

Bob Sager

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Helping You Thrive in the
Age of Artificial Intelligence

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

*Helping You Thrive in the Age of Artificial
Intelligence*

Bob Sager

Copyright © 2024 by Robert
D. Sager

All rights reserved. This book
or any portion thereof may
not be reproduced or used in
any manner whatsoever
without the express written
permission of the author
except for the use of brief
quotations in a book review.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

This Complimentary Edition of [More Freaking Brilliant Ideas: Helping You Thrive in the Age of Artificial Intelligence](#) has been made possible through the sponsorship of the organizations whose advertisements appear here.

We respectfully ask that, as the need for their offerings occurs, that you consider patronizing them.

Should you decide you want a regular copy of this book, you can find it [here](#).

Guide to Sponsors

[The AI Klatch](#)Page 15

[Outreach25](#)Page 29

[Marketing Firepower](#)Page 48

[Jennifer Gilmore](#)Page 76

[Customer Attraction System](#)Page 99

[Follow Guard](#)Page 119

Preface

Nearly five years have passed since the publication of this book's predecessor, [*101 Freaking Brilliant Business Ideas: And Ten Ways YOU Can Create Your Own*](#). In re-reading the preface to that book, the notions I proffered there seem even more applicable now. In fact, there seemed to me little I could do to improve upon what I wrote there. So, rather than completely reinvent the wheel, I have left most of the rest of that book's preface in place in this volume.

In today's digital-age-attention-span economy, it's more important than ever to be remarkable. People only pay attention until they think they know what you're saying. Then, they quickly move on. If you seem *just like everyone else*, you will be ignored. This is true whether you are a company trying to gain and retain customers, a nonprofit organization seeking donations or simply someone looking for employment.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

The old rules for success don't apply as they used to. Millions in advertising, regardless of medium, can be easily bypassed. Conventional approaches no longer resonate. New, innovative thinking and approaches are required. Here's the problem; most people don't challenge 'the way it's always been done'. They don't innovate. They replicate and become commodities.

Here's the good news. Innovative thinking can help you to see the invisible so you can do what others deem to be impossible. By consistently thinking innovatively and acting on the ideas that thinking produces you will become what others call *lucky*. Where others are merely trying to survive in a rapidly changing world, you will thrive.

In this hyper-competitive world we now find ourselves living in, the skill of innovative thinking is a must. This book may be the catalyst that starts you down the path to learning and mastering this skill. It is designed to provide you with actionable ideas, strategies and solutions as well as to activate your natural creative

imagination so you can become more innovative on a daily basis.

Following each idea/strategy/solution is a blank page. This is on purpose. If you have the paperback version, use the rest of the page as a personal idea notebook. Write on it what ideas occur to you for how you might apply something similar in your business. If you have the eBook, keep a notepad handy while you're reading.

An important caveat: Some of these ideas and strategies have been crafted for specific industries. That doesn't mean they can't be the stimulus to your imagination that is needed to develop that next big idea in your business or career.

I wish you massive success!

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Getting the Most From This Book

We now find ourselves in the beginning stages of the Artificial Intelligence age. Without question, the advent of A.I. is a huge paradigm shift. I dare say, it is bigger than the internet and even bigger than mobile devices. It is massive because it is fundamentally changing the lives of billions. There are estimates that as much as 40% of jobs will be disrupted by A.I.

While some see this disruption as dire, in my opinion it is a good thing! Yes, I am serious. It is normal for people to fall into a comfort zone and to not move out of it until they are forced to. But, growth only happens through discomfort. It is through experiencing this temporary discomfort that one expands what they are comfortable with.

A.I. will act as the force that prompts people to grow.

The ideas and strategies in this book will help you achieve more success and prosperity in the short term. As importantly, in companionship with my first book on this topic, [101 Freaking Brilliant Business Ideas: And Ten Ways YOU Can Create Your Own](#), this book will be a catalyst that activates your ability to think creatively. Because bots will now be handling ordinary tasks – including routine thinking – the skill of *Purposeful Creative Thinking* is essential to the long term success of those who desire to thrive in the age of A.I. That's you, right?

So, here is how to stimulate that in yourself and get maximum value from this book.

1. Read through all the strategies here without stopping.
2. Wait 24-48 hours and read through each one again.
3. On the second reading, pause to make notes on each regarding any ideas that occur to you.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

4. Every day for the next 30 days, go back and read at least one of the strategies and consider the notes you have made.
5. After that first month, share the book with friends, family members and colleagues or, better, have them get their own copy.
6. At least once per month, meet and use the content of the book along with everyone's notes as fodder for discussing ways to improve your work or business.

Why is re-reading the same material and revisiting your notes important? There are two reasons for this. First, while the material stays the same, you don't. Therefore, with each reading you perceive things you didn't on your previous reading. Second, our subconscious mind never rests. It is on and active 24/7/365. Because of this, you will often find that ideas for how to implement these strategies will grow and improve over time.

We see this all the time in working with those we train in Purposeful Creative Thinking. Using the

process I laid out above, a statement we hear regularly is this:

You know, this idea is good. And, if we added this to it, it would be even better!

The tweak that makes it even better comes from the effort made by our subconscious mind working on our behalf. It has solutions at the ready. But, we can only access them when we make the conscious effort to utilize this process.

Let's go!

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Develop Your AI Skills by Joining The AI Klatch™ Community!

Not sure where to get started or go next with AI?

You should take advantage of our AI learning community called The AI Klatch™.

Our unique community goes beyond basic prompt engineering to help you build genuine, productive relationships with AI.

What makes us different?

- Learn alongside passionate AI enthusiasts
- Get real-world applications, not just theory
- Share experiences and grow together
- Apply skills across any AI platform
- Build an AI portfolio that shows you know what you are doing

Don't just learn about AI—master it no matter what stage of learning you are at.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Visit [The AI Klatch™](https://TheAIKlatch.com/) today and join the community that's changing how we learn and work with AI.

<https://TheAIKlatch.com/>



Addition Through Subtraction

“Doing more with less is a crucial principle to learn; especially if you’re going to be in business in this rapidly changing world.” – Robert Kiyosaki

Is it possible to do more with less?

In his book, [*Flash Foresight*](#), author Daniel Burrus defines *Eight Pathways of Technological Advancement*.

One of those eight is *Dematerialization*.

Consider this. As of this writing, 5.44 BILLION people around the globe now have in the palm of their hand a

- Phone
- Still Camera
- Video Camera

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

- Calculator
- Clock
- Alarm Clock
- HD Video Player
- HD Music Player
- Video Game System
- And MUCH more!

Each of those technologies was previously a stand-alone device that occupied space. Now, they have been dematerialized and fit into one device that is infinitesimally small in comparison to the size of all those previous iterations of the same.

At one time, I had a vinyl record collection that I kept in a peach crate – like the one they used to sell at *Peaches Records & Tapes*.

For those of you under 40 years old, I promise that was the actual name of a store.

That crate full of music was heavy! I still remember toting it to parties so we would have music to listen to.

And, even though I may have still owed the Columbia Tape and Record Club money, eventually, I re-bought much of my music collection on C.D.'s which were much smaller, lighter and easier to transport.

Bob Sager

Music had been dematerialized.

But, as we all now know, music got even further dematerialized until there was hardly any material at all!

Who recalls the one-line benefit statement for the iPod?

A Thousand Songs In Your Pocket

Now, with YouTube, Spotify, Pandora et al. music is available on demand in the ether.

Why am I talking about the dematerialization of music delivery? Sometimes, an industry can have addition through subtraction. There is far more music being consumed now – both bought and simply listened to – than when music came on bulky vinyl records.

There is a lesson in that example. Just because something has always been a particular way doesn't mean it always will be. Which leads me to this idea.

Addition Through Subtraction

What if there was a hotel that employed few housekeepers and where you brought your own linens?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Ridiculous? Maybe. Maybe not.

By providing no linens or workers to change them out, a significant cost savings would result. A portion of this cost savings would be passed on to guests in the form of lower nightly rates.

The cost savings and peace of mind guests would have from knowing they were the only ones who had slept on those sheets and used those towels would make an appealing marketing campaign.

Guests would be provided tokens for laundering their linens during their stay.

Obviously, the hotel would need to have an adequate number of washers and dryers to facilitate this. But, they already have those.

Is this a crazy idea?

Consider this. Prior to the discount store movement spearheaded by Target and Walmart people shopped in department stores. As discount stores began gaining traction department stores felt the pinch. In some states, the owners of department stores even tried to persuade politicians to pass laws making discount stores illegal!

