

The background of the cover is a photograph of a white interior wall with a white door on the left. The wall features decorative paneling and a white radiator. In the bottom right corner, a black tufted chair with a chrome X-base is partially visible. The text is centered on the wall.

INTERIOR DESIGN BUSINESS
SURVIVAL GUIDE; STOP WASTING
TIME AND MAKE MONEY NOW!

Design for a Living *Survival Guide*

CHELSEA CORYELL

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Why Do You Need A Survival Guide?

I was talking to a troubled designer recently and she asked me a captivating question. She said, **“I’m almost ready to give up my dream of being an Interior Designer, because I haven’t made any real money yet and I’m running out of time. If you had to give me one piece of advice based on your years of experience, that will help me get my business off the ground and make me money FAST, what would it be?”**



WOW, talk about pressure?

The sad fact is, I talk to designers everywhere who are feeling this same financial pressure, which can then unfortunately send them into panic mode. Times are tough for everyone these days. If that’s the case, then changing the way you do business should be a given and even starting over may become a necessity.



I hear different scenarios from all types of designers and decorators. Some designers have had a spouse lose their job, leaving them as the *main* breadwinner for the first time in their life. Other more experienced designers have become a casualty of corporate downsizing, and have lost what used to be a safe and secure job. They're starting out on their own and they're not quite sure where to start.

What Makes-up a Survival Guide?

Back to that original designer who was so desperate to succeed, I asked myself, "If I had to do it all over again, and build my business from scratch, knowing then what I know now, **what would I do first?**"

What framework would I put in place, and what steps would I take to quickly make money and get my business on solid footing for a long and sustained future?"

After 30 years as a successful designer, I evaluated the parts of my business that were most important to my success, and those that had no significant effect at all. Then I narrowed it down to the specific steps I'd taken and I organized those steps by their rank in importance based on what actions brought me the ***most immediate*** response, and which of those were fun and interesting, yet eventually just a waste of my time.

The number one mistake entrepreneurs make is mismanaging their time.



My systems are laid out in a specific order. Don't choose to start where you feel most comfortable. These steps are important to your design survival.

Other tasks are important and will be necessary eventually, but we are focusing on using your time to the utmost efficiency.

What if your life was at stake? What if the actions you took made the difference between life and death? For many people right now, there is a direct correlation between making their business work, and survival.

My Source of Inspiration

I decided to ask for help from a trusted source. My husband is the most intelligent person I know. As a US Navy helicopter pilot, he has been professionally trained to evade, survive, and be rescued if he were ever to be shot down behind enemy lines. What better person to ask about survival skills?



I wanted to know what steps he would take in such a situation, and how they would relate to building a business. After all, keeping a cool head, prioritizing, and conserving your resources in a crisis situation are pretty universal concepts no matter what disaster you're facing.



I asked him to describe in detail what specific steps he would take to ensure his survival. To my surprise, his answers directly correlated with those steps that I would take in order to ensure my business survival. Brilliant!

Apparently the same priorities required to save your life literally, pertained to your career survival as well.

STEP ONE... Establish a plan to GET RESCUED from Despair Island.

Just like being in a real life survival situation, **time is of the essence** and the first few days are critical. This is the time when the search party is most active and you have the greatest chance of being discovered.

The first thing you have to do is spell **HELP** on the beach with driftwood or palm fronds, so you can be seen, discovered, and of course rescued.

Similarly In your business, you need to know that people are out there searching for you and they desperately want to find you!



First things first, you must have a clear understanding of who it is that you want to be searching for.

So dig deep and decide who your ideal client is, how you're going to find them, and what it will mean to you once you do.

Just like spelling HELP on the beach, when you're setting your goals and defining your ideal client, you must remember these three critical points:

- 1. Make sure it's clear.**
- 2. Make it bigger than you think necessary.**



3. And never lose sight of your ultimate goal!

Work through the questions on the following page, and make sure to be clear and honest with yourself. Remember, this is to find your **IDEAL client**, and to define your **Ultimate Goals**. Be strong, make a commitment and get pumped up. Use this new knowledge and motivation to build a powerful momentum and get started right away.

Your Ultimate Goals.

