

the solopreneur zone

the resource place for solo-entrepreneurs

Who Ya Gonna Call?

Just a Quick Question

Have you ever had just one simple business question and had no one to ask? Maybe you created and manage your own website, but periodically get stumped on something. Or maybe you want to submit articles for publication and want some quick tips on where to start. It can be frustrating to have a simple question, but no one to ask.

There aren't a lot of Question Hotlines Out There

If you were to call a web designer or a marketing expert to get your simple question answered, they'd probably offer to work with you-- for a cost. They don't really have a system for answering quick questions. On the flip side, you probably feel like you are bothering them or taking advantage of them to ask a question "for free". So, you don't get your question answered and they don't get to demonstrate their expertise. Lose-Lose.

Cocktail Parties aren't the Place for Quick Questions

Have you ever bumped into a Real Estate agent or a Doctor and accidentally caught yourself asking them how "hot" the market is for sellers or what to do about that annoying rash? Or, more likely, you overheard someone else asking a question like that. Some professionals don't mind talking business during their personal time, but others, like doctors, get overwhelmed with well-meaning information seekers. (I actually had a doctor ask for coaching on how to politely bow out of these situations because she wasn't able to escape all those well-meaning question askers!)

What's the Answer When You Need an Answer?

So, what's the solution? I've been thinking a lot about this problem (especially when it's me that has the question)!

I've also been talking to a lot of subject matter experts and they too would love a way to connect with folks who need their services. They love the idea of being able to share their expertise and demonstrate their skills so that if a client ever has a need to hire them for their services, they've established a relationship. Serving as a subject matter expert also establishes their credibility in general, which is a great way to encourage referrals.

Going for the Win-Win

The idea of having business experts available to my clients has been on my mind for quite some time. When I decided to change the way I provide my services to Solopreneurs, I realized I could create a full business-support package for clients-- a complete Business Advisory Team "in a box".

The program basically works like a time-share. The experts I am bringing on are offering a couple hours of their time each week to answer quick questions the members might have. Most likely, members call each expert only periodically, but they get the peace of mind of knowing they have someone "on call" when they need them. It's like having an expert on retainer, without paying the retainer fee each month-- because it is built into the membership program.

How Could I do this Myself?

If you love this idea, but don't think the Solopreneur Zone membership is for you at this time, how could you still take advantage of this concept? For years, people have been pooling their resources to buy services (think of how group health insurance works-- it is less expensive the larger the group is).

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You might want to join forces with other Solopreneurs and purchase retainer time with various experts and share the time as needed. Many coaches have formed coaching groups because several clients wanted to have coaching at a lower price point-- they wanted to create a time-share for one coaching slot. You might be able to do this with a web designer or marketing consultant too.

Most importantly, don't short-change your business just because of your budget-- there's always a way to make things work...and get those questions answered!