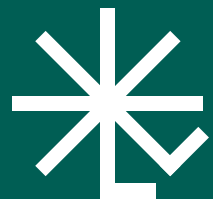


VOLUME 1

**GROW
YOUR
CREATIVE
AGENCY**

**THE 8-STEP
CHECKLIST**

**GR*W
YOUR
CREATIVE
AGENCY**



**Has your creative agency plateaued?
Have sales declined, and you don't know
how to grow? Are you feeling stuck or
ready to pull the plug? You're not alone.**

Print this checklist out, hang it on your wall, and tick off each step as you complete them. We guarantee that your creative agency, whether one person or a hundred, will grow **if you put in the time and do the work we've outlined for you here.**

These 8 steps for growing your creative agency are insights, tips, and rituals from founders who have successfully been there and done that.

You got this. Keep going.

ERIC + NATE

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Your hosts of the Grow Your Creative Agency Podcast. Available on Apple Podcast and Spotify. **GrowYourCreativeAgency.com**

GROW YOUR CREATIVE AGENCY

THE 8-STEP CHECKLIST

1

Create a lead generator

If you want your business to grow, you need more sales. To get more sales, you need more leads. A great way to gather leads is by offering valuable content in exchange for a future potential client's email address. Lead generators can be in nearly any format, including PDF, video, or podcast episodes.

Once you have their email address and a general idea of what's important to them (they wouldn't have downloaded your lead generator if it didn't resonate with their current interests, goals, or struggles), it's time to build trust with them. How? Create a series of auto-sending emails that continue to offer value while positioning your product or service as the answer to their needs.

Bonus: Try one of these formats when you make your next lead generator. They work!

- An article, video, or podcast episode (Interviews with specialists make excellent content)
- A value list (10 tips for getting more donors)
- A checklist (10 steps to get more donors)
- A trial or sample

2

Plan your customer's experience.

One of the most critical parts of structuring your agency for growth is to have a 30,000ft view of your customer's experience while working with you. This includes planning each pathway, including your lead generator follow-up, initial in-person conversations, proposal development, client onboarding process, delivery of final products or services, and invoicing.

Not only will having consistent processes save you time, but they help to instill confidence in potential clients at each stage of the process.

Wisdom says: Hold your customer experience processes with an open hand. Update them as you learn and grow.

At BLASTOFF! Studio, we always seek feedback from our clients on how we could have improved their experience working with us and then adjust our workflows accordingly. We also highly value talking with those for whom we don't win the project. Those conversations are feedback-gold and often ensure a relational connection that otherwise may have turned into a forever closed door.

3

Build and share case studies

Case studies are a critical aspect of getting new work. Imagine hiring an artist to paint you a \$10,000 painting if you've never seen their work. No way! Case studies are simply a portfolio demonstrating your effectiveness for previous clients. If your potential client sees that you create great work (especially for someone in a similar field), they're much more likely to want to work with you.

Bonus: Use this framework when writing and displaying your work as a case study. Be sure to include images in between each step.

Step 1: Explain the challenge (Bob's Birdseed Co. wanted to grow their sales.)

Step 2: Describe the solution (We built Bob's Birdseed Co. an e-commerce website and ran monthly marketing campaigns for them.)

Step 3: Present the results (Within 6 months, sales increased by 387%.)

4

Stay connected with your past clients

Ever asked a friend if they had a plumber, electrician, or photographer they liked and trusted? Or how about when someone visits you from out of town? You take them to the restaurants you know and love. Those tradespeople and restaurants are getting additional work and revenue because they had already won you as a forever customer. According to Temkin Group, 77% of customers recommend a brand to a friend after just one positive experience!

Growing your creative agency is no different. Once you work with a client, nurture that relationship, and you'll become the go-to for your work when others ask them for recommendations. It's crazy how much different interacting with a "friend of so and so" is versus a stranger who found you because of an online ad.

