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where every small business owner can achieve big business success

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Networking, not Net-Socialising

That's a wrap on another M500 event – How to Build a Referral Based Business.

And what a great event it was! Our guest speaker Glen Coutinho of R T Edgar shared his thoughts on going above and beyond with the critical non-essentials in his business and how they have set him apart from his peers, and our Champion in Business Marcus Theodor of C2 Films shared his journey so far, explaining why building a referral strategy was the turning point in his business. If you missed it here are the highlights.



A major component of our events is the networking. It's always a time when the room is buzzing with energy and business owners get to meet with each other. But for some, networking can be nerve wracking, although we all appreciate that building a wealth of contacts is invaluable to your business. We must remember that a networking event is not a social gathering – you are there to achieve something. So how do you ensure that networking is time well spent? Here are my top 3 tips.

Firstly, people buy off people they like, know and trust. If you get to know someone on a social basis, they are more likely to do business with you. So networking is about developing relationships. This method can outstrip every other method if done right. You need the right mix of genuine friendliness and salesmanship. That is, don't be too pushy, but be pushy enough. You basically want to build the type of relationship where you can go and visit them a few days after the function.

Secondly, don't go unprepared. Make sure you've got an idea of the type of people you want to meet, and what things you'd like to discuss with them. Simply going is not enough; you have work the room to make the most of the opportunities present. You need to listen to your new contact closely and look like you're enjoying their conversation. However, you need to be careful not to waste the whole night talking to someone who clearly is never going to do business with you in the future – ask yourself “are we going to do business together and do I need this person's business card?”. Remember this is networking not net-socialising.

And finally, be aware of the time, for instance at a breakfast event you will probably only have about 30-40 minutes to network, so if you set out to meet 8 people that only gives you 5 minutes with each. Make sure you manage your time effectively.

In my experience as a business owner over the years of networking if you're clear on your purpose, are likeable and can offer value and genuine help to others you will get huge returns on your time invested in networking.



Using Digital Strategies to Connect with your Target Market

Do you feel confused, overwhelmed or nervous about taking your business online? Today's online world is evolving at an alarming pace and this speed of change can be hard to keep up with, particularly for busy business owners. Did you know that if you are not online, you could be missing out on a lot of business?

[Register today](#) for our September M500 event.

Best always

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