

Market Positioning Case Study: Jerry

Learn how Jerry went from a being inexperienced designer to an industry expert, which professional organizations were determined to be his best source of networking, and how he's becoming a sought after expert in his area of expertise.

Case Study: Jerry

Situation:

50 year old, starting 2nd career as a Landscape Designer

Recent graduate of a local 2 –year program

Currently charges \$500-\$750 for a planting plan (spends approximately 20 hours per plan)

Hopes to build a nice residential clientele and work on larger projects

Feels current clients are too micro focused - one bed at a time

Clients tend to change his designs

Wife feels tied to his schedule. He lacks scheduling flexibility when projects go to construction and she doesn't feel the money is adequate for the time spent on these projects.

He believes this will evolve into something bigger and more satisfying but doesn't know how to evolve it fast enough to satisfy wife.

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Analysis:

Although Jerry is a recent landscape design graduate, he has spent the last 30 years as a fire fighter.

He has 30 years of experience with plants and their fire resistant qualities and how their placement can reduce fire hazards.

He also has a clear understanding of the process to successfully submit drawings for approval through the fire department.

He is a self-proclaimed 'Plant nerd', and has studied plants since childhood. He loves reading plant books and discovering new drought-tolerant plant combinations.

He has developed a fabulous plant palette photo book which he takes with him to client meetings.

People love seeing the pictures of the plants he suggests for their project.

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Results:

Positioning him as an expert in plan submittals and low-fire plant palettes allows him to charge more for his services and opens up his client base to other designers who want help getting their plans through the fire department submittal process. Immediate changes to his website and social media sites were suggested.

His residential design experience will build with time; in the meantime, he can make a decent living consulting with area architects, contractors and designers. Professional organizations such as ASLA, APLD, and CLCA were suggested for networking opportunities.

A database of local nurseries and contacts was suggested to keep in contact about the speaking opportunities. He will contact nurseries in fire-prone areas to offer free lectures for their clients on proper plant selection and placement which will more than likely gain project referrals from nursery management and lecture attendees.

What is your area of expertise?
Who is your ideal client?