the swag business is a fantastic lifestyle and career, but you have to make sure it aligns with your personal values and what you like or it will take control of your life and drive you to an early grave!

For me, that means ridding myself of the things I hate ... things like poor cash flow, accounting, the admin work, HR issues, risk, debt accounting and more. I've GOTTEN RID OF ALL OF IT. That means I don't do it, someone else does.

I spend my work days doing what I love ... I love people. I love connecting with them. I love talking with them, building relationships, being helpful and hooking people up (like I am going to do with this book!) Oh, and I love checking my bank account to watch it grow!

I also love keeping things simple. We have built out an easy-to-order online technology so clients can order through our website. Those orders plug directly into our back office partner, so that once an order is placed online, my job is done!

The model works. The technology rocks. How was I going to get the word out?

### **Getting the Word Out Online**

So I got together with my good bud Ridgely Goldsborough. Ridgely and his team helped me figure out my Why Marketing Formula – a fancy way of saying... why I am who I am and what are my beliefs, at my core. He helped me craft my marketing message, based on own belief system, so that I could now promote my business online, and attract the types of clients I want to do business with.

Then they helped me get my message out there, everywhere, by helping my clients and prospects find me. Exactly how you might ask? By leveraging social networks over the Internet, so that the right clients and prospects were coming to my website. Buyers who shared similar beliefs to me. It's the old "field of Dreams" adage... "If you Build It They Will Come" – especially if you sprinkle in a strategic internet marketing process to make it easy for them to find you!

The Internet is the greatest creator of referrals and word-of-mouth recommendations ever devised. As any good sales person in the promotional products world knows, referrals are critical to our success.

The formula is pretty simple...

Build out a network that encompasses all of the major social networking channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Places, YouTube and so on) along with an eCommerce technology so that the right clients and prospects can first find you, then easily buy from you.

Whether you are a distributor sales rep looking to launch your own business but don't know how, or a distributor owner looking to shake up how you do business, this book will be your Your Step-by-Step Guide to Profits and Freedom by Leveraging Your Network & A Proven Business Model for Selling Swag Online.

This book is about "paying it forward", to showcase and share a new "twist" on how to do business in an industry that oftentimes gets left behind when it comes to bleeding edge technology and marketing.

This is a business model I use every day to support my family and my lifestyle. It works if you execute the best practices. It works if you use the technology. It works if you leverage your network.

So kick back with a cup of Joe, a glass of wine or your favorite beverage of choice, and enjoy all the wonderful tricks of the promotional products business you're about to learn with Selling Swag 2.0! And thanks for making the time to read on...

Josh

Josh Frey, aka The Swag Coach™

# Positioning Your Business, and Your Clients, to Transact Online

There is no short cut here. You have to position your business, operationally, to be able to handle the influx of orders and leads that will come to your website. You have to have a website where buyers, be they clients or prospects, can transact and buy, on line.

And you have to have a process for generating, then handling, client leads and orders.

This takes having a strategy. And a budget, for either building out your own eCommerce website (where your clients can order online), or finding a tool you can “rent” or “license” for your own business, that has already been built (much like Microsoft Office). We use one of these tools (we call it a portal) and have processed millions of dollars through it, with orders placed online, either by our buyers, or by our sales team. In this section we show you how.

The other thing you will need to consider is how you are running your day-to-day business. Are you currently handling every aspect of the sale – from dealing with the factories, to client billing and collections and everything in between? Or do you outsource any of these components?

We have leveraged the benefits of outsourcing and taken our business from a traditional distributorship model to an outsourced model, thereby allowing us the time to focus on the fun, money-making parts of the business, and handing off the rest.

This change of approach has resulted in more sales, more money in the bank and more balance in life.

