

She Grew A Consulting Business One Door At A Time

This article was written and published by ConvertedU and Leadpages to help others learn and get inspired by these transformational stories from Conversion Marketing Certified Professionals.

<https://www.convertedu.com/success-stories/kathy-colaiacovo/>

Introduction

Starting a business because someone read a newspaper article and said, “You should do this, you’d be really good at it,” might seem whimsical to some, but to Kathy Colaiacovo of [Pepper it Marketing](#), it made perfect sense.

She listened, did her homework, and started a business in 2008 as a virtual assistant. “And it grew very fast,” recalled Kathy, from Halifax, Nova Scotia on the Atlantic Ocean. That was the first of many opportunities Kathy would hear about and show up for in the months and years to come. Each door she opened led to a new wrinkle or an exciting expansion of her business model, followed by greater and greater success.

“If opportunity knocked, I would always try to answer the door and see where it would take me.”



Challenge: How Does a University Dropout with Social Anxiety Succeed in Getting a VA Business Off the Ground?

Once Kathy opened that first door, she heard another knock. This one led her to take part in a government program designed to help entrepreneurs get off the ground fast. The program provided weekly training sessions and the opportunity to work with an advisor. All of which Kathy devoured and excelled at. There was, however, one required aspect that instilled fear and trepidation: twice-a-month networking events.

“As someone who dropped out of the university because of social anxiety, that was my big terror barrier that I didn’t think I would cross,” Kathy recalled. But cross it she did - and how!

Kathy didn’t just overcome her social anxiety terror barrier, she slayed it! She took to social media, especially Twitter and within the first couple of months of starting her business she landed a client with a single tweet.

One tweet?

“Yep, 140 characters landed me a contract!”

That was the beginning, and things began to mushroom quickly from there. For someone who was terrified of socializing and networking with people, Kathy actually built her entire VA business by networking online with those she didn’t know, and rarely even met.



“I’m here in Nova Scotia and 75% of my clients have been, from day one, from the States. And out of hundreds of clients that I’ve dealt with over the years, I’ve probably only met, in person, about 5% of them.”

Opportunity continued to knock, and knock...

...and Kathy continued to open the doors and slay her dragons:

- She got nominated to the board of directors for the International Virtual Assistants Association ([IVAA](#)). And a couple years later she got elected as their president.
- She answered a call from the management team at Bob Proctor’s [Proctor Gallagher Institute](#) to work with them as a virtual assistant specialist. And soon thereafter began providing services as needed to help their clients implement their plans learned from Bob’s program.
- She transformed her business model from being a one-person VA shop to a 10-person practice doing six-figures year-after-year with clients all over the world. Not only that, she’s gone from performing traditional VA work to providing strategic online marketing consulting and support.

Through all of these experiences, Kathy’s journey to higher growth was characterized by a two-step process: learn, then apply. Time and time again, she’d implement the techniques first to her own business to see how they’d perform before helping her clients to succeed.

Everything was humming along. Her business was prospering, and her clients were happy with the results they were getting. Still, Kathy’s never been one to settle or rest on her achievements.



So once she heard about a new course Leadpages was offering to help consultants increase conversions across the entire conversion marketing lifecycle, it was like hearing that familiar knock-knock-knock on the door of opportunity. And just like she'd done so many times before, she opened that door to see where it might lead.

Solution: Grab Hold of Some 10x Thinking and Doing From Leadpages Conversion Marketing Certification Training

A core value to Leadpages growth is 10x thinking. It's constantly asking questions like, "How can we grow blog subscribers by 10x?" Or, "How can we help our customers 10x their revenue?"

10x thinking resonated with Kathy, too. "It was the type of thing I wanted to do for myself and for my business," Kathy said. Her business was growing and evolving and she wanted to put into place new services for her clients.

She saw the Conversion Marketing Training and Certification Program as a perfect fit to take her business to the next, 10x level.

"Once I got focused and saw the value of the program, I realized I could take what I was learning and turn it into practical tools, intake forms or how-to-sheets for my clients," said Kathy. And that's just what she did.

One of the things Kathy created from the program is a Call-To-Action Document for every client's lead generation offer. It's a simple text document that lists out their lead magnet, Leadbox code, what the call-to-action might be in the article, etc. "It gives us a



little system that makes everything associated with an offer a lot easier to implement,” said Kathy.

10x thinking, for sure.

“There are lots of pieces in the training,” she points out, “that lends itself to creating tools and systems you can actually use for yourself - print it out, fill it out, and use it and do it. A lot of people will look at some of those pieces that are in the training and think, ‘Okay, that’s what you should do,’ but never actually do it.”

Not exactly 10x doing.

“One of my pieces of advice to anybody going through the training is to be really clear about setting aside definitive time in your schedule...to sit down and do it, do the work of the course.”

So it should then come as no surprise, 10x thinking and doing can often lead to 10x results.

Results: Systems and Blueprints for Ongoing Success

“The growth that I’ve seen in my business has been fabulous. For example, my email list has grown by over 200%, and I’ve achieved a 30% conversion rate of post-webinar offer sign-ups.”



Along with achieving terrific post-webinar conversion rates, phenomenal growth of her email list, and many other results, Kathy built repeatable systems and blueprints for helping her work with clients much more effectively.

In an 18-month period with one client, Kathy's guidance helped them build their Email list by more than 3,000%, their Facebook community by 900%, and their Twitter followers by 620%.

Another client worked with Kathy and in their first 60 days they saw an increase in subscribers of more than 51%, visits to their lead generation page increased by 75% with 46% as new visitors.

These results, and much more like them, serve as a striking validation of her skill and decision to move completely away from doing the work of a VA to doing online marketing strategy consulting, and support.

“A lot of the work I do now with people is about helping them put their marketing plans together so they know and understand what they need to do and how to do it.”

She calls it “Community Building.” It's a systematic process of connecting more and more people through compelling content, calls-to-action, lead magnets, lead nurturing emails, and compelling offers. All of which works together for building trust and creating demand for products and services.

She is, in fact, doing what Kathy has always known how to do best: open up the doors of opportunity and see where they'll take you. Only now she's doing it as an ever-



learning, always-evolving and improving virtual marketing director with a team of savvy virtual marketing specialists utilizing her systems and blueprints for success.

Last I heard, Kathy was stepping back, doing some homework and preparing to lay out a plan for new services. “Just sort of upgrading what I have, and changing a little bit of what I have in place now and going on from there,” said Kathy in a matter-of-fact manner.

Uh, huh.

I’m guessing someone read an article and said, “Hey, Kathy, you should try helping people set up their entire marketing funnel, I bet you’d be good at it.”

Yep, I bet she’d be good at it too.

Epilogue

It should be no surprise that Kathy followed through on her plans to change things up a bit and upgrade her service offerings. Several months later, she launched the **Pepper It Marketing Funnel Blueprint**.

The Blueprint has options for clients from Creating the Plan and Blueprint to offering Copy and Content Packages.

See, I told you she would do it. I now wonder what the next knock on the door will bring.

