

Part 1: Ignite



EXCERPTS FROM

Module 1: Know Yourself & Module 2: Know Your Business

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Get the SPARK™ eBook Series

Get the SPARK™ - Part 1: Ignite / Excerpts from Module 1: Know Yourself & Module 2: Know Your Business

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Get the SPARK™ eBook Series

Hello entrepreneurs!

Small business marketing coach, Dequiana Brooks, here. I'd like to introduce you to my new eBook series called Get the SPARK™! In this series, I walk entrepreneurs through those crucial steps needed to achieve business marketing success. You already read a portion of these eBooks, and I know the full version will bring you even more value.

The first book is called **Know Yourself**. Learn the secret to creating a winning business: changing your mindset. Know Yourself, the 1st in the Get the SPARK™ eBook series, teaches entrepreneurs how to recognize and stop self-sabotaging behaviors, develop a winner's mindset and put your business on the path to success. Reading a book is not enough. In addition to solid advice, the book also includes confidence challenges and worksheets to kick start your business today!

"Get The SPARK™ will be extremely helpful to those considering small business ownership, those who've just started their business, and more seasoned business owners. The right mindset is so important, and Dequiana gives you actionable, practical advice on how to cultivate a winning business mindset...You're almost guaranteed to noticeably increase your sales after this course... it's THAT good!" ~ Anilia Arneus, Motivated Sista – <http://www.motivatedsista.com>

Know Your Business, the 2nd module in the Get the SPARK™ eBook series, will help you build a solid foundation for your business. Learn what you really sell and the keywords that get your ideal clients to buy. Understand what sets you apart from the competition and a solid formula to create your perfect elevator pitch. Know Your Business also contains worksheets, step-by-step marketing advice and action items that you can apply in your business immediately.

"I just went through the first two [Get the SPARK™] modules and I think they are great! It was an easy and conversational read. It's like at least 2 semesters of marketing courses condensed to 80 pages. It makes me think, I could have just bought your E-book instead of borrowing tens of thousands of dollars to go to college. Good job!" ~ Derek Bolton, Hester & Waters Law – www.hesterandwaterslaw.com

Get the SPARK™ eBook Series

The first two modules of Get the SPARK™ are available now for **an investment of only \$97!** This \$97 investment gets you both eBooks, which include expert advice from me, worksheets and challenges to make sure you take action in your business immediately. You'll even receive the eBooks in audio form for on-the-go learning.



BONUS #1:

Build Your Marketing Plan in One Week eBook

Creating a solid marketing plan for your business just got easier. This guide gives you the tools, worksheets and advice needed to jumpstart marketing efforts in your business. Take what you learn in Know Yourself & Know Your Business and turn it into a marketing plan.



BONUS #2:

6+ Ways to Establish Yourself as an Expert Audio Training

Did you know that you don't need a college degree to be considered an expert? You have all the tools necessary to be an expert in your field at your disposal RIGHT NOW! I'll teach you 16 different tips on how you can establish yourself as a credible expert in your industry. If you're ready to learn how to set yourself apart from the competition and showcase your expertise to a market of hungry clients, then you'll enjoy this bonus item!



BONUS #3:

50 Marketing Promotion Ideas Whitepaper

Sometimes all you need is an idea to kick start your marketing efforts. Use this list of 50 marketing promotion ideas to jump start your marketing plans today!

Purchase Get the SPARK™ Now

Welcome

Hello, and welcome to the excerpts from Part 1: Ignite / *Module 1: Know Yourself & Module 2: Know Your Business* of Get the SPARK™! I'm so excited that you've accepted the challenge to transform your business. Ignite is Part 1 of a three-part series designed to teach you how to market your company to the right customers at the right time with the right message. While marketing can be intimidating, it doesn't have to be. Each section of Get the SPARK™ is written in easy-to-understand language, so that you can immediately begin applying what you've learned to your business. The lessons are interactive, so have a pen handy to jot down notes and complete assignments. Remember, you must complete all chapters and assignments to get the full benefit of the course.

Ignite is designed to kick start your business. After this part of the series you will:

- Have a mindset for success
- Have a pitch that gets people interested in learning more about your business
- Understand the importance of marketing AND how to start doing it
- Develop solid business and marketing goals
- Create the perfect pricing plan for your business
- Know enough about your customers to offer products and services they want to buy

Know Yourself specifically helps you create a mindset for success. We'll explore the best ways to still that small voice that tries to stop you from fulfilling your small business dreams.

