



The Top 10 Most Powerful Moneymaking Lessons I Learned From Multimillionaire IT Business CEO

Robert Herjavec

**An In-Depth Report On What I Learned After
Spending A Day With *Shark Tank's* Robert Herjavec
Discussing How He's Grown The Herjavec Group From
\$0 To \$150+ Million In Managed Security Services**

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Who Is Robin Robins And Why Is Everyone In The IT Industry Talking About Her?

Robin Robins is a “marketing rock star” who specializes in helping MSPs and IT consultants who provide outsourced IT support to attract new clients, increase sales and make more money on a small marketing budget. She established and runs the largest and fastest-growing marketing consulting firm in the world for small IT services businesses and has more documented client success stories than any other marketing agency or consultant in the IT industry.

Robin is the author of the Technology Marketing Toolkit and Million-Dollar Managed Services Marketing Blueprint system. To date, over 7,500 IT businesses from all over the US and in 42 different countries have learned, used and implemented the marketing systems she has created to generate hundreds of millions of dollars in NEW sales, NEW opportunities and NEW revenue streams for their business.

Robin has been voted a #1 speaker at many industry events, such as BreakAway, System Builder Summit, VARVision, ASCII's boot camps, CT Summit, SMB Nation, IT Nation, Kaseya's user conference and many more. She's been quoted and published in the Wall Street Journal, VAR Business, eChannelLine.com, Sales and Marketing Magazine, Selling Power and SMB Partner Community Magazine. She currently commands over \$1,500 per hour for her consulting services, with a six-month waiting list.

To Learn How Robin Can Help Your Consulting Firm Attract More Clients And Increase Sales, And Help You Sell Profitable Managed Services Contracts, Visit Her Online:

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The Top 10 Most Powerful Moneymaking Lessons I Learned From The Multimillionaire IT Business Tycoon, Robert Herjavec



Robin Robins and Robert Herjavec, CEO of The Herjavec Group and shark on Shark Tank

I believe the information I'm going to share with you in this report will have a dramatic impact on you and how you think, albeit in some cases providing an uncomfortable truth that will force you to look at certain beliefs and habits you have now and force you to either change or stay stuck in mediocreville forever. But first, let me set the stage for how this all came about...

A while back, we contracted Robert to speak at our Producers Club meeting. Given he's already grown and sold an IT security company to AT&T to the tune of \$30 million, and his current IT services firm delivers managed IT security (security as a service), he's clearly "one of us" and could easily talk shop to anyone in the room. (Side note: Robert actually DID talk shop to people at the private breakfast we had, non-stop. I got a chuckle out of how much of a geek he is at heart.) Robert commented multiple times to me how much he enjoyed

my group and how connected he felt to them; so while he was there, I proposed that we arrange a field trip to his office in Canada to get a behind-the-scenes look at how he runs his company. He immediately agreed, and so, with 30 other IT services firms' CEOs, I flew to Canada to meet with him and the leadership team, to learn what steps they took to grow from ZERO to \$150 million and how they were tackling many of the same issues you deal with on a day-to-day basis, including selling their services, hiring and managing a team of people, competitive pressures and figuring out how to price, deliver and sell a profitable managed services model in a very competitive marketplace. MUCH was learned. Some were small comments that had a great impact (like co-founder George Frempong's comment that 23% of the staff are made up of SALESpeople), while others were bigger breakthroughs, such as Robert's prediction for the growing demand of IT security and how it's a HOT sector to be in.

So organized here are the most powerful and significant lessons learned from that day, compiled from my own viewpoint as well as the collective experience and notes of those who attended. (I asked everyone to e-mail me their top three breakthroughs to gather the collective wisdom and see if we all picked up on similar strategies.) The following lessons are in no particular order other than how they came to my mind as I wrote this. I believe they are ALL interwoven and necessary, just like parts of an engine.



#1. Be A Sales-Driven CEO

I know you're thinking it is incredibly self-serving and "convenient" for me to list this first, because it aligns with the agenda I've been pushing for YEARS (convenient, yes, but that's not why it made the list). I'd also be willing to bet that some of you want to ignore this factor, hoping and convincing yourself that it's not true because, at some level, you dislike selling and believe it's a job for unsavory con artists, liars, cheaters and criminals, NOT a professional person like YOU. But the above statement is verbatim from Robert on why a rare few companies grow and land in the top 5% to 1% of their industry, while others barely break the million-dollar mark and constantly struggle for profitable growth.

Robert said that as you move up the ranks from the "unwashed masses" of small businesses in the IT industry to larger companies such as IBM and CGI Systems (both multibillion-dollar companies), the single biggest thing that changes is NOT the service offering, not their operational efficiencies or the target market they are selling to – what changes is the PROFILE of the CEO: they are "sales-driven" (his exact words). He further said he believes there's only one major function of the CEO in any business, and that is the ability to sell yourself and your company.

No one who spent some time with Robert and his team would disagree that one of the primary reasons he's successful is that he is a highly competitive salesman at heart who is unwilling to settle for second place. Compare that against business owners who live in mediocrity every day and feel no shame, pain or angst about stagnation, who accept slow to no growth, low profits, an unproductive team, mediocrity in all ways and no focused, determined effort, since the inception of their business, to drive more sales.

Robert's competitive, sales-driven spirit shows in every aspect of how he runs his company, as well as in his personal beliefs, his language, how he makes decisions and even in his hobbies (he's a competitive race-car driver and told me he practiced four hours every day, seven days a week, while still running his company, when competing on *Dancing With The Stars*). When Robert came to one of the Producers Club meetings, one of his first comments was **"The purpose of a business is to build a customer – if you can bring in customers, everything else takes care of itself."**

He went on to say that the biggest difference between the people (employees) who were with him in the beginning, when they only generated \$400,000 in sales, and those with him today at \$150 million was MARKETING. Yep, you heard me. Marketing. Small-minded people (his words) have an unwillingness to do marketing and put forth an aggressive sales effort because they think they are "above" it. They think if they focus on delivering excellent service, the business will naturally come. Further stressing the importance of marketing as a key part of your business success, he then went on to say, **"There is no genius in darkness. You can't build a brilliant product or service and not tell people about it. It's only a genius idea when someone else discovers it."**

In my organization, I hear a LOT of excuses about why there isn't a dedicated, focused effort on sales and marketing – and one of the biggest "reasons" for putting the brakes on sales and marketing is some flavor of "operations won't support it" or we need to "fill-in-

the-blank-with-your-favorite-excuse” before we can do marketing. Bull. They don’t want to bring on more new clients because their business is a disorganized mess and they know it. To be clear, there are times when you need to readjust and recover from a surge in business, but if you let it drag on for a year or more like many do, it’s simply an excuse not to grow.

