



PETRA
PROFIT

THE POWER OF THE HANDWRITTEN WORD



THE POWER OF THE HANDWRITTEN WORD LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

It used to be the way everyone communicated — put pen to paper and write your thoughts. Shakespeare wrote all of his plays by hand. Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence that way. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote his letter from Birmingham jail on the margins of a newspaper.

Today we communicate through smartphones and computers. We dash off 140-character tweets. It is instant. It is satisfying. It is magic.

But even today, there is value in taking the time to write a note by hand and communicate like our forebears. I rediscovered this recently when I sent a note to a fellow CEO I'd never met, but admired greatly. It was a simple message on one of my company's postcards, but it made an impression and opened some serious doors that have impacted my business and expanded my digital audience.

The guy liked the note so much that he blogged about it. His followers spread the word and eventually my note found its way to Oprah Winfrey's website. Suddenly, the traffic to my company's own site went from a couple hundred visitors a day to thousands. By taking five minutes to scratch ink onto paper, I was able to draw thousands of new potential customers to my digital front door.





People, there is still power in the handwritten word. Here's why:

- **It's a novelty.** If I'd typed up my note and e-mailed it to the CEO, it would have found its way into his inbox alongside the hundreds of e-mails he gets every day. If the subject line didn't grab him, my note would have just moved on down the list to digital oblivion.
- **It's tangible.** You can hold a postcard in your hand. You can pin it to your wall and reflect on it. It's more permanent than a phone call and more personal than clicking a like button or thumb-typing a text message.
- **It forces you to consider and reconsider what you want to say.** There is no cut-and-paste or spellcheck. Writing by hand forces you to be precise as you balance what you want to say with how much physical space you have to say it. We've all heard people bemoan the lost art of letter writing and this is a significant component of that art.
- **It takes time. Instant communication has robbed us of our patience.** A letter or postcard takes more time to write, more time to reach its destination and even more time to hear back from our correspondent. We can relearn the patience our grandparents had as a matter of course.

Now, not every postcard you (or I) mail is going to result in a tenfold increase in your company web traffic, but that isn't the point of writing a note by hand. Making the effort to reach out in such a personal way should be its own reward.

So take some time this week to write someone a note by hand. Show somebody the power and magic that our grandparents understood, but we've somehow forgotten. It doesn't have to be earth-shattering prose or world-changing social commentary. It just has to be real, from the heart and in your own handwriting.

THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at www.petracoach.com for more business and leadership insight.

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