



Message + Market = Match

Or Discover What Your Unique Message Is, Who You Are

Most Meant to Serve

&

What YOUR People Most Want

to Buy from YOU...

Hey there!

I'm so looking forward to sharing this playbook with you!

Know that I greatly admire and respect you for making the investment in yourself and your business to ramp-up your knowledge and skills to use the Internet to get more clients and customers, and create multiple leveraged streams of income, all so you can enjoy the life you desire and deserve.

You have a lot to look forward to with the program, but first, let's be sure we have a strong foundation in place.

I encourage you to complete the exercises that resonate the most with you so you can get the most value from the content we'll be covering together. Some of the exercises are super-simple and some are more involved – and there is no need to do them all - but none of them are difficult – I promise. They will help you create the critical foundation upon which to build a successful and sustainable business.

So, let's jump right in...

Cheers,



PS: As always, if you have questions, please email us at support@aliciaforest.com

The Online Business Breakthrough Formula™

Let me introduce you to the formula that took my seriously struggling coaching business to a multiple 6-figure company. Just because it's simple, doesn't mean it's not powerful. The power of it is actually in its simplicity.

The Online Business Breakthrough Formula™

**Your Unique Message + Your Niche
+ Your Niche's Problem + Your Solution Packaged =
Your Profitable Product/Program/Service**

What's Your Unique Message?

The Online Business Breakthrough Formula™

Your Unique Message + Your Niche + Your Niche's Problem + Your Solution Packaged =
Your Profitable Product/Program

You may wonder what your “unique message” has to do with building your business. It's simple, really...

If you come from an authentic place, success is almost guaranteed.

So why not set yourself up for success from the beginning and find that authentic place for you?

I'm going to share something with you that I usually do in-depth with my private clients. It's called your Center of Authenticity.

If you're just starting out in your business and need to truly make yourself and your business stand out from the crowd, then answering this question will move you leaps towards that end. If you are already in business for yourself, answering this question will help you define the benefits of your services from a truly authentic place that will not only make you more memorable, but will also draw more of those ideal clients and customers to you.



Your Center of Authenticity

Answer the following question on Worksheet #1:

'What has happened in your life, good or bad, that would be the most useful to share with others?'

Make sure you write down your answer. Your answer to that question is your Center of Authenticity, and offering whatever it is that comes up for you in that answer is one of the easiest roads to building your own successful and sustainable business. And of course, this will also help you as you further define your niche.

Seth's Godin's book, *All Marketers Are Liars*, talks about how marketing is really storytelling. Not made-up stories, mind you, but authentic stories that help sell the product or service being marketed.

Think about your story, your life as it has unfolded up to today, and answer the following questions:

1. How did you get where you are today?
2. What event(s) caused you to be on the path you are on?
3. What reason(s) do you do what you do (or what you want to do)?

If you already know what it is that you want to offer to the world and who you want to

offer it to, then you might not feel the need to answer the Center of Authenticity question, but I encourage you to do so. Once you have a compelling answer to this question and have weaved a story around it that you can share with others, you will be creating a connection with them that simply doesn't come from saying, "I'm an author and a speaker" or "I'm a life coach" or "I'm a virtual assistant".

Because most likely whatever service/product/program you are providing, there was a path that led you to want to do what you do - and people are very interested in that. Telling people your story - how you got to where you are and why you are doing what you do - makes them feel connected to you. It helps them get to know you, learn to like you, and trust that you are who you say you are.

And you know that most people only buy things from people they know, like and trust, right?

To help get your storytelling juices going, here's my answer to the Center of Authenticity question, my story:

My name is Alicia Forest and perhaps the best way for me to explain what I do is to share a defining moment in my life.

In 2001, I was fired from a job I was quite attached to, my marriage fell apart, my dad was diagnosed with cancer, and my brother was getting married to a woman I had never met - in Finland.