Know Your Business will specifically help you identify what sets you apart from you competition. Not only will you develop your unique selling proposition, but you will also create the perfect elevator pitch for your business.

What is the SPARK Marketing System™?

The SPARK Marketing System™ is a step-by-step program designed to take the confusion out of marketing a small business. As an entrepreneur myself, I found that most of my clients had passion, but they lacked the proper tools to market their companies effectively. I decided to seek that information out, and now I'm passing it on to you. The SPARK Marketing System™ was developed using the marketing strategy knowledge I gained while getting my MBA from one of the #1 business schools in the nation; my observations while working for the #1 branding company in the world; and my own interactions with successful entrepreneurs. Rather than keep all this information to myself, I want to share it with those I feel need it most: small business owners.

SPARK is an acronym that stands for:

- **Stand** on a firm foundation
- **Prepare** a solid marketing plan to reach your target
- **Act** tirelessly on the plan
- **Review** your results
- **Keep** your customers coming back for more

These proven strategies will teach you how to position your products and services in a way that gets your ideal customers to buy from you and keep returning.

Ignite covers the "S" of the SPARK Marketing System™, **Stand on a firm foundation**. It will take you step-by-step through what I call "The 5 Know's:"

- Know yourself
- Know your business
- Know what you're working toward
- Know your industry
- Know your customer

Are you ready to transform your business? Then let's get started!

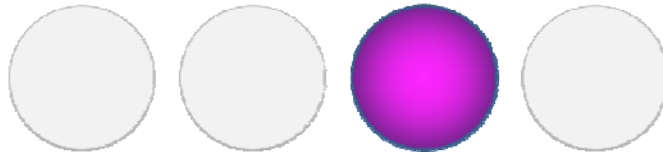
How This Course is Organized

Ignite is written in a way that makes the information both easy to learn and easy to apply to your business immediately. I recommend you take at least a week to go through each section. This will give you time to read the lesson, internalize it and complete your challenge and worksheets. Some challenges will ask you to speak with people, which may take more time if you are just getting started with your business. Remember, the goal is to grow your business. Make the time to give your company a fighting chance. Here's what you will find in this course:

- 1) Message – This is the main lesson and will take up the majority of each section. This is the meat of the book.
- 2) The Bottom Line – Don't have time to read an entire chapter or want a refresher for a lesson you read awhile ago? Turn to "The Bottom Line." This section lists key takeaways from each message.
- 3) Additional Resources – Need more help? The resources listed at the end of each chapter provide books, web sites and other places to get more information on the topics discussed in the message.
- 4) Confidence Challenge – Get the SPARK™ is meant to be interactive, even as a home study course. Just reading the messages is not enough. You will have to apply the lessons to your business to see results. That's where the Confidence Challenge comes in. This assignment at the end of each section is designed to take what you've learned and make it real. The only way to gain confidence and change your business is to step out of your comfort zone and do something different. These challenges will help.
- 5) Success Sheets – These worksheets serve as a way to get your thoughts organized, and will often help you complete your Confidence Challenges.

From Module 1: Know Yourself

*"Poverty is not an absence of money and things - it is a mindset.
Prosperity is not an abundance of money and things - it's also a mindset." Randy Gage*



Don't be afraid to stand out from the crowd

Have you ever had a dream but were too scared to pursue it? Or did you push forward a little with your vision only to have a small voice tell you that it would never work? Did you almost convince yourself that you may as well quit before you REALLY messed up? If so, you are not alone. I've felt those things with each business I created.

I was 23 when I started my design company, Inspired Graphics Media. It was supposed to be a joint venture between me and three of my guy friends. We were all designers who thought we could change the face of web design. I was so excited to start this business until one-by-one my business partners chose different paths. One wanted to finish school while the others wanted to pursue other start-ups. I started with three partners and ended up all alone! That little voice in my head was screaming, "Go get a real job! Leave this entrepreneurship stuff to people who know what they're doing." I was so tempted to give up, but I pushed through the fear and opened up shop a few months later. What made me decide to jump headfirst into entrepreneurship as a single mother of 1 (now 2) with nothing but a degree in Sociology and a dream? I'll tell you. It was all about changing the way I thought.

I've learned that before you can be successful in business, you have to develop a winner's mindset. That's also what the first "Know" is all about. As the quote above states, the prosperity you seek is not just about an accumulation of things. It's something that starts in the mind.