1. How much money do you want to make this year? *Remember to dream BIG.*

2. How many clients do you want to work with this year? It can be a mixture of big and small projects. Ex: 2 big projects and 5 mid-size projects etc.

3. Based on your income goals, and your client load, how much profit do you need to make on each project?

Ex: Goal \$80,000/ 2 projects @ \$20,000 & 5 projects at @ \$8,000 profit each.

4. With all of your financial goals being met, do you want to take any well-deserved time off for vacations etc.? When and what would that look like to you?



5. What will your lifestyle be like when you accomplish your goals? Describe what your home will look like, what you will be wearing, and what car are you driving?

6. What will meeting your goals mean to your family?



7. Knowing now how many clients you need to have to reach your ultimate goal, create a Yearly Planner for your success.

1. Block out your client goals and the appropriate marketing you will use to reach those goals.
2. Keep in mind our industries' typical busy seasons, as well as its customary slow times. (Before any major holiday is always hectic because clients want help preparing for upcoming entertaining demands. After tax return time is great for those middle income families expecting a tax return and a bit slow for larger projects or corporate clients who have just paid large sums to Uncle Sam.)
3. When it comes to your marketing schedule, plan for a few large events as well as consistent upkeep and reputation building tasks.
4. I will be explaining community partnerships and their importance to your success later on in Chapter 2, so leave room for them in your schedule.
5. Don't forget to include your vacations and time off.





<i>Month 1</i> January	<i>Month 2</i> February	<i>Month 3</i> March	<i>Month 4</i> April
Launch my website: Blog, Linked-in, Facebook page.		Update website, establish a small newsletter for clients.	Write about Spring trends and new vendor lines.
Build at least two community partnerships	Build one new community partnership		Help community partner boost biz during slow time. (Hawaii spring Break w/ Kids at end of month)
Find One new client, and a potential big client: deposit \$1,000 profit	Close project 1, and get deposit for project 2: \$3,000 & \$1,000	Close project #2/ \$3,000 Two small window treatment jobs, \$3,000 total profit.	Install project #1/ \$5,000 Deposit for one new project/ \$1,000

My Example Schedule

When estimating your monthly income, plan for medium profit from design deposits, medium-small profit from closing the sale, and large take home profits from installations. They will include labor fees to stage space, accessory house calls, and any commission checks or referral fees due to you from your community partners.



My Ultimate Goals for the Year

<i>Month 1</i>	<i>Month 2</i>	<i>Month 3</i>	<i>Month 4</i>
<i>Month 5</i>	<i>Month 6</i>	<i>Month 7</i>	<i>Month 8</i>
<i>Month 9</i>	<i>Month 10</i>	<i>Month 11</i>	<i>Month 12</i>



Selecting Your Ideal Clients



It may seem that we're jumping ahead a bit by identifying your ideal clients now in step one. In all actuality, I commonly see designers neglecting this all too important step. Here are just a few reasons why:

- By failing to plan and strategize on who you would **honestly** like to work with, you are not only holding yourself back from finding enough clients, you will be wasting precious time and money marketing to the wrong people.
- Take the time now to be direct and truthful about your IDEAL client. Until you're clear on whom it is you're looking for, how will you ever find them?
- This may seem a little, "Woo Woo" for you, but I believe in manifesting your destiny. You are creating your dream business, so why not be determined to fill it with your dream clients?
- Don't worry about who you will be leaving out of your practice. There is plenty of work to share with every designer, and by choosing who it is you want to work with, you will be graciously leaving those clients to another designer who is a better fit for them.

Know what you want, and go after it!



Your Fresh Clients

1. What type of clients do you want to work with; residential, commercial, hospitality?

2. Do you work best with professional types or housewives?

3. *Are you looking for a few big spenders or a steady flow of smaller clients?*

(When making this decision, be careful what you wish for. Big spenders can mean you'll have larger project management responsibilities. They can have less patience, and have higher expectations when it comes to perfection. If you have a high tolerance for these obstacles, then by all means the large paychecks are great. Just remember that slow and steady can mean a more predictable income, added opportunities to express your creativity, and a sense of fulfillment when you help the average homeowner in need.)





Name of your business

How

many incredible clients will you have this year?

Describe a great quote from your ideal client.

Your

income this year will be...