On that trip to Finland, standing with my father on a street corner in the middle of nowhere, the weight of it all crashed in, and I lost it. Now, I am the daughter of a long line of longshoreman, and losing it is not part of our make-up. My father put his arm around me, pulling me close, but he didn't know what to say. And if you knew my father, you'd know how unusual that was. But that was the moment that led me to where I am

today. When I lost everything I had invested my heart and soul into, and even the strongest man I knew didn't know how to help me, I understood in that moment how very responsible I was for my life, as it was then and how it would be in the future.

So, I went back to square one. I got divorced, started my own business, and am very pleased to say that my dad's doing great.

Since then, I have found and married the love of my life, we've started our own family, and I continue to run a very successful and fulfilling coaching and company that I love that I've very purposefully designed around my life and what's most important to me.

As a result of these experiences, I decided that I would dedicate the rest of my professional life to helping others create their own successful and sustainable businesses, designed around what's most important to them, by sharing all that I've learned and by being a champion for their dream.



What's your story? Write it down on Worksheet #2.

Now let's take your answer to the C of A question to help you articulate what you do to others.

Sometimes it's difficult to come up with an answer to the "So, what do you do?" question that is both exciting and interesting. In order to entice people to want to know more about your work, whether they are a potential client or not (but they probably know someone who could be), you want to leave them with a memorable experience.

You want to be able to answer this question with a simple but compelling statement so they will ask the next question, "Really? Tell me more..."

Remember, when people are looking to hire someone, they really don't care what you call yourself - they just want to know that you can solve their problem.

For example, if you're a massage therapist, saying, "I'm a massage therapist" is not particularly compelling. The person asking you already has their own idea of what a massage therapist is and does. However, saying, "I help stressed-out men and women remember what it feels like to be relaxed and refreshed, instead of frazzled and wiped out all the time," may just prompt them to ask, "Really? Tell me more..."

Ask your current clients and customers what the benefits are that they receive from working with you or from being in your programs or using your products. You may be surprised by their answers, and those answers will help you craft a compelling answer to the "What do you do?" question. When you ask your clients this question, ask them to think past the superficial. Ask them to get to the root of what value your service gives to their lives. Ask them to describe the benefits and results that they get from working with you.

If you're new in business and you don't have current clients to ask this question to, ask your colleagues or your coach to help you flesh it out.



Go to Worksheet #3 to write down the benefits and value your clients receive from you. If you don't have clients yet, what benefits and value are you committed to your future clients receiving from you?

Now that you know your story and have gathered what value your clients receive from you, you can create your 30-second introduction. Your 30-second intro is your compelling and concise answer to the “So, what do you do?” question.

I work on a longer “conversational” version with my private clients, but this one comes in handy for email signatures and in certain brief exchanges, and it’s actually easier to start out with as well.

Here are two versions of mine that I use depending on the audience:

- I teach women entrepreneurs how to design a priority-based, highly profitable business in less than part-time hours.
- I mentor women entrepreneurs to breakthrough to 6 figures and beyond so they can live the life they ache for.

More Examples:

“I teach entrepreneurs who are struggling with their marketing attract more clients so that they can make more money with their business.”

“I work with executives who are frustrated with their current career path or keep getting passed over for promotion by helping them reposition their strengths and talents and sharpen their interviewing skills so they get a better paying, more exciting job that they love.”

“I help business owners who never have enough time to weed through job applications to hire the right team members by providing a done-for-you hiring service that matches the right person to the job so that they can focus on running and growing their business.”



Go to Worksheet #4 and write your 30-second intro.

Then, when someone next asks you what you do, try telling your story or giving your 30-second intro, whichever seems more appropriate instead of saying, "I'm a _____." Make a mental note of what kind of reactions and connections you make. Then tweak as necessary until you devise an answer that feels and sounds really "right" to you. You'll know when you've hit it.

If it's easier for you to write your 30-second intro first, then go right ahead. Then write your Center of Authenticity story.

With the work you've completed so far, you have created and clarified your unique and compelling message. Please don't skip these beginning exercises because they lay the foundation for what follows. And know that clarifying your message and your niche is an ever-evolving process!

Discover and Define Your Niche ~ Or Who Are You Most Meant to Serve?