Bob Sager

Those who lead the charge in shifting the paradigm for their industry are sometimes ridiculed. But, they can also reap the biggest rewards.

Applying This Concept

If you are not in the hotel industry, ask yourself:

- What could we eliminate that would allow us to lower prices?
- What might customers be willing to do themselves?

As you are considering possibilities, avoid judging too quickly what customers would be willing to do themselves.

Remember, at one time, there was no such thing as people pumping their own gas or self-check-out lanes.

In what ways might you apply this idea to your business?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Are You Making Your Customers Thirsty?

“Marketing is no longer about the stuff you make but about the stories you tell.” – Seth Godin

“Wow!”

“Is everyone okay?”

“I was so curious to hear what happened...”

Once upon a time I shared a post on LinkedIn that was a micro story about a car accident. It was filled with emotional imagery and had no conclusion. In the post, I did not indicate that the story was fictional.

Below is the text of the story as I posted it.

Mandy was driving along a winding road in the early morning twilight. Worried about the

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

downsizing going on at work, she was only half focused on driving.

Suddenly, from out of nowhere, a child ran into the road!

Brought immediately out of her state of semi-awareness, she quickly swerved to avoid the child. And, she lost control of the vehicle!

Tires squealing. Fast approaching tree. It all seemed to be happening in slow motion. Then, WHAM! The car slammed into and skidded along the guardrail until, mercifully, it finally stopped.

Shaking and bruised, she took a deep breath for the first time since the child appeared. Then a terrifying thought leaped into her mind, 'OMG, did I hit that kid?!'

She looked back with trepidation.

The comments in quotations that open this section were among the responses to that emotion-filled and incomplete story. In the comments section, I did let people off the hook. I let them know that the story was fictional. But, I purposefully did not say that in the body of the post because I wanted authentic reactions.

Bob Sager

Why would I do that to people? Was I just being a jerk? Allow me to explain.

A person who has been wandering along a hot, dusty road for hours needs a drink.

In the same vein, humans have a thirst for closure which **MUST** be quenched. This is why good authors leave you hanging at the end of chapters in a book.

MANY television shows leave unresolved drama at the end of episodes for the same reason.

It is also why the middle chapter in the initial *Star Wars Trilogy*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, had no real ending and left many issues unresolved.

It's called opening a story loop.

And, as author of the phenomenal book, [Building A Storybrand](#), Donald Miller says, "The opening and closing of loops is a magnetic force that drives much of human behavior." He goes on to say, "Feeling cold is the opening of a loop and shelter is its closing. Hunger is the opening of a loop and a sandwich is its closing."

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

How can this benefit you in business?

Use This in a Marketing Campaign

Run a story-based campaign that is comprised of more than one chapter. It must be emotion-laden and, with the initial chapter(s), leave the viewer or reader hanging.

By doing this, when each subsequent chapter of the story is released those who have seen the previous parts will immediately reconnect with the story's emotional tone.

Turn The Campaign Into an Interactive Conversation

If you really want to maximize involvement in your campaign, give consumers of your content an opportunity to finish the story.

Naturally, I have a vision of how to finish the 'Mandy's Accident' story. But, in my opinion, it would be more interesting to see how *you* would finish the story.

What do you think Mandy saw when she looked back?

IS everyone okay?

What happened next?

Bob Sager

Feel free to share your thoughts on how you would finish the story of Mandy's harrowing experience with me via [private message](#) on LinkedIn.

There is a Chinese proverb that goes: Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand. By asking consumers of your story-based content to share their thoughts on how *they* would close the story loop you involve them. That involvement will create an emotional connection between them and you; and that connection will help you stand head and shoulders above the crowd. What story can you create?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Bob Sager

Outreach25

Imagine a child of yours being diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

That is something no one wants. But, it is what the Leko family is going through with their nine-year-old, Will.

[Click here](#) or the image below to learn their story. Then, if your heart is moved and you are able, please consider choosing one of the two ways to them.



Can Less Be More?

"Good things come in small packages." - Aesop

There was no way to ignore it! The man came on the screen speaking at seemingly superhuman speeds. His rapid-fire delivery was a seductive assault on your ears. Whether you wanted to or not, you had to pay attention!

The year was 1987 and that man was John Moschitta, Jr. who has been recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records as The World's Fastest Talker. The forum for his rare talent was a television advertisement for Micro Machines; a line of tiny toy vehicles that were highly detailed and about one-third the size of the popular Hot Wheels toy

Bob Sager

vehicles. From their introduction in 1987 they were an instant success.

Why?

Besides the aforementioned brilliant and brilliantly executed commercial campaign, their diminutive size was...unique. In a crowded market of toy sameness, Micro Machines stood out as different.

Can Less Be More?

A decade or so earlier than the introduction of Micro Machines, I witnessed another phenomenon. My Mother used an Automated Teller Machine for the first time. Taking money out of the bank without the need to interact with a teller? This was a completely new paradigm! Despite my young age, I got the sense that this was the foreshadowing of a transformation.

Knowingly or not, the folks who invented Micro Machines and ATMs were using a method of thinking creatively called Minify or Eliminate.

To summarize this method in a few words, it is:

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Taking the whole or some part of what you're considering and greatly reducing it or dramatically scaling it down. And, in some cases, eliminating something altogether.

The purpose of using that, or any other, *Purposeful Creative Thinking* method, is to generate ideas for ways to be unique or more efficient. Maybe, even both! It's a way of thinking that can help bring something to the marketplace that consumers have not experienced previously. It can make your offerings *remarkable*.

Can Less Be More?

Fast forward from the '70's and '80's to today and we see another example of something that *could have* resulted from utilizing this method. While technological advances have facilitated remote work for a couple of decades now, the worldwide pandemic put Work From Home on steroids. Indeed, according to an October 2021 Gallup poll, 25% of U.S. employees are working exclusively from home while another 20% are doing so part of the time.

Bob Sager

Will the WFH trend continue after the pandemic is over? It seems likely. Though there were many obstacles to overcome, employers have found ways to adapt to make this model work. And, a substantial segment of employees have found it to be preferable because it helps them have a better work/personal life balance.

Can Less Be More?

In 1950's America, the average home size was 983 square feet. Fifty years later, that had more than doubled to 2,077 square feet.

There has, however, been an emerging market segment; Tiny Houses. While still only 1% of the U.S. market, sales of tiny houses have been on an upward trajectory for a decade. Many people completely reject the notion of that sort of living. But, tiny houses are so distinct and remarkable that the FYI Network featured a show called Tiny House Hunting that ran for four seasons. Tiny houses utilize both aspects of this creative thinking method. Obviously, they minify. They also *eliminate* yard work, real estate taxes and more.

Can Less be More?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

McDonald's is possibly the most successful elimination story of all time.

Prior to the world-famous iteration everyone is familiar with, the McDonald brothers ran a drive-in restaurant much like others that were in vogue in the late 1940's and early '50's. But drive-ins were rife with problems. So, the brothers completely changed how they thought about what a restaurant was. They eliminated every offering from their menu that didn't sell well. They trimmed it to only essential items and mostly sold four things; hamburgers, french fries, Coca-Cola's and milk shakes.

Gone were car hops, cigarette machines and juke boxes. They ditched anything that was attracting customers they would be better off letting their competitors have. The dishes were even gotten rid of. McDonald's food was served in disposable wrappers.

But, perhaps the most important thing they eliminated was the largest obstacle to customer satisfaction; the wait time! By adapting the principles of the assembly line that Henry Ford utilized in the automobile

Bob Sager

business to fit their restaurant, the McDonald brothers literally invented fast food!

Did it work? Today, McDonald's has over 39,000 restaurants worldwide and serves 1% of the entire population of the planet EVERY DAY!

Other Examples

Some other product and service examples of Minify/Eliminate:

Polly Pocket

A line of toys that features micro-sized dolls and everything else needed to play with them.

Vehicle Leasing

Helping consumers obtain a vehicle in this way eliminates a portion of vehicle ownership and the accompanying cost.

Legal Zoom

Ironically Founded by an attorney, it eliminated the lawyer from routine legal work.

Ordering Kiosks/Mobile Apps in Fast Food Restaurants

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Eliminate the need to stand in line and interact with a person, thus accelerating the already fast speed of quick service restaurants.

Less Can Be More!

Here's how to use this method. Look at each of your market offerings and consider the following questions:

What should I omit?

What if this were smaller?

Could we streamline something?

Could we miniaturize?

Could we condense, compact, subtract or delete something?

