

*Grow Your Business  
With Less Effort  
On Purpose*

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## *The Ripple Effect*

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**Have you ever skipped a rock across the water?** As the rock skims the water, notice how the water ripples. After a moment, each ripple flows effortlessly into the other. The same concept applies when business owners take a systems approach. Each system leads to greater connections and business growth.

**If you implement the system properly, you'll notice how momentum begins to build and the pieces come together.** Like the ripples on the pond, each ripple begins to incorporate into one another and, at the same time, the blending is harmonious. You start to build momentum and get noticed for your unique lineup of products and services naturally and spontaneously.

**However, it's not about just implementing random systems to gain momentum for your business.** The trick is to think through how one change impacts your entire business system so that you create that effortless blending. That's where most business owners get stuck and why implementation of a solution gets sidetracked.

**For example, in 2007, ethanol was slated as an energy solution.** According to a 2007 article in USA Today, corn prices soared to their highest in the previous decade, mainly due to increasing demand for ethanol production as ethanol was made from corn.

**While the higher prices benefited farmers who grew corn, there were also farmers who lost.** Higher corn prices increased feeding costs for livestock producers. To stay in business, producers had to reduce or change their feed. Not surprisingly, this change affected another part of the system as chickens and other livestock had lower reported weights when sold. This, in turn, impacted consumers.

**On the surface, ethanol seemed like a reasonable solution.** However, when you put your systems hat on, it becomes evident that the entire infrastructure needs to be considered for the success of the solution.

**Small business owners can learn a lot from this ripple effect.** The next time you see a solution, like any systems thinker, remember to:

- **Determine how the parts within the whole business interrelate.** If you just implemented a new lead generation system and now have systems bringing in more prospects, make sure you have systems that keep in touch with your prospects. As you create your stay-in-touch system, how does that interrelate to the way you market your business? Can your business model infrastructure support an influx of new business? These are critical questions that need to be answered to make sure your solution is implementable and sustainable.

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- **Work through how each solution interrelates and affects the other parts of your business.**  
One small business client had considered new accounting software. They also just implemented a new online shopping cart. When I asked if the shopping cart and accounting systems talked to one another, the owner paused. Later, the owner discovered that the two systems did, indeed, integrate. Because the systems integrated seamlessly, they were also able to streamline the process, reducing additional data entry and staffing. Once a customer purchased an item online, the transaction was automatically transmitted to their accounting system. In this case, the investment was a good one; however, it illustrates the need to think how each system links and communicates with the other systems.
- **Consider that methods that once worked may no longer work with new systems.** If you want to join social media with the only intention of asking for introductions to others, think again. The old methods of push selling don't work on social media platforms. It's about building relationships. As you implement new systems, your approach or method in how you utilize the system is just as important as the solution itself.

Just like stones thrown in a river, one action creates ripples in other areas of your business. When you put the pieces together like a well-oiled, interconnected machine, it creates synergy and effortless momentum.