When Robert started the Herjavec Group, he brought two key partners with him. The first was Sean Higgins, who was their technical lead and is still the CTO, as well as George Frempong, who was their sales manager and is still today their SVP of Sales. George said it best when I met him at Robert’s office: “Sales **MUST** lead operations, not the other way around. In any business, sales must be the driving force and dictate what happens in operations.” What he meant by that is precisely what I’ve been teaching for years – sales, or market demand, should determine what you build, how you build it and what you deliver. Sales should be driving operations, because until you sell something, operational excellence is worthless.

#2. Embrace Chaos

This is actually the title of a chapter in Robert’s book *Driven*. I put it here because it flows directly from the previous lesson, in that successful, growth-minded entrepreneurs EMBRACE chaos, disorder and uncertainty, knowing they will bring order and process as they plow through uncharted territory. If you’ve ever been on a boat and watched the bow plow through the water, you’ve seen how the front of the vessel churns and disturbs the water, and the wake behind is a calmer ripple. So goes it with building a business. All new growth in a business involves breaking through barriers, creating complexity, messes and uncertainty. You can’t delay sales until all lights are green, until you get more organized, more prepared, more automation, more structure, etc.

Again, I don’t believe for a second you should recklessly go forth and sell clients a service you truly cannot deliver on. Robert agrees. However, I believe the real reason why many companies don’t grow is that the owner and leadership team have a disdain for chaos. They don’t have the mental fortitude and unwavering commitment to the growth they say they want, to deal with the stress, workload, uncertainty of biting off more than they can chew and chewing like hell (which is how ALL entrepreneurs focused on growth behave). They want to



have a nice, neat, low-stress workday that is highly predictable and stable, without surprises and disorder (sound familiar)? Managers think that way, NOT entrepreneurs. Success IS messy. Driving more clients into your business and generating more sales will screw up the best-laid operational plans because it inherently strains the system and adds complexity and



variables that cannot be accounted for. Heck, implementing a dedicated marketing effort and sales team is chaotic and uncertain for most people because they've never done it before and therefore they have to deal with a lot of mistakes and setbacks, complexity and tough questions that are not easily answered; and if you want to be successful and break through that next barrier, it requires you to plow straight through all of it UNTIL you figure it out and bring order, process and systems. If you can't figure out how to be "okay" with this constant pressure to perform, build, organize and stretch, you'll never have the stomach for exponential growth and will constantly shrink back to what's comfortable and easy. We see it ALL the time with IT services firms who come to us for help in growing.

The #1 reason we hear for people returning our program is this: "I don't have TIME to implement it," or "We're too busy." Too busy doing what? They enrolled in the program for a reason – they know they need a more dedicated marketing effort and they want more clients, revenue and profits. So we give them the formula for achieving that and all of the sudden they're "too busy"? Let's call it what it really is: a big FAT excuse. They're chasing a utopia that will never exist in a GROWTH company: order and ease. If you're constantly growing, your company's ability to service your clients is NEVER going to be neat, clean and organized, UNLESS you're barely straining the system, never adding new clients and new products or attempting to elevate your service. It just can't happen. The minute you add another customer or the minute you add another employee, technology or any other element, chaos ensues, and you can waste YEARS trying to chase perfection in your operations to the detriment of profitable growth.

In his book, Robert starts the "Embrace Chaos" chapter with this:

Chaos breeds life. Order breeds *habit*.

While at Robert's office, I asked his leadership team if every day felt like a constant push to growth with no "off" days, no days of recouping, no time to take a breath. ALL of them agreed that was the culture of the company – a constant, never-ending battle of pushing to accomplish as much as possible, in as little time as possible. No excuses. This was VERY apparent in the sales culture – Robert routinely raises their quotas by 10% to 12% EVERY YEAR for them to earn the SAME amount of money. He said that at first they grumbled, but now they know it's just part of the culture. But beware, mediocrity can also become the "norm."

#3. Your USP Has To Be Defensible BEFORE The Customer Buys

Both at the Producers Club meeting and at his office, Robert hammered home the importance of differentiating your company and having a solid USP (unique selling proposition). His definition of a good business idea is "one that is original and appeals to a defined market." So many IT firms try to differentiate themselves by saying their service is "the best" and that they employ "good people." While it's important to be able to deliver quality (and many don't), service and caring people are NOT valid differentiators because, first, EVERYONE says that, and second, in order for a customer to determine if that is true,

they have to buy from you. Good service, quality support and a sharp team are expected, not unique, just like good food and cleanliness are expected in a restaurant. **Therefore, if your USP is to have any power, it MUST be defensible before the customer buys.** It also has to offer a big enough benefit for the customer to want to change. A BIG lesson Robert learned when starting his company was that “clients aren’t going to leave a vendor that is okay for something *potentially* better.” In other words, your product, service and offering need to have real teeth and a significant upside if you want to win clients away from competitors who aren’t massively screwing up. Robert’s first-year goal for sales was \$5 million; they ended up doing \$400,000. That’s when he learned that relationship and tenacity aren’t enough – you NEED to couple that with a solid USP.