Describe

what your great life will be like this year, your dream vacation, or your new house.



Step Two: You Can't Survive Without a Constant Stream of Fresh Clients

Your clients are your lifeblood. Just as if you were trying to survive on a deserted island, you can live without food for a while, but you absolutely must have clean water.

Your clients are your fresh water. Your design business will not survive without a constant fresh supply of them. Finding a client is helpful for a short time, and will quench your money thirst, but wouldn't discovering a whole stream of fresh clients be fantastic?

If you have been **trying to survive on one client at a time, it's no wonder you've been struggling. You will either need to become an expert at transforming single clients into multiple streams through referrals or repeat business, or learn to hunt for client streams.** Here are just a few examples that have personally made me thousands in income.



Make professional relationships to feed you leads: cabinet makers, home automation experts, painters, professional organizers, real estate agents, and contractors all make great lead generators.

Find a complimentary business that you can partner with: Look for a retail store that needs a designer to recommend to their clients. Display a design board and have flyers or brochures available for shoppers to easily see.



Find an upholstery shop or window treatment workroom that doesn't have an in-house designer. You'll promise to sell their products and services and they will send you out to meet with their clients. Look for true win-win situations.

Steady client streams can come from a multitude of places, and it's easy to find them if you really open your mind and get creative. On the next few pages I will take you through some exercises to get you started.



Your Ideal Clients:

1. Thinking of your ideal client, where do they congregate? List different areas of town where they might live and socialize.

2. Where do they shop? What stores and in what neighborhoods?

****These are your target areas****

3. **What types** of community partners can you think of in these areas that would mutually benefit from sharing business with you?



4. List as many **potential community partners** you can think of in these target areas. Write down their business name, phone number, and contact person.

5. List ways you could help each of **them** build their business. It may not be simply to refer new clients to them. Try to get creative.

6. List ways they could help **you** build your business.



IMPORTANT: You've heard that saying "the more you give, the more you receive?" It's never been more important than when you're asking to share business leads with someone else. **I can't stress this enough.**

Be generous, thoughtful, and considerate when approaching a community partner for a potential partnership. When you pitch the idea to them, ***do not*** suggest that you can "fix", or "improve" their business. (You will have plenty of time to suggest redecorating their business later) We all get a little protective and sensitive when it comes to our business (even if it's clear we could use some help).

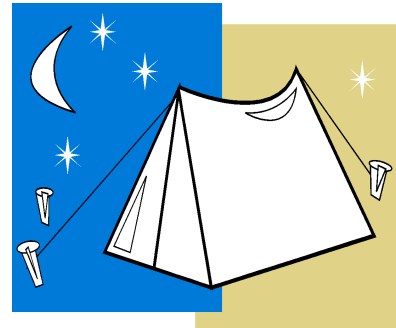
When you discuss your potential enterprise, emphasize how you can really "HELP" each other grow your businesses. Explain how your two companies can make a clear and beneficial partnership to bring in more clients for both of you.

Look for ways your help will save them time or headaches. Most businesses that support designers really have no interest in doing the design work. They may try out of necessity, but 9 times out of 10 they realize how much extra work they have created for themselves, and they abandon the idea. What a great opportunity for you don't you think?



Step three: You need to build a shelter, a place to call home.

Building a shelter for your business is step Number 3 for many reasons. First and foremost, it's a place that makes you feel safe and sheltered, a place where you can store your things, and somewhere people can find you while you're not out in plain view.



What types of shelters are we talking about?

- An office (spare room, home office)
- A designated workspace (corner of a room in your house or a converted closet)
- A storefront or studio
- A website

Which of these you need depends on a few factors.

1. **If you're just starting out** at the beginning, you will simply need (and should only worry about) a designated workspace and a simple website.
2. **If you've been doing this awhile**, you will need a slightly larger area like a home office, a desk, or a corner of your house that is strictly designated as your workspace. You will need an organized way of keeping your records and paperwork, as well as a slightly more impressive website than the beginner.



3. **If you already have a storefront or studio** you know how much extra time it can add to your workload (not to mention extra money). Unless you are tied into a lease or have already established a solid place in your community, I don't ever recommend designers renting a retail space. It is simply not necessary to make money and is a huge added responsibility.