Your mission is where the world's deepest hunger and your heart's greatest gladness intersect. ~ Richard Bolles

The Online Business Breakthrough Formula™

**Your Unique Message + Your Niche + Your Niche's Problem + Your Solution Packaged =
Your Profitable Product/Program/Service**

Let's get something out of the way right now:

I know you may be afraid to choose a niche for your product or service. I know there can be the fear that you're limiting your business if you narrow your niche down too much, but that simply isn't true. Believe me, it's so much easier and profitable to market to a smaller portion of the market (just think how many people there are in the world!) than to try to be all things to all people. And you'll be amazed to find out that you actually open yourself up to possibilities that would not have come up had your focus been all over the map.

Next let me say that lots of new business owners struggle with this issue. All you want to do is give your gifts to the world, and making decisions that make you feel as though you are saying "no" to a segment of the world may not feel right to you. But by choosing to focus on a certain segment of the population, you are ensuring that your work actually gets out there, and you will be astounded at what comes your way, including faster and easier business growth.

For example, even though my niche is entrepreneurs, once I started defining my offerings for and to women coaches/consultants, my business took off. Currently, I have about 80% coaches, and 20% other entrepreneurs as clients. Once I started focusing my marketing efforts on my niche, all these other potential clients (who are not specifically coaches/consultants – or women ;-)) showed up. I promise this will happen for you. You just need to keep putting your work out there, just in a more focused and consistent way.

When you doubt the power of focusing your efforts, read this list:

1. Your marketing gets a whole lot easier.
2. It's much easier for people (your clients) to talk about you because they understand that you do one basic thing for one group of people.
3. It's much easier for clients and colleagues to refer you for the same reason as #2.
4. It's much easier to build strategic alliances/joint ventures and partnerships.
5. It's much easier to become and be considered an expert at what you do.
6. Other opportunities WILL present themselves.

If you keep in mind the infinite abundance of the Universe, understanding that you can't (nor should you) serve everyone is a bit easier.

Think about the billions of people in the world. Even if you wanted to, you couldn't possibly serve all of them – and you certainly couldn't please even the smallest percentage. Trying to do so really dilutes your genius work, your best work, instead of allowing it to truly help those people you are meant to serve – your niche.

When you focus your efforts and energy on one target market, you are directing the Universe to help draw those ideal clients to you. When you continue to put yourself out there with one clear message, those ideal clients and customers will eventually hear it and seek you out. Exciting, isn't it?

Just one more thing – even if you already have a niche, don't skip this step. It very likely

will help you define it even further, which will ultimately create a more profitable business for you.

Let's get started...

NOTE: This is a lengthy section because most entrepreneurs seem to get stuck here, so I wanted to make sure I gave you several different ways for defining your niche. They build one upon the other, but you can also do only the exercises that resonate – or mix and match, giving you numerous ways to blast through this stuck point!

How do you select and narrow a niche?

Here are 8 proven strategies you can use to select and narrow a niche. We'll cover all 8 in this section, so the odds are in your favor that if you don't know who you're best suited to serve, you will soon!

1. Quick and Dirty Way to a Niche
2. Quick and Dirty Way to a Niche II
3. Do Some Inner Investigation
4. Use Your Past Experience as a Springboard
5. Develop Your Passion into Your Unique Business
6. Follow Your Dreams, Then Show Others How to do the Same
7. Identify Your Ideal Client
8. Still Stuck?

Sidenote: A question I'm often asked is if it's ok to have more than one niche. Yes, but you need to be very clear about each of them so potential clients are not confused.

As you are defining your niche, remember that your niche has to be deep enough to support your business. In other words, there needs to be a viable market for your product or service. So, yes, you want to narrow your niche as much as you can, but you will also need to make sure that there are enough clients or customers to support and sustain your business now and into the future.

Exercise: Put Your Thinking Cap On...

Think about and answer the following questions. Don't worry about coming up with the perfect answers; just jot down anything that comes to mind and see where that leads you.

- ✚ What is it that you want to become known for?
- ✚ How do you become one **in** a million, instead of one **of** a million?
- ✚ What makes you distinctive from the rest?
- ✚ What makes you stand out from the crowd?
- ✚ Why do people choose you?
- ✚ Who are you best suited to serve and why?



