



Gil Gerretsen is a man who understands marketing. He started BizTrek Marketing, a service that educates small business owners on how to properly – and most prosperously – market their small businesses in 1994, after nearly 20 years in a career where his role was to “get companies out of trouble.”

Friends who knew of his successes soon came to Gerretsen asking for advice or tips on how to turn their own businesses around. “Some ended up becoming even more successful than me,” he says. That’s when he decided to create a business model that would allow him to share his methods and reap the benefits. “A good mentor can make more than a director, but he can also help other people make money in the process,” he says.

As Gerretsen explains, the key tenant of small business ownership is that the small business owner is never free unless he knows and can control four things: the mechanics of his business, its finances, its manpower and its marketing. “They usually have a pretty good handle on the first three, but for a lot of small business owners, with marketing, it’s anything goes.” Through BizTrek, small business owners learn the best methods to market themselves, Gerretsen says.

A major point that he emphasizes: BizTrek is not a consultancy. Through the program, small business owners can take a one-hour general overview seminar or the 12-seminar forum, each meeting covering a single trigger in Gerretsen’s 12-trigger process. Graduates of the process can also join a monthly feedback panel or get paired with a local mentor.

According to Gerretsen, the company has been very successful, and he’s currently in the process of taking it nationwide. Three branches exist already, and he says he’s heard a lot from those interested in setting up franchises elsewhere.

And although Gerretsen says his process easily could be distributed online, he’s hesitant to go that route. “It just wouldn’t be the same. A big part of the process is the feedback you get and the connections you make in the process. I’m just not interested in that.”

In addition to his work with BizTrek, Gerretsen is also developing a career as a public speaker. He travels to professional organizations and social clubs, explaining the tenants of his program and emphasizing the importance of marketing to business. A published author, he’s also working on a new manuscript which he plans to self-publish and sell through his seminars.