



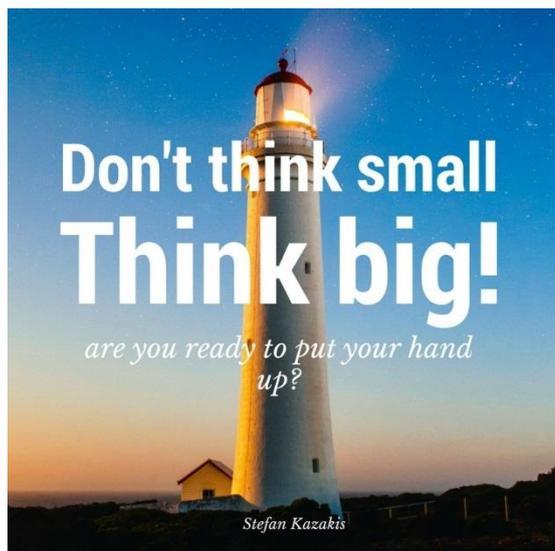
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where every small business owner can achieve big business success

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## Build Your Tribe



So did you obtain feedback from 10 of your best, and 10 of your most challenging customers last week? If you missed last week's message you can [read it here](#).

Were you surprised by the results? Did you address the concerns of your most valued customers?

So what are they saying about you?

### REPUTATION

Reputation is about being attractive to the four key stakeholders: the owners, the team, suppliers and customers.

Having a good reputation means that you are getting rubber stamps from people in each of these categories.

These rubber stamps are the coming of age for your business. It means that your business is recognised as being worthy of providing an opportunity. It's maturing. It is known for attracting good people. Better suppliers are non-negotiable and A-grade suppliers are turning up.

At this stage, your business might be winning awards, and you should start to be recognised as a top 10 industry benchmark, either locally or globally. Your financial position is robust and you are achieving steady profits. You are attracting more and better opportunities. Your products and services are reaching a level of innovation, maturity and breakthrough. You deliver on results. You are growing steadily and with focus. As far as results achieved, you have testimonials and case studies growing on a monthly basis. You know how to be personal but still in touch with technology and innovation.

A good reputation is a combination of all this, and more. It's not easy to pin down and there's no way to put a dollar figure on it, but I can safely say that without a good reputation your business is closer to being deadwood than a diamond.

### VALIDATION

There are a number of ways your business can achieve validation. Awards are a great acknowledgement that you have achieved a level of excellence. These can be awards within your industry and also general business awards. They can be local, national or global. And it's not just about winning. It's about putting your hand up because you're backing yourself. It's about staying focused on the one critical thing that makes you who you are and being recognised for that.

Recognition from your industry and the media is also a form of validation. How is it you are perceived and sought after in your industry? Are you being asked to speak? Are you asked to comment in the media on particular aspects of your industry? This means you are now being recognised for what you do. I've been interviewed in the media many times before, and I wasn't speaking about synchronised swimming in Rio! I get called to comment on small and medium



business and profits, because that's what I'm known for and that's what I do. That's the validation I receive.

In fact, just this week I spoke with Tony Delroy of ABC Nightlife about the immeasurable value of word-of-mouth referrals by happy customers and how some would even argue it is the most powerful form of advertising when someone is singing the praises of your company or product. Likewise, talk about a bad experience is news that travels far and wide and that's why business owners and their staff should strive to make sure customers are always happy so they will refer your product or service to family and friends. Topical I am sure you will agree – and if you missed it just click on the podcast image to listen in.

## ADVOCATES

You know you have achieved deep target market penetration when people are starting to wear your lapel buttons because they are proud to do so. It's not just that they are talking about you – they *belong*. They are genuinely part of your tribe. They believe in you. This is true customer loyalty that has developed from your customer delight culture.

You don't need to be a \$50 million business to achieve this. In the early days, having raving fans can be a personal relationship. At this point they are fans for you but not your business. You have got through the initial growth phase and placed your stake in the ground, but work still needs to be done. Right now you might only have five raving fans. That's fine. Even five raving fans is valuable certification. That's something for you to build on. As you grow you will develop more levels of raving fans and they will help you get through choke points.

Don't think small. Think big! Are you ready to put your hand up? Are you ready to enter your industry awards? It puts you out there to be counted and to get feedback. The process of aiming for it is valuable in itself. Don't worry about winning. It's like leadflow and workflow; if you aim to grow it the benefits will flow.

All of the Champion in Business interviews we share are thriving examples of these three areas. They have loyal, repeat customers. They are go-to organisations. Their message is clear and they are not confusing the market. Existing clients are bringing new clients. They have active referral programs, and you can't do this without a reputation for providing solutions.

Be clear about where you are building your reputation. These businesses are. So can you!



### M500 – How to Build a Referral Based Business

There are just a handful of seats available to attend our event next week. Marcus Theodor of C2 Films will share how he has built a referral based business in his ideal target market – you won't want to miss it. Book now.

Click to Register 

Power to you this week.

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