Use Worksheet #5 to answer these questions to get your creative juices flowing.

Let's dig deeper...

What is a Niche? And how do I start finding mine?

There's no shortage of information out there about how to define your niche. But let's keep it simple to start. The following is the basic definition of what you need to know to define your niche:

A niche is a group of people who:

- 1. have common issues and problems, and who**
- 2. hang out together in some organized fashion.**

Makes sense, right? Now, if you want to use a few more criteria that will help you narrow down the best niche to focus your efforts on, a more profitable niche will also have:

3. a membership list

Meaning, there is an association, organization, Facebook Group(s), LinkedIn Group(s), etc. attached to it, with preferably a large number of members (but not too large – see #4).

For example:

Association of Women Entrepreneurs <http://aofwe.com>

American Veterinarian Medical Association <https://www.avma.org>

4. Strong niches are also big, but not TOO big.

For example, entrepreneurs in general is too big of a niche. They have many different challenges and needs to be met, in many different segments of that market. If you can't identify a specific problem(s) to be solved, it will make your work that much more difficult. It will make marketing a lot harder, and it will be challenging at best to attract those ideal clients to you.

Sidenote: In building your business online, having a clearly defined niche is particularly important because the words you use to describe who it is that you work with, your chosen niche, become your "keywords".

Keywords are how people find you online, so they are very important.

The 8 Strategies to Defining Your Niche

Strategy 1: Quick & Dirty Way to a Niche

a. Give yourself some labels.



Just to get your mind thinking in the right direction, try this exercise. Think of all the roles you play in your life and write them on Worksheet #6.

For example, here are some of my labels:

Woman

Business owner

Certified SCUBA Diver

Married

Mother of 2

Singer

Marketing Expert

Irish-American

Former teacher to juvenile delinquents

Aries

Redhead

Licensed Boater

Outlander Fan

Oracle Card Reader

So, what are your labels? Make a list on Worksheet #6.

b. Review your answer to the Center of Authenticity question.

'What has happened in your life, good or bad, that would be most useful to share with others?'

This is a great question for you to start defining a potential niche. Review your answer on Worksheet #3.

c. Go to <http://www.keywordspy.com>

KeywordSpy is a free keyword research tool for finding the perfect set of keywords for your business web pages.

Start playing with it by entering a keyword or keyword phrase that describes the niche you're interested in serving. Use the work you've done so far as a jumping off point.

Your results will show how many searches are made on that particular keyword or keyword phrase a month.

For example, I just typed in 'small business marketing' and found 90,500 searches on that term per month.



Keep doing this for several of your keywords and keyword phrases and jot down how many searches were done on each of them on Worksheet #7.

You want to see about 30,000 searches on your keyword or keyword phrases to decide whether it has the potential to be a great niche for you.

With the work you've completed so far, you should at least have a general idea of the direction you're heading in for a very good niche for your business. And it may still be feeling fuzzy for you at this point, so to help you gain more clarity around it, move on to Strategy 2.

Strategy 2: Quick & Dirty Way to a Niche II

1. Choose a profession.

Pick a profession: massage therapists, dentists, maid service, plumbers, veterinarians.

2. Research where they gather.

Visit online discussion and networking groups at:

Google: <http://groups.google.com>

Facebook: www.facebook.com

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com

Then search the categories to find people in the profession you've chosen. Just enter the name of the profession in the search box and see what comes up.

You can use the same technique to find organizations and associations of your potential niche.

Go to www.google.com and search on "profession name + association" (for example, "healing arts association"). This is where you can find if your chosen profession has the membership list we covered earlier.



So you don't have to try to remember what you find with your research, organize the information by jotting notes on Worksheet #8.

Continue this research for as many potential niches as you want. Some groups of people will feel more "right" to you than others, so put a star next to those ones. Also, when you find a group that seems like a really good fit or that you want to investigate further, save the web page URL in your favorites folder in your browser and jot down the URL on Worksheet #8.