I want to explain why I feel a workspace is so important, and how you should prioritize your time when it comes to developing this critical space.

One major mistake designers make when creating their business, is to **undervalue the importance of professionalism to their business success.**



By creating an organized, dedicated work space to perform your day to day activities, you not only prevent common paperwork mistakes, you achieve an emotional sense of professionalism which naturally affects the way you conduct your business. If you feel more like a professional, you tend to act in a more professional manner. Professionals earn the admiration and respect of their clients and therefore can demand higher fees.

The major point to make here is your space doesn't need to be large, or filled with expensive equipment. Notice, **I never said a fancy space** reflects your level of professionalism, it merely needs to be organized and dedicated. You won't feel very professional with your latest project blueprint covered by the breakfast dishes, newspapers, or coloring books. I also know it's difficult to concentrate and work efficiently if I feel my desk is in disarray.



Don't obsess or spend too much time on this, simply carve out a niche for yourself with a place to keep file folders, a computer or laptop, and an all-in-one printer\scanner\fax machine. (Even this can wait until your first big paycheck.) It's worth it to spend a little time getting organized, and then get to work making money!



Build Your Shelter

1. What space will you use for your new office?

2. What organizational tools do you still need to acquire? Do you have file folders, a way to capture contact information (spreadsheet system or rolodex), and your forms and contracts? **

**You will need a basic contract or letter of agreement before you meet with your first client, so do take some time to prepare these critical documents. I have included some sample contracts and forms in the back of this workbook. **

Take one afternoon to personalize your space and make it organized, clean, and comfortable.

Where are you going to place your HELP sheet so it's visible every day?



The next step in your shelter building is of course your company website. If you're just starting out, and you don't have many projects in your portfolio, the best way I've found to inexpensively and easily start a website is by creating a simple blog.



If I was just starting out, I would use Wordpress.com. (Which is a free blog hosting site) and select a basic template of theirs. Add a few stock photos or a rendering of my own and start writing short and informative blog articles on the latest design trends, or my personal design philosophy.

If you keep your articles around 400 words (easy to do when you're writing about your passion) and use lots of design, "buzzwords", search engines like Google and Yahoo will start to find your articles and get you noticed.

By using this strategy, you are not only telling the public about your incredible knowledge of the wonderful world of design, you are laying the groundwork for your future SEO (search engine optimization). Search engines love blogs, and other bloggers love to share your articles and pass them around.

This is incredibly powerful stuff!

At first glance you may wonder how spreading the word about your design prowess can possibly help your local design business. **This stage of the game isn't about directly finding clients through your website, but rather by building a positive reputation for yourself and your business.**



Here's an example:

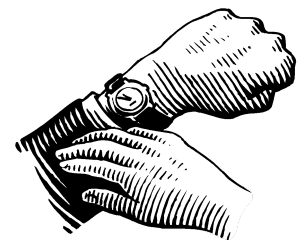
You are out at a party and you meet someone who is talking about their new house. You start asking them questions about its design in a casual manner and they mention that you know a lot about design; you must work in the industry. You reply, "Why yes I am". They ask for your card and go on with the party.

Two days later they think of you and decide to Google your name. WOW, your name pops up on the first page of the search and there are 5 different articles mentioned in various websites... you must really know what you're doing. It's almost like you're famous. They had better call you fast before you get completely booked up.

Now picture your business a few months later. You are making great money, your client list is building and you **can afford to have a simple personal website built for your business**. Your name is already spread across the internet, along with your business name. When you go to optimize your new website, you can link your little free blog and whammy! ***You're 10 steps ahead of the game.***

Notice that I didn't mention building the website yourself. I have a very good reason for this. Yes, it is possible to design a simple website on your own using numerous free design tools on the internet.

The problem lies with the tendency of designers, (myself included) to obsess with the details and the aesthetics of the site. I know this from personal experience and from coaching other designers.



It is so easy to get sucked into spending WEEKS fiddling with fonts, graphics, our logo etc., and forget to focus on those tasks which will directly make you money, and isn't that what we're after? Trust me; the Wordpress blog template is GREAT. It's



simple, clean, and extremely professional looking. It is also specifically designed to be SEO friendly and easy enough to personalize with pictures and links to other sites.

