

My Media Labs eWorkBook



Paint the Fence: Leveraging Networks and Social Media to Succeed

Why This eWorkbook Was Produced

A Guide to Redefining and Reaching Success

“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.”

– Steve Jobs

“Getting other people excited about painting the fence gets the job done quicker.”

- Mike Mintz

Many people have been sold a bridge to nowhere and they don't even know it.

At some point we have all been presented with the idea that certain things need to happen to reach a golden state called “success”.

It's a lie.

The most successful people are the ones who do what is necessary while finding

the most effective, effective and (hopefully) ethical way of getting results. Sometimes this means coming up with creative solutions, unique to what they can do. They don't always reinvent the wheel (nor do they have to) rather they find ways to make the wheels work for what's needed now.

In my own experience, I've been an actor, a writer, a director, a kung fu teacher, a lawyer, a social media professional and now a CEO. Looking back I can see there may have been a theoretically direct route to where I am now, but I believe that all of the things I've done have brought me to now.

Paint the Fence tells the tale of two necessary paths, which should and do intersect.

The first path is based on the 1980's movie, The Karate Kid, which was about a teenager named Daniel who moves to a new town.

The cool kids are all part of this karate school and they keep beating him up. He discovers that the maintenance man at his apartment building is a karate master who offers to teach him. The master responds by making Daniel do home improvement jobs

and chores at his home in a very specific way, one of which is painting a very large fence with the same brush strokes, up and down, for three days.

Eventually the Daniel gets fed up and throws a tantrum about the masters' teachings, which results in the master attacking him. Daniel's body reacts instinctively, and he realizes that all of the chores built his skills without him even knowing it.

Daniel



Tom



The second path is based on the Mark Twain novel "Tom Sawyer".

In the book, Tom needs to paint a fence by the end of the day. It's the last thing he wants to do, but he knows he has to.

As a friend comes walking up Tom gets an idea to make painting a fence look like the most fun activity in the world. His friend begs to help and the two of them start to have fun working together. Eventually more friends join in and Tom sits back under a tree while the work gets finished way ahead of schedule.

So which approach leads to greater success and better results: The Karate Kid or Tom Sawyer?

They both work for different things.

For job seekers and business owners the key is which one to focus on and when.

That's what "painting the fence" is all about.

In using this eWorkBook you will walk away with the following:

- How to work less and earn more
- How to leverage networks to open doors using online and offline tools
- How to tell your story in 7 lines or less
- How to start a content based website or blog
- How to package and price yourself (sales or salary)

Learn more about Branding and Marketing:

To learn, discuss, and find work in social media visit the My Media Labs website:

- **Hire My Media Labs As Your Content Vendor** – My Media Labs creates marketing content for large organizations and professionals across a range of industries and can provide content for your business.
- **Subscribe to updates on My Media Labs** – the blog at My Media Labs provides practical tips in how to influence your target market using social media and provides tons of free resources to give your marketing efforts a jolt.
- **Book Mike to Speak** – CEO, Mike Mintz, is an expert speaker on social media marketing. Book him to speak at your next live event or keynote.

About the Author



MIKE MINTZ, ESQ., CEO at [My Media Labs](#) and LawLeadPro

Mike Mintz has used the power of blogging and social media to promote businesses since 2005. His first blog, [Jurisgamer: Video Game Law Explained](#) earned him international recognition as the first law student to cover these topics, which ultimately lead to a job at a law firm specializing in video game clients.

In 2007, Mike became the manager of law school content for LexisNexis, a leading provider of content-enabled workflow solutions. He spearheaded the digitization

of law school titles and leveraged social media, before becoming the community manager of Martindale.com in 2009. Within 1-year his team built a lawyer network of 60,000+ members using content-based strategies and virtual events.

In 2011 he started My Media Labs to provide enterprise digital content to professional industries, and by 2013 built a team of more than 25 lawyers producing thousands of blog posts and copywriting pages per month. His newest venture, LawLeadPro offers a full service online marketing solution to solo practitioners and small law firms.

PART 1 – How to Work Less and Earn More

When I first read Tim Ferris’s book, *The Four Hour Work Week*, a few years ago I thought it sounded nice but unrealistic. Today, I successfully use many of the tactics he suggests and have found ways to minimize time spent in unproductive areas. I can’t say that I only work four-hours per week, but I have seen a dramatic increase in productivity and a reduction in stress because of some of these methods used.

Eliminate Distractions

Much of what we deem “vital” to do on our jobs can actually be eliminated. As a Kung Fu practitioner I struggle with eliminating unnecessary movements, because by doing so it allows me to generate maximum power and results.

Business is no different.

Often we hold onto some of the worst items in stock or sit in fear of “killing our darlings” as author Neil Gaiman says. On the lines that follow, write down three of your biggest distractions while working and make a commitment to eliminate them:

Distractions: what gets you tripped up during the day?

Automate Tasks

Email wastes a lot of time in our professional and personal lives. Gone are the days of AOL euphoria when “You’ve Got Mail!” gave you a burst of excitement. Now we may even dread opening our inbox for fear of the flood that awaits, yet email and many other electronic tasks can be automated using filters and tags to avoid having to sort it by hand.

In many companies, “automation” can be seen as a dirty word that translates to “job loss”, but as we become a more technologically advanced workplace there are old jobs that need to go. Automation in your work life actually spells opportunity, and you should look for ways to automate as much as you can.

