

Subject: Post on George Kayer Blog - Marketing To Inmates Newsletter
From: George Kayer <gkayer@gmail.com>
Date: 08/27/2011 06:58 AM
To: cfd@media.mit.edu

Dear Mr. Detar,

Please post this on my blog.

Thank you,

George Kayer

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **George Kayer** <gkayer@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, Aug 27, 2011 at 8:56 AM
Subject: Marketing To Inmates Newsletter
To: "<< Test First Name >>" <gkayer@gmail.com>

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

You may be surprised to know:

1. There are about 305 business owners like you, marketing to inmates.

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Marketing To Inmates Newsletter

Mission Goals:

- To provide a catalyst for each of us to get to know the other.
- To share our collective wisdom and experiences from our own niche.
- To provide articles on current & relative topics specific to marketing to inmates.

You may be surprised to know:

1. There are about 305 business owners like you, marketing to inmates.
2. In 2005 there were less than 40 businesses serving inmates.
3. New businesses entering our niche: Five (5) per month.
4. 8% of business ads to inmates are pre-meditated scams
5. The oldest continuous business in our niche? "Prison Legal News" - 20 years, May 2011
6. The oldest for-profit business? "Let My Fingers Do Your Typing" - 11 years
7. The number of national, non-religious, FREE to prisoner publications currently available? - 0

Want to help me create one?

Who Sends Me This Newsletter?

I'm the only writer to identify, contact and track all for-profit businesses marketing to inmates since 2005. I know you all and you know me--if only through your mailing list.

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Subscriber Chosen

Content:

Published once every two or three weeks

Each issue of Marketing To Inmates shall list titles of fine articles, (see below).

Readers may vote for three articles they want to read in the next edition.

The three article titles with the most votes shall be published in the next issue.

Vote Now!

Go to the website [\[CLICK HERE\]](#)

Then simply Click on the titles you would like to see published in the next issue.

Limit 3 please

1. Why do prison staff return our products for arbitrary reasons?
2. How do publishers determine their ad rates?
3. Why it is critical to hire part time help before you need them.
4. Is accepting stamps legal?
5. Why we can't reach customers beyond the readers of Prison Legal News, without expensive direct marketing or slow

I was first published at age fourteen, grew up in an entrepreneurial family; co-started and managed a multi-million dollar niche company in the 80's and am the founding editor of Shop DiSSE: America's Largest Shopping Guide for Inmates. (160 pages, published quarterly) I'm George Kayer, a prisoner at Arizona State Prison. When you read my articles about marketing to inmates, you'll know you're receiving first-hand business wisdom from an experienced insider.

Honestly, I've been planning to publish this newsletter for years. We all know that story - don't publish today what we can put off till tomorrow. Right?

Credit for the catalyst to birth this newsletter goes to John Hamel, proprietor of mymagstore .com. John recently responded to my essay in the Holiday Edition of Shop DiSSE. As I read John's words, I knew hundreds of us have experienced these same frustrations of marketing to inmates -- I also knew the time had come to let all of you know, you're not alone and we *can* help each other.

John Writes:

I found it inspiring to read about George's struggles dealing with the "system" from the inside, and as I read it found myself pondering how I ever became involved from the outside as a business owner; the unexpected turns that take us where we are. I am a 63 year-old white male who, to my knowledge, does not know anyone, outside my customers, who have ever been in prison - not one. I never went to school with an African American or Latino until college - none lived in my town that I knew of. I have never known a gang member, or that you could make a weapon out of a staple, or that stamps replaced

word of mouth.

Share Your Best Tips:

- **What's your best "Ooop's . . . never do this" tip?**
- **What's your best "Be sure to do this" tip?**
- **What's your best tip for pesty guards who return merchandise?**

What's Around The Corner And Why You Should Know

A. Inmate Shopper is a 16 pg color publication -- FREE to inmates!

At 5,000 copies per issue and ad rates identical to PLN, for color, and distributed FREE -- Inmate Shopper will be the place to reach outside the PLN readership to expand your customer base.

[\[Click here\]](#) for a copy of the Press Release and Ad Rates:

B. Christmas!

Time to consider your Christmas Ads.

Last Chance at our sale priced ad space: up to one full page, ONLY \$58.49.

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cigarettes as a means of betting and barter, or that some sheriffs in the south are still paid a fixed amount per inmate to feed them, and if there is money left over it goes into the sheriff's pocket.

Learning these things from the inside is a necessity, but from the outside it is . . . interesting.

I had two magazine stores in Seattle, purchased in 2002. By 2004 came the realization that it was kind of a "buggy whip" business, and I needed to do something if the business was to survive long-term. After searching on the internet and finding no one selling single copy magazines, and having lots of single magazines to sell, I commissioned a website, launched in 2005. Never once did it cross my mind that a potential market was inmates. Lo and behold, the very first order was from an inmate's family. Thus began my education.

Once the prison door closed, and the first order came in, we all had to learn. Whether reading the prison handbook or the internet marketing literature, we got the basics, but somewhere along the way we had to find mentors, someone to follow and learn from, someone to help us not make too many mistakes. Our first mentor was the mailrooms. I got so tired of seeing "Must come from Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, or Borders" I could scream. What do you mean he can only have three at a time! You call that nudity! I can't believe you are rejecting Field & Stream and National Geographic! After 15,000 orders and a 4-5% return rate, we can tell some stories. But that's seeing it from the outside, and you see the mirror image from the inside-- although perhaps the mirror is one of those carnival ones that are all distorted. We on the outside say, why did the idiot order five if he can only have three, and you on the inside think we cheated you because you didn't get your order.

I hope you've enjoyed this first issue of the Marketing To Inmates newsletter. Your comments and questions are welcome.

George Kayer, Editor

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Kind of a fuzzy image in the mirror, don't you think?

Our second mentor was Prison Legal News, because they opened our eyes to the underbelly of the prison system in the United States. It helped put a face on the mailrooms, both positive and negative. Every issue I am appalled at what I read and impressed with the professionalism of PLN as they present the facts and report the conclusions reached by the courts. Their struggle to have their magazine accepted, either voluntarily by the various prison systems, or involuntarily by court ruling, mirrors the struggles we have had getting accepted as a trustworthy vendor. (I am not a shill for PLN, I just think it is a great magazine)

Calvin was our next mentor. He was an ex-con who was, and still is I assume, trying to make a living selling a variety of things to inmates. He was the one that put a number of the faceless inmates: two point two million potential customers, he said. Take my magazines and his knowledge and we could become the go to guys for all the incarcerated. Alas, we could never reach a business arrangement, but I am thankful for what I learned from him --he helped put a face and context to these faceless customers with their all important ID numbers. He also made me realize that the vast majority of businesses catering to inmates were run by ex-inmates and/or their relatives, so they had the advantage of experience.

So finally, what struck me about George's essay was the peace he has found in his circumstances, and how those circumstances opened up the world of publishing. And my circumstances have allowed me a window, albeit a blurry one, into the foreign world of the prisons: and I am better for it.

**check or M.O for
\$12.98 + \$4.00 S&H
To:**

Tia Tormen Productions
P.O. Box 8069
Pittsburgh, PA 15216

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