What is not necessary?

Should or could we divide it, split it up or separate it into different parts?

NOTE: These are the exact questions we address in the *Purposeful Creative Thinking Training FUNshops* we conduct to teach this method and that I use when developing business strategies for clients.

Bob Sager

How will you use this method to position your offerings as unique in the marketplace?

This segment was originally published as an article written for FDI Alliance International Magazine and featured in their Winter 2022 issue. Visit FDI Alliance online by clicking [here](#) or going to <http://www.fdiallianceint.com/>

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Bob Sager

Classic Car Competition

"Nostalgia is a file that removes the rough edges from the good old days." - Doug Larson

Who doesn't love classic cars?

In any era, many cars look an awful lot alike. Part of the appeal of classic cars is they look very different from the cars you see on the road every day. And, as my friend and branding genius [David Brier](#) says, "Different is better than better."

This idea is a way your organization can capitalize on folks' love for classic cars.

The Idea: Sponsor a Virtual Classic Car Show and Competition

Here's how it works.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

You set up a Classic Car Competition page on your site. Those who own classic cars shoot a video of their vehicle and the story behind their owning it and submit them to you. Owners are encouraged to be creative in the way they tell their car story.

You share these videos on the Competition page of your site as well as on your social pages. Visitors are asked to vote for the vehicle and presentation they like best.

To make it extra fun, make the show an elimination tournament. Run it over the course of a month with eliminations each week. This will dramatically increase the traffic to your social pages and site.

There is a cool factor in classic cars. Because of that, and the creative stories, the videos will be shared. Doing so pays those sharers in Social Currency.

Have a Competition scoring system:

- Like Video Post = 1 Point
- Comment On the Post = 2 Points
- Share the Post = 5 Points

Bob Sager

This will encourage entrants to drive all of their friends, relatives and colleagues to their video posts.

Maximizing Reach

Help other companies by inviting them to be your collaborators in the Virtual Car Show. They'll get exposure via the videos, help more widely distribute them and help pay for the awards.

Be sure to provide all participants with a Certificate of Appreciation. This physical thank you will earn you much goodwill and increase word of mouth about your company long after the contest ends.

As with in-person car shows, winners get trophies and cash prizes.

Regardless of the geographical footprint of your business, you can run a Virtual Car Show.

What is your favorite classic car?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

I Am Shocked!

“I don't like shows that are predictable. I like it when you're shocked and you have no idea who's about to die.” – Aaron Douglas

In his incredible book, [Contagious: Why Things Catch On](#), Wharton Professor Jonah Berger explored the science behind exactly WHY some things go viral.

He even developed an easy to remember guide to help readers recall those factors. It's called STEPPS and stands for

- Social Currency
- Triggers
- Emotions
- Practical Value
- Public and
- Stories.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

This idea capitalizes on the Emotions aspect of Dr. Berger's blueprint.

As he states in the book, not ALL emotional content gets people engaged or aroused enough to do something with it. Emotions that affect people physiologically – high arousal emotions – are the ones that get them worked up enough to engage and share!

Among the high arousal emotions are:

- Anxiety
- Anger
- Fear
- Love
- Outrage
- Awe

I have personally experienced the value of sharing something shocking in my LinkedIn posts. The post I shared that garnered by far the highest number of views was one which featured a video of a truck driver attempting a U-turn on a narrow mountain road. Multiple times during the short video it seemed as though the driver would back up too far and go careening over the side.

In order to feel the emotions people experience while watching that video, take a

Bob Sager

look at it now before reading on. To watch, you can:

- Search YouTube with the video's title: *Driver Performs the Craziest U-Turn Ever*
- If you have this book in eBook format, you can click [here](#)
- Or, if you have lots of patience, you can type in the URL, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viX0ss2aaD4&t=39s>

In commenting on my post that included that video, many people said something to the effect of 'I kept my eyes closed half the time while watching'. Yes, they found it hard to watch. But, they *did* watch!

WHY?

As much as some folks might deny it, people love to fret. That is one of the reasons action-adventure movies are so popular! It is the reason the manufactured drama on so-called reality shows is compelling.

What follows is an idea that will help you capitalize on this human propensity. Btw, I originally developed this idea for a company that does demand generation contacting. It

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

works well for that industry but can be used just as effectively for others.

Here's what to do:

Share a post that features a video that activates the emotion of anxiety. That will garner attention! Along with the video, share this short text.

Most people would rather do something like this than (fill in the work you do).

Why put yourself through that?

Let US do the work you HATE!

In deciding which videos to use, ensure that they:

- Appeal to the emotion of anxiety
- Are two minutes or less in length

Ready to activate people's emotions and make yourself memorable?

Bob Sager

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas



Want an **unfair advantage** in connecting with your prospects and clients?

Our CRM platform, *Marketing FirePower*, is **Your All-In-One Arsenal for Marketing and Sales Success!**



[Click here](#) and see how you can make a **major impact**, for less than a hundred bucks a month!

(*And there's a special offer waiting for you, as a valued reader of this book)

Bob Sager

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Employee Speed Dating

"No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it." – H.E. Luccock

It's been said that people do business with people they know, like and trust. That is undoubtedly true. And, just as that is the case for buying decisions, it is equally true when it comes to co-workers supporting one another.

Folks who know, like and trust one another will be more engaged and collaborative. They will go the extra mile.

As a way to build that spirit of cooperation and support, I present this idea:

Employee Speed Dating

Bob Sager

No, it isn't *that* sort of speed dating. It is a strategy to build strong, supportive relationships.

Here's what to do.

Pair people with another employee with the assignment to learn more about one another. This process can begin as inter-departmental but over time should work outward. The cross-departmental *Speed Dating* will help eliminate or lessen the silo effect.

The Date

This is really more a back-and-forth interview rather than a date.

To facilitate the dialogue, provide each person a list of 10 questions to ask. These questions should be formatted in a way that they spark curiosity and conversation. Each one should be an open-ended question that encourages the person being asked to talk openly.

For Example: I recently met someone who lives in my state of residence, Ohio. I asked

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

him if he was originally from Ohio or had moved from somewhere else.

He said he had relocated to Ohio from Los Angeles, California.

I asked, 'What do you find are the biggest differences in Southern California and Southwest Ohio?'

That sparked an extensive answer.

Though there can be one of two work-related questions, the goal is to help the interviewer get to know the other person beyond strictly what their work is.

So, the questions should be mostly non-work related.

Provide a meeting space along with a get-to-know-you notebook that each employee keeps. It's also a good idea to provide light refreshments for these sessions. Bonding is much stronger when done over food and drink; even if it's something simple.

Next Step

Over the course of time at team meetings have each interviewer refer to their notes and

Bob Sager

tell what they have learned about the others. This will help the team become more familiar with one another and find common ground.

Results

This process takes time, organization and commitment. But, it will dramatically increase teamwork because it helps co-workers know, like and trust one another.

Will you use this strategy to help build strength and cohesion within your team?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Becoming Lucky

“Luck is where preparation meets opportunity.” – Seneca

On June 28, 1914, a Serbian terrorist assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria triggering a chain of events that led to the beginning of World War I. Twenty-five years later, on September 1, 1939, German troops invaded Poland igniting World War II. For those born after 1945, there have been few circumstances that affected all the peoples of the world to the degree the world wars did. But, a microscopic organism commonly called Covid-19 changed that. And, since March 11, 2020, when the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic, we have been in a war-like state. Besides costing the lives of millions and redirecting economic resources into the war

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

effort, something the world wars had in common was being the impetus for economic change. After each, military personnel and civilians alike discovered an economic and social environment permanently altered by the war. Those who adapted to the changes, thrived. Those who stood still, hoping the ways of the past would return, struggled.

Similarly, the global pandemic has caused much loss of life and worldwide economic disruption unlike most of us alive today have ever experienced. But, times of great change create opportunities for those prepared to take advantage of them. Seneca said, “Luck, is where preparation meets opportunity.” A big part of being prepared is learning how to think differently. That ability will do more than any other to help you face the new economy with confidence. This article outlines one method you can use to ‘become *lucky*’.

Think BIGGER!

My family and I were driving west on Interstate 70 between Indianapolis and St.

Bob Sager

Louis. There, near mile marker 120 in Illinois we saw the sign.

See the World's Largest Windchime in Casey, Illinois

We were on vacation and the possibilities were so intriguing we couldn't resist. Like a scene out of the classic movie, National Lampoon's Vacation, we *had to* take the exit for Casey to see the World's Largest Wind Chime.