At one of the Freshman Academy meetings for our Producers Club members, I did a deep dive into USP development. The vast majority of the room struggle with it for any number of reasons, but here are the top three:

- **They don’t have one.** Not everyone is the “best” at what they do, and most IT services businesses are simply another “me too” in a sea of many. Many struggle with a USP because they’ve never thought about it, much less given any serious effort to creating one. If you can’t even roughly articulate, with certainty, how you’re better than your competitors, you probably aren’t and need to work on building your USP.
- **They don’t have a clearly defined market they are focusing on.** A USP is only powerful when framed with relevance to a particular customer. Domino’s Pizza’s “Fresh hot pizza delivered in 30 minutes or less guaranteed,” one of my all-time favorite USPs, wasn’t trying to appeal to a high-end market. They weren’t trying to appeal to foodies who wanted gourmet flavors and “natural” ingredients. When they initially started, their target market was college kids, which is why they build all their stores on the edges of college campuses. (Key point: When you’re initially launching a business, having a VERY narrowly defined market is ULTRA-important because you typically don’t have a bottomless pit of money and resources to burn through, which means you have to be that much more focused on a very small group or niche.) If you’re trying to be all things to all people, you’ll fail because you’re an expert in nothing. And since your USP has to spring from what your customers want to buy, where they’re being underserved, what specific business problems they’re facing, the incumbent competition and their specific needs, it’s incredibly difficult to build a USP or even a service model if you can’t articulate who your client is. For the record, saying your customer is “all small businesses with 10 to 200 PCs” is NOT a target market. That’s a dream.



Robin interviewing Robert Herjavec



- **Thinking they need a tagline USP.** Although I like to use Domino's single-sentence USP as an example, that does NOT mean you need to have a "tagline" USP. If you CAN develop a true and powerfully concise USP like that, God bless. It's rare. Most USPs are not delivered in a simple sentence, but ARE short and concise and made up of layers of differentiation points. For example, the Herjavec Group's USP has four parts. They are:
- **They SPECIALIZE in IT security.** That's all they do. They don't do system upgrades, Office 365 deployments, backup solutions, help desk, etc. They are laser-focused on being the best at IT security, full stop. Could they easily creep into doing other projects for their clients? Absolutely. But Robert knows that one of the challenges he has to face every day is staying focused.
- **They thrive in complex environments.** It's not enough to say they specialize in security; where they REALLY shine is in complex environments in larger organizations with a lot of people and moving parts. If you're a "small" business that needs a relatively simple UTM (unified threat management) solution, you would not call the Herjavec Group. If you are, however, a large bank that provides online banking solutions with multiple locations, thousands of employees and end points, the Herjavec Group is THE go-to company for that solution.
- **They are vendor-agnostic.** This is important whenever they compete against IBM, who will ONLY support IBM equipment. Therefore, if you need managed security services and select IBM, they will require you to replace your existing equipment and software with their own.
- **They provide a full-service solution that includes consulting (mapping out an IT security plan and penetration testing), implementation of the plan, managed services and remediation in the event of a breach.** Many IT security companies will consult and implement a solution, but it's up to the client to manage and remediate if a breach happens. Some only remediate and many don't offer a managed solution (although that's changing fast).

To give them credit, we asked every leader in the company what their USP was, and they could all articulate it. Not verbatim and not in a tagline, but they could answer the question accurately if posed by a prospect. Further, the two that were most important to their clients were that they specialize in IT security only and thrive in complex environments. Pop Quiz: How many of YOUR employees can articulate your USP or even answer the question "Why should I buy from you?" Can YOU articulate it?

#4 Put As Much Into Selling Your Services As You Do Into Delivering Them

There are multiple lessons in this section that flow from the above point. It's worth noting that throughout the day, EVERYONE who spoke to us, from the HR person to the technical team, all knew they were in sales, and touched on it in various ways. Obviously the

sales and marketing team leaders we spoke to talked about it a lot – but the HR manager talked about “selling” top talent to come to work for the Herjavec Group. The technical team and presales team talked extensively about being very active in the sales process early on, proactively assisting in assessing, quoting and closing sales. Further, they have built an SOC (security operating center) that is largely designed to put on a show for a new prospective client, with big screens and flashing monitors, that looks more like the deck of the *Enterprise* than the belly of an IT security company. All of this you would expect from a fast-growing company that is very determined to grow and compete with IBM on a daily basis.

But here are a few golden nuggets I gleaned from various people throughout the day who are directly related to building an amazing sales function, in no particular order:

- **They have roughly 250 employees, of which 58 are salespeople.** THAT little fact shocked a lot of the room. Robert mentioned about 58 dedicated sales reps – roughly 23% of the staff. Compare that against most other IT firms, where less than 1% of the staff has a sales role.
- **Salespeople are paid a percentage of GP (gross profit), not top-line.** They do this to prevent discounting and price cutting to win a deal AND to keep them in line with Robert’s goal of doubling the profitability of the company. (Side note: Robert’s goal is NOT to grow top-line; his goal is to stay above \$100 million in sales, but then to continue to increase profitability. That’s because his ultimate goal is to sell the company, and investors/buyers pay a premium for profitability, recurring revenue and client assets over top-line sales. If you’d like to implement a sales plan that is based on GP, Taylor Business Group has excellent training on compensation strategies for salespeople. The general rule of thumb is that 1/3 of the GP goes to the sales rep and 2/3 to the company. Of course, this should be a scaled approach where they get a smaller percentage for less GP brought in, with 1/3 being at the top of the bracket. Also, commission is only paid on the initial sale or first year’s contract, and not every year the client renews. For more details, contact Taylor Business Group.
- **“Customers don’t come to us.”** Meaning, their marketing doesn’t produce any inbound leads. (Believe you me, I sat there biting my tongue – but I wasn’t there to give free advice and they never asked anyway.) Initially I found this to be odd, given all the free publicity and TV coverage Robert gets. However, this is partly due to the environment and client they are selling to. Most of the CTOs and CIOs of the 1,000+ seat companies they are targeting get prospected a LOT. These prospects



Robert addressing us in his boardroom while eating a cookie. He’s a busy man who doesn’t have a lot of time to stop



know they can offer a vendor a very juicy piece of business, so they don't have to work to find a vendor; they're constantly being courted. Further, most are already buying from someone else, and the "somebody else" competitors at the level Robert is playing are very competent and protective of their accounts, so they're not easily taken. Therefore, if the Herjavec Group has any hope of winning that business, they have to go hunt it.