Even though my circumstances made it appear that small business ownership was not a wise decision (minimal cash, single mom, and business partners changed their minds), I didn't let those circumstances stop me from moving forward. I also didn't let

this one HUGE issue hold me back. I bet that issue is holding some of you back right now. The problem isn't that you don't have enough money. There are many entrepreneurs, myself included, who've started companies on a shoestring and a prayer. It's not that you don't have enough time. I have seen people work their businesses for an hour a day consistently and make it work. It's not even a lack of education. Bill Gates, one of the richest men in the world, only has an honorary college degree. I'd say he's doing quite well without a college education. You want to know the #1 thing that's causing you to fail in your business?

Self-Sabotaging Behaviors

We can develop dangerous habits that show our potential business partners and customers that we aren't really serious about developing a profitable company. Here is one self-sabotaging behavior:

- **Procrastination** – Is one of your favorite phrases, "I'll do that tomorrow?" That phrase is fine if in fact you do plan on completing that task the next day. Unfortunately, for many of us, tomorrow never comes. We don't complete that book, contact that potential customer or write up that marketing plan. When the to-do list becomes overwhelming, we quit altogether.

Smart Solutions

If you've been plagued by this self-sabotaging behavior, I offer you this smart solution to turn it around.

- **Develop a "the time is now" attitude** – Running a business can be overwhelming, especially if you are running a solo operation. Not only do you have to find new clients, but you also have to do the book keeping, create a marketing plan and perform customer service. To be successful, there is no time for procrastination. If you find yourself overwhelmed, then I challenge you to start writing your "daily three." This is a short list of the top three most important things you need to do for your business that day. The amount of time it takes to complete each of the "daily three" will vary depending on whether you are working your business part-time or full-time. For these items, there is no, "I'll do that tomorrow." If you stick with it, you will have completed 15 different things for your company during a business week. How awesome is that?! Module 3 in this course will explore goal setting and help you figure out your main priorities. For

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those overachievers out there like me, you will be tempted to write a “daily six” or “daily twelve.” Don’t do it! Commit to three main priorities and then consider whatever else you get done that day a bonus. The goal here is to work smarter, not harder.

THE BOTTOM LINE

- In order to be successful, you must replace your negative mindset with positive attitudes and behaviors.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on reversing negative mindsets or to increase the positivity in your life, check out the following resources:

- Motivated Sista (<http://www.motivatedsista.com>) – This web site gives weekly doses of inspiration to its visitors. It is geared toward female entrepreneurs and those women who want to get to the top of their career game.



CONFIDENCE CHALLENGE

“Get Real” – Before leaving this module I want you to get real with yourself. Answer the following questions before moving on to this section’s Success Sheets.

Which of the negative behaviors do you find yourself repeating most often? Which ones are holding your business back the most?

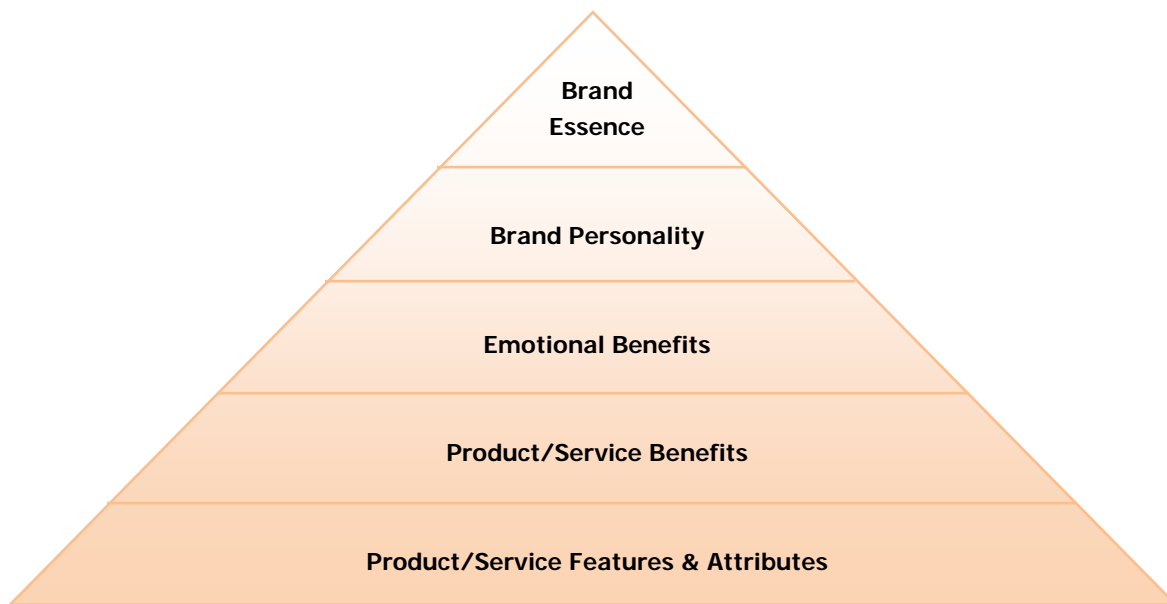
Why do you engage in these behaviors?