You want to be able to identify at least 10,000 people within a group that you can join in order to have enough depth and breadth to build a business around it. The 10k can come from more than one group/membership/organization/association, so if you find two or three organized groups that add up to approximately 10,000 members, you've got a viable niche to work with.

3. Participate in discussions on their lists/groups/boards/blogs

Join the groups that most interest you, begin reading the discussions/posts, and start posting questions as well as answers to the questions posted by others. Get involved in the conversation.

Now you've accomplished three things:

1. You have become knowledgeable about this niche.
2. You've discovered how to find and reach them.
3. You've decided it's a viable niche to build a business around.

So, basically, you've chosen a niche! But to get a better idea of who your ideal client is within that niche, continue on to Strategy 3.

Strategy 3: Do Some Inner Investigation

You probably have already gone through exercises similar to this one. But I encourage you to give this one a whirl. Try to respond from your gut, and not your mind, and see what comes up for you.

And just a note: try to remember that you are already living your purpose, even if you can't see that from where you're at right now.

Have you ever wondered what your purpose is? Of course you have. We all have – at least those of us who haven't known it since birth. We all want to know and believe we're here for a reason, that we do have a purpose to serve.

There was likely a point in your life where you knew (or thought you knew) what your mission on Earth was, but it seems like Life may have thrown you off-course.

But somewhere in you is the knowledge of why you're here... and your "why" is as unique as you are.

You see, there are people, many people, who need you, who need to hear your message, because they can only hear it from you, in the way that only you, as a unique being, can put it out there.

So, right now, think about your previous clients. (If you don't have any previous clients, then think about the people in your life whom you've helped).



On Worksheet #9, describe each of them in detail. Put a star next to any

commonalities among them. From what profession did your most enjoyable clients come from? What type of client seems to come to your door? What challenges do they share?

Next, write down your work history. What industry or business were you in? Who were your customers? Take a look at your resume and see if anything jumps out at you.

Sometimes just doing simple exercises as this can cause an “aha” moment, where the group you're supposed to serve becomes very clear.

It could be that your niche is actually bigger than what you've been considering. Or it may be that it's a bit smaller, too.

Add any thoughts that come up for you on Worksheet #9.

Strategy 4: Use Your Past Experience as a Springboard

Let's take a deeper look at some of your initial thoughts from Strategy 3.

Many people start a business related to their past job experience and skills. If you've enjoyed the work you currently do or have done in the past, know that you can create your own business from that.

And if you don't quite know what you want to do (your business) or with whom you want to do business (your niche), one way to discover both is to take a look into your past to see what things and people have interested you over the course of your life. This will help you to access potential areas where you could offer your work.

So many of us had dreams when we were children about who and what we wanted to be. Sometimes those dreams weren't encouraged, and other times they fell by the wayside due to circumstances beyond our control.

Let's revisit those dreams now:



Go to Worksheet #10 to work on the following exercises:

Step 1a. Carve your life into 5 year increments and answer the following questions for each:

- What did you love to do? (draw, color, pretend to be a teacher)
- What were your favorite toys, activities, hobbies, interests, etc.? (coloring books, skating, being on or near the water)
- Who did you do those favorite things with? (self, lots of friends, Dad)
- Who did you admire? (Mom, a certain movie star)
- What did you want to be when you grew up (at each age, if it changed)?

Step 1b. Think about the jobs you've had at each stage of your life and answer these questions:

- What did you love about the work itself?
- What did you not love about the work itself?
- What was it about the structure of where you worked that you enjoyed? (time off, flexible work hours, supportive colleagues)
- What was it about the structure of where you worked that you did not enjoy? (scheduled hours, limited time off, unsupportive environment)

Answering these questions will help you define what you do and don't want in your own business.

Step 2. From the work you did above, make a list of 20 things you like to do, that are appealing, challenging and interesting to you, whether or not you are doing them currently.

Step 3. Now write 10 things that were positive about your work experiences, and that you would like to incorporate into your own business.

Step 4: Read through what you've written and notice what and who stands out for you. Your "what" has the potential to be the area in which you give your gifts to the world. Your "who" has the potential to be your niche. Jot those down here as you review what you've written.