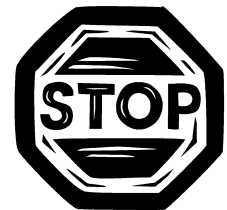


When you're ready for the big time, look to local web designers. Make sure you check their references to make sure they normally finish in a timely manner and do quality work. *Look at other sites they've designed for a style that would reflect your own design philosophy.*

If your ideal clients are professional business types, then your site should reflect that. If you want to work with residential homeowners, then you should make sure it has a sense of home and comfort, you get the idea.

Along with having a professional looking website, these days you need to link your site and your blog to your Facebook page, LinkedIn profile, and your Twitter account. Scared yet?

Don't worry, it's not that difficult. **If you do find yourself spending too much time messing with linking these social sites, then stop what you're doing and get help.** You'll be amazed at how easy it is to find a nephew or neighbor kid that can hook you up in less than 20 minutes.



Remember, we are still in survival mode. Create the basics, link them together (for search engine purposes) and get out in the real world and make things happen. I promise you, your clients are not at home reading your Facebook page and following your tweets just yet.



Building Your Shelter Website:

1. Do you have a basic site or blog? _____

2. When a potential client finds your site, **how can they reach you** from your site?

3. Is your site SEO friendly? List all of the words or phrases that your target audience might be searching for. –*interior designer, Seattle, window treatments...*

4. Link your site or blog to your Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts. List your log in here for easy access.



Step Four: You need to eat right?

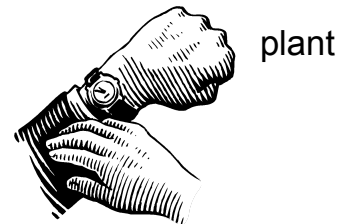
Nourishment is of course a necessity when we're talking about our survival, and I mean both personal as well as business survival. When you're stranded on an island, you'll be looking for fish and fruit, when rescuing your business, **it's your income which will nourish you.**



Just like in island survival, when you're in a desperate situation you shouldn't worry about what tastes the best, or what you're "used" to eating. This **isn't** the time to keep on doing what you've always done. (Obviously it wasn't working very well or you wouldn't be in survival mode.)

You also **CAN NOT** be picky about how big or small your clients are right now. A few smaller projects will not only quickly build up some instant income to get you on the right track, but they **may possibly lead to larger more profitable projects later on.**

When you're in need of rescue, you don't have time to and grow anything. Right now you need to look for nourishment that's easy to obtain, and rich in nutrients.



Let's look at a step-by-step plan for slowly building up your clientele, and thus your income. You can name your different levels of service, and even develop a simple pricelist. This way, if someone can only afford level one, they'll know that you have more to offer in the future.



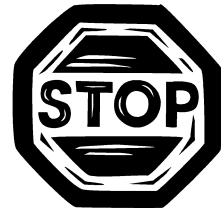
The most obvious choice is to find a client, and then simply charge for design time. All you need is a simple contract (see samples in back) to cover your liability and a house-call system for your first meeting. It doesn't get easier than that.



I have different levels of Design Consultation that I have offered in my design business. They are all extremely easy to sell to clients, and even easier to achieve a generous paycheck. Here are 3 examples that I share with my coaching clients:

1. Design consultation only: Create a design plan, strict layout and color advice. I describe this to clients as giving them a road map to follow. You can include shopping lists, simple floor plans, renderings or elevations, and even material samples. It all depends on how much you can charge.

Even though you're in survival mode, don't ever undervalue your talents. Your design is valuable, and you deserve to be paid for your skills.



2. Create a community partnership with a retail store that could benefit from offering design service to their clients.

You can create an arrangement where the store will pay you a commission for selling their products. They contact you when they have a client that's interested in design service.

You can charge a basic design fee for your time plus the commission you earn from selling merchandise. How much you charge for the design fee depends on the expected commission checks. If you're working for a store with high end furniture and



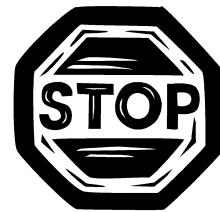
wealthy clients, you may consider keeping your design fee to a minimal. I would suggest around \$150- \$250 for the first house call.

