

Solopreneur Take Aways

SHINY GEMS UNCOVERED IN 2014

*Moments of Inspiration,
Smart Things People Said,
& Other Nuggets of
Business Wisdom*



Compiled By Kelly McCausey & Incredible Members of SoloMasterminds.com

In 2014, Solo Masterminds turned 10. How is it that this membership has survived a decade in an industry that changes with every wave of technology and trend? Because we were willing to change as the needs of our members changed. Knowing when to change - and knowing when to resist it, that's the key to longstanding success in our world.

My Biggest Take Away: Resist Making Social Media Your Home

Experts are telling us to 'meet the people where they're already spending their time'. That's good advice for MEETING people. I believe it's less valuable for BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP and ESTABLISHING A TRIBE.

When it seems "all the action" has transferred away from websites to social media hubs - I made a pointed decision NOT to let it happen at Solo Smarts. I stepped up efforts to keep the Solo Masterminds Forum a center of discussion and support.

I centralized my Solo Masterminds Membership together with Solo Smarts and started to host Group Coaching support and Challenges on the same forum instead of using Facebook Groups to provide group discussions.

The more time my community spends on my forum, the more they're exposed to my brand, the more they feel a part of my Tribe. And as a bonus, they're not being distracted by Facebook advertising and the constant barrage of cross group promotion. Discussions are more focused, opinions are more respectful and relationships are built for the long haul. *(That's always been the secret sauce at Solo Masterminds!)*

Would you like to join us? We welcome you with open arms!



Kelly McCausey



Solo Masterminds Member has never had greater value than right now. Starting in January 2015, new members enjoy increased contact with Kelly.

On top of having ready access via the Private Members Forum, during the first 12 months of membership you have One on One Phone access once each month for up to 15 minutes. Ask a private question, get feedback - find clarity!

And as always, after paying for 12 months, you graduate into permanent access to the forum and member learning resources. A short term investment for long term reward!

Visit the link below to view all Member Benefits :)

[Join Solo Masterminds Today!](#)

“2014 started out really rough for me. I left my work at home job and jumped into freelancing full time. It was tough to give up the regular income but I had to do it. Getting back into freelancing, after years of neglecting my blogs and my lists was not easy. I put myself out there like I had never done before. I was rejected so many times it was hard to keep my chin up. My sister reminded me, “You know what you can do.” That and my faith kept me going.

No matter how difficult things got, I didn't compromise on a few things:

- *I never undersold myself*
- *I didn't reduce my rates (except for a one time SMMO that I made)*
- *I didn't take on projects that I didn't enjoy just to make money*

Now 2014 is turning out to be one of my best years. I accepted a part time job with a non-profit Not only do I get to apply my marketing, communication, and copywriting skills for a worthwhile cause, but I also get benefits. I also still have time to accept wonderful clients who found me because of the hustling I did.

The lessons I learned in 2014 are:

- 1. I'm tougher than I thought I was**
- 2. You don't always get what you want. Sometimes you get something better.**
- 3. Material possessions are easily lost, but you will always have your skills, experience, and relationships.” - Lexi Rodrigo**

Lexi is a wife and mom who enjoys copywriting and marketing.

Email: lexi@alexisrodrigo.com

Website: www.alexisrodrigo.com



*"I was thinking about my experiences this year at Solo Smarts including the forum, The Stretch Yourself Challenge, and working one on one with Kelly. One resounding theme kept coming up for me: **Plan your Work and Work your Plan.**"*

As Solopreneurs we often have so many thoughts for products, programs, or any number of things that we'd like to do. Having a strategy is key.

This is the strategy that I've learned this year while being involved with Solo Smarts.

- **Brain dump**
- **Decide on the one idea that you'd like to focus on, feels right to you, and is closest to the money**
- **Create a plan on how you'll make it happen**
- **Break that down into bite size pieces and schedule them on your calendar**
- **Check in for support and accountability**
- **Celebrate Your Success**

Then GREAT things will happen!" - Alicia Jay



Alicia Jay is a virtual assistant mentor who helps women get out of overwhelm and start their VA business.

Email: alicia@newvaadvice.com

Website: www.newvaadvice.com

“80/20 rule proven...I was working on my numbers today and I am pretty amazed at how accurate the 80/20 rule was for me. I believed it to be true but this proves it.

My income has gone up 20% each year from 2009 up until this year. This year my income went down about 23%. Now I could be sad about that or feel discouraged but I'm actually feeling pretty amazed because the first five months of the year I barely worked at all due to having a baby.