A short two-mile drive off the interstate and we were in the heart of the small town, parking in front of the Whitling Whimsy; the restaurant next to the huge wind chime. Approaching the wind chime is somewhat awe inspiring. It is fifty-five feet tall! Naturally, we all had to pull the rope that makes the chimes clang together. They sound more like church bells than chimes. What a fantastic, sensual experience!

As we stood gazing at the wind chime and taking pictures, we noticed another sign:

See the World's Largest Golf Tee at the Casey Country Club

Upon investigation, we discovered that, not only does Casey, Illinois have the world's

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

largest windchime and golf tee, it's also home to the world's largest rocking chair, mailbox, knitting needles and more! In total, there are a dozen world-record-holding things.

It all began when Casey resident and business owner Jim Bolin decided he had to figure out how to fight declining traffic to the town's retail stores and restaurants. Due to the loss of manufacturing, Casey was, in a way, fighting a war for its very survival. All those *World's Largest*s have made the once dying town of Casey, famous. They have reinvigorated the local economy. These novelties have become so noteworthy the town and its attractions have been featured in numerous articles and even a segment on *CBS Sunday Morning*. (learn about the largests at <https://www.bigthings-smalltown.com/>)

I share this story here because while visiting Casey we spent time and money that, prior to the Clark Griswold-esque moment of spotting the sign, we were not intending to. It has now been years since we visited and we still talk about it!

Bob Sager

Whether Mr. Bolin knew it or not, he was using a creative thinking method called MAGNIFY.

What is the MAGNIFY method?

It's a method of stimulating creative thought that can help you discover new ways to position your current offerings. It can help you innovate and differentiate in a crowded marketplace so you can win your everyday war. Magnify is taking the whole or some part of your subject and greatly enhancing it or dramatically upping the scale.

Those world's largests in Casey, Illinois are an obvious example. Some others are:

- The show that ran on the Travel Channel for eight seasons, *Man vs. Food*. It took eating to an extreme and created a successful niche show. Some people thought it was stupid, but one thing for certain; it was anything but common.
- The ridiculously large potato on the back of a semi-truck that travels the U.S. as part of the *Grown in Idaho* campaign. According to the site,

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

www.BigIdahoPotato.com, “It began in 2012 as a one-year campaign to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Idaho Potato Commission and became quickly apparent with its success that it would be more than a one-year occurrence, it literally became a big piece of pop-culture.”

- The rock band KISS. They revolutionized what a rock and roll concert was. Almost single-handedly they created the Rock and Roll show *experience* by employing this strategy. Prior to them, most bands just stood on stage and played. KISS reimagined a concert as larger-than-life theater.

Most people remember them for the characters they created with their unique make-up. But, at their shows you would also see flames and explosions, a flying drum kit, a guitar on fire and more. You never knew what you would see and that was part of the appeal. Their fans loved them. Others

Bob Sager

hated them. But, almost nobody ignored them.

To be clear, the Magnification doesn't have to be something humongous in size. It could simply be magnifying existing features.

In 1971 the Gillette company introduced the Trac II razor. Prior to that every method of shaving – including the safety razor King C. Gillette invented in 1901 – had only one blade. It was the accepted norm. The Trac II doubled that and, just as the safety razor had done, fundamentally transformed the world of shaving.

FedEx magnified the speed at which packages reached their destination.

Super Glue magnified the strength a glue had. This altered and expanded glue's applications.

A beer brand from Anheuser-Busch, Natural Light, once upon a time sold a 77 pack! It was a unique way to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the brand's launch in 1977.

You might wonder what sales of the Natural Light 77 pack were. But, guess what? That's unimportant. Offering their product in

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

packaging that was SO far from the industry standard garnered massive free publicity and word-of-mouth buzz. That resulted in more brand awareness than nearly any amount of advertising could have accomplished. I'd call that a brilliant idea, wouldn't you?

To help you figure out if and how this method can help you, here are some questions to ask. Note: These are the exact questions we use when developing strategies for clients and in our *MAGNIFY Method Purposeful Creative Thinking Training FUNshop*.

What can be added?

Can we provide or take more time?

Could we make it stronger?

Is making it higher a possibility?

What if we made it longer?

What can be exaggerated?

What features could be overstated?

How about greater frequency?

If we add extra features, could that make our product/service unique?

What can add extra value?

Bob Sager

What can be magnified, made larger or extended?

How can something be carried to a dramatic extreme?

There is a famous saying that goes, 'build a better mousetrap and the world will beat a path to your door.' That is not true. The only way the world will beat a path to your door is if they are aware of your 'better mousetrap.' Making folks aware is becoming increasingly difficult. Using the MAGNIFY method can help you get noticed and become worthy of people seeking you out; just as it did for Casey, Illinois. In a soon to be post-Covid world, this method is one tool that can help you win in the new economy.

As prolific author Seth Godin said in his famous 2006 TED Talk, "How to Get Your Ideas to Spread", for your ideas to spread they must be *remarkable*. He expanded on that point by saying that what he meant by remarkable, was *worth remarking about*. Having something that is magnified is a fabulous way to be remarkable, get people to pay attention *and* tell others. And, there is no

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

better form of advertising than word-of-mouth, is there?

This segment was originally published as an article written for FDI Alliance International Magazine and featured in their Summer 2021 issue. Visit FDI Alliance online by clicking [here](#) or going to <http://www.fdiallianceint.com/>

Musicians, Magicians and Money

"Don't reinvent, reimagine." – Sonia Sanchez

Go to any sizable city in the U.S. – or the rest of the world for that matter – and you will always find two things.

- Street Performers
- Public Transportation

In thinking about solving problems for clients I almost always begin with a three-word phrase:

In what ways...?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Initially, this idea began strictly as a way to solve city budgetary problems.

I asked, 'In what ways might Street Performers and Public Transportation work together for the benefit of both?'

The resultant original idea was to have street entertainers - musicians, magicians, mimes, etc. - on board buses, street cars, etc. to promote ridership.

Just as they do in the street, they work for tips from passengers. It gives them an audience and there are no weather-related issues. This would cost the city nothing and, by using a little imagination, other sources of revenue could result.

If I do say so, that by itself is a great idea. But, as someone who predominantly develops ideas and strategies for businesses, I always consider how even strategies created for charities or municipalities could be a boost to business. So, read on to see how this could be profitable for you.

Sponsorship

Next-Level Guerilla Marketing

Bob Sager

A business could sponsor street performers (on or off public transportation) by matching the amount they earn in tips for a day – with an upper limit.

Each street musician, magician or other type of performer displays a sign or banner that promotes the company or companies who are sponsoring them. This banner should have a QR code on it that offers a *Street Performance Special* to anyone who is stopping by. If there are multiple sponsors, the QR code would link to a page which features all.

As many of these street performers ply their trade in areas that are frequented by business owners and executives, this would be an ideal fit for businesses that cater to those folks.

To give this marketing investment traction that lasts longer than just a day, shoot video of various performers and share on your YouTube Channel, web site and Social Media pages.

Short snippets from these videos would work well on TikTok, Instagram and YouTube Shorts; any short form video platform. Hey,

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

you might help one or more talented Street Performers get discovered!

Could this Street Performer sponsorship approach be a boon to your business?

Bob Sager

The Power of Three

"In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: it goes on." – Robert Frost

- See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil
- Eat, Drink and Be Merry
- Of the People, by the People and For the People

Groups of three are sticky to human brains. We love patterns and three of something forms a pattern.

For an interesting perspective on the power of three TEDx Talk on the power of three, watch Mark Moore's TEDx Talk on YouTube called, appropriately, The Power of Three. If you are reading the eBook version of this book, you can find it by clicking [here](#). Otherwise, search on YouTube using Mark's name and the title.

Bob Sager

There truly is power in three!

Utilizing our understanding of this power, as organizations we can obtain feedback from those we serve in order to serve them better. By serving better, we will thrive.

Customer Surveys

While customer surveys can be useful, many are too long and anything but customer centric. This is an idea for making a customer survey productive.

And, it has...three questions.

The following are the three questions and an explanation of what to do with the responses and respondents.

- In your most recent experience with us, what did you enjoy most?
- In your most recent experience with us, what did you enjoy least?
- What is one thing would you like to see us improve on to serve you better?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

The survey should be prefaced with the fact that it is only three questions in length. Here's why.

Knowing the specific number of questions helps folks decide if they will spend their time to complete the survey. Knowing there are only three questions, more will click through to participate. Increasing the amount of feedback will provide a more accurate picture of what needs to be improved as well as what is being done well.