- **They're in the "leaky roof" business.** Mike Kolassa, VP of their Managed Security Operations, said they are in the "fixing leaky roofs" business, not the "sell a home addition" business. What he meant by that comment was that they don't try to DEVELOP the need for IT security services in their prospective clients; instead, their entire focus is to find someone who is already buying some type of outsourced security services and knock out the incumbent. That's why you'll hear Robert say he's in a "zero sum game" when it comes to sales. The prospects they are targeting ARE going to buy from someone; if he doesn't get the sale, it's only because somebody else did.
- **"Be the MOST professional guy in the room."** This is one of a handful of rules of the sales team shared by Michael Brameld. All of the top sales reps were wearing very expensive custom suits and were immaculately groomed, with polished manners and social skills. At the Producers Club meeting, Robert commented that many professional IT services firms fail in sales because they are incongruent with their marketing. They're trying to sell a prospect on their expertise and professionalism, but they're wearing a shirt that doesn't fit and jeans. When they bring a tech in, the tech is wearing any old shirt and sneakers instead of a clean, pressed, logo shirt. HOW you interact and show up for a sales meeting matters. Human beings buy on a subconscious level. How you greet the prospect initially, how you sit, how you ask questions and conduct yourself, how you dress, follow up, present your company all matter – your sales presentation IS the first glimpse a prospective customer has of what it will be like working with you. It would be incredibly incongruent for one of the Herjavec reps to show up in a polo shirt, even if it had a logo on it. They're selling to C-level executives in big corporations. If they want to be perceived as a "trusted advisor," they better show up looking and acting the part.
- **You're expected to work hard and to hit quota.** Someone asked Michael Brameld, "What's your work-from-home policy?" to which he replied, "You get to work from home on nights and weekends. During work hours, you are either in the office or at a client's site. There is no working from home." As mentioned earlier, Robert routinely raises the sales team's quota every year to make the same amount of money they made the year before. You are also expected to start generating sales within the first four to six months of coming on board. If you don't, you're gone.
- **If you're in sales, you're in SALES.** You don't service accounts, research quotes for hardware, push paper, collect money, invoice, etc. This is really key since it's my experience that most small business owners want their salespeople to do a lot more than sell. And while I do believe that in the beginning, when you're small, everyone needs to pick up a bit more slack and a few more tasks to get the job done, there comes a point when you need to let your salespeople just be focused on sales, period. I will also add that if you HAVE a stallion sales rep who can produce, why on earth



would you have them doing anything other than selling and closing?

- **Know the characteristics of a great salesperson.** Someone asked Robert what he found was the #1 characteristic of his best salespeople. After thinking for a moment, he said, “The best salespeople have no similar sex, age, body type, background, etc. But the one thing that ALL the successful salespeople have in common is that they start taking action fast. They don’t want to learn, they don’t want to get organized and they don’t want to waste a lot of time in training about the company’s products and services. They just want to jump on the phone and start kicking up activity. Unsuccessful sales reps always want more training, more preparation, more coaching and more time for research.” He went on to explain that even if their activity kicks up the wrong type of prospect and opportunities, it’s forgivable in the first few months they’re working for you because it’s easier to course-correct than to get started (my “you can’t steer a parked car” axiom). I would add that I see this same characteristic in the business owners who come to us for marketing advice. Those who are successful just start doing SOMETHING instead of hesitating and procrastinating, looking for “one” thing they can do, picking through and dismissing most of what I’m giving them.

Robert also said that great salespeople don’t look for a “yes” – they look for the “no” and how to overcome it. Essentially saying you need to know what your prospects’ objections are and ferret them out; don’t pretend (hope) they don’t exist because the client hasn’t articulated any. In fact, Robert said, “One of the easiest ways to get rid of a salesperson is to tell them yes.” What he meant was that many prospects won’t tell you their fears, concerns and objections because they don’t like confrontation and it opens up a discussion where you (the sales guy) will deny and argue and potentially remove the excuse they’ve manufactured for not buying. Think about how you interact with salespeople – I’d be willing to bet *you* don’t always verbalize your objections for the same reasons. Therefore, if you’re the guy selling, you have to keep in mind that sales objections are lurking behind the wall like a cockroach hidden from view, not wanting to come out into the light. You can’t assume a “smooth” and positive meeting is a sign they’re buying, or even a verbal “yes.” You need to go one further and get contracts signed, budgets approved and checks written.

- **They maintain an organizational chart of all their clients and intentionally build relationships with all C-level executives.** A key part of their strategy to expand within their existing accounts is to maintain an organizational chart of their clients and purposefully communicate with and build relationships with ALL C-level executives up and down the chain of command within that account. Further, they make sure that their CFO is connected to the client's CFO, their VP of Sales is connected with the client's VP of Sales, etc. This gives them unique insights into the organization's goals, decision-making process, operations and budgeting; it also strengthens their relationship, reducing the chances of being replaced by a competitor who's a friend of one of their key executives.



This bike sits in the reception area and is signed by all the Toronto Maple Leaf players.

- **They always float pricing with a client BEFORE they do proposals or any presales work.** Here's another valuable lesson I've championed for years: Do NOT use a proposal as the first means of giving a client your price. In Robert's business, pulling together a proposal is a very complex process that involves a presales technical team that has to spec the scope of the project, hours, hardware, software, etc. It is NOT a simple process to quote a complex security solution. Therefore, all salespeople are required to discuss price and float a ballpark range of what their solution will cost before quoting.
- **Don't stop selling once a prospect has given you a "yes."** Here's another incredibly important point Robert made regarding high-end, complex sales – do not start doing your Snoopy dance the minute someone says, "You're the guys we're going with." That's because the easiest way to get rid of a salesperson is to tell them yes. Robert said he trains his salespeople to have the maturity to continue to probe and close UNTIL they get the contract. All too often salespeople stop the "hunt" once they have a verbal yes; but the deal ends up never closing and the prospects "disappear," never to be heard from again, or they end up going with another competitor. Remember, the deal isn't closed UNTIL you have the contract signed. It takes a lot of discipline and skill for a salesperson to get a yes, but continue to probe and ask questions about budgeting, how contracts like theirs get signed and approved and who is involved in moving the deal beyond just a verbal yes. MANY deals are derailed AFTER the yes is given due to an objection with a contract, budgetary issues and other logistics.