From Module 2: Know Your Business

The Equity Pyramid

A brand equity pyramid is a visual representation of the benefits and values of your company. Essentially, it's a quick overview of what your company is all about and how it's unique. While aspects of your product/service attributes and benefits may change as you introduce new ideas to the market, the essence of your brand will remain the same. Equity pyramids are helpful reminders of what you want your brand to stand for in the hearts and minds of your consumers. It can also serve as a "gut check" when you are creating new marketing materials. Let's go through each level of the pyramid, from the bottom up, using a fictional toothpaste brand as an example.

Structure of the Brand Equity Pyramid



Product/Service Attributes – The very bottom of the pyramid is where you list the features and attributes of your product or service. This is typically the easiest part to fill out because it's a running list of identifying product or service attributes. Ingredients, colors, and aspects of your service offerings are just a few things that will be listed. These could be points of similarity between you and your competition, such

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as tartar control ability or mint flavor. There could also be unique attributes or points of difference, like a special cavity-fighting substance that was only available in your toothpaste.

Answer these questions to help you get started with this section of the pyramid: What are the essential parts of my product or service? What does my product or service have that no other company can offer? What aspects of my product or service do my customers care about the most?

Product/Service Tangible Benefits – The next level of the pyramid includes all the tangible benefits of your company. A benefit is something your consumer gets by using your product. It is usually tied to a physical attribute. Using our toothpaste example, a consumer gets fresh breath because of the mint flavor, or she gets a smooth feeling when she runs her tongue across her teeth because of the tartar control protection. Put yourself in solution mode when you start writing this level of the pyramid. We are no longer talking about features but what the consumer gets from using your product. This is part of the “what’s in it for me” answer we talked about earlier.

Here are a couple of questions to get you thinking: Why would you purchase this product or service? What results can someone get from using your product or service? Remember that tangible benefits are directly related to the product/service attributes you listed at the bottom of the pyramid.

Emotional Benefits – As we continue up the pyramid, we start to talk about the higher order benefits of your business. In this area you will list the positive emotions associated with your brand. What’s that next level benefit your consumers will receive because of your company? The toothpaste consumer could feel clean because of your superior product; happy because trips to the dentist are no longer scary; confident enough to get close to that special someone because their breath is always fresh; and the list goes on. The goal here is to start thinking of your brand/company as more than a list of physical features.

When you create your marketing materials, focus on the tangible and emotional benefits to get them interested in your products or services. Consumers buy benefits, not features. When they are surfing the Internet and come across your product and a

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competitive product, telling them that you have tartar protection is not going to win, especially if your competitor promotes a less stressful trip to the dentist.

Brand Personality – This is a fun part of the pyramid because it allows you to think of your company as more than a thing. For the brand personality section, ask yourself: “If my business was a person, how would I describe him or her?” Create a simple sentence that uses traits you’d use to describe a real person. Is your brand professional, fun, a little shy? While this may seem silly, your brand personality will help inform your marketing materials.

The marketing campaign of a brand that describes itself as a shy kid hiding behind its mother will be very different than one described as a rocker girl with a little bit of sass. If the toothpaste is rocker girl sassy, then it may introduce fun flavors like lemon twist or cinnamon. The packaging may be black and pink, and promotions could include the ability to win tickets to a rock concert. See how brand personality can shape communication?

Brand Essence – At the very top of the equity pyramid, list one word or short phrase you want consumers to associate with your brand. It should be something positive and a little lofty. This could be freedom, reliability, peace of mind, or another large goal. It’s what you want customers to take away after having a satisfying experience with your brand. While it will take some time for your consumers to start moving up the pyramid with regard to how they think of your products/services, the brand essence feeling can be achieved over time, especially with your most loyal consumers.