A reward of some sort should be provided to everyone who completes the survey - even if they say their most recent experience was the worst ever. Ideally, this reward would not be solely something having to do with doing future business with your company itself.

In other words, it could be a \$5.00 Amazon gift card or something like that instead of - or in addition to - something you sell, a percentage savings or other incentive on future purchases from you.

When you consider the Lifetime Value of a customer, the small reward for completing the survey will easily be offset by increased

Bob Sager

future business. This is especially true if the survey is a catalyst for improvement.

By the way, this reward should not be announced prior to someone completing the survey. Making survey participants aware of it only after they have completed the survey makes it unexpected. And, smart companies do unexpected things that surprise and delight their customers.

Increasing Reach

A way to get creative and increase the reach and effectiveness of your Customer Surveys is to develop a collaboration with two other companies who provide complementary products or services.

Three companies cooperating will give your surveys more length, width and depth.

Will you employ the Power of Three approach?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Bob Sager

Jennifer Gilmore Keynote Concert



Elevating Corporate Events

Versatile and talented singer Jennifer Gilmore provides a one-of-a-kind keynote experience that your team will never forget!

[Click here to read and *hear* more and book Jennifer.](#)

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Sometimes Bad Is Bad

*"Cool is a rule, but, sometimes bad is bad." -
Huey Lewis*

What is the worst idea you can come up with? That's a serious question. I am asking because one of the methods I use to develop strategies for clients - and that we teach in our *Purposeful Creative Thinking* training is:

Come Up With Ten Bad Ideas.

You read that right, ten BAD Ideas. We use that method because within those bad ideas will often be the seed of a good idea.

From reading this book, you know it is filled with GOOD ideas. But, in this segment, I am switching it up and sharing some BAD ideas I've come up with.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

As you read them, consider this question, 'With a tweak or two, could this be an idea worth pursuing?'

So, without further ado, here are some new bad ideas for you to consider.

The Ordinary Show

A podcast that talks about ordinary, everyday, inconsequential things. Like:

- What you had for dinner
- How you did the laundry; the trouble with trying to fold fitted sheets
- The choice of cat litter

There are guests. But, few people outside of their family and close friends even know who they are.

No books to sell. No sage advice. Just people talking about...stuff.

A Book Book

Featuring a page about each book with a brief description along with the author's bio.

This could be a series that features different genres of books.

- Novels You Should Read
- Self-Help Books

Bob Sager

- Cookbooks
- Children's Books
- Science Fiction
- Mysteries
- Etc.

It could even be books about books you should *never* read.

Movie Trailer Reaction Show

A YouTube channel that is nothing but a man and a woman watching movie trailers and commenting on them.

They pause the videos as they are watching them and comment on them.

These are most often trailers for movies neither of them has seen and both people provide a prediction of the full plot and outcome of the movie based only on the trailer.

Channel viewers comment on their commentary.

Btw, do you know why those short previews for movies are called trailers?

R U S T

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

An Art Gallery show featuring rusty items.

- Cars
- Barbecue Grills
- Metal Fences
- Outdoor Furniture
- Tools
- Weapons: Knives, Guns, Etc.
- Metal Barrels

The art could be pictures, sculptures, collages, etc. But, every item must feature a rusty item.

What do you think the letters in the word R U S T could stand for?

Stuck In Traffic

A streaming show that originates from various interstate highways around the U.S. during rush hour.

Featuring:

- The Most Out of Town License Plates
- Stupid Things People Do on the Road
- Most Bizarre Looking Drivers
- Broken Down Cars
- ARTIMIS Sign Messages

Bob Sager

- Time to Travel Between Mile Markers Challenge

What do you think?

Can any of these lame ideas be tweaked and converted into a good idea?

Or, are they all just irredeemably bad?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Outrunning the Bear

There is an old joke about two hikers in the woods who notice a bear charging toward them. The first hiker hastily removes his trail boots and puts on his running shoes.

The second hiker nervously laughs and says, “Why bother changing out of your boots? You can’t outrun a bear.”

The first hiker replies, “I don’t have to outrun the bear. I only have to outrun *you*.”

To thrive in business, we must outrun the competition. Otherwise, the bear will catch us. This metaphorical bear is, of course, any threat to the health of our business.

Sometimes these threats come like a bolt out of the blue. More often, however, they are like a developing hurricane. They can be plainly seen on the radar long before they become an existential danger. We have ample warning.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

But, far too often business leaders discount or ignore the threat until it is too late.

The list of brands that were once market leaders and now only exist in memories is extensive. Kodak, Blockbuster Video, Pan American Airlines and many others were business icons that seemed invincible. They weren't. Technological changes, complacent management and, more recently, the global pandemic have all been the cause of business failure.

Outside threats are ever present. Awareness of these is essential. More difficult to see is an equal or perhaps larger threat. Our existing paradigms.

Outrunning Our Self: The Filet-O-Fish Story

In the early 1960's a majority of the population of Cincinnati, Ohio was Catholic. A dictate from the church meant no meat could be consumed on Fridays. As a result of this precept, Cincinnati area McDonald's franchise owner Lou Groen saw hamburger sales plummet each week.

Witnessing this discouraged Groen and he recognized the very real possibility of the

Bob Sager

business failing because of it. He became increasingly desperate. But, rather than simply doing nothing, Lou began to think. Being Catholic himself, Groen knew that fish was not considered by the church to be meat. Since protein was a staple part of every meal in that era, Catholics ate a lot of fish on the last day of the work week. Doing his best to not completely reinvent the wheel, he considered the ingredients he had on hand. Knowing McDonald's customers had come to expect sandwiches served quickly he invented the fish sandwich we now know as the Filet-O-Fish. It was the first non-hamburger sandwich ever served in McDonald's.

But, there was a problem. Serving anything other than the items prescribed by McDonald's corporation violated his franchise agreement. When the CEO Ray Kroc found out about Groen serving a non-approved menu item he was livid! He told Groen to cease and desist immediately. Lou pushed back and said without a meatless option to serve on Fridays he was out of business.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Kroc, while having learned the value of each McDonald's running the exact same way, still was open minded. He made Groen a deal. Kroc himself came up with a meatless sandwich called The Hula Burger. It was a slice of grilled pineapple served with cheese on a cold bun. In a limited test, they would offer both and see which consumers preferred.

It wasn't even close! The Filet-O-Fish outsold The Hula Burger nine to one. Humbled by this but recognizing opportunity, Kroc congratulated Groen and said McDonald's would now offer the Filet-O-Fish in every location.

Your K.E.I. to Innovation

When my clients ask me how I am able to continuously come up with such incredibly unique, profit-enhancing ideas and strategies I tell them I have the key. However, the letters in my key are K, E, and I. Those stand for Knowledge, Experience and Imagination. You can use this K.E.I. as well.

Below is one method which you can apply to stimulate your imagination. When aroused, your imagination breathes new life into your

Bob Sager

experience and knowledge. It helps you to configure them in new ways and see possibilities and opportunities that were previously invisible.

As A Service

As a Service is a simple creative thinking method which you can use to uncover new ways of serving customers and generating cash flow.

Here is how it works:

Make a list of all your product offerings and add the phrase 'as a service' to it. Then, consider ways each product could be made into a service.

Microsoft did this with their best-selling Office Suite and it transformed that segment of their business. Their as-a-service model, known as Office 365, converted what had been a one-time sale which only occurred every few years into a predictable ongoing stream of revenue.

Though they may not have specifically used this method, Uber and Lyft in effect used *Transportation in Private Vehicles As A Service*

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

to create an entirely new market in the sharing economy.

In using this method, do not limit your application of it to existing products you offer. Ask yourself what related products are available in the marketplace that might be a natural fit for your existing customer base.

Questions to help you see even farther:

- In what ways could making this a service add so much value that it would be disruptive?
- In what ways could this add value to customers that they aren't receiving now from us or our competition?
- What value-add could be applied to enhance the attractiveness of becoming a subscriber or user?

This same method can be applied to turning a service into a product.

If you are the seller of a service, ask similar questions with the goal of creating a product from your service.

Good Times, Bad Times

There is a human tendency toward becoming comfortable when something works. After all, as the old saying goes, *if it ain't broke,*

Bob Sager

don't fix it. Today, that 'way we've always done it' complacency can be a killer. Others are looking to break you. So, preempt them by breaking yourself and figuring out how to do it better.

The pace of breakage has hit warp speed. Consider this. Netflix took 3.5 years to reach one million users. Facebook took ten months. Spotify hit seven figures in five months. The recently launched ChatGPT hit one million users in five DAYS!