At the end of the year they simply need to send you a 1099 tax form so you can claim the income on your tax form as an independent contractor.

3. Accessory house-call: This is one of my favorite ways to earn an income. You simply meet with the client, explain your process, walk through their space and of course have your contract signed, and then you get to go shopping*. What's better than that?

Take everything back to the space, then arrange and stage the room with the accessories you purchased. Present your receipts along with a bill for your shopping and design time.

***make sure you keep your receipts organized and documented. You must make sure you are reimbursed for everything you purchase, or are able to return it.**



When You're Ready!

As your business grows and you're ready to step things up a bit, you can begin to "create" your designs. That means you not only specify a window treatment, you have it created and installed. This way you can charge for your design time, make a small profit off of the labor and installation, as well as a percentage of the fabric and hardware mark-up.

It's not as difficult as you may think, **as long as you have a great team on your side**. If you don't have much experience working with custom furniture or window treatments, make sure you find businesses to work with that are willing to teach and guide you through the learning period.

After you're out of survival mode, you can begin to open your own vendor accounts and really make more money. It's a great way to double or triple your income.



invoices.

Just remember that it takes a great level of responsibility and organization to stay on top of your paperwork. I've seen too many designers get excited about getting new sample books and catalogs, then get in over their head with purchase orders and



What will nourish your business?

1. What is the easiest and quickest way for you to earn an income?

Name three levels of design package that you can offer to earn instant income?

List what you would include in your Level 1 Design Package?



Describe what benefit your client would get from hiring you for this service?

What would you charge for your simple design package? _____

This is everything you're going to include when you describe your services to potential clients, as well as write about it in your blog site.



or

Now describe what would be included in your Level 2 Package, Level 3 etc.



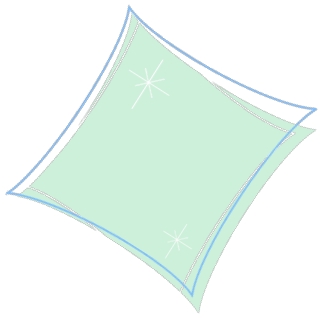
Your Survival Guide

Recap and Reminders: When it comes to building a design business, regardless of how big or how small your endeavor may be:

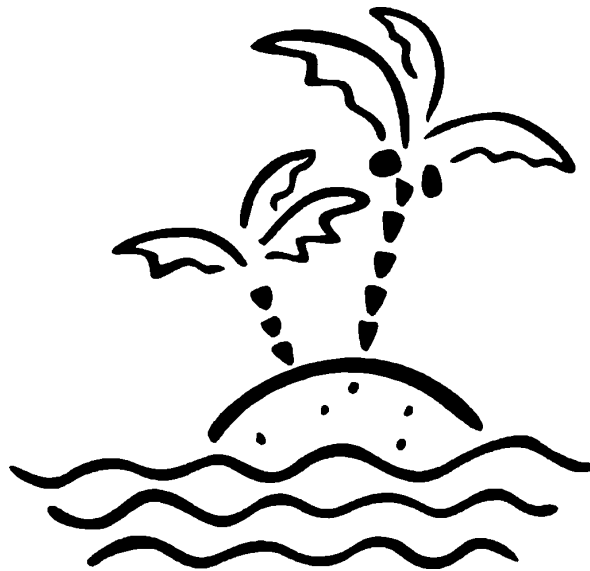
- ✓ Don't make things harder than they need to be.
- ✓ Be strong, make a commitment and get pumped up. Use this new knowledge and motivation to build-up a powerful momentum and get started right away.
- ✓ Know what your ultimate goals are, and what you want to achieve with your life.
- ✓ Make your goals Big, Clear, and Visible.
- ✓ Understand what type of clients you want to work with?
- ✓ Know who is searching for you, and who it is you want to attract.
- ✓ Find simple yet consistent streams of fresh clients.
- ✓ Take care of your clients, and value them as the lifesaving treasures they are.
- ✓ You need to have an office or a workspace specifically designated for your business. You need a place to keep your paperwork organized and easily accessed.