Here are the steps you need to take to take your swag business from off line to online:

1. Set Up Your Business (both off line and online)
  - a. Your Physical office space
  - b. Your Laptop and Electronic Organizational System
  - c. Your Company's Website & Portal
  
2. Set up Your Order Processing Online

- a. Be Sure Your Clients (or you on behalf of your client) can place Orders online (through Your Website and Portal)
  - b. Outsourcing – find a partner who can provide the back end support and administrative roles once your client places an order.
3. Follow a Weekly Routine for Managing & Growing Your Business
- a. Leverage the social networks and media to drive traffic to your website
  - b. Implement Marketing Strategies to Officially Launch Your “new” Business 2.0 (online version) to Your Network
  - c. Do what you do best – Build your Pipeline. Network. Ask for referrals. And Sell!

Not yet convinced it's worth the trouble to set up an online promotional business?

Check out how many potential clients (and even some of your own current clients undoubtedly) are searching for promotional products according to Google:

*Searches According to Google:*

<u>Term/Phrase</u>	<u>Monthly Search</u>	<u>Annual Search</u>
Promotional Products	360,000	4,320,000
Awards	20,600	247,200
Bags	327,100	3,925,200
Coffee Mugs	69,100	829,200
Pens	150,500	1,806,000
T-Shirts	475,900	5,710,800
Water Bottles	47,300	567,600

Over 15 million searches for products that you can sell them. Wouldn't you love to get in on that action???

How about a few more facts and questions to ask yourself:

*Order Processing Facts:*

1. Our customers can place their own online promo orders in less than 2 minutes.
2. Our reps can place their client orders, online, in less than 2 minutes.
3. Our reps spend 85% of their time selling or engaging in activities that drive sales/leads/revenues.
4. Our reps get paid within 1 week after the order is placed (booked) by the client.

*Questions to ask yourself –*

- a. *How long does it take you to enter and process an order?*

- b. *How much time do you spend once the order is placed, be it dealing with the factory, dealing with accounting or dealing with any administrative tasks?*
- c. *How soon do you get paid after the order is placed by the customer?*

*eCommerce Facts:*

According to Forrester Research, Inc 2010, it's not just young people shopping online nor those making small purchases –

Total US:	60%
Ages 18-30	54%
Ages 31-44	68%
Ages 45-54	64%
Ages 55-65	60%
Ages 65+	48%

According to eMarketer, the number of U.S. digital shoppers is expected to grow from 137 million in 2010 to 175 million in 2016.

*Questions to ask yourself – How old are your clients and are they already ordering online, “cheating” on you?*

Hopefully I still have your attention and got your whistle wet just a bit more when it comes to outsourcing and setting up an online business at this point.

And here's the best part .. setting up your business, correctly, from the outset, will allow for you (and your team/future team) to be well positioned to grow your business quickly and easily, and still afford you the time to spend living life the way you want, on your own terms.

# Leveraging The Internet to Attract Buyers to Your Site

Once you are positioned to take your business from offline to online, you will need a way to attract buyers to your business. There are a ton of ways ... advertising, pr (public relations), email promotions, social networking and more.

But here's the catch – you have over 20,000 companies you are competing with, all pulling from similar suppliers, so how do you stand out? Why would a customer that you don't know nor have a relationship with buy from you? How do they know you are a legitimate business, especially online where there are a ton of “pretenders”?

You need to hit them with the “1-2 punch” –

First you build the relationship with them, then you make it super easy for them to buy, all on line! Would a swag buyer come to and buy from your site because it's easy for them to order online and they don't have to speak to you or a live person? Maybe. Would that same person come to your site and buy because they feel like they know you and your values, and who you are? They like you, believe you and want to buy from you and support you because they believe the same things you believe?

Wow, the concept of doing business with people that you like and want to do business with (versus doing business with anyone, someone who you don't like, just for the sale). What if you could have this? Where would you even begin? Sound too good to be true? Well, it's not...

I did this by working with a good budby of mine, Ridgely Goldsborough, founder of The WHY Marketing Method™ to Attract Buyers to Your Business.

Ridgely and his team helped me understand my WHY (simply put, my reason for being and why I think the way I think, and the drivers behind that thinking that motivate me personally and professionally), and then push my WHY messaging out there to the Universe.

Sound a little kooky? Who cares you might ask? What does this have anything to do with business and getting leads and traffic to your website? Let me explain...



