

30-Day Digi-Scrap Business Challenge

Summary Document

Presented by:

Digital Scrapbook Designer Professionals

DSD-Pro.com

Resources for Digital Scrapbook Entrepreneurs

A compilation of the blog posts and comments made
during our challenge from 1 Sept – 31 Sept 2007



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We launched a [30-Day Digi-Scrap Business Challenge](#) on September 1, 2007. The result of the challenge is a list of tips from DSD-Professionals willing to jump in and do some peer coaching with other digi-scrappers. Also a part of the challenge is a set of mini-taskers designed to offer digi-scrap business owners a list of items they can do to help increase their income.

You can see all the blog entries on this subject by going to our page tagged with "[30-day-business-challenge](#)" Below are the tips and mini-taskers offered and links to the places where you can find them, along with the name of the mentor who shared the information.

Mini-Taskers

1. [Email a new member of your website](#) and thank them for signing up or commenting and tell them that you're looking forward to further interactions.
2. [Develop or add to a tips section](#) in one or more of the delivery systems you have that reaches your customers.
3. [Market your businesses](#) by accomplishing at least one thing that will help folks know who you are, what you do, and where they can get more info about your business.
4. [Write a review](#) of something for your readers. [Join a blog carnival](#). Consider sharing your knowledge by being a [guest writer](#).
5. [Review your business goals](#). Develop small action steps/milestones to accomplish. Then take one step this very day towards accomplish them. Remember to celebrate your achievements along the way.
6. [Take a critical look at your website and answer the question, "How can I improve my web content and get my site visitors to keep returning?"](#)
7. [Turn off the computer, and experience FRIDAY!](#)
8. [Reach out to fellow digi-scrappers and continue networking](#). Open the communication channels and develop relationships with your peers.
9. **For Designers:** [Take a minute to double check your packaging](#). **For Store Owners:** [Make sure you have a feedback form located on your website](#) **For Digi-Art Consumers:** If you purchased a product that had a surprise in it, [take a minute to drop an email to the designer or store owner](#). **For Business Exchangers:** If you purchased or sold a commercial use product and found the exchange to be unfair - [initiate any discussions for appropriate disclosure and refunds if necessary](#).
10. [Read](#) the [first part of my Business Branding Series](#) and write out the answers to the business questions presented. See if you learn anything new about where you are heading with your business.

11. [If you don't already have 2-way communication systems in place then take time to build them.](#)
12. [Today - Do something beautiful; see something beautiful; say something beautiful; hear something beautiful; be something beautiful. Create a piece of beautiful art.](#)
13. [Develop a filing system that works for you. If you already have one in place, then double check to see that things are in place. If they aren't... take some time to tidy things up a bit. Share with us what your system looks like too.](#) Your solutions may be just what a fellow scrapper has been looking for!
14. [Research possible publication opportunities and other avenues for picking up recognition for your business and for yourself.](#) If you haven't been offered the chance to write, or interview with someone you'd like to - then step up and ask for the chance. Track down a fellow web-writer whose blog might mix well with your interests, and offer to do an article swap. Dig up the layouts and tutorials you've written that might fit the current needs of magazines. Then get brave and make yourself known by jumping in there with your information!
15. [Spread the message of hope to someone today.](#)
16. [Write at least 3 articles on your blog this week and respond to each person who comments.](#)
17. [Research calibration methods for your computer monitor and take the time to set things right. For you and for your clients!](#)
18. [Carry with you for a full day a notebook or idea journal. Every time an idea presents itself, write it down.](#) Jot a note to yourself about the phrase you heard someone say, or sketch that LO idea that showed up on a magazine cover, or the color combination you saw in a TV commercial that seemed to just pop.
19. [Begin work on your portfolio if you don't have one. If you do have one, then take time this week to review the layouts in it. Make sure your package includes several layouts showing the full range of your artistic style.](#)
20. [Take a look at your largest digi-art paper file. Using the original working file, save it at 2 or 3 different compression levels to test the quality. REMEMBER to use optimized, but DO NOT choose progressive!](#)
21. [Think about the last 3 projects you created for your business. Using the one that was your favorite... find a way to tool-it-up, and create that tool this weekend. Why? So the next time you go to do the same thing, your job is easier and you can delight in the results sooner.](#)
22. [Read the article about the benefits of creating a secure TOU in pdf format and then give it a try yourself.](#)