I often advised my children to keep an umbrella at hand even on sunny days. I told them, 'it is better to have it and not need it than need it and not have it'. So it is with using creative thinking. Those organizations that thrive in our hyper-paced economy will continuously look at every aspect of their business through an innovative lens. The best way to do this is to utilize defined creative thinking methods in what I call Disruption Sessions. These need to be held on a regular schedule - in good times and bad. This practice will create an abundance of ideas you can develop. You may never need them. But,

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

isn't it better to have them and not need them than need them and not have them?

The bear is always in pursuit. Using this and other creative thinking methods I write about is like having that pair of running shoes the hiker in this article's opening had. They will help you outrun your competition without breaking a sweat.

This segment was originally published as an article written for FDI Alliance International Magazine and featured in their Spring 2023 issue. Visit FDI Alliance online by clicking [here](#) or going to <http://www.fdiallianceint.com/>

Bob Sager

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Sibling Rivalry

“The villain drives the plot.” – Gayle Lynds

Years ago, comedian Jeff Foxworthy had a bit in his comedy routine about NASCAR.

He said, "Every NASCAR fan has that one driver they LOVE and that one driver they HATE."

At the time this was part of Foxworthy's show, the two drivers that were most loved or hated were Jeff Gordon and Dale Earnhardt. When Gordon became a driver in the NASCAR Cup Series, Earnhardt was already an established star. And, though he was viewed by some as a villain for the unapologetically tough way he drove, he had legions of fans because he won a lot!

Seemingly out of nowhere, Gordon comes along and starts winning races immediately. Not only was he beating the rest of the field,

Bob Sager

but Gordon was also beating Earnhardt; the driver known as The Intimidator.

At first, Earnhardt was incredulous and did everything he could to put 'the kid' in his place and remind him who Ruled the Roost in that sport. But, Gordon kept winning.

There were many things about the two of them that made them natural rivals. In many ways, they were opposites. Earnhardt was from Kannapolis, North Carolina. So, he spoke like a good-ole-boy. Gordon was from Southern California. And, as Foxworthy joked in his bit, one of the reasons so many NASCAR fans hated him was that 'he enunciated' his words. Gordon was green and Earnhardt was seasoned. And, much more.

For a good laugh, watch the Foxworthy bit on YouTube by clicking [here](#) if you have the eBook or search 'Foxworthy on Jeff Gordon' on that platform.

Eventually, Earnhardt recognized that the rivalry with Gordon created a serious business opportunity. There was LOTS of money to be made from merchandise sales. If

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

people hated your rival, they would buy more of YOUR merchandise to publicly demonstrate whose side they were on. He realized what many in sports, entertainment and politics have understood for a long time.

You can't be a hero if there is no villain.

By the way, there's an important object lesson there. Just because someone speaks with a good-ole-boy accent doesn't mean they don't understand people and aren't business savvy.

Even though their on-track rivalry was completely legitimate and they did all they could to beat one another there, he and Gordon collaborated off-track on feeding their rivalry. As a result, both of them sold massive amounts of merchandise.

The Raiders of the U.S. based National Football League have mastered this, too. They understand some people will hate their 'just win baby' (by any means) reputation. But they readily embraced the villain role and have legions of fans nationwide.

Steve Jobs did this, too, only the opposite. He positioned Apple as the good guys to IBM's bad guys. He understood that those who saw

Bob Sager

themselves as the kind of person who bucked the status quo would be inclined to purchase an Apple product.

One of the most iconic commercials of all-time is the 1984 ad Apple ran during the Super Bowl of that year. Without saying their name, the ad demonized IBM and, positioned Apple as the savior.

Luke Skywalker vs. Darth Vader

Superman vs. Lex Luthor

Harry Potter vs Voldemort

Rivalries and having people choose sides feeds into human nature. Understanding this has made Vince McMahon of WWE fame a multi-billionaire.

So, how can YOU utilize this in your business?

Can you position yourself as good vs. evil? Or, vice-versa?

Can you follow the example of Earnhardt and Gordon and collaborate with a competitor?

In what ways might you capitalize on that rivalry?

Could you do interviews together?

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Make public appearances together?
Can you sell merchandise that lets people proudly proclaim who they are for?

This might not be a strategy that is for you.
And, that is okay.
But, understand that people LOVE to pick sides. It gives them a rooting interest; something to identify with and be part of.
In that way, it makes them feel important.
And, if you can make people feel important, you have done something that matters.

Bob Sager

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

The B2B Customer Attraction System

Do you want your sales reps to be welcomed as a trusted partner rather than as an inconvenient interruption?

If your company sells to other companies the B2B Customer Attraction System provides a **dramatically better** way to prospect, grow sales and retain customers.

See how this revolutionary approach can transform your company's results by [clicking here](#).



You're Triggering Me!

"From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step." - Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle

If the quote above is accurate, and I have found it to be so, then it stands to reason that there is also but one step from the ridiculous to the sublime.

In researching his book, [Contagious: Why Things Catch On](#), Wharton marketing professor [Jonah Berger](#) discovered that there is indeed behavioral science to why some things generate buzz and others just fizzle. Being a marketing-oriented person, he proffered a memorable acronym that defined the ways things catch on:

STEPPS

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

If you like understanding people better and why they do the things they do and don't do the things they don't do I highly recommend that book.

One fascinating example from the book that falls into the T from Berger's acronym was the 2012 song *Friday* by Rebecca Black. Despite the fact that some have deemed it to be the worst song ever, as of this writing the original video for *Friday* on YouTube has piled up nearly 170,000,000 views and counting.

Why am I mentioning it here?

Well, the T in Berger's acronym stands for Trigger(s) and what the research showed was that, of those millions of views, a majority of them occurred on one particular day of the week.

Can you guess which one?

P.T. Barnum once astutely said, "Any publicity is good publicity."

So, even if something is talked about as being the worst ever, it is still being talked about.

And, therefore, it remains top of mind.

That fits in perfectly with this idea.

A Spammy Idea

NO, I am not encouraging you to send spam emails to people! So, hear me out.

Every time someone complains about unsolicited and unwanted emails, they call it spam. And, I bet those in the know at Hormel Foods Corporation LOVE it! While the use of the word in this context is certainly negative, it keeps that brand name in the forefront of people's awareness.

SPAM was invented in 1937. Now, I have no way of knowing this, but I would wager there are many more people who have tried SPAM since the invention of email than had from 1937 until then.

There is a rumor, which seems likely true, that the impetus for using the word spam to refer to junk emails came from the early 1970's skit from the comedy show Monty Python's Flying Circus. (watch [here](#) or search 'Monty Python Spam' on YouTube.) Fifty odd years later that skit is still talked about.

From the ridiculous to the sublime, indeed.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Perhaps the folks at Hormel should send the writers of that skit, Terry Jones and Michael Palin, royalty checks? Their humorous skit has been worth more for brand awareness than would be garnered from millions of dollars in ad spend.

By the way, in case you did not notice, just like the title of that Rebecca Black song is a Trigger, the use of the word spam is a Trigger for the product SPAM.

While the boost Hormel continues to get from the use of their product's name was/is unintentional, you can be intentional in boosting yours.

Ask yourself, 'In what ways could we be purposeful in starting conversations – good or bad - about our brand?'

One way to do this would be to channel Monty Python and hire a comedian or comedians to lampoon your brand. In Berger's acronym, the E stands for emotional. In his research, Jonah discovered that when something is fun or funny people are highly likely to share it and talk with others about it.

Bob Sager

An early mentor of mine once told me that 'a knock is a boost'. He said that is why he never spoke badly of his competition. That is wise! Utilizing this principle and that of tapping into the positive emotions that come from fun and funny, indirectly poking fun at your own brand can actually be a boon to your business.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Celebrities?

“We live in a celebrity-obsessed culture. Putting an important piece on a celebrity is like having a free billboard.” – Sally Morrison, Director of PR, De Beers

Regardless of what you personally think about it, and whether it is justified or not, celebrities hold sway over public opinion. There is behavioral science behind WHY that is the case that we won't get into here. But, consider this:

When Wheaties cereal began putting celebrated athletes on the front of their box, sales skyrocketed. That marketing strategy converted an also-ran cereal into The Breakfast of Champions.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Michael Jordan partnered with Nike to almost single-handedly create the premium sneaker market. Are Air Jordan's worth the price? Some say yes while others disagree. But, they surely sell well!

George Clooney tells you how your life will be better with Nespresso and folks rush out to buy one of their machines.