#5. Always Be A Fountain Of Good News And Positive Energy

You can and should discuss problems and financial difficulties with your executive team



– but workers (employees) only want good news. They don't want to know about your problems, personal or otherwise. They're employees because they don't want to deal with bad news. They only want security, safety and reassurance. Same goes for customers. They don't want to know that your business is struggling, not hitting quota, not growing, having operational, marketing or employee issues, or that you're having a bad day – they have their own problems to deal with. At his office, Robert made a point to say that whenever he meets with or talks to customers, he makes absolutely certain to be a source of positive, happy energy. Same with employees.

Another comment he made to me in Nashville was that successful entrepreneurs all have in common a characteristic of being happy people. People WANT to do business with them because their attitude is upbeat and their outlook is positive; if you're chronically miserable, tired, low-energy and uncertain, what client is going to want to deal with you on a regular basis? And what about good employees? Unhappy, low-energy entrepreneurs, by and large, are NOT successful. So even if you're dealing with multiple problems, setbacks and issues, you HAVE to remain positive.

My mentor and friend Nido Qubein, President of High Point University, commented to me that every day he makes a point of walking around campus to connect with students and staff, making sure to always be smiling, happy, energetic and acting as though he hasn't a care in the world – this is done VERY intentionally, and he invests at least one to two hours a day in this. Question for you: How is YOUR attitude in the office every day? Do YOU make a point of being a source of positive, upbeat, GOOD news to your clients? Employees? There's only one thing you can count on when running a business: you're always going to have problems, but how you react to them and lead your team through them matters greatly.

#6 The Saying “It Takes Money To Make Money” Is Crap

Too many people have the impression that having money – or somehow acquiring a chunk of money via an investor, bank loan or even a lucky break – will solve their problems. It rarely does, simply because their biggest problem is not a lack of money, but rather mismanagement of the money and resources they have; and without fixing their inability to properly invest and manage it, all the money given to them will be gone in no time at all, with no real results to show for it.

Robert shared a story about a deal he closed on *Shark Tank* with Mark Cuban to invest \$200,000 into a fledgling start-up. When they asked the owner what he was going to do with the money, he told them he was going to buy a car and pay off his mortgage. Much to his dismay and shock, both Robert and Mark “schooled” him that the money was NOT to leave the business and was ONLY to be used for its growth and marketing.

Although this seems foolish, many entrepreneurs are just as foolish with the money THEY get during the normal course of business. Instead of reinvesting it back into marketing, hiring, training, better tools, etc., they buy a nicer car, go on vacation or get a

bigger mortgage and starve the business.

This is a common theme I've found in all highly successful CEOs in our industry. When starting the business, they only took meager salaries, drove used cars, lived in "starter" homes and reinvested all the profits to grow the business for years. I wish I had a nickel for every business owner who knocks on our door looking for marketing help, only to tell us they "can't afford" the \$3,000 for the Toolkit – all while they're dropping a few thousand on family vacations, new cars and running up credit card bills for things they can't even remember buying.

#7. You Get What You Ask For

As you may know, Robert is a huge race-car fan and drives competitively as a hobby. Four years ago he bought a race car. After buying his car, he called the company that sanctions his race series, EMSA, and told them he wanted his new race-car number to be 007 (James Bond). The woman he spoke to informed him, "You can't have that number. It's in the rule book that you can't give your car a number that starts with two zeros." So he hangs up the phone, goes online, downloads the entire rule book and combs through it that night. He calls her back the next day and says, "Hey, it's me again." She says, "Did you come up with a number?" He says, "Yeah – 007." She replies, a bit exasperated, "You can't do that. Like I told you yesterday, it's in the rule book that you can't have a race-car number start with two zeros." He says, "I'm not trying to be rude, but could you tell me where it says that? I went through the entire rule book and I couldn't find it." She says, "Well, maybe it's not in the rules, but we've been doing this for 25 years. Don't you think if it was possible to have 007, someone before you would have asked and gotten it?" To which he replied, "No. I think people have asked, you told them no, and they stopped asking." Today, his race-car number is 007.

The point is, far too many people take the first no – whether it's asking for the appointment, the sale or anything else in life, or simply having hard-set rules about what can and cannot be done. Real salespeople and entrepreneurs know to completely ignore the first no and industry norms to pursue their goals, regardless of what others tell them.

Case in point: The Herjavec Group sells managed security services and, like most of you, bills the customers monthly on a three-year agreement. One day, Robert decided to see if he could convince his customers to pay him annually to help with cash flow and avoid the administrative work of issuing invoices and collecting and processing checks every month. So he went to all his customers and asked. Much to his surprise, 80% of his clients were happy to write one check for the annual service agreement; some even **PREFERRED** it, stating it was easier for them than having to process a monthly invoice. Today, paying in full for the year IS the norm. Further, all of his customers have non-cancellable contracts. That means they cannot cancel the agreement for



Robert's "Hall Of Fame" in his office.



any reason. The first time he tried that on a prospect, the prospect balked. He replied, “Hang on a second – you want me to invest in the tools, software, training and people to service your account – a cost that I’m not going to be able to recoup until at least six to nine months into our agreement. Yet you want the ability to cancel at any time, leaving all the risk on me? I don’t see that as fair.” After hearing that explanation, the prospect agreed and signed the agreement. Now 90% of Robert’s clients have non-cancellable contracts.

Keep in mind that I’m not suggesting YOU need to bill a client annually and have non-cancellable agreements. Maybe you should and maybe you shouldn’t. That depends on your strategy. Robert does this because the services his team delivers DO require a heavy investment in people, technology and other resources that requires a three-year term to get to the point where he can recoup those costs. **The point is you get what you ask for.** Far too many business owners make concrete assumptions about their clients that are NOT based in fact but in their own misguided beliefs and values. My clients would never agree to that. My clients would never pay that. My clients would never buy that. And because they believe it, it’s true.

#8. Their Most Successful Marketing And Lead Generation Strategy Is...

Seminars and events! I’ve been saying this for YEARS: delivering seminars, lunch-and-learns, executive breakfasts and after-hours events are the best way to generate high-quality leads and clients. Robert’s marketing team said this was their #1 marketing strategy; but they also make sure they host “experiential” events such as a cigar-rolling, after-hours cocktails or a private party on a yacht with food, wine and music. They invite existing clients AND prospects and let them mingle. The existing clients sell the prospects, and the event itself induces huge feelings of reciprocity in the prospect.

