

A modern living room with a white sofa, a patterned rug, and a coffee table. The room features a white sofa with a light green, orange, and yellow patterned pillow. A black metal coffee table holds a book and a cup. The floor is covered with a light-colored rug with a repeating teal and white pattern. In the background, there is a white shelving unit with orange accents and a purple wall.

Mc Donald

Wholesale Distributor

PHIFER

7 Effective Ways to
Build Your Interior
Design Business!

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Introduction

Being an interior designer can be fraught with challenges, one of them is making sure you consistently attract new clients year-round. This special report is designed to help you, as an interior designer, increase awareness, build value and secure more clients.

“TALK ABOUT THE PROBLEM YOU SOLVE, NOT THE PRODUCT OR SERVICE YOU HAVE”

As an interior designer, you may see yourself being in the business of creating beautiful, efficient spaces for your clients. It is also helpful to remember that you're in the business of solving problems. Solve a client's problem? You suddenly become the hero.

So remember to **TALK ABOUT THE PROBLEM YOU SOLVE, NOT YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE!** Regardless of whether you are designing the “home of the future” or a workplace that enhances beauty and is environmentally-friendly, interior designers need to educate prospects and clients on the value they create.

Education and credibility are key to creating a synergy that continually produces new clients who respect your skills and are willing to pay for them.

The good news... with your expertise, awesome new technology and the availability of online resources, you can create and operate an interior design practice that grows year after year.

All in a matter of a few hours a week. So, without further ado - let's get going!

Sincerely,

Bill Strickland
Senior National Market Manager, Sun Control
Products
Phifer Incorporated

The Process

Developing effective strategies to build your interior design business is a process, not a destination. With a few hours a week of committed time and energy, you can start seeing results in your practice and attract new clients.

This special report is designed to give you actionable steps you can immediately embrace to

build your practice AND a plan to keep new clients constantly moving in your direction.

The most important thing is to put your new process in place and stick with it. With just a small amount of consistent effort, you'll see substantial increases in leads and new clients. Let's start by taking a look at the four pillars to growing your interior design business.



1. Awareness

The very first thing you need to do is build awareness about your practice and your services. Everything starts by making yourself more visible.



2. Education

People need to understand what you do and why that is valuable to them.



3. Credibility

Building credibility within your target market takes time, but is critical to your success. A potential client needs to know that you will make them look good.



4. Conversion

This means getting the business. In our experience, if you've done a great job on steps 1-3, actually closing the deal becomes very easy.

I Awareness

Awareness is so important to new client development for interior designers. Here are some ways we've seen successful firms stay in front of current clients and prospects:

1. **Website** - Even if you are a single shingle (one-person shop), having a website that rivals the biggest firms is not that difficult. Here are some things you'll want to do with your website.
 - a. Design it for conversion - each page needs to be focused on motivating the user to take an action (CTA, or Call to Action). Be clear about what you'd like them to do after seeing your website. Would you like them to call you or email you? This is your CTA, and everything needs to revolve around this.
 - b. For interior designers, fewer words and more beautiful images tend to work better.
 - c. Remember, you are not trying to close the deal. You want the prospect to take an action that will lead to a conversation. So you either want them to call or email you (or text you).
 - d. Make sure to have your phone number and email address on every page!
2. **Retargeting** - Most websites allow you (or your webmaster) to place a little piece of code on your site that will allow you to market to those who have visited your website. It is very easy to do, and retargeting can be extremely effective.
3. **Direct Mail** - Everything that is old eventually becomes new again. So many people are using digital marketing that postal mailboxes are much emptier than they used to be. Targeted postcards and educational material can be very effective.
4. **Events** - People do business with people they like. Make every effort to attend at least two events a month where you will meet people you may be able to do business with.

PRO TIPS:

Website - [Wix](#) and [SquareSpace](#) are extremely easy website platforms. If you have someone who knows how to develop websites, we suggest Wordpress.

Retargeting - [AdRoll.com](#) is an easy platform to use for retargeting. You can create a budget as low as \$5 per day.

Direct Mail - [Fiverr.com](#) is a great place to find a graphic designer who will create a postcard for little expense.

Postcard Printing - There are plenty of places to have a postcard printed. A couple we've used are [printpelican.com](#) and [overnightprints.com](#).

I Education

Education is all about providing prospects with material that REALLY helps them make their lives easier. The more high quality information and advice you provide to potential clients, the higher the likelihood they will hire you.

Provide problem-solving information about green spaces, building and renovating that answers the questions your prospects have.

Everyone wants to do business with the expert. When creating educational material, always design it to be A.I.D.A. compliant. That stands for **Attention, Interest, Desire and Action**. Your educational piece needs to be designed to grab their **Attention**, capture their **Interest**, build **Desire** for what you provide and motivate them to take **Action**.

Here are some ways you can educate and nurture your prospects:

Build an Opt-In List - Create an educational, powerful report that you offer for free on your website in exchange for someone's email address. It could be "7 Things You Need to Know Before Hiring an Interior Designer" or "7 Things You Need to Know Before You Renovate."

When you offer an enticing report, people will give you their email addresses to receive your report and you can start building an "opt-in" list of names.

Electronic Newsletter - We suggest sending out a newsletter with a great visual and enough information to get your prospects interested. Then, drive them to your website to actually read the full piece.