23. Sit down and come up with 3 or more one-liners. The next time someone asks you what you do — you'll be ready to make a great impression!
24. Reflect on the direction your business is currently going in. Look for boldness in your digital art business. Read the "Go Big or Go Home" article. See if you can pull from the article a piece of information to help you in your business.
25. Write down three things you are scared of, dreading, or unsure of about your business. Then write down why you feel that way. Then let these concerns go... Now write down three things you are looking forward to seeing come about with your digi-scrap business. Take this list and tell your inner-self that it's time to make these happen. Trust that your subconscious will find whatever it takes to do it.
26. Access your business practices in reference to the freebie distributions. Make sure these "gift programs" are working for you - not against you.
27. Research and review options for adding additional sources of income to your business if the situation is prime for it right now. If the situation isn't right just yet, consider doing some planning for the future.
28. Think of 3 new ways you can market to your existing customers and encourage them to refer you to their friends. Focus most of your marketing efforts on developing these 3 efforts this week.
29. Review your website to see how you are using conversation marketing to help build your business stronger and create a trusting bond between you and your clients. Make adjustments or start a new conversation today!
30. Go through the tips and taskers shared to date. Then take this opportunity to jump in and participate!

Shared Tips

PChip/Cindy at DSD-Pro:

- Be present on the web and use your own domain name
- Sharing tips, shortcuts, secrets of the trade, the inside scoop, is also a great way to show your customers you are an expert in your field.
- Do something at least 5 days a week to market your business. Check out these 4 quick methods
- Eight Tips to consider when writing reviews
- Creating a step-by-step plan using small milestones that, lead to short term goals, to help you see your way to achieve a long-term goal, is healthy for your business.

- [Repeat web traffic comes from providing value and uniqueness.](#)
- [Think of Friday as a metaphor for recovery. The concept of recovery is vital to our growth and you should strive to incorporate it in all that you do!](#)
- [Network with others in the same field you are in by participating in online community forums and by getting to know scrappers through their blogs too.](#) This activity will keep you in the loop with the latest trends, solidify friendships, offer the chance to develop business relationships, and provide you with helpful resources as well.
- [Mention on your packaging anything that might be helpful to your customers to know BEFORE they purchase your product.](#) The only things customers tend to like when it comes to surprises are extra freebies. Even those aren't always welcomed if they cause a slow download or large file storage issue. [See the article for a list of things to include.](#)
- [Branding your company CORRECTLY is a business move that can put you ahead of your competition,](#) no matter how small your digi-scrap company may be. Good branding has long-term results of a brand that is preferred, a customer base that is loyal, and increased profits for you, the small business owner. Poor business branding can leave you without much of a business at all.
- [It's important to have multiple communication systems in place for you and your customers to stay in contact easily.](#)
- [Create a sense of comfort and beauty in all that you do, in business, in family, in private thoughts, in personal spirituality... and you will be a beautiful person inside and out!](#)
- [An organized filing system in any office, makes it easier to accomplish the tasks at hand.](#) This isn't limited to your physical office space. It's also relevant to your virtual space. This is especially true for digital scrapbook professionals!
- [Being published in a highly recognized magazine can add a boost to your ego as well as your resume. Getting published by other webmasters and blog owners can also boost your business! The same goes for professional interviews.](#)
- [Don't Give Up! You are Loved. You are special.](#)
- [Interact with your blog readers often.](#)
- [Create your TOU's in PDF format to keep from having them changed by no-gooders.](#)
- [Make a good impression to the question, "what do you do?" with a strong "one-liner" that explains what you do and how you could be valuable to the individual you are talking to.](#)
- [Be bold in your business by offering something new, different, maybe even unexpected.](#) Be bold in your business by taking a stand and sticking to it. Be bold in your business by not always following the crowd, but instead do something YOUR way. Then don't stop there...