- ✓ You need to have a website of some kind. Somewhere that's easy for your clients to find you while being SEO friendly.
- ✓ Create a space that reflects your design style and abilities.
- ✓ Have it linked to Facebook, Twitter, design blogs, designer referral lists.
- ✓ Make sure it's professional looking, even if you design it yourself (unless you're extremely proficient, get some help)





Keep it simple... remember your goals... and understand that you are “building” your business and this doesn’t just happen overnight. Just because your business isn’t up to full steam doesn’t mean you aren’t going to make enough money.



Special Bonus Sections:

1. Accountability buddies
2. An example of an Affiliate Designer agreement made with a retail design store.
3. Example of potential income based on multiple income stream strategies.
4. Sample first house call checklist to use during your initial visit.
5. Sample contracts
6. Masterminding group information



Accountability Buddies

You know, sometimes you just need a gentle kick in the (you know what) to give you a push to do the tasks you're dreading. **Building a business is like a marathon, not a sprint.** We need to keep going forward, pushing through those times when we're ready to give up and sit down. Slow and steady, but constantly moving towards the finish line.

Being an entrepreneur can be tough. You don't have a time clock to punch, there isn't a boss breathing down your neck, and you know who runs the customer service department, YOU. There isn't anyone to hold you accountable for whether you succeed or fail in your business.

I myself actually have two accountability buddies. One that I talk to every morning (yes Mon-Fri for 10 months) at 8am for around 15 minutes to establish our daily goals, and my friend that inspired this article. We talk about every other day. We share resources, we offer advice on tricky clients, and most importantly, we laugh together and remind each other that there is no such thing as a, "furniture emergency".

Accountability is a very motivating propellant. (That's why in weight loss, dieters that attend the meetings are more successful than those that go it alone). Sometimes finding the strength you need to finish those tiresome tasks can be so much easier if you have someone by your side motivating you to be better, keep working, and remember what you're working for.

I recommend you find a Buddy! Someone in your field that not only understands our crazy industry, but who also wants to grow a thriving business. You should both work together to help each other stay on track. Be there as a shoulder to lean on in the tough times, and a cheering section when it's time to celebrate.

My recommendation is for you and your buddy to set-up a regularly scheduled phone call, at least once a week to check in on current progress and to set goals for the future. Even a 10 minute chat can be the support you need to get you moving again in the right direction.

Remember, the only people that suffer from your procrastination and lack of motivation are you and your clients!



Sample Affiliate Designer Program

A copy of an actual agreement made with a Retail Community Partner:

Tier System Discounts:

Under \$1000. - Accessories off floor 10% Upholstery 20% off of retail

\$1001-\$5000 - Accessories off floor 20% Upholstery 20% off of retail

\$5001 and up - Accessories off floor 20% Upholstery 30% off of retail and free delivery.

\$10,000 and up - Lead generator: you will qualify for preferred designer status which includes client referrals and the chance to be featured as a designer of the month.

Service:

- Use of design center in back for research.
- Store will be courteous to your clients and offer them water or soft drinks.
- Together design simple purchase orders to fill out.
- Store will place orders and track progress.
- Receive advanced notice of new products and specials.

Support:

- Store will work as a liaison between our manufacturers and yourself.
- Do everything in our power to maintain discontinues and back-orders.
- We will keep you informed and updated of all delivery status.
- Keep our business relationship confidential, never supplying pricing information to your clients.
- We will assist your clients in the event that they come to our store without your knowledge, and notify you if we do, but remember, you're discount doesn't apply unless you are there to make the purchase.



Turn your success into a thriving business

Now that you've learned the basics of finding your clients, working with that client, and creating a great design experience for them, let's put it all together and make some money.

A typical project, based on a beginning design practice:

Prices will vary depending on location and experience.

Initial design consultation: this includes the house call, the interview, the initial design concept, and the first meeting to discuss plans.	\$200.00
Furniture commissions: based on an average room cost of \$8,000. Discount is 20%, 10% to your client and 10% to you	\$800.00
Window treatments: Based on two windows per room. Average window treatment costs \$1500 a piece.	\$1,000.00
Painter commission: Based on one color, basic room.	\$150.00
Design time: A job of this size shouldn't take you more than 10 hours in addition to the initial consultation.	\$850.00
Total profit to you.	\$3,000.00

Not bad for a simple room design. One can see how using multiple income streams can make you more money in the long run. It also has a less-visible advantage. I see many designers fail because they charge too much for their time without considering the other income opportunities.



