

There are some lessons in our evolution that are generally true for other companies:

1. Always keep looking at your competition. Just because they were stupid when you started, it doesn't mean that they'll stay stupid. They can use the internet too to find out what you're doing.
2. If you don't get to a point where the business is generating the kind of income you want or need, then you have to figure out how to get to the income that you want or need. Or sell the business and move on to something else. Entrepreneurs are excellent at finding something else.
3. Be alert for new ways of doing things. And, sometimes, new ways aren't necessarily the best ways. For example, we find that most owners actually relish getting together with their peers over lunch to talk over their challenges. We are social animals. There's something about personal contact that just doesn't come across in a Zoom room. Several of our clients aren't in the same businesses they were in when they first became clients, and the ideas have either come from groups or been validated by groups.
4. Stay focused on your customer and what he or she wants. We thought Zoom rooms were a great idea, but as soon as owners could meet face to face with each other, that's what many of them did. But, as soon as restaurants reopened, we went back to face to face meetings, along with our Zoom Room for Eastern clients, those who miss meetings and the odd single consult.
5. In promotion, figure out what makes a difference in influencing your customers and advertise there. Solutions Forum just doesn't come across as well on a website as it does in face to face groups, so we do all sorts of things to get people to attend just one group.
6. In the final analysis, when you're faced with a decision, what does your intuition say? What's your partner or spouse say?
7. Trademark your Unique Selling Proposition at the outset, and let everything else flow from that.
8. At the same time, get your website domain name that reflects what the company does. No cutesy names. Even test the domain name with your focus group.