Work hard. Play hard and learn all that you can by always being a student of life. A student of creativity. A student of business.

- Know how much of your income you are willing to invest in gaining new customers and in keeping current customers. Then stay within those limits. Giving away your time and your money should be taken seriously.
- Stay tuned into DSD-Pro for continuously great business info!
- To see the highest return on your investment, follow the 80/20 rule with your marketing efforts by spending 80% of your time and money on your customers and 20% of your resources marketing to new leads.
- A really great marketing conversation embraces three things: an open invitation to interact vs. a pushed marketing message; a willingness to hear honest feedback vs. a censored or scripted review; and a trust in the customer vs. a controlled brand image
- Take the time to participate in peer networking opportunities and accept creative challenges. These activities will help you build business relationships and strengthen your business even further.

Greg from DSD-Pro Research Team

- Calibrating your monitor can make a huge difference in your printouts!
- When you are fixed for an idea use what's around you inspire you to create.
- Professional Scrapbookers, whether they be paper artists or digi-artists should have a portfolio of their work to show prospective clients. This is your calling card more than anything else.
- When saving a large 300-ppi file to jpg format you should first save the file in the native format for your software. For example, it would be a PSD file for Photoshop users. That way you still have an original to work with in the future.
- When saving your digi-art paper files to jpg format using the most compression while keeping the quality high, so you aren't adversely affecting the quality. For most papers 8 is the average used. But you'll need to do some test runs to see. To do this use your save options combined with the jpg compression or optimization settings.
- After you've created something you know you just love and will probably use again in the future - before you forget... turn it into a tool for yourself. It'll save you time later!

David of Aardvark Scrapbooking:

- Do something you love
- Ten Reasons Why Digital Scrapbooking is Better

- [Don't start a "small" business — think big!](#)
- [Associate yourself with other digital scrapbookers and participate in digi-scrap business associations.](#)
- [Choosing a name for your business can be a tricky task.](#) Try to keep it short and snappy and also related to the business you are in. Think about your market too - who are your customers? - What would they understand? Reasons for picking "[Aardvark Scrapbooking](#)" for the business name.
- [Know your customer.](#) Make and sell products that your customer wants, not necessarily what you want.
- [When pricing products do comparison with products from other vendors, do the math right when deducting direct and operating costs, consider how people perceive your price and how pricing plays into your marketing methods.](#)
- [The potential market is huge and wide open, with room for everyone. What we have to do, collectively, is to keep on encouraging people to go digital. For our own businesses - keep up the quality, keep selling and keep helping our customers. Don't be afraid of the competition, but welcome it.](#)
- [I like the idea of a little extra something in the package - it generates goodwill.](#)
- In the included instruction sheet with [Aardvark Scrapbooking](#) files, we always end with a personal message with easy-to-use hotlinks to feedback, email and of course the products page of the website. No better time to capture feedback as when they have the file open in front of them.
- Creating a successful enterprise needs a whole range of skills. [Give each role a go. Do what you love, do what comes easily - and outsource the other duties to quality performers who you trust.](#) Don't let the mind-numbing effects from doing the parts you hate ruin the enjoyment you get from the others.
- [Whether you are a business person exploring the scrapping industry, or a scrapper exploring business to succeed, you will need both a creative streak and business acumen. Make your purpose in all your ventures to create art. Make people feel through your work. Then use you business skills to capitalize on it.](#)
- [Remember the power of personal contacts. Meeting face-to-face with potential customers is a great way to make a lasting impact. Look for places where your customers congregate such as local scrap store classes, etc. Collaborate with the organizers of these events. Also consider networking in places where your customers go that isn't directly scrap related \(ie. the gym, other craft shows, local computer shop\).](#)
- [Structure your business model to suit your personal and financial needs.](#)