Cadillac used the Led Zeppelin song to sell its brand to Baby Boomers who had an emotional attachment to the tune – and, finally, enough money to afford a Caddy.

For these and other national and international brands, having a celebrity endorsement can produce a phenomenal Return on Investment. Of course, you have to have the Investment money up front and be able to convince a high-profile celebrity to endorse your product.

Clooney reportedly got paid \$40,000,000 for pitching Nespresso!

What to do if you aren't quite at that level yet?

Bob Sager

This idea will help.

It capitalizes on people's love for dogs while borrowing a celebrity association. And, it costs WAY less than \$40,000,000.

I call it **Rock Dogs**.

These are graphics featuring 'celebrity' dogs endorsing your company or product.

Imagine the following:

Pink the Poodle says, "Shop at Smith's."

Elvis the English Setter says, "Shop at Smith's."

Madonna the Maltese says, "Shop at Smth's."

Springsteen the St. Bernard says, "Shop at Smith's."

And, so on.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

See a beta version of the *Rock Dog* images we created, including one we put together for our client [Lori Knudsen](#) and her company [Knowbility Consulting, here](#).

Note: If you are reading the paperback version of this book and want the link to see the images, PM me on LinkedIn.

Though these aren't *actual* celebrity endorsements, the name familiarity carries more weight than you might imagine.

In what ways might you utilize this sort of 'celebrity endorsement'?

Bob Sager

Sharing is Caring?

Uber, AirBnB and Sparetoolz. What do these three things have in common?

Unlike 'what do pine tree, compass and phonograph have in common', this isn't a tricky riddle. Each of the above are part of the sharing economy.

The sharing economy, for anyone unfamiliar with it, is the employment of a privately owned asset to serve others and create a stream of revenue. Uber drivers provide rides in their own vehicles, AirBnB Hosts rent out rooms in their private residence and Sparetoolz is an app that connects those who need a tool with those who own them. Each of these enhances the value to both the user and the owner. And, non-private entities can glean something valuable from the sharing economy.

Bob Sager

By the way, in case you are wondering, a pine tree, compass and phonograph all have *needles*.

One industry that is notorious for being anti-sharing is the music industry. In a way, I can understand. The human nature default is one of scarcity thinking. But, what if there were a better way? A way that involved sharing and increased the abundance of all involved?

Read on.

In the era of social media, memes have become ubiquitous. Among others, nearly everyone has seen memes created from Disaster Girl, Woman Yells at Cat and The Success Kid.

But, perhaps the most famous was made from the image of The Most Interesting Man in the World. Originally an advertisement for Dos Equis beer, the tag line, 'I don't always drink beer. But, when I do I prefer a Dos Equis' was memorable. And, meme-able.

Shortly after that campaign appeared, jokesters worldwide began creating memes from it. Nearly all of them beginning with, 'I

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

don't always...' and concluding with 'But, when I do...'

And, guess what? Every time one of those memes appeared online Dos Equis beer was catapulted to the forefront of the consciousness of those seeing it. The result? From 2007-09 sales of Dos Equis grew by 34%! How much *less* traction would that campaign have gotten if Dos Equis attempted to stifle all those takeoffs?

Now, back to the music industry. It was forever changed on August 1st, 1981, when MTV went live for the first time. For anyone under 40 years old, it is important to point out that, for the first several years, all MTV did was play music videos for popular songs 24/7/365.

Music videos became an art form. Record labels often went to great expense to make videos and, thereby, promote sales. But, as rocker Sammy Hagar once observed, 'a music video is just the director's interpretation of the song'. Could there be others?

Steven Tyler is the lead singer for the rock band Aerosmith. He is also one of the band's main lyricists. In his autobiography he tells

Bob Sager

the story of being at a meet and greet where a curious fan asked him what the lyrics to one of his songs meant.

He asked the fan, “What do *you* think they mean?” The fan answered, and Tyler responded, “That is exactly what they mean!”

In the book, Tyler went on to say that he has been asked that question by multiple fans who each have a unique response to what the lyrics mean. And, he always tells them that they are correct. Tyler explains that he does his best to write lyrics that could be interpreted multiple ways. That way, fans can make their own personal connection to the song.

In my opinion, the music industry could, in a way, combine the sharing economy with the potential for multiple interpretations of songs.

I’m going to explain what I mean. But, in order to do so we must get into the semi-way-back machine. The year was 2006 and, in a few months, the most coveted spot for advertisers, the N.F.L. Super Bowl, was approaching. With over 100,000,000 people

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

expected to tune in and 30 seconds of airtime costing north of \$2.5 million there is great pressure to create something remarkable.

The folks at Frito-Lay along with their ad agency were agonizing over what their spot should be. Then, they had a revolutionary idea. What if professionals didn't produce the spots at all? What if, instead, they let amateurs have their shot?

To some, it probably sounded like a *really dumb idea*! Nevertheless, they decided that they would put the word out that the concept and production of a 30 second commercial was open to anyone. A web site, CrashTheSuperBowl.com was set up. Consumers were invited to create their own Doritos ads and at least one fan-made commercial was guaranteed to air during the game.

In all, 1,065 consumer-made ads were submitted and displayed on the contest site. From those entries, five ads were selected as finalists. The director of each selected ad received a cash prize of \$10,000 and a trip for two to Detroit during Super Bowl XLI in February 2007. Two of the ads,

Bob Sager

Live the Flavor and Checkout Girl were aired during the Super Bowl. The cost of producing these genuinely original and memorable ads was infinitesimally small compared to the traditional method. Amateur filmmakers got a shot at becoming famous and viewers watching the game were treated to something special. And, most importantly, Frito-Lay got enormous sales traction and connected with consumers in a deep and unprecedented way.

I'd call that a complete win!

Now, to my idea. What if musical artists ran a similar competition to have fans create music videos for their songs? Instead of having ONE version of a music video, everyone and anyone would be invited and encouraged to produce a video that was their vision of what the video for the song should be? The music could, with no threat of a copyright infringement claim, be used in the video.

The record labels or the artists themselves could host these videos online and fans could vote on them. A head-to-head tournament could be held with fan voting determining

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

which video goes on to the next round until an ultimate champion is crowned.

I submit that taking this approach would dramatically increase streams and sales.

Now, you are probably not a musician or a filmmaker. So, what can your business take from this idea and article?

Obviously, if you can come up with a campaign that is meme-able, ala The Most Interesting Man, it can be a big win in the marketplace. That might or might not ever happen. But, the creative thinking process which I used to come up with this strategy you can most definitely apply to see new and better solutions.

Here's the simple process:

1. Write down the things you *know* to be true about your business.
2. Consider the exact opposite of that and ask how that might be possible.

While I wasn't privy to the meetings at Frito-Lay about what to do about a commercial for the Super Bowl, I can absolutely imagine them writing down:

Bob Sager

Professionals write, direct and produce Super Bowl commercials.

What is the opposite of that? *Amateurs write, direct and produce Super Bowl commercials.*

Try this process! You may astound yourself at what ideas come to you seemingly out of nowhere.

This segment was originally published as an article written for FDI Alliance International Magazine and featured in their Summer 2023 issue. Visit FDI Alliance online by clicking [here](#) or going to <http://www.fdiallianceint.com/>

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Bob Sager



Instantly message all of your followers across all social networks from one amazing app.

www.followguard.com
(soon)

The advertisement features a blue cartoon character with large purple eyes and a white patch on its forehead, smiling. A white speech bubble with black text is positioned above the character. The background is black.

Making the Mundane Exciting

“What is drama but life with the dull bits cut out?” – Alfred Hitchcock

In a vast sea of white eggs, it is the Golden Egg which gets noticed – and talked about. This is as true for staffing as it is for marketing products or services. The following is an idea that will help you attract, retain and engage employees. It is a way to help you be the Golden Egg of employers.

The Idea

Bob Sager

In any line of work, there are mundane tasks that must be done even though they are not especially enjoyable. This is a way to make those boring tasks MUCH more interesting and have your team be at least a little more excited about doing them.

1. Shoot video of folks performing ordinary, everyday tasks.
2. Develop a good number of these videos that feature multiple team members.

Once you have enough of these in your library, you can move to the next step. Drop the clips into a video production software. You can do this one at a time or as a compilation of many.

Then, using the software, speed the video up to 10X Speed or slow down to $\frac{1}{4}$ Speed. If you want to enhance the creativity, add sound and other special effects.

Show the completed video(s) at meetings, team building events, etc. You could also have these videos playing on a loop in a break room

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

or available on-demand on the company intranet.