BONUS ~ Go to Worksheet #11 to do the following:

Here are some additional ways you can sort out your niche:

1. Make a list of the things you do best and the skills implicit in each of them.
2. List your achievements and accomplishments.
3. Identify the most important lessons you have learned in life.
4. Look for patterns that reveal your style or approach in resolving problems.
5. What do people compliment you on most often?
6. What do others often ask you to help them with?
7. What industries or types of companies do you have contacts and experience in?
8. What types of clients or customers do you most enjoy working with?

You can divide your answers into several categories to help you extract a niche from your past experience. On Worksheet #11, list your Personal Qualities, Specific Knowledge, Situational Expertise, Personal Passions, and Personal Values.

Rediscovering a dream or a passion, or simply realizing what work is meaningful and important to you will move you forward in your path to defining the kind of business you want to have as well as the type of people you want to serve. It's an inspiring process that should ignite some excitement for you!

Strategy 5: Develop Your Passion into Your Unique Business

In Strategy 4, you identified a number of areas that are both meaningful and important to you. Wouldn't it be fantastic to develop a business from your passion?

What is it that you would love to give to the world? Is it your artwork? Is it your knowledge having gone through something unpleasant and come out on the other side stronger and wiser for it? Is it a product or service that you know would help other people live a better life, make more money, or ease their stress?

Are you passionate about horses and want to open your own boarding and training facility? Or are you passionate about having a clean house and want to write and publish a book full of tips to help others keep their homes neat as a pin? Have you been a volunteer? What parts of your volunteer work did you truly enjoy? Was it public relations, event planning, financial management? What about those can you envision as a business?



Go to Worksheet #12 and work on the following exercises.

Step 1. Think about those passions, hobbies or interests you wrote about in Strategy 4.

Step 2. Choose one or two that most resonate with you. Write those down on the worksheet.

Step 3. Pull each of them apart until you get down to the smallest version of what they can be. Jot down those down on the worksheet.

For example, let's say your passion is cooking and your ultimate dream is to write and publish a cookbook, but the task seems too daunting at the moment and you know little about publishing.

You could start small by offering cooking classes in your home. This will build your confidence and your credibility, as well as give you real world experience about what works and doesn't work for the average cook, which will be invaluable for that cookbook you want to write. Having a successful track record as a cooking instructor will also help you immensely when you pitch your book to a publishing house, if you decided to go the traditional publishing route.

You can easily build a business online from this example, by offering a content-rich newsletter, hosting a membership site, or offering parts of the book as mini-ebook, for example.

Step 4: What is one small step you can take in the direction of your dream? Write it down on Worksheet #12.

As you travel on this journey, each small step will allow you to further define what it is that you want and don't want. Your niche, your area of expertise, and the audience with whom you wish to share that expertise will unfold.

I promise that if you take that first step, the inspiration and momentum will build. Each small step will lead to the next, and with patience and persistence, you will get there.

Strategy 6: Follow Your Dreams, then Show Others How to Do the Same

Don't you love stories about people who have followed their dreams and turned them into

reality? I particularly love to hear stories about people who have developed a dream into a successful business. Not only are they so inspiring, but they prove that you can do it too.

In 2001, my dream was to build a part-time yet profitable successful business from home before my husband and I started our family, and I have done just that. I didn't do it overnight, by any means, and I learned a lot along the way. And I've been showing others how to do the same ever since.

Are you on your way to turning your dream into a reality? What are you doing now that you can take the experiences and knowledge you've gained and turn into a profit-center for you?

Your niche would include others just like you (which makes them easy to describe). For example, say you are writing articles on a fairly consistent basis for a handful of publishers in a certain industry. You may not be where you eventually want to get to (being assigned writing gigs as opposed to writing query letters, for example) but you do have the knowledge and experience that got you to the point of success you are currently enjoying. Why not package that wisdom into a product or service to offer to others? You could host a website with tools and resources for that niche and charge a membership fee. Or you could write and sell an e-book about the things you wished you had known (even 10-page e-books can be profitable). Or you could write and self-publish a step-by-step book based on your experiences and offer that to your niche.