Up until this point my business was relying on my presence for the most part as the majority of my income was from group coaching webinars. Obviously it takes some time to restructure and it surprised me that the drop wasn't bigger.

Now that I've been working the second half of the year I'm barely able to get 1-2 hours of work in per day compared to a good 8 hour day before. That is about 82% less time I spend on my business. Put another way I spent 20% of the time but still earned 80% of the income.

80/20 in action” - Angela Wills

Angela Wills teaches marketing for solopreneurs.

Website: www.marketersmojo.com

Email: angela@angelawills.com

10 Tips To Improve Your Focus!

Keep a clean desk top

Keep an uncluttered eye line.

Limit the number of open programs.

Limit the number of open tabs in your browser.

Have one clear priority at a time.

Limit the number of open projects.

Start a 'Ideas for Later' file system.

Limit the number of voices you pay attention to.

Limit the number of lists you subscribe to.

Empty your inbox, then keep it down.



“One of the biggest chunks of gold I found this year is how being active in an online community by answering questions, providing feedback, and encouraging others enriches your life in so many unexpected ways.

The first one is a no brainer: Take a moment to reflect on how wonderful the feeling of being able to help is. It just feels amazingly incredible right? The feeling of being helpful is rooted deep within us. I always thought of myself as generally being helpful. While participating actively on the Solo Masterminds Forum, however, I learned how being helpful to others provides you with a lot of unexpected additional benefits.

Being active in an online community may make attending a live event much more fun and less scary. You already know some people and you know more about them than you would learn during a typical lunch conversation while at an event. It would make the conversation much more interesting and valuable.

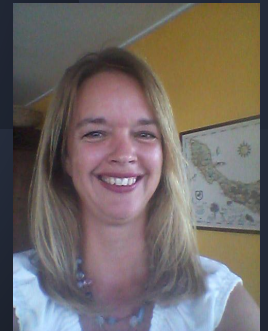
Last but not least providing a safe environment to test the waters is a community thing. If you are looking for help and feedback you can safely assume fellow members are more inclined to set aside some time and do so if they see you help others too.

**Go share a virtual hug!! There’s peeps out there who need you to make their life more blissful”
- Yvette Sonneveld**

Yvette Sonneveld trains, mentors, and assists entrepreneurs with optimizing their
inbound marketing

Email: yvette@inboundmarketingbliss.com

Website: www.inboundmarketingbliss.com



“Break big goals into day to day action steps/tasks.

Around the end of 2013, I started to see an image of the 52 week money challenge pop up in various places on social media. The premise is simple - set aside \$1 the first week, \$2 the second week, \$3 the third week and so on. I decided to take on this challenge.

I’m happy to report I did it! I have \$1378 extra in my pocket which I wouldn’t have, had I not done it. Financially I didn’t need to do it, but I did it anyway just to see where it would take me. Besides, no matter how much you have in the bank, extra cash around the holidays is always a good thing isn’t it?

What do I mean by this? Here are some examples:

Instead of saying, “Walk 365 miles this year,” say to yourself, “Walk a mile a day.”

“Make \$1000 this month,” becomes, “Make \$33 a day.”

Not all things work with this outright. For example, you can’t break, “Double your income this year” into daily tasks. You have to get creative such as, “One new landing page a month, one new ad campaign every week, or make one offer everyday.”

The other big takeaway is to focus on 1-2 big goals at a time. It’s ok to have several major goals but only work on them 1-2 at a time. Working on all of them at a time is way too much to try and change. Even if you could do it there would be too much change, too soon. Something will give sooner or later. This was a hard one for me to learn but thankfully I did.” - Lynette Chandler



Lynette develops WordPress plugins that make marketer’s lives easier

Email: lynette.chandler@gmail.com

Website: www.techbasedmarketing.com

“As a business coach, advisor and owner, I know simplification or, “Less is more,” is what really creates amazing results. However, sometimes it’s easy to forget that when I’m in the excitement of helping a client. I also know that because I love what I do.

**I love helping others see their business potential that I can get carried away and overwhelm them. I have to learn to keep telling myself, “Less is more, less is more.”
- Heather Cameron**



Heather Cameron is passionate about empowering women entrepreneurs to reach their potential.

Email: hcameron@horizon-insights.com

Website: www.igniteyourmarket.com



TEDIUM IS DEATH

- Nicole Dean

from a collection of strangely dark
remarks overheard at an otherwise
remarkably upbeat beach conference

“In 2014, I found that I was tired of playing small. I kept giving myself excuses about how I couldn’t do things because of this or that. I started telling myself that my “pride” or whatever it was that was that was keeping me small would just have to start taking the pain.