#9. You Can’t Build A Business On Talent

Robert commented, “The LA Lakers only had Kobe Bryant and one or two other key players; everyone else is interchangeable.” Meaning, every business needs to have one or two high-level players with a team of good players supporting them, but most of the employees you hire are not rock stars. Your company and the success of your business just isn’t that important to most of the employees you can afford; they want to come to work, do their job and go home at 5:00 p.m. If your business depends on hiring ONLY rock stars, you’ll never grow – there just aren’t enough of them out there.

But know this: When you do find that rock-star salesperson or tech, he is NOT the asset you may think he is – he’s a *liability* – particularly if he’s the only one you’ve got, and he’s producing results on sheer talent, motivation and skill, NOT due to having a process or system you’ve created. What if he goes lame? Decides to leave and go to a competitor? If he’s a sales guy, your entire sales and marketing “process” just walked out the door. If he’s a tech, same deal. What IS an asset is a process that can enable even a pretty mediocre person to succeed. THAT’S the asset and that’s exactly the point Robert was making when he said

you cannot build a business on talent alone.

#10. Know The Lifeblood Of Your Business

When he was competing on *Dancing With The Stars*, Robert had to live in LA for months, practicing four hours every day. But during that ENTIRE time, he knew exactly where his business was by the numbers every single day. The only thing Robert knows every quarter is what his overhead is going to be (what he's going to spend). So he watches his numbers (sales, profits and pipeline report) DAILY to know exactly where they are and whether or not they're about to run into a problem. In my experience, most IT business owners have no clue how many leads are coming in, how many proposals are out and what their sales forecast is, and have no handle on their sales pipeline. Robert made a point to say he watches that like a hawk – it IS the lifeblood of his business – and he said that if you have any hope of being successful, you MUST master and know the lifeblood of your business.



Robert and the rest of the members who attended the day at the Herjavec Group standing with me on the steps of the reception area.



FREE One-On-One Consultation Shows You How To Get In Front Of More High-Quality IT Services Prospects In A Month Than Most IT Services Firms And MSPs Get All Year



I Want To Give You The Missing Piece To The Puzzle That Might Double, Triple Or Even *Quadruple* Your IT Services Business,
Absolutely FREE

From The Desk Of: Robin Robins,
Founder & CEO, Technology Marketing Toolkit, Inc.

Do you feel you should be more successful in your IT services business by now, making more money with greater ease than you are today?

Are you unsure about where to **start** when it comes to marketing? Perhaps you're excellent at the technical aspects of running an IT services business, but **simply lack the experience in sales and marketing you need** to make good decisions about what to do and what activities will give you the highest and best results?

Does it frustrate you how **difficult it is to get prospective clients to see the value of what you do**...and aggravate you how **UNwilling** they are to pay for quality IT services and support? Are you fed up competing on price and having to **work so hard** to get a client to understand WHY they need the specific services you are recommending?

I completely understand and agree...it SHOULD be easier to sell managed services and IT support.

The good news is that it CAN be. You CAN attract more appreciative, well-behaved and profitable clients. You CAN implement marketing systems to magnetically attract the types of clients you want who are willing and happy to pay for your services. You CAN stop being an advertising neophyte and avoid getting "taken" by advertising salesmen who use your ignorance to abuse you. I know because I've already done this for thousands of IT services firms just like yours.

And now, for reasons explained in this letter, I want to help YOU.



www.technologymarketingtoolkit.com

Why Should You Pay Attention To Me?

My name is Robin Robins and unless you've been living under a rock, you've heard of me. **That is because I have worked with 8,000+ IT services companies over the last 15 years to create sales and marketing systems that WORK.** I've been a featured keynote speaker at multiple industry events such as CompTIA, the ASCII events, Continuum, Datto, Connectwise and dozens of others. Based on PAID attendees, our annual IT Sales and Marketing conference is the **second largest event in the IT services channel.** We are routinely sponsored and endorsed by the IT industry's most trusted and respected vendors, including Microsoft, Intel, eFolder, Datto, Continuum, Solar Winds, IT Glue, Sophos, WebRoot and dozens of others.

I also run the largest, **highest-paid Master Mind group for MSPs and IT services business owners** in the world (no exaggeration), called our Producers Club (www.RobinsProducersClub.com). And most important, I have more documented client success stories than any other marketing firm, consultant or "guru" in the world, period. (If getting actual results matter, I'm your gal. In fact, I'm your ONLY gal.) You can go online and see the LONG list of real comments, from real clients.

You can also look at our Google reviews where we have a SOLID 5-star rating, and read comments from DOZENS of IT services firms we've helped. You might think all the client success stories are "made up," but you can't fake Google reviews:



Who This Offer Is For Specifically

I'm on a mission to find more ambitious, smart, hardworking business owners running IT services businesses to join our community of clients.



To find those ideal clients, we paid a market research company to profile our **BEST**, most successful clients and use the data, statistics and **COMMONALITIES** they shared to find more who match their profile – and that is how you’ve come to receive this letter. I do realize this is not a perfect process and you might NOT be a good fit.

Bluntly, you don’t qualify simply because you run an IT services business and can write a check. If you’re NOT motivated to grow...if you are so tech-minded that you carry a deeply embedded negative bias against selling and marketing...if you aren’t willing to keep an open mind about NEW ways of marketing...or if you’re just bitter and skeptical about everything and everyone, **you’re not for us.**

But if you are hardworking, ambitious and smart – yet are constantly held back due to your inability to strike upon an effective, reliable and consistent way to get more clients – if you see your lack of marketing as a weakness that makes you vulnerable to bigger, well-funded competitors and anxious about the stability of your income, I would URGE you take me up on this.

Briefly, Here’s What I’d Offering You

If you qualify, I want to give you a strategic marketing planning session with one of my most experienced Business Coaches, PLUS our proprietary IT Marketing Roadmap that we’ve perfected over the last 15 years, working with over 8,000 IT services firms. This Roadmap will show you how to approach the process of implementing a marketing plan to fuel sales, attract more QUALITY clients and reveal hidden opportunities for growth and profits I can guarantee you’re blind to or grossly negligent in capitalizing on.