Go to Worksheet #13 to develop a niche from something you already know by the following steps.

Step 1. Think about what you wrote down for Strategy 5 about the work you do or have done, the knowledge you've gained, and the experiences you've had.

Step 2. Choose one or two things that you feel you could share with others, having “been there, done that.” Write them on Worksheet #13.

Step 3. Brainstorm how you can develop those things into a business. Jot down your ideas on Worksheet #13.

Step 4: Choose one or two of those ideas and start exploring your options for developing them.

As I've said before, the narrower your niche, the easier it will be to market your product or service. If you start out with something small, like an e-book about “10 Things You Need to Know About...(fill in your expertise),” you'll be able to market this to a niche that is clearly defined for you already. Who are the people in that niche? They are You...when you were where they are now. So share what you know. There are people out there just waiting for your gift.

Strategy 7: Identify Your Ideal Client/Customer

Another way to help define your niche is to identify your Ideal Client/Customers.

If you've ever had a client/customer who was more trouble than they were worth, then you know how important it is to create an Ideal Client profile and boundaries around whom you will and will not do business with.

Maybe you've had a client/customer who was constantly on the phone to you, never satisfied with your product or service, but just kept coming back to complain. Maybe you've had a client/customer who didn't pay on time – ever. Maybe you've had a client/customer who demanded far more than you were offering. You might even remember an inkling from the first time this person came into your business that something wasn't quite right.

One way to avoid situations like these is to create your Ideal Client/Customer Profile, and refer to it every time someone wants to do business with you.



Go to Worksheet #14 to

...

3. Special features of my business include...
4. Specific benefits of my business to my clients are...
5. The basic message I share with my clients is...
6. What makes my business irresistible is make an Ideal Client/Customer Wish List.

As you do this exercise, visualize your Ideal Client/Customer. Who is it that you want to do business with? Be specific about the kind of people you want to serve.

Step 1. Start with the basics. What are the basic characteristics of your Ideal Client/Customer? For example, what are their demographics - gender, age, salary, education, location, etc. Write those down on Worksheet #14.

Step 2. Who are your clients/customers? For example, are they artists, work-at-home moms, small businesses, dentists, restaurants, etc. Write it down on Worksheet #14.

Step 3. What are the values of your clients/customers? If you currently have clients/customers, think about the things that you enjoy the most about them. For example, are they fun to do business with, do they seem to like what they do, are they honest and reliable, etc. Write those values down in Worksheet #14.

Step 4. What do your clients/customers do? For example, are they working on

getting to the next place in their career, are they trying to build a business of their own and need and want to sell your product, do they serve the same niche you do, etc. Write it down on Worksheet #14.

Step 5. How do your clients/customers respond to you? For example, are they respectful and considerate in communication with you, do they rave about your services, do you feel appreciated by them, do they regard you as an expert, etc. Write it down on Worksheet #14.

Step 6. How do your clients/customers treat you? For example, do they pay on time, are they on time for meetings, do they have reasonable expectations of you, etc. Write it down on Worksheet #14.

Step 7. What is it like working with your clients/customers? For example, do you look forward to interacting with them, do you want to help them succeed, are you stimulated by the work you do together, etc. Write it down on Worksheet #14.

Step 8: Take what you've written and craft a paragraph or two that describes your Ideal Client/Customer on Worksheet #15. This is your Ideal Client/Customer Profile.

Bonus Step: Review your current client list against this Ideal Profile. You may find that perhaps you need to let a few clients/customers go. This will create the space for those clients/customers who are ideal for you. For any new clients/customers, make sure you use your Profile as your guide before you decide to do business with them.

Bonus Exercise: Design your ideal business in the same way by answering the following questions:

1. I work with people who are...want...can...

2. I specialize in the following areas of my industry...
7. Services that I offer that most of my competitors do not include...
8. Referral sources who've agreed to send me X# of clients/customers are...
9. I make X amount of money each month
10. I work an average of X hours per week

Once you are clear about who your ideal clients are (and who they are not), you put that intention out into the Universe to attract those clients to you. They are your Ideal Niche. By developing this profile, your niche becomes much easier to describe to others. Marketing, reaching out to those whom you want to serve, becomes exciting and intriguing as you seek out your Ideal Client/Customer, instead of a frustrating and overwhelming process.