I began to ask for the things I wanted. I asked to be a speaker at an event and I was turned down but later offered a spot. I learned to ask for the sale, even if it’s uncomfortable.

Now I have a speaking event that I can use to attract other speaking events and people will give me more credit because I am an author and a speaker.

If I had not asked, that window would never have opened” - Mathea Ford



Mathea Ford helps people who have chronic kidney disease to improve their lives.

Email: matheaford@gmail.com

Website: www.renaldiethq.com

“While there are some that call 2014 the ‘Year of the Podcast’ I’ve dubbed this past year the “Year of the Membership Site.”

In November, I finally subscribed to Netflix and the moment I did that it sparked the realization of the transformative power that subscription based websites have across many industries.

The subscription model has also benefited solopreneurs seeking education. I joined Michael Hyatt’s “Platform University” the first month that it was offered, drawn to the idea of receiving new training content each month (plus access to the archives). This year I took the leap and upgraded to Kelly’s Solo Masterminds membership.

The biggest impact for solopreneurs with subscription models isn’t in joining them, however. It’s in creating them. Starting with the ideas in Kelly’s [“Little Monthly Payments”](#) (creating a micro continuity membership) and then looking for opportunities to secure members at higher levels of commitment is a trend that solopreneurs should jump on because it’s going to continue.

Whether you look through your archives and package up content you’ve already created, or you brainstorm a new way to leverage the one-to-one models, I’ve seen the impact of steady, recurring revenue in my own business, and I’m constantly looking for new membership sites to launch.

Look around - I think you’ll be surprised at how membership sites can be both disruptive (to the traditional way things have been done) and transformative (in other businesses - but especially in yours)” - Bridget Weide Brooks



Bridget (Weide) Brooks helps resume writers be more effective in their work and in their work with clients.

Email: bridgetweidebrooks@gmail.com

Website: www.bearesumewriter.com

Nothing is more important to
building a successful business as
having a **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**
and nothing fosters a positive
attitude like the **PRACTICE OF**
GRATITUDE.

-Kelly McCausey

#BEACHPRENEURS



“One of my mottos at the beginning of the year was to be comfortable with being uncomfortable. It’s one of the things Tony Robbins talks about if you want to reach your goals.

I was making slow progress during the year with my business so I started business coaching with Kelly from solosmarts.com. She slowly but surely challenged me outside my comfort zone.

I always avoided, “putting myself out there.” After all, what might others think of me? That was until I took the plunge and just started sharing my work and showing my true colors.

Taking the advice of Brendan Burchard, I decided not to worry about the critics and instead give my whole heart and effort to those who wanted positivity and progress in life.

It’s my time and I’m ready - I’ve stepped it up to the next level!

Bring on 2015!!” - Tamsin Young

Tamsin Young is a Prosperity coach helping you create
Inspirational results.

Email: tamsinyoung@gmail.com
Website: www.inspirationalresults.com



“I’ve always considered myself to be a strong woman, but that strength meant hiding any sign of weakness in any way. Having experienced some physical weakness over the past several years made me feel even more determined to not display any other vulnerability and put on a stoic public face.

This year I’ve participated in a number of challenge groups and masterminds, and in the process experienced a revelation. While opening up to others and allowing myself to accept help and advice from fellow mastermind members, I’m finding a greater strength. It’s the strength that comes from knowing that I don’t always have the answers and not being afraid to say so.

A quote from a fellow member resonates strongly, “Learn to be bold in your vulnerabilities as well as your achievements.”

Going into the next year of my business, I will be stronger than ever. Not because I’m afraid to show weakness or accept help but because I know that I have vulnerabilities and can boldly step up and face them.

Instead of allowing a weakness to make you feel less strong, use it as a tool to show you how strong you can really be when challenged.” - Teresa Miller



Teresa Miller helps authors and entrepreneurs self-publish with style!

Email: teresa@freestyleauthor.com

Website: www.freestyleauthor.com

On Charging More For Her Time



**"I had to
earn it to
charge it!"**

- Debbie O'Grady



#BEACHPRENEURS

“Kelly’s course, [The Power of a Focused Business](#) has made all the difference for me in 2014. I was able to let go of so much that has been holding me back. I then joined the [Stretch Yourself Challenge](#) and continued on with the Masterclass. I wouldn’t have done any of that without the Power of a Focused Business. I had access to that class because I’m a Solo Masterminds member.