I KNOW MY BUSINESS **Brand Identity Worksheet**

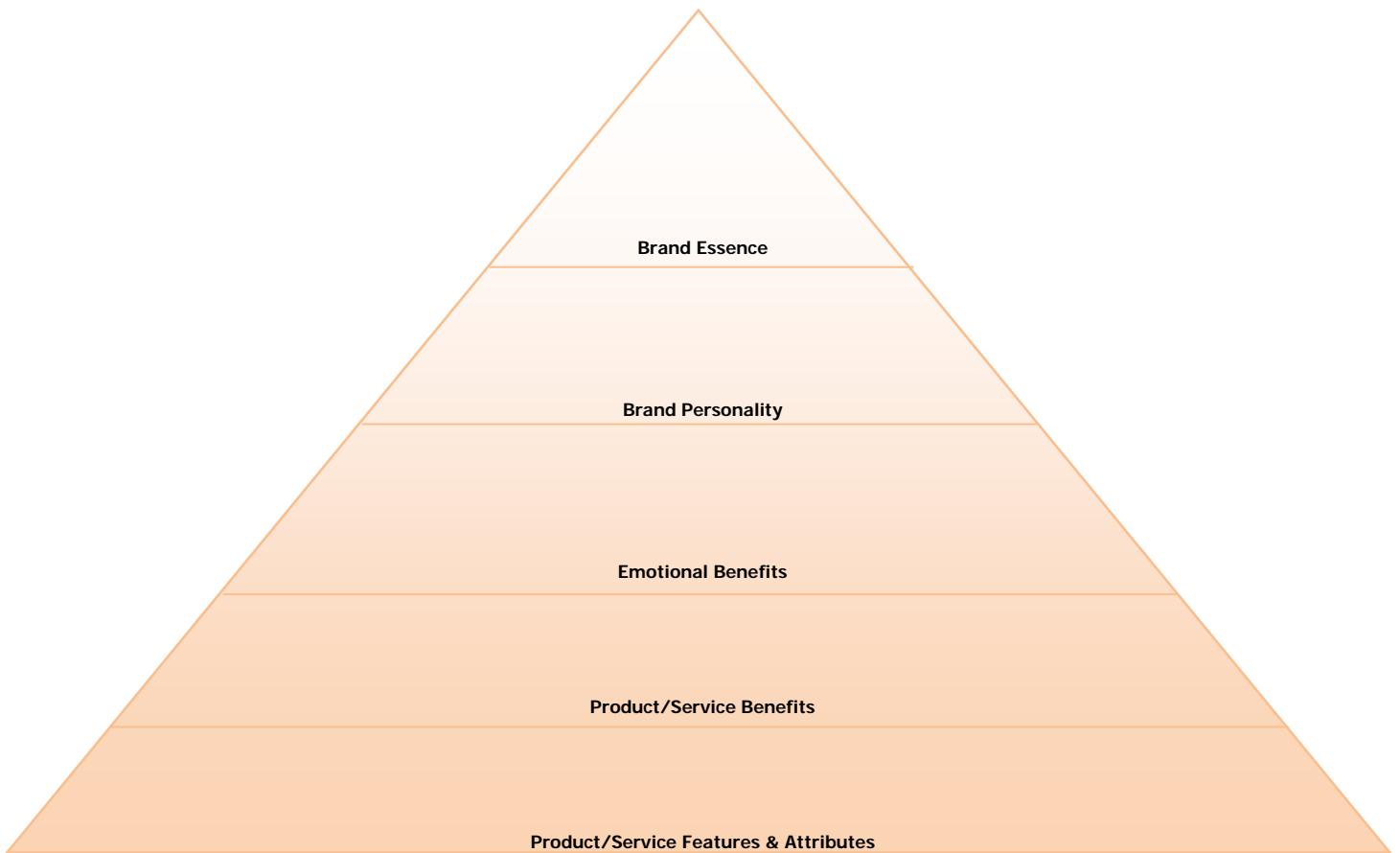
My Business' Brand Identity

1. I want my business to be associated with the following positive characteristics:

2. I will do the following to make sure my brand identity or business image captures the above characteristics:

My Brand Equity Pyramid

Fill in the brand equity pyramid with information about your own company.



