

# “I Just Wanted to Be a Six-Figure Guy”

**Learn the three things you need to succeed with your advertising specialty business from six-figure income earner Joe Ferraro**

**F**or Joe Ferraro, making a decent living as a full-time employee in shipping and receiving just wasn't enough. He admits the money was good, but not enough. “I enjoy the finer things in life, but I knew I could only make so much money where I was,” he shares. “I wanted to be a six-figure guy.”

He recognized that to reach that financial goal, he'd have to start climbing the proverbial corporate ladder. That was the last thing he wanted to do, so this Woburn, Massachusetts-based entrepreneur started hunting around for other options. He began a screenprinting business on the side and balanced it with his full-time position.

Then, three years ago, he came across a home-based business opportunity dealing with advertising specialty products. “I knew I could do more business with specialty products, so I was looking for the right opportunity,” he says of his online research.

What began as a basic web chat about the industry of selling specialty products resulted in a life-changing business for Joe. He chatted with Joe McVoy, founder of Promotional Products Consulting, and invested in his distributorship program, which at the time was a manual covering the industry and strategies to build a successful business.

“Joe McVoy supported me 100 percent. He's a business associate, but I also consider him a great friend. He was extremely helpful to me – and still is – and I'll never, ever forget it,” says Joe, adding, “He has all the answers



for you. If you follow what he tells you to do, it just flows and it will change your life. It sure changed mine."

After six months of running his promotional products business when he wasn't at his "day job," Joe found himself facing a dilemma. "After only six months, I couldn't handle both. I was that busy with my [home-based business]," he explains, noting it was the best problem he could have.

He left his job, launched a full-time effort with his home-based business and has never looked back. He reached the six-figure mark only seven months after following Joe McVoy's plan.

"I have two vehicles now, one is a new truck. I've put a deposit on a house, something I could never do before; and I can eat out every day if I want," says Joe. "I'm making money and not even touching the products. I take orders, send out materials and make follow-up calls. That's it."

The business is pretty basic, and Joe provides additional details, explaining that he uses a web site, marketing materials (letter, brochure and business card package) to get business. Joe McVoy's distributorship program gives step-by-step instruction on setting up a web site and developing communications for potential customers.

The basics of the promotional products business, according to Joe Ferraro, are sending letters to companies, showing product samples and catalogs after someone responds to a letter or call, then taking orders for product. He cautions that you should never forget to do follow-up calls: "You've got to stay on top of it. You never know when they're going to need your services."

However, Joe believes that before you begin your home-based business, there are three key elements you need to possess to ensure your success. "You've got to have personality, drive and contacts. That's all you need. If you've got all three then you're set," he says.

One last piece of advice Joe has to offer to individuals interested in this industry is something he learned from one of his top customers, John Merck of Haverhill, Massachusetts-based Triad Association. John's advice is that image is everything, so the way a business owner presents himself and the products he represents need to be professional.

Joe notes that he approaches his business meetings with the customer's image in mind, making sure to show how his products can promote that image and, in some cases, improve it.

After three years of working from home, Joe says he's nearly tripled his business. He admits to having a contractor keep his books, but other than that, he runs the business by himself. Yet he's quick to note that he isn't in it alone, because Joe McVoy is always a phone call away if he ever needs assistance. "This business is very profitable," he says. "I don't worry about my bills, I'm developing great friendships and I have all the benefits of working from home. It's changed my life." **HBC**