Strategy 8: Still Stuck?

As I said at the beginning of this section, lots of new business owners get stuck here more than anywhere else when building their business.

So if you've reached this point and you still feel stuck on your niche, let's try something different.

Although defining your niche usually comes before discovering what it is that they want (what problems they are having that they want help solving), sometimes it helps to let things happen backwards.

For example, if you work with clients from diverse groups, is there a common issue that most of them seem to grapple with?

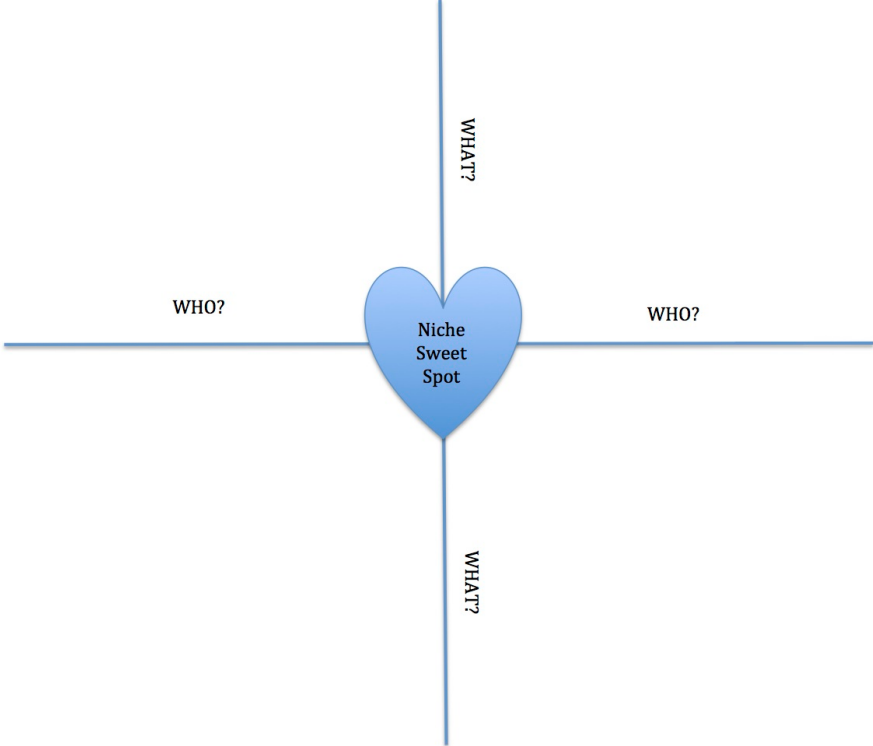
Does time management seem to be a common theme, or work-life balance, or lack of understanding of technology, etc.? What problem do you seem to be helping to solve most often?

This can help to lead to defining a niche for your business.

You now have 8 proven and strategic ways for discovering and defining your niche for your ideal business. Do the work, see what comes up for you, follow your instincts, your heart, your gut, and your desires, because that is what will build a successful and sustainable business for you.

Your Task: Work the strategies until you gain clarity around your niche. But don't wait for it to be perfect or exact, just trust your feelings around it. And remember, your niche will continue to evolve and be defined as you evolve and your business becomes more defined.

At the end of this step, you should be able to fill-in this visual representation below:



© Alicia Forest International | All Rights Reserved

Next steps...

Congratulations for investing the time and energy necessary to take the first step in creating a solid foundation for your successful online business!

If you'd like to take your work here and apply it to the next part of the formula, which is discovering what your niche most wants to buy from you (Your Solution Packaged), stay tuned! We'll be in touch with more on how you can do that soon!

The Online Business Breakthrough Formula™

**Your Unique Message + Your Niche + Your Niche's Problem + Your Solution
Packaged = Your Profitable Product/Program/Service**