There’s no charge for this, and it only requires you to complete a confidential Marketing Analysis Questionnaire so we can prepare for your private consultation. This call will last approximately 60 minutes, but during that brief time we will show you **NEW possibilities**, **NEW opportunities** and reveal why you’re struggling.

You’ll also discover whether or not your IT business’s revenues, profits, growth and goals are par, below par or above par, measured against actual numbers and key performance indicators from thousands of other IT services firms of your size and tenure in business. **Essentially, how do you stack up?** After doing this for 15 years, we’ve not only gotten pretty good at helping MSPs and IT services firms get results fast, but also know how well you’re doing compared to the industry as a whole.

3 Things You Can Expect From This Consultation:

ANSWERS. You’ll get ANSWERS to your specific questions about implementing a marketing plan, attracting more clients, where to start, what results to expect and what is REQUIRED for you to even begin to compete against the growing commoditization of



IT services. Your every question answered directly, no stone left unturned. You'll also get an incredibly thought-provoking examination of your current business and what opportunities for more growth, profit and client retention you are grossly negligent about, overlooking and completely missing. This WILL be an eye-opening session for you.

A MARKETING ROADMAP. As mentioned, we'll give you our proprietary Marketing Roadmap that has been developed after working with over 8,000 IT services firms, both large and small, from big metropolitan cities to rural America. Start-ups to mature MSPs generating over \$30 million in revenue. There isn't a single problem we haven't seen or *solved*.

Our Roadmap will detail **4 critical elements you MUST HAVE RIGHT** in order to compete and attract the "sweet spot" clients you want. If you're struggling to get more clients, if you're constantly running into price resistance, sales stalls and delays, and you aren't getting referred, I can practically guarantee you're missing one (or more) of these critical elements – and **NO OTHER MARKETING FIRM WILL TELL YOU THIS INFORMATION**. In fact, most don't even **KNOW** it or use it for themselves.

HELP. After reviewing your specific goals, challenges, resources, budget and situation, we will prescribe which of our programs can best help you. This will not be a sales trap you are lured into and abused by. At the end of the consultation, we'll simply give you options and details on the most appropriate services and programs for you, so you can make an informed, intelligent decision on whether or not we should work together. We will ask you to make a decision – and it's perfectly okay if you decide we're not right for you.

This Is NOT For Everybody; Here's Who I CAN Help And What I Require

I have a strict (but reasonable) set of criteria that must be met in order for us to proceed:

- 1. You have to be an established IT services business with happy clients.** This offer is **ONLY** for IT services firms that have been in business for a while **AND** who have happy customers. If you are a brand-new start-up with no clients and no money, we *might* be able to help you through a different process. Call the office, and we'll direct you from there: 615-790-5011.
- 2. You must be the owner of the business.** Due to the nature of the advice we'll give you and the conversation we'll be having, you must be the owner of the business. If you have a business partner, spouse or other key employee, you should have them present as well. (NOTE: Only invite people you are comfortable discussing sales numbers, profits and



other financial and business-health details in front of, for obvious reasons.) If you are a marketing manager, sales manager or operations person, we'd be happy to answer questions you have about our programs and our company, but through a different process. Call the office and we'll direct you from there: 615-790-5011.

3. You must have an open mind and be able to focus and listen.

Come to the call with a positive attitude and an open mind to really engage with us. The call will last about an hour, so please set aside time away from distractions and interruptions so we can have a serious conversation. You must be in front of your PC (not driving, walking, exercising or otherwise preoccupied). If you won't take this process seriously and be a professional, we can't help you.

If You Meet The Above Criteria, Here's What To Do Right Now

Step 1: Go to the website below to complete our Marketing Analysis Questionnaire. Don't worry, it's simple and unobtrusive:

www.technologymarketingtoolkit.com/consult

This will give us important information about your current business, your specific goals and what you're doing now for marketing, so we can formulate a plan and fully prepare for our consultation. Please take a few extra minutes to give us as much detail as possible.

Step 2: Once you have completed your Marketing Analysis Questionnaire, you will be presented with an online calendar to self-select a time that is most convenient for you to hold this call. This consultation will last approximately 60 minutes, depending on how many questions you have, so please clear your calendar of any distractions during that time.

Step 3: Your application will be reviewed and, provided you meet all the criteria outlined in this letter, one of my Client Concierges will send you pre-meeting materials that you MUST REVIEW IN ADVANCE of your consultation. You will find this information extremely beneficial and interesting – and an “easy” read (most will be short, informational videos). This is NOT just “brochures” about us, but detailed information on our approach to marketing, case history and client examples, along with answers to questions I'm sure you have about us, our approach, our clients and our capabilities.

IMPORTANT: We reserve the right to deny your application if we feel you do not meet the criteria outlined in this letter. Please **ONLY** apply if you are the CEO of an



IT services company that is genuinely serious about growing your IT services business, attracting more clients and implementing a quality, professional marketing plan.

Here's EXACTLY What My Program Makes Possible For You

Keep this list: It is a list of specific promises you can hold me accountable for when you decide to enroll in one of our programs after your consultation:

- **You will never fall victim to another advertising salesperson again.** I'll arm you with the knowledge you currently lack to hold ANYONE you hire for marketing HARSHLY accountable for delivering a measurable ROI – including me.
- You will enjoy a **steady, consistent flow of prospects calling your office**.
- You'll have the **power to be a LOT pickier about who you accept as a client**, and ONLY accept the ones who appreciate and value your services, take your advice and pay.
- You'll be able to **fire every single whiny, cheap, annoying client** and replace them with well-behaved, appreciative and profitable ones.
- You will have **the freedom to take a vacation or a little time off** without the wheels falling off. That's because you'll be able to AFFORD to hire techs and admins to take the grunt work off your plate, and the confidence to get them fully utilized by finding more clients.
- You will be able to **overcome price resistance** and avoid having to negotiate, discount and change your advice (and your price) to win new clients.
- You will be able to **stop doing low-pay IT grunt work** and elevate yourself to a true CEO/owner position.
- You'll **stop making foolish decisions about marketing** that waste your time and money.