Special Report - Put together a beautiful two-page piece and email it to 100-200 people per month. Remember, solve a problem they have and they will want to do business with you.

Infographic - These are relatively easy to put together and people love them. You can pass them out, put them on your website and get additional visibility posting them on social media

News - Leverage things happening in the interior design field, and deliver that news to your clients via your email list.

PRO TIPS:

E-Newsletter - There are many options. One of the easiest to use is [MailChimp](#).

Special Reports - Again, [Fiverr.com](#) is a good place to have someone take your words and create a beautiful special report.

Infographics - If you need inspiration, go to Google Images and type in "interior design infographics". You'll find hundreds of examples of what other people are doing.

News - A great tool to use to pull in interior design news is [Feedly.com](#). They have a free version.

I Credibility

You got it, the “Cred Factor”... We all know how it works. You can tell others how amazing you are until you’re blue in the face, without a lot of success. However, if someone else says how wonderful you are, a potential client is more likely to call you.

Here are ways you can build your credibility:

Testimonials - The best time to get a testimonial is right after you’ve completed a successful engagement. You might even want to offer to write the testimonial and send it to them for approval. Think about the clients you’ve done a great job for — ask them! You probably have a few “friendlies” that will happily write you a testimonial. Take advantage of that.

Case Studies - Case studies are a great way of communicating with people that you know your stuff. A wonderful format is to simply break your case study down into four sections:

- Company Overview
- Challenge
- Solution
- Result

Successful Jobs - When you’ve successfully completed an interior design engagement, send in a professional photographer to take pictures. Put those pictures on your website, make them into postcards, add them to your social media — you get the picture!

I Conversion

This is the easiest stage by far! If you've successfully gone through stages 1, 2 and 3, the final stage is really helping your new client make the decision to hire you.

To ensure things go smoothly in the conversion stage, here are a few helpful tips:

- Have a professionally-formatted, nice looking agreement (call it an agreement rather than a contract).
- Make sure your agreement is easy to read, understand and sign.
- Have a very clear process when you bring them onboard.
- Be proactive when it comes to communicating progress with your new client.

In the education and credibility stages, you've established your value as an interior designer. Now it's time to perform. As we all know, a happy client will share their experience — give them an opportunity to sing your praises!

Things to make sure you have in your sales "toolbox"...

- A well formatted proposal template
- Business cards
- Professional letterhead (it's always good to send things in the mail, even if you provide them electronically)
- An engagement agreement that is easy to sign
- Professional-looking invoices

Leverage Technology & Online Resources

Technology has come a long way in the last five years. You now have access to technology that was previously reserved only for the Fortune 500. Below are some examples of technology you can leverage to create your OWN EVER-EXPANDING PRACTICE.

Item	Description	Price
Website	Wix , Squarespace or Wordpress	Approx. \$20 / month
E-Newsletters	MailChimp or ActiveCampaign	Approx. \$20 / month
Graphic Design	Fiverr , Upwork , Envato	Approx. \$25 / hour
Printing	Print Pelican , Overnight Prints	Based on need
Digital Marketing	AdRoll	Based on need
Graphics	Adobe Stock , Shutterstock	Based on need
Domains	GoDaddy , Namecheap	\$15 / year

The prices above are “average prices”. Each provider listed has multiple plans based on your individual needs.

The Plan

This is where it all comes together. Putting a plan down on paper and, more importantly, sticking with it, is **THE SECRET** to success. Give yourself about 10-20 hours to get things started and then 2-3 hours per week to **KEEP YOUR PRACTICE ON TRACK TO GROW**.

Below is a very simple example of a content calendar:

	Awareness	Education	Credibility	Time	
Create Website				20 hours	Month 1
Set Up Blog As Part of Your Website				4-6 hours	Month 2
Post 2 Blogs / Month				2-4 hours	Month 2
Set up E-Newsletter				3-4 hours	Month 2
Send 1st Newsletter				2 hours	Month 2
Post 2 Blogs / Month				2-4 hours	Month 3
Create Case Study				4-5 hours	Month 3
Mail Case Study				2 hours	Month 3
Send 2nd Newsletter				2 hours	Month 3
Post 2 Blogs / Month				2-4 hours	Month 4
Start Digital Retargeting				2 hours	Month 4
Post 2 Blogs / Month				2-4 hours	Month 5
Create Infographic				3-4 hours	Month 5
Send 3rd Newsletter				2 hours	Month 5
Post Infographic on Social				1 hours	Month 5
Mail Infographic				2 hours	Month 5
Post 2 Blogs / Month				2-4 hours	Month 6
Send 4th Newsletter				2 hours	Month 6
News Announcement				2 hours	Month 6

Give yourself about 10-20 hours to get things started and then 2-3 hours a week to keep your interior design practice growing.

Summary

We hope you enjoyed our special report for interior designers. Creating a plan and embracing the strategy we've laid out WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

However, this report is just the beginning. At Phifer we are committed to helping you and your firm grow. As such, we will be sending out Pro Tips on a frequent basis. These Pro Tips will include tips, technology and tools you can use to secure more clients and serve the ones you have even better.

We appreciate you helping to make Phifer SheerWeave® and Sun Control Fabrics the leaders in our field. We will continue to deliver legendary quality and high performance. Our solutions will always be leading edge.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Strickland
Senior National Market Manager, Sun Control Products
Phifer Incorporated