

Apr 10, 2018, 09:00am EDT

5 Proven Tips To Beat The Competition



YEC COUNCIL POST | Membership (fee-based)
Entrepreneurs

POST WRITTEN BY

Adam Cronenberg

Managing Partner, Alpha1 Garage Door Service Alpha1GarageDoorService.com.
Overseeing Company Operations in North America.



Shutterstock

Subdue the enemy without fighting.

Take it from me. With a perfect battle plan and a lot of courage, I've conquered 12 home service markets across seven states. And I did that as a newbie entrepreneur. Now, I have a multimillion-dollar home service business. The secret is following what I believe to be military strategist Sun Tzu's most important *The Art of War* strategy. I position my business. I capture my markets. I get ahead. Most importantly, I eliminate the competition by catching them unaware.

How do I do that? Here are my five tips for those new to the journey:

Stay One Step Ahead Of The Enemy

Have a holistic understanding of your business. Investigate the environment where you are working, including the players. Understand their strengths and weaknesses.

When I was just starting, the home service business was booming. I knew that there was room for a new player. However, the competition was tight and customers relied a lot on their familiarity with the old players and traditional brands. My insight: Use available online tools to penetrate the market. I capitalized on the targeted advertising that new apps and tools made possible. I used Google Trends and Analytics to help determine my online strategies. I applied SEO techniques and invested a lot in my digital reputation. In doing so, I was able to blindside the competition.

Prepare A Strategic Battle Plan

Your knowledge of the business terrain and the competition is important in determining how to capture your market. Use this business intelligence to formulate a winning battle plan. Map out the competitor's strengths and weaknesses to take them down.

I listed down all the challenges I faced, created scenarios and produced detailed plans on how to overcome each. I knew that I was the new kid on the block. So I came up with a roadmap to propel myself to the top of the

home-service industry. I always had a Plan A and several backups. Note to self: Be thorough and ready for any eventuality.

My goal was always to turn my competitors' strengths against them. One of my competitors offered low prices, jacking up demand for his services. To compete, I offered deals like free maintenance service, tune-ups and overall positive customer experience. All these provided great value which customers appreciated.

Seize All Opportunities

If you prepare a well-thought-out battle plan, you will be able to forecast future events. Seize on all possible opportunities that will open up for you. If there are none, then create these opportunities yourself.

When I was just starting with my garage door business, I used to scour websites to check for customer reviews. I used the information to strengthen my business and improve the quality of my products and services. I always check out negative reviews and make sure that my business does not make the same mistakes. I once saw a customer complaining about a poorly handled garage door installation. The company was not responding to his complaints. I sent him a personal message and offered to re-do the job for free. In return, I got a really good write-up on Yelp, several referrals and ended up being his go-to person for all of his garage door repairs. This enabled me to showcase my business as the better alternative. And I continue to do it.

Be Smart In Fighting For Your Product Or Service

You must believe in your own product or service. This will serve as your motivation in fighting for it.

Boxers have strategies. As a new fighter, I knew that I was the smallest in the ring. The odds were stacked up against me. So, I made a list of all my strengths: I was good with technology; I was the boldest of just a few home

service businesses who target customers digitally. And I had nothing to lose. I leveraged my strengths and created my own boxing ring. I made sure that when people searched for garage doors, my business was on top of Google's search results. I advertised on all digital platforms. I keep quality and relevant content on my website. I create how-to videos. I stay up to date with email marketing trends, and so on.

Of course, this meant a lot of hard work and a lot of heart. It was not easy. But in being creative, I was able to even out the playing field and create my own niche in the home service market.

Know How To Choose Your Battles

You do not have to fight every battle that comes your way. By taking stock of your business' strengths and weaknesses and arming yourself with business intelligence, you will be able to choose your battles. As an entrepreneur, I continue to be very hands-on. I monitor how my business fares day to day. I evaluate and analyze the data that I have to see where to make tweaks or changes in the system in order for me to get ahead.

Never lose heart. The battle is long and arduous. That is a given. But if you will maintain your courage and determination, no obstacle will ever be insurmountable.



[Young Entrepreneur Council \(YEC\)](#) is an invitation-only, fee-based organization comprised of the world's most successful entrepreneurs 45 and younger. YEC members... **Read More**

Reprints & Permissions

ADVERTISEMENT