



## Small Business Consultation Report

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**Report Date:** July 2010

**Report Type:** One Hour Small Business Makeover

**Client:** Budget Garage Doors LLC -St. Louis, Missouri, USA  
[www.stlbudgetgaragedoors.com](http://www.stlbudgetgaragedoors.com)

**Report By:** Joshua Black – Outer Limit Productions LLC

### ***Consultation Issue and Background:***

- Client is looking to increase leads, double revenue, stand out from the crowd in a business that is currently very similar to his competition. This will be the first full year of long term operations as a garage door installer and maintenance provider in the budget-level door market.
- Currently the client has concerns that his young age (19) will not be taken seriously with clients and may be looked upon as a negative.
- Client currently only sells to one customer one time, with no system of re-selling current/old customers. He does not keep a customer database. Current customers are mid-high level income earners.
- Current closing rate is 50% each time client meets with a new customer, so closing is not an issue, just lead generation. Current leads are generated in two ways, through Craigslist- 70% and word of mouth- 30%
- Current average revenue per customer- \$200

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### ***Quick Fixes:***

- Position yourself as a “senior installer” instead of the business owner. Even change the title on your business card, or make a special card just for meeting with new customers. If in fact, your age is hurting your sales, which, by the closing rate, does not seem to be an issue.

- Order bandit signs (see resources below) and place them in high-traffic areas in the regions where you operate. Make sure your unique selling proposition (USP) is on every marketing piece that you put out, including your business cards.
- Increase your prices- this is the quickest way to increase revenue. Work to make the average order \$300 instead of \$200, eventually raise even more. Since you have such a high closing rate, you are probably NOT charging enough money. Although you are going after the budget market, there is still room to increase your rates.
- Add up-sells to your services once you have closed the deal on the original garage door servicing (not before). Try closing an annual maintenance package where you come out once a year- inspect, lubricate, and check for issues etc. Perhaps you offer a more powerful opener or a heavier set of springs. This keeps you in the mind of the customer instead of only a one-time sale and gives you residual income with little extra labor.

### *Hidden marketing assets:*

- Use your current customers for more business- Ask for referrals, create a rewards program that will give a free garage door maintenance inspection and adjustment with each qualified lead that someone brings in.
- Try to go back and remember the names and addresses of old customers that were satisfied. Ask them for referrals.

### *Long-term Suggestions:*

- Maintain a customer database for every client that comes in the future. The real money will be in keeping customers for the long haul. Even though a door may last 20 years, there are many supplemental services that you can offer in the meantime (garage door exterior light installation for example). Become the guy that is EVERYTHING garages for your customers.
- Stay in contact with your customer list on a frequent basis (once a month). Develop a short e-mail newsletter relating to tips about garage doors, safety of chemicals stored in the garage, winterizing a garage, or any other on-line research that you can come up with to maintain that image of your business in the customer's mind, so that when the big money jobs do come in they won't even think of calling anyone else.
- Finish developing your professional (.com) web site with a business email address that is not a free email address (an @mybusiness.com address) like the one that you are currently using. This will help credibility as well as help customers research you. This will also allow you to answer from multiple different "departments" of your business such as "customer-service@mybusiness.com," or "business-owner's-name@mybusiness.com." This will help position your business as a bigger operation than just a single person and will also help with the stigma of being such a young age as the owner.
- Create 2 price structures- one standard, and another level of pricing if you have to come out during an emergency (ie. Same day). Emergency pricing should be double. If a

customer has an emergency, price will not be an issue, they want it fixed NOW, and a garage door that closes at night is an emergency.

- Create a sales letter/flier and hand deliver them to customers in the region where you want to work, however, do not try and close a new sale with the flier. You should have a two-step sales process. Offer a free door “safety” inspection. Write the sales letter like an article about the dangers of a poorly-adjusted garage door. Use this as another lead generation tool only.

***Resources that may offer additional help:***

- <http://www.banditsigns.com/> awesome deals on lawn signs for small businesses
- <http://stickerobot.com/> great place for vinyl stickers for guerilla marketing
- <http://www.vistaprint.com/> the best site on earth for small business printing needs- Awesome, very heavy business cards (some designs even FREE), postcard marketing, vehicle magnets. I use them for everything.

***Additional comments:***

- Although you have come up with some other business ideas to supplement your income, this is not the time to go after them. You have a very solid business model that is just in its infancy and needs your full attention. Keep working on just building the garage door business and you will end up with more work than you will know what to do with. “Stick to your knitting,” as the old saying goes.
- The garage door industry is a billion dollar/year business, with probably 90% of all homes that have a garage. If you are passionate about this business and you are willing to do what’s required to grow (hiring a few employees eventually) you could fairly-easily build a million dollar business by the time you are 30, especially since you are in a large metropolitan area.
- Research the competition and do more, do it differently, and don’t let them know what you are up to. Call and ask the biggest garage door company in town and try to get them to pitch you on the phone. This will help you research their sales process. Sign up for everyone’s list in your industry to see what they are mailing out. If they are sending nothing, then you are in even a better position.