Example first home visit questionnaire

You may also copy this page to take to your visit so you don't forget anything.

Clients Name _____

Spouse's Name _____

Children / ages / at home? _____

Pets _____

Are there any time restrictions? _____

About how many people occupy the room on average? _____

How often do you entertain in this room? _____

What does your typical gathering look like? _____

Size, casual, formal? _____

What is your focal point? T.V, fireplace, view? _____

What pieces are staying? _____

Are their sentimental pieces you would like to include? _____

Do you have privacy issues or light control needs? _____

Do you have a preference for window treatments? _____

Budget:

What were you thinking as far as your investment in this room? _____

"I need a general guideline to stay within. For example, rugs can range from \$500 to \$10,000. If I was to bring you a \$10,000 rug and that's what you had envisioned for the entire room, it would be embarrassing for both of us."

Initial meeting date _____ First consultation _____



Why I Love to Mastermind

When I first joined a mastermind, I hardly even knew what it was. I just had that *knowing* that joining the program was the inspired action I needed to take to catapult my business to the next level. If you've been following me for a while, you know that it did that and more!

Napoleon Hill coined the term, "mastermind" to describe the powerful collective brain that forms when a group of like-minded people come together for the betterment of all members.

When you add to the mix a monetary investment, miracles happen. Just making the significant investment lit a fire under me that I didn't even know existed and had me think in ways I never had before.

I was also surprised to find that investing in myself at that level helped me to know the benefit I would be providing to others by offering my own services at that level, and it gave me the courage to offer high-level mastermind programs as well.

I really believe that you can't expect someone to invest in themselves through you at a level greater than you've invested in yourself. You just can't know what you're asking of them if you haven't done it yourself.

Here are a few other reasons why I love to mastermind:

1. You Get Support for Your Quantum Leaps.

Imagine that group of highly invested professionals all focused on helping you get where you want to go -- or even better, where you hardly dare to dream of going. That's what happens, and with that support, you can make some really profound leaps. I've seen people who have struggled alone for months or years build six- and seven-figure ideas after only eight minutes of mastermind focus!



2. Tools and Resources.

When you're in a mastermind, you don't have to spend a lot of time looking for people to help you with your vision. When you want to hire a team, you just ask your mastermind members, "Who's the best fabric line to open an account with?" And you get five recommendations. "Who does your website?" "Hey, will you look at my floorplan?" "Help me choose the logo for my website." You're never alone, and you don't have to reinvent the wheel.

3. Accountability.

When you're a solopreneur, you're sitting at home behind your computer and there's no accountability. You have to build that in. There has to be somebody knowing what you promised to do and whether you did it, because it's just too easy for your other responsibilities to take you away from the work that's really critical to your mission. That's why I always surround myself with a group of like-minded people... to build-in structured accountability.

Those are just a few of the many benefits of being in a mastermind. I haven't even mentioned the mentorship, the business training and coaching, the retreats, the surprises, the first-class treatment! To hear all about our Cashmere Coaching Mastermind Group, check out www.designforaliving.com/cashmerecoaching.html

The best bonus of all, in the world of design is FREEDOM! I hope you use these tools and my advice to create the perfect business for yourself.



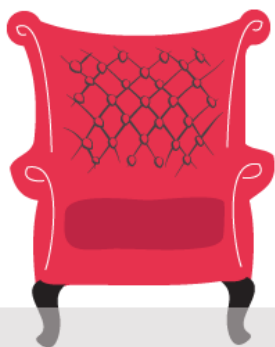
Do you want to work just a few hours a week and earn a little spending money, so you can shop and lunch with the girls? Maybe you see yourself building a great reputation in town, which in turn will improve your social status. You could be the designer that gets recognized in the local paper as the go-to expert for anything related to home improvement. If a flourishing design studio is what you dream of, then get going and use these steps to build a great foundation for a wonderful future.

This really is just the tip of the iceberg. You are only held back by your own desire and determination.

If you are interested in additional coaching from me personally, write to

chelsea@designforaliving.com.

I offer numerous training products as well as one on one, personal coaching in any area of the design field.



Design for a Living

TURN YOUR PASSION INTO PROFIT