Any sales rep in the promotional products world has done networking of some form, right? SO say you are networking at a cocktail party where you must convey a very different type of message or “elevator pitch” to be remembered, one designed clearly tell others what you do, but said in a that where it will stick, is genuine and has the greatest chance to build a relationship and rapport with those people you meet. And ultimately turn them into your clients.

You get how to do this in person right? But how about online?

The Internet is no different. If you are looking to attract ideal customers for your business through online marketing, your message must be designed to do one thing and one thing only – engage and connect with prospects in such a way that the right client picks up the phone and calls you (or whatever action you want them to take.)

Unfortunately (or fortunately, in your case as a reader of this book) virtually all small business websites fail miserably in this regard. They talk about products, pricing, number of clients served, years of experience, areas of expertise, schools they attended and diplomas earned – in short, are completely business centric, have nothing to do with the prospect or their interests and most certainly do not trigger any decision whatsoever.

Think about it. Would you ever walk up to a complete stranger at a cocktail party and introduce yourself as Bob Smith, the local swag provider of logoed stuff who is looking for clients and then proceed to ask that person for their business? Or for referrals? Of course not. And yet that is exactly what the overwhelming majority of promotional product websites do, without even allowing the customer to buy online!

Before someone ever considers buying from you, they need to feel trust, kinship, confidence and belief. If they have made it to your website, they already know that you are selling swag, assume that you know how to do your job and could care less about your current credentials. Particularly your ideal clients - those with higher-priced demands - need to be emotionally invested in the decision to use you over anybody else.

People never buy WHAT you do. They buy WHY you do it. In other words, what do you stand for, what do you believe, why do you exist and why should that matter to them? You don't care about what your friends do. You care about who they are, what they believe, and whether or not those beliefs resonate with yours. Your prospective clients feel the exact same way. If you do not tell them what you believe, they will not relate to you. If they don't relate to you, they won't work with you.

How many of us live and die by referrals in the swag biz? Well, the Internet is the greatest creator of referrals and word-of-mouth recommendations ever devised. People talk all day long about the restaurants they frequent, the movies they watch, the books they read, their lawyer, their accountant, their dentist, their chiropractor and yes, the person who sells them promotional products! And they do so in whatever channel they like best.

If you do not provide them a pathway to your message and your website through their desired channel, they will not find you. For you to succeed in attracting ideal clients, you must make it easy for people to find your message. You must build a network that encompasses all of the major channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Places, YouTube and so on) and lead prospects back to your website, where they can experience the full expression of your messaging.

Pushing out THIS message, your personal voice, about who you are and why you believe in what you believe via the social networks is critical in helping to drive the right types of buyers to your website, and in helping you build long term client relationships (on line and off line) because you will be working with the types of buyers that appreciate you, your values, your business and your services.

# Bringing It All Together & Watching Your Sales Grow, Online

## 3 steps to taking your promotional products business online:

**Step 1:** Set up your new Swag Business by leveraging an Outsourced Business model (let someone else handle the administrative work and back office so you can focus on selling)

**Step 2:** Set up an eCommerce website and portal (so that your clients can order online, easily through your website, or you can order on the backend for them)

**Step 3:** Drive Leads to Your Website and Your online Swag Business (get your clients and prospects to buy online by pushing out your message through Social Networks)

I use this exact model to support my family and lifestyle every day.

It works really, really well. But you have to set it up right, and execute consistently.

All the lessons learned and best practices are right here, at your finger tips, to help you take your swag biz online, and to then promote it in a way to attract the types of clients you want to do business with. And do a lot of business with. You just have to execute!

Thanks for taking the time to read Selling Swag 2.0 and I hope our paths cross in the not-too-distant future.

You CAN do it!

Josh

p.s. So here's a little shameless pitch... I teach, coach and help promotional product sales reps launch their own swag business within 2 weeks. It's called the Swag Coach™ Pro program (<http://www.swagcoach.com/pro/>).

If you need some help and want to launch your own swag business, online, I am happy to connect with you and help. My direct email is [josh@swagcoach.com](mailto:josh@swagcoach.com).