Another benefit that often happens (but one I cannot promise or guarantee for obvious reasons) is that your spouse or significant other and kids will **stop resenting your business** and be **proud of your success** and supportive of your goals. When you're working your tail off day after day but having nothing to show for it, failing to get ahead, your family questions whether or not you really know what you're doing. But when



you're winning and your business is growing, they'll start rallying behind you.

Are You Worried That Your Time Will Be Wasted?

I don't blame you one bit. I too would be worried that this consultation is nothing more than a thinly veiled sales pitch that provides no value. Therefore, I want to assure you I've worked very hard to make sure your time will NOT be wasted, and that you will see real value. **To that end, I'm putting my "money where my mouth is" and making the following UNHEARD-OF GUARANTEE:**

I personally guarantee you will find this consultation to be incredibly valuable, with numerous eye-opening details, information and useful advice. If you don't agree, let me know and **I'll immediately write you a check for \$100 to compensate you for your time.** In fact, I e-mail every single person AFTER each consult, asking for input on how it went. That response comes directly to me, unfiltered, and is your opportunity to say you feel your time was wasted, and that you want your compensation.

TO BE CLEAR: Provided we feel we CAN help you, we will be presenting you with a few options on how you can work with us. I'm not hiding that as one of our goals for this discovery call and consultation. But – I also believe we can deliver value to you and NOT WASTE YOUR TIME.

Who else is making that kind of offer to you? *No one.* (I checked.)

WARNING: TIME IS A FACTOR

This opportunity is extremely limited because of the intense one-on-one time needed in order to provide you with results. Therefore, it is physically impossible for us to work with more than a handful of people.

BUT THIS SHOULD BE URGENT FOR YOU.

If you are **NOT** perfectly happy with the sales, income and progress you are making in your IT services business, if you're **NOT** satisfied with the growth and stability of your client base, if you're **NOT** completely confident in your ability to attract the quantity and quality of clients you want, why wouldn't you say "Yes!" to this opportunity right now?

If not now, when? No business can thrive, be stable and secure and have the funds to invest in serving their clients properly without the ability to bring in sales and new clients consistently and cost-effectively. If you put it off by telling yourself,



"Next month," I can tell you a month will turn into 2 or 3, and 2 or 3 months will turn into a year. A year turns into a decade – and once that time is lost, you cannot make it back.

YOU'RE ALREADY BEHIND. You should have already been marketing and building the foundation of a client-attraction system. So stop procrastinating and making excuses. Go to the website below right now and complete your application. You'll be glad you did:

[**www.technologymarketingtoolkit.com/consult**](http://www.technologymarketingtoolkit.com/consult)

In Summary, Here's What You're Coming To Your Consult To Decide (3 Vital Questions That Will Be Answered)

Question 1: Is your IT services business revenues, growth, stability and overall business "health" able to deliver the lifestyle and financial security you're expecting and hoping it will deliver? Are you on track? Are you making reasonable progress? How well could you "weather the storm" of another recession, the loss of a major account, an aggressive, well-funded competitor moving in on your territory OR simply a personal crisis that would prevent you from working? How do you stack up against your peers? Are you on par? Below? Above?

Question 2: Exactly WHERE are your biggest and best opportunities right NOW to plug the holes in the sales bucket? What opportunities are you completely overlooking right now? What specific aspects of your business and marketing strategy are in the direst need of repair? Where and how should you start to go about fixing them?

Questions 3: Whether or not enrolling in one or more of our programs is appropriate for you, and which programs will help you achieve your specific goals. If yes, how do our programs work? How do you participate? What's required of you? What is done FOR you, what is done WITH you?

One Final Thought If You're Thinking Now Isn't The Right Time...

Below is a **REAL response** from the owner of an IT services company we sent this SAME letter to. I modified it to protect the identity of the person who sent it to us:

"I'm not even sure why I'm talking to you. I can't afford what you're selling and it won't fix what is broken. I'm 64. I'll be 65 in a few months. My health is OK, but not the greatest. I have a very small amount in retirement, but nowhere near enough to live on.



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I have obligations and a wife whom I love dearly, but I really can't support her. I knew everything I should do, but I just never got it done. I guess I was just too stubborn. I didn't want to do [business] managed services; I wanted to do residential, but I didn't know how to sell it. Yet I didn't go to sales training. I tried a little of this marketing and a little of that, but nothing seemed to work. I've now had this aha moment – *but it came pretty late.*

I don't really know what to do. Maybe I'll go sell cars or something. But who would hire a 65-year-old with no experience? **There's no way to go back and undo what I've done, no rerun button.** So here I sit. I have 100 residential clients, and really want 200 – but no one wants to buy this great service I have for \$40/month."

This is a perfect example of what happens to the person who ALWAYS said, "Next month I'll get to marketing," or "I can't afford to learn how to sell and get more clients." How about *you*? Are you on this same excuse train, putting off getting serious about marketing until the "right" time?

If so, **YOU ARE FALLING BEHIND.** ***Every day matters.*** Days turn into weeks and weeks turn into months then years. Losses stack and multiply – and every dollar lost today CANNOT be invested, CANNOT be put to work in your business, CANNOT be multiplied.

Your inability to bring in a client is a vulnerability...a weakness...that shouldn't be ignored, put off, procrastinated on. You've already put this off long enough. **Call or go online now and book your consult right now:**

www.technologymarketingtoolkit.com/consult

Dedicated to your success,

Robin

Robin Robins

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Office Phone: 615-790-5011



www.technologymarketingtoolkit.com

P.S. Not Ready For A Consultation Right Now? Let Me Give You This FREE



Please allow me to at least give you **The Ultimate MSP's Guide To Marketing, Lead Generation And IT Services Sales Success**. This is an in-depth report on why so many MSPs struggle to get more clients, constantly fight price resistance and fail to convince clients why they need managed services.

Inside you'll find powerful lessons on how to attract more "sweet spot" clients with ease, along with multiple checklists and resources you'll be shocked we're giving away FREE! It WILL be an eye-opener. **You can download it instantly without talking to anyone at:** www.TechnologyMarketingToolkit.com