List three time consuming tasks that can be automated (ex/ email filtering, form filing, etc.):

Automation: which tasks can smart use of technology take off your plate?

Delegate Responsibility

My old boss at Mexicali Rose restaurant, Dominck Restaino, used to say: “Mike, it’s better to be an owner than a chef”. He never cooked anything, but had great guys in the kitchen that helped him win a Best Mexican Restaurant award from NJ Magazine for 5 straight years.

In September of 2013 my business changed. It went from me and one other blogger to a staff of eight. Workweeks became 80-hours plus as the business grew and I tried to be the diligent boss by being on top of everything.

Eventually I had to realize that investing in other people to run things for me made more sense. It freed me up to grow the business and focus on other important things. I had to make an investment of trust and money in others to get to where I wanted to be.

Delegate: which tasks can you entrust and train others to take off your plate?

Concentrate on Products

Even if you are not “not selling anything” in the traditional sense of the word, whatever you produce online in order to reach your goals is your product. Remember, the product is you.

Whether you are selling your ideas to the boss for a company strategy, creating mobile apps to sell on Android and iPhone devices or putting together the next great American novel, whatever you focus your time and effort on is your product. Getting clarity on what you are producing is key.

Most products fail for lack of thoughtful execution. Writing down exactly what you are hoping to sell is the first step in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of what you’ve got in stock.

Concentrate: what is your product?

PART 2 – How to Leverage Networks to Open Doors

Connections are overrated.

LinkedIn, Facebook, Google+ and other networks are designed to encourage connecting between people. We connect and connect and connect, never stopping to consider Dunbar's number.

Dunbar's Number is a theory about the number of people the human mind can maintain a stable and efficient social relationship with at the same time. Research shows that most people can maintain an active network of 100 to 230 people, commonly reduced to 150 as the benchmark.

Those of us who break the 500+ barrier on networks like LinkedIn and Facebook are way past the threshold of meaningful relationships – at that point we are hoarding connections that for the most part are meaningless. This isn't a bad thing though since in both business and social networking the expectation is that a few relationships will be meaningful, while most will be casual.

This fits in nicely with the "Lurker Paradigm" inherent in social media, which says that 10% of the people in a community will produce meaningful contributions, while 90% will observe. If we think of our network this way, 10% of the connections will be maintained with active, meaningful interactions, while 90% will be more inactive.

These five steps will help you leverage your online networks:

1. Make a list of warm leads from your cell phone contacts in the space provided on the next page
2. Under those names list anyone else you think can help
3. Put stars next to the key people
4. Circle three stars of people you will contact this week
5. Cross off stars as you make contact and keep notes on the relationships made

PART 3 – How to Tell Your Story in 7-Lines or Less

Stories sell. Whether you are meeting people at a party or writing an About page on your blog, you need to know how to tell your professional story in a compelling way.

Steve Jobs once said: “As long as you have an idea that improves someone’s life or moves society forward, then you have a story to tell. It’s up to you to communicate your story in a way that inspires, energizes and excites your listeners.”

Follow these steps to write your 7-line story:

1. Summarize your professional vision in 2 lines or less
2. List 3 professional accomplishments
3. Write 2 lines about how you succeed in what you do
4. Finish with 1 line about your ambitions

Vision	
Accomplishments	
How you succeed	
Ambitions	

PART 4 – How to Start a Blog

You need a place to convey your message, and there are lots to choose from: websites, blogs, Google+ profiles, Pinterest, YouTube channels, Facebook pages, Twitter, LinkedIn, podcasts, iPad apps and ebooks (to name a few). You don't need all of them - rather you need to really stand out and become a star with just one of them. In my experience, blogging is a quick and easy way to get content up online that can sell your “product” and establish your expertise.

Lets say for some strange reason you want to be seen as an authority in underwater basket weaving. You might create a channel on YouTube and post your videos there of you doing the deed in the deep. Then you might start a blog to embed those videos to and write more about your experiences.

The product in this case is your expertise that you are sharing online, and the payoff might be notoriety, community, or just plain attention. If you build a big enough following, chances are there are advertising dollars out there willing to invest in you. None of this is possible though without a product, and that means producing content that can communicate your message to the people you are trying to influence without you needing to tell them directly.

In the law we call this: Res Ipsa Loquitor, which is a pretentious way of saying in Latin “the thing speaks for itself.” When you produce content online you become Google-friendly, and what you have produced will show up in the Google search that prospective employers or clients will certainly do when trying to find out more about you. Producing content online gives you a body of work that best represents what you do and more importantly what you are capable of.

Think about it: what's more impressive, you going into someone's office to tell them how great you are or being able to point to a body of work on the Internet along with a small army of followers and fans who all prove your greatness without you saying a thing? List three things you could do online that best represent who you are and what you have to offer (your “product”).

I never went to school for marketing or social media. The best way to learn blogging or any social media tool is by just doing it. Experiment and see what works.

Use the worksheet below to plan some content that can be published online.

List an area of your expertise	
List 5 important sub-topics	
Now put the words “How to” in front of each sub-topic	
Develop each how-to item into a 300-400 word post	
Sign up for a free WordPress blog http://wordpress.com Pick a template you like and start posting	

Let's Keep Talking ...



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