Bonus: Don't send random branded crap to clients for Christmas. They don't want it. Instead, note what they always have with them and buy that. Here's an example: You notice during your meetings with Bob from Bob's Birdseed Co. that he always carries a HydroFlask. Great, send him a HydroFlask with your engraved logo for Christmas and a note, but don't send him a box of your favorite chocolates if you didn't uncover the fact that he loves chocolates; heck, he might even be allergic! The point is, be specific with sending thank you's and holiday gifts.

5

Build a sales pipeline

We know you do great work and have a killer website, but until the day comes when you can hit your sales goals by only doing referral work, you need to go to your potential clients. No matter how amazing your work is, sitting back and waiting for customers to knock on your door will likely not happen. You need to build a sales pipeline and start having conversations.

Follow these three easy steps, and you'll have a sales pipeline that, if nurtured and qualified, can turn into signed contracts.

Step 1: Write down who your ideal clients are. Be specific and include data points like industry, company size, location, and financial resources (are they funded or working with a \$500 budget?)

During this step, include your past clients on this list. You may notice that, as an example, half of your past clients were CEOs or founders of small companies. If that's the case, continue chasing that client type because you know it works. This list clarifies your ideal client and can help you see trends in the clients you want to work with.

Step 2: Create content that speaks directly to your specific audiences. If you've realized that working with CEOs and founders of small companies is your sweet spot (from our example above),

then as you write and design your messaging, make sure to address their concerns, needs, and hopes.

Step 3: Gather contact info for your specific audiences using a service like [Zoominfo](#) or [Apollo](#), then start reaching out. We suggest starting with somewhere around 50-100 contacts.

Develop a series of email or call scripts with follow-ups to send their way, take note of which scripts have the best return rate, then use those moving forward.

Bonus: At [The NW Collective](#), we set aside a weekly recurring block of time for our outbound sales efforts.

If you're not already doing this, add a 45-minute event to your calendar called "Build Our Pipeline," set it to "repeat weekly," and then stick with it. It'll pay dividends to be consistent, plus you'll learn a ton as you start to reach out.

Also, we like adding notes in our CMS for potential clients we hear back from, whether they end up working with us or not. This gives us context if they contact us a year later, but it also allows us to see patterns in what works and what we should avoid as methods of communication and the scripts we use.

6

Create and share ongoing content

Social media, newsletters, and blogs are all methods of staying in front of potential customers. It's rare for someone to visit a website once and make an initial purchase. It's even rarer when it comes to buying a service. So how do you get one-time visitors to your site to be customers?

The trick is viewing website visitors as potential customers saying "Hello" to you. When someone says, "Hello," you say "Hello" in return. This goes back to our first checklist task of creating a lead generator. You can keep the conversation going by giving them something of value in exchange for their email.

So whether you share ongoing content by email, a blog, or social media, your goal is to stay in the front of their mind for the products and services you offer.

7

Offer a retainer or membership plan

Finding a promising lead, nurturing that relationship, proposing your work, signing the contract, and onboarding your new client is a ton of work... and you haven't even started your creative work yet! One of the easiest ways to grow your creative agency and increase consistent revenue is to offer retainer or membership plans.

We suggest offering a discount on your rates as an incentive when a client considers your retainer or membership plan. Learning your client's likes, dislikes, and workflow is a significant time investment, so working is naturally lessened over time, and it makes sense to discount services this way.

Bonus: Head over to blastoffstudio.com/design-retainer for best practices on what information to include in a retainer description and to see how we structure our retainers (which, by the way, have been life-saving during slower seasons!)

8

Don't grow your creative agency alone

Growing a creative agency is hard work, but it shouldn't be lonely and shouldn't be guesswork. If you really want to grow your creative agency, join the Grow Your Creative Agency community by becoming a Patreon Supporter.

As a supporter, you'll get...

- A shout-out on the Podcast
- Ad-free content
- A sweet Grow Your Creative Agency Sticker mailed to you
- The ability to request future topics and guests

Join the community at:

GrowYourCreativeAgency.com/Together