- Know when you're beat. If necessary realign your talents with other activities to make a greater impact do so. Nothing squelches the soul like a thankless, unrewarding task. Wet your next milestone and goals appropriately. Make directional changes as needed. Re-dedicate yourself and push full-steam ahead.
- Invest in your visitors appropriately - according to their position in the sales chain.
- Consider doing test patches when printing. This helps both calibrated and uncalibrated setups.
- Use your cell-phone for recording ideas. Most phones today have cameras good enough to make a visual reminder. Also most phones have a voice memo function. Record a noise to trigger a memory, or leave yourself a verbal message.
- Use a USB Thumb Drive for storing your art portfolio. Fill it with your work, electronic business card, links to parts of your website, free digital samples. Then attach it to your key ring so you have your portfolio ready at a moment's notice. Great for those unexpected show and tells.
- When considering the competitive positions that Michael Porter suggests, pick one that's a proven winner - cost leadership, differentiation, or focus. Recommendation to stay clear of the "loser" position called "middle-of-the-road. Aim to be the best and win!
- Using Photoshop CS2/3 - record a series of actions that you repeat, such as a resize, then convert to jpeg, rename and finally save, this series can then be assigned to a key, and all that work can be reduced to one touch.
- At Aardvark Scrapbooking, we are starting to put a shortened version TOU and web URL in a strip alongside the image, much like a paper sheet from the store. Everywhere the image goes, the TOU and your logo / URL go with it. Nothing to lose and no files to dig for.
- Be thankful that here in the States you can be who you want to be!
- Look carefully at hidden costs incurred! Compare your real costs to the fiction that you are saving money.
- A great business strategy is to form of a strong and clear brand, market it accurately, and keep it focused around a core group of followers. Then, move as the market changes.
- When choosing which hosting service to use, do a careful comparison of what is offered. The considerations about whether you should choose a Linux, UNIX or Microsoft based webhost is a very important one.
- When thinking about content for your LO's, make a point to ask questions of your relatives, especially of those getting on in years. Once these opportunities are missed, they can never be replaced.

- [Allow customers to shape your product through actual use. Get to know your customers better by watching and learning.](#)
- [If there is a deadline to meet, meet it.](#)

Rachel of Rachel Clark Designs:

- [Using Group-with-Previous](#) (a PSE tutorial for designers)
- [Virtual Photographer PS plugin - product review](#)
- [Use one notebook divided into sections for jotting down ideas when the light bulb goes off. Then make sure I put it in this one notebook so I can actually get some use out of it!](#)

Loonyhiker:

- [Networking is important. It's amazing how far reaching this can get.](#)
- [When developing your website, keep in mind that not everyone has high speed internet.](#) Make sure you put in an alternative for people to skip animation or long intros and get to the "meat" of your product, purpose, or service.
- [It is important that your goals are realistic and attainable. Develop a vision statement.](#)
- [I have seen TOU's printed out and then a photo was taken and it was saved as a jpg. That was a pretty neat way of making sure no one changes the contents of the TOU.](#)

Happy Scrap Girl:

- [In each of the forums I use, I have added a clickable blinkie to my blog. I also have the description - clickable link to my FREEBIES blog right next to it. I get a lot of traffic this way. I have set it up as an automatic signature so I don't forget to do it each time.](#)
- I often get asked the same questions over and over again by new digi scrappers - how do I get started. [I have added a section in my sidebar for resources for newbies.](#) These resources have proved to be very helpful to others. They trust my recommendations, and come back again and again to see what new tips I have, and where to look for the latest digi resources & freebies.

Cindy J:

- [Suggestion for designers to please put your name or your business name at the start of the TOU file name. This helps when giving credit to designers. When this step is skipped, it makes it very challenging and time consuming to go back and try to track whose creations one is using.](#) It's easier to delete and go with another similar item from someone who has taken the time to label their files to make identification easier.

Get More Business Tips and Tools for
Your Digital Scrapbooking Business at:
<http://dsd-professionals.com>

We Invite to Join our Business Association too.

Get Your Free Lifetime Membership Today!

<http://dsd-pro.com/association>