These edited videos will become conversation starters and hence will help to build relationships and team cohesiveness. Importantly, your employees will be amused by this unexpected and delightful part of the work environment.

Knowing they might be the STAR of one of these amusing videos, people will grumble less – and, maybe, even be more enthusiastic – about doing mundane tasks.

Make Your Employees Stars

Using These for Marketing

Another productive use for similar videos is as a fun and different way to showcase the fact that your company gets things done.

For example, imagine a video of:

- A Roof Being Put on in Three Minutes
- A Cut, Color and Style Being Done in Two Minutes
- Four Tires Being Changed in About a Minute

Bob Sager

Share these videos on your social media pages, YouTube channel and your web site. As they are amusing and different than most of what is on social media, these videos will garner attention as well as likes, comments and shares. They will be a Golden Egg.

Bonus For Parents

You can use this same idea to inspire your kids to clean their room or do any other mundane chore they don't really want to do.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Bob Sager

Networking With Steve Jobs

*"My Golden Rule of Networking is simple:
Don't keep score." - Harvey Mackay*

Do you have a network? Or, do you just have a group of folks that know who you are and what you do?

Yes, there is a difference!

You have probably heard it said more than once; *Your Network is Your Net Worth*. That can be true, but it isn't necessarily. Early in my career I was told to memorize an Elevator Pitch and, at networking events, bombard as many people as possible with that pitch. I can attest from painful experience that doing that is a sure-fire way to crash and burn in business.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

In pursuing growth and success, I also learned that many networking events are awkward and uncomfortable. How DO you break the ice and start conversations?

Here are a couple of awkward ice breaker questions you should probably *never* use at a networking event. (or, really, anywhere)

- Why are you still single?
- Who do you like the least in this room?
- Has anyone told you that you should lose some weight?

Having experienced many awkward and unproductive networking events myself, I came up with this strategy to make networking events more comfortable and productive.

The Movie Achievers Club: A Creative Way to Make High Level Connections

At your office, host a Movie Night and show entrepreneurial, leadership and success-oriented movies. Some examples are:

- The biopic about Steve Jobs called, *Jobs*.

Bob Sager

- *Joy*, the story of the journey that led Joy Mangano to becoming an entrepreneur.
- *Hidden Figures*, an inspiring story about overcoming multiple obstacles to gain success.
- *Coach Carter*, based on true events, it is a story of real, caring leadership.

If your office is not big enough – or you don't have an office - find someone who has a venue with whom you can collaborate.

As the host, serve popcorn or other finger food. Have a business mixer beforehand and discussion period afterward. Depending on the length of the film, you may even have an intermission.

There is magic in watching movies. They evoke emotional responses in those viewing them. That shared emotional experience will help all involved resonate with one another and build more meaningful connections. As the person who organizes and hosts these

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

once-monthly events your stature is elevated.

Make The Movie Achiever's Club like a book club. Doing this will help everyone grow and improve. Here's how.

As the host, help make the discussion livelier and more productive by coming prepared with an initial set of thought-provoking questions about the movie and the characters. This will jump-start the conversation. Be prepared with questions, but don't feel the need to ask all of them. Once the conversation is started, let it flow and let others do most of the talking.

Even without dominating the conversation, by taking the lead and organizing these events you will be established as a person people know, like and trust.

You will build a true *network*.

An Online Alternative

An alternative to gathering in one place would be to find one of these subject matter

Bob Sager

movies that is available on demand via a streaming service and have an online watch party via Zoom, Facebook or LinkedIn Live or comparable.

As there are many on-demand streaming services, choose one that is free or that all the folks in your Movie Achievers Club are already subscribed to.

A Third Option

An alternative to either an in-person screening or an online watch party is a live discussion after everyone has watched the movie separately. The upside to this approach is the members of your club can watch the film at their convenience.

The downside to doing this is that much of the spontaneity, camaraderie and emotional connection that comes from the shared experience of watching together is lost.

Whichever of the three approaches you use, DO implement this method of business networking.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

It is vastly more fun and productive than other methods!

Bob Sager

Getting Hammered

*“Being memorable equals getting picked.” –
Jeffrey Pfeffer*

According to research, the average person sees upwards of 10,000 marketing messages per day! That much noise becomes a veritable cacophony.

In order to protect oneself from that madness, human beings have learned to be superb at one particular skill:

Ignoring Advertisements.

This idea is a way for you / your company to avoid being ignored. It is a super simple yet extremely effective marketing video. It works best for a person or organization that sells a tool of some sort. But, with a little imagination, it can be adapted to fit other industries. In fact, a job seeker could even use this to help stand out from the masses.

Bob Sager

Props You'll Need for the Video:

- A Board
- A Long Nail
- A Hammer
- A Loaf of French Bread

Before shooting the video, use the hammer to start the nail into the board. Drive it far enough in that it is stable enough to be struck. But, leave it mostly outside the board.

The Video

Fade into an opening shot that is a tight on the nail and then zoom out to a wider shot showing a person standing next to the board. This person first hammers on the nail with their bare hand. Then, in obvious pain, the hammerer very animatedly shakes their hand. (screaming encouraged)

The person reaches off camera and grabs...a loaf of French bread.

They begin hammering the nail with the French bread baguette.

Note: Be sure the bread gets severely shredded on the nail. Once the loaf is pretty

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

much obliterated, grunt in frustration. (not optional)

The person then reaches off camera and grabs...an actual hammer.

Then, hammer in hand, they easily hammer the nail into the board.

Closing shot:

The person looks right at the camera. With a big smile and a look of undeniable satisfaction they say:

“Isn’t it amazing how much easier things are when you have the right tool?”

On screen is then displayed:

Let’s talk about a _____ (your offering) that won’t frustrate you.

Or, alternatively:

Our _____ (your offering) won’t frustrate you.

If this video is being done by a job seeker, the onscreen message would say:

Hire me and you won't be frustrated.

Bob Sager

Finally, an appropriate Call to Action is displayed on screen.

Then, fade to black.

This concept for a simple and unforgettable advertising video is an idea that will help you thrive in the modern economy.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Bob Sager

Isn't it better to ATTRACT customers than chase them?

Introducing the SpearPoint Solutions
B2B Customer Attraction Initiative.

With it, businesses who serve other
businesses position themselves as a true
partner and not simply one of many
vendors.

**See the details, listen to recordings from
actual events and meet our Certified
Facilitators [by clicking here](#) or scanning
the QR code below.**



Wrapping Up

Artificial Intelligence can be daunting! Observing the speed and efficiency with which it accomplishes routine tasks is stunning. But, like other technological advancements that preceded it, human beings will find that, on the whole, A.I. will be a boon to productivity and prosperity.

What is necessary to ensure that prosperity happens for you is to learn and master 21st century skills. Chief among those is *Purposeful Creative Thinking*. It is a uniquely human skill that bots cannot compete with.

As the author, I hope you find the strategies and methods of *Purposeful Creative Thinking* contained in this volume to be valuable. By following the process outlined in the beginning of the book you will be on your way to thriving in the modern economy.

Bob Sager

Of noteworthiness is the fact that, often, in order to get the most out of any success principle, folks need instruction, guidance and feedback that cannot be obtained by reading only. Learning, implementing and maximizing the use of *Purposeful Creative Thinking* methods is no different. Should you find yourself and/or your organization in need of an outside influence, we at SpearPoint Solutions would be honored to play a part in training you so that you can Out-THINK the Competition.

To contact us, find me on LinkedIn at www.Linkedin.com/in/bobsager. You can also email us with questions or comments at support@spearpointonline.com

Thank you for reading!

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

Notes

Bob Sager

Notes

About the Author

The founder of SpearPoint Solutions, Bob Sager's professional background includes over three decades of experience in sales, leadership and training. Combined with Purposeful Creative Thinking, he uses that experience to develop business strategies that help organizations increase sales and margins. Additionally, Bob and his team of Certified Facilitators train individuals and organizations on these same methods of Purposeful Creative Thinking so they are better prepared to thrive in the modern economy.

Among other accomplishments, Bob is the inventor of the Purposeful Creative Thinking game, *What's the BIG Idea?*TM and author of the books, [Discovering Your](#)

Bob Sager

Greatness and 101 Freaking Brilliant Business Ideas.

More Freaking Brilliant Ideas

View the cool ready-to-ship sock designs, including the popular Pumpkin Spice design, in the [SpearPoint Solutions eCommerce Store](#).



[To view these and much more, click here.](#)