Marketing Terms Glossary Excerpt

	Definition	Example(s)
advertising	a form of communication used to inform potential customers about products or services, usually to entice said customers to purchase	Placing a banner ad on a web site your target market visits
allocation	a method of selling a limited amount of product	Only allowing retailers to purchase 100 cases
allowances	money paid to the channel for each case purchased, distributed and moved through in-store merchandising	
authorization	when a retailer's headquarters agrees to accept a product in their stores	
bonus pack	a complimentary product, usually of sample size, is added to your base product at no extra charge to the consumer. The bonus pack sells for the base product's price. Also called an in-pack or on-pack.	A lipstick with a free eye shadow attached
brand awareness	the percentage of consumers who will name your brand when asked to name brands in the category (unaided), plus those who have heard of your brand when it is named (aided)	
brand equity	the added value that is attributed to a brand name	
brand extension	a new product under an existing brand name that is introduced to a new category	Crest extended its brand name from toothpaste into mouthwash and tooth whitening products
break-even analysis	pricing technique used to determine the number of products that must be sold at a specific price in order to generate enough revenue to cover costs	It costs you \$10K to produce, distribute and sell your product. What price will you need to charge to make at least \$10K?
buy rate	a measure of how often and in what quantity a consumer purchases your product. This strategy focuses on getting current consumers to purchase more often.	
cannibalization	when products take sales from other brands in the same line. You have customers who switch between variants rather than new customers coming in to try the other products in the line.	You sell dish soap and introduce new dish soap with lemon. Cannibalization occurs if customers just switch from dish soap to dish soap with lemon.

About Inspired Marketing, Inc.

Inspired Marketing, Inc. is a small business marketing firm dedicated to helping entrepreneurs succeed. Through coaching and home study products, we empower small business owners to take control of their marketing and make more money. For those who need extra help, we offer branding services, like web design and content writing. After working with us, one client had a \$3500 day of sales (her highest ever)! We encourage you to contact us to learn how you may achieve similar results. We have what you need to be a business success. Find us online at <http://www.inspiredmarketinginc.com>.

About Dequiana Brooks, MBA

"It takes courage to walk away from the comfortable...live on purpose." ~ Dequiana Brooks



Hello! My name is Dequiana Brooks, and I'm a passionate entrepreneur who makes it her mission to take the fear out of small business marketing. My Inspired Marketing, Inc. (<http://www.inspiredmarketinginc.com>) coaching clients are driven entrepreneurs who have placed marketing on the back-burner because it was deemed "too hard" or "too expensive." I show them how implementing my exclusive SPARK Marketing System™ will shatter negative mindsets, empower them to take control of their marketing and help make more money. For those who already have their strategy down, I offer branding services, such as web design and content writing, through Inspired Graphics Media. (<http://www.inspiredmedia.net>).

I've always been motivated by two things: entrepreneurship and helping others succeed. Both of my businesses were built around helping entrepreneurs solve a problem. Inspired Graphics Media was developed in 2003 after I noticed that many entrepreneurs I met did not have web sites, or the web sites they used to promote their businesses were lacking the key tools that would convert their site visitors into buyers. However, I was slow to make a profit because I did not understand the proper way to

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market my services. It took me 6 months to land my first web design client! Rather than rest on my laurels, I decided to go to business school and learn the right way to market. A few months into my classes, December 2005, I started Entrepreneur Resources: A Small Business Blog (<http://www.entrepreneur-resources.net>). This blog served as a way to share my new knowledge with other entrepreneurs.

I graduated from the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business in 2007 with an MBA in Marketing Strategy, Entrepreneurship and Organizational Behavior. Directly after school, I worked in brand management for a top consumer packaged goods company. I learned the strategies used to make billion dollar brands successful, and now I'm bringing that marketing knowledge back to the small business community. In September 2010, Inspired Marketing, Inc. was born. Through coaching, home study products and live events, I help entrepreneurs make more money in their businesses through better marketing. I'm so excited to be able to help small business owners succeed.

When I'm not coaching marketing clients, doing branding work or writing, I can be found running behind my energetic 12 and 4 year old daughters. We live in Chicago, Illinois.

If you need 1:1 help, our private coaching is an excellent option. Not quite ready for a 1:1 session? Group coaching is available as well. If you have any questions about our products or services, please email Dequiana Brooks at info@inspiredmedia.net or call me at 312.252.3070.

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