Once I was able to be focused about my business, it became much easier. It was alot less struggle - almost effortless. I would recommend to others to find that focus. I still have to do the work, I am just better able to determine what that work should be.” - Lori Winslow

Lori Winslow is a Practical Organizer - Helping you clean up your office and be more productive.

Email: mysticlori@gmail.com

Website: www.helporganizemyoffice.com

“While on a trip to Europe with my family, my eyes were opened to two things:

- *I wanted to be able to travel like that anytime I felt like it and not have to save up vacation time to do it.*
- *When I returned home I was going to work my business like I had not done in the past and I needed to change my service offerings.*

I have said I had a business since 2011 but in reality it was a hobby. It was fun to dabble and talk about and I did work for a couple of clients, however, I wasn't actively searching for work. I had bright shiny object syndrome. I was learning, attending workshops and webinars, but not actually doing anything. I guess I thought people would just somehow find me and ask me to help them, plus pay me for it. Not sure where I came up with that but it didn't quite work out that way.

Upon returning home I'm much more focused on my business making it a priority to work on it at least two hours a day. I'm proving to myself that I can do this and I love it.

My advice to others is to just start putting yourself out there and see what happens. Don't wait for things to happen. Make them happen. If you aren't sure you can do it, consider interning. Hire a coach to help you with your obstacles. Learn, but take action on what you learn. Believe in yourself and your abilities. Probably the most important is to love, or at least enjoy, what you do.

My biggest takeaway from 2014 - You can be in learning mode forever but it doesn't make you any money.

You must TAKE ACTION!!” - Robin Smith

Robin Smith is a Solopreneur, wife, mom, and copywriter who loves to travel and learn new things.

Email: robins89@comcast.net

Website: www.besocialgetsuccess.com





AFFINITY

meeting you was
like pulling up next
to someone on the
street and
realizing they
were listening to
the same music



BEACHPRENEURS

“Embrace uncertainty and be open to the unexpected.

No matter how much I tell people in my personal and professional life to expect the worst and work towards the best of yourself with what you have (your abilities, skills, talents, desires, resources, time or lack thereof) life seems to hit me with some of the most unpredictable, unimaginable experiences and circumstances. No matter how much I plan, prepare, or devise alternative options B, C, or D, I seem to attract obstacles, roadblocks, and situations that push me further away from my goals.

When horrific world events affected my personal and extended family and crept intimately into my business I felt a loss of identity and wept in utter disbelief. The very business and reputation I poured my heart and soul into for the past five years which attracted optimism, realism, and hope for the greater good of myself and others began to attract the exact opposite. I felt defeated and didn't want the other side to win. I know no one ever wanted me to say goodbye to americanmuslimmom.com so I selfishly didn't let it go.

Then a wide calling from those I love most asked me to walk away. It broke my heart to know I had no option or opinion in the matter but my family's health, safety, and well-being had to take precedence. I have yet to say my official farewell since I'm leaving it to the end of the year. However, without tears and heartache I can share my farewell with a newfound optimism, reality, and hope for the greater good. I can move on and I want others to as well.

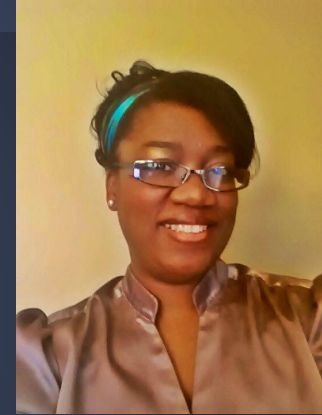
An unexpected personal encounter turned into a lively business venture and joyful life adventure. I never planned or anticipated that such an opportunity would befall me. That is where Embracing Uncertainty comes into play. Almost like soul mates unexpectedly meeting for the first time, Heidi and I developed an instantaneous life friendship neither of us knew we needed or wanted. Within a week, the idea of a partnership for bloggerbabes.com blossomed unexpectedly before our eyes. Just like our chance meeting, we are embracing uncertainty in how we conduct our business and think others should as well.”
- Ponn Sabra

Ponn Sabra is a best-selling author and world traveling homeschool mom of three.

Email: ponnsabra@gmail.com
Website: www.bloggerbabes.com

“My takeaway this year was to realize that I am the CEO of my business. I can decide how much I want to work and what boundaries to have in place. I am not an ER doctor who is on call 24/7.

Once I learned to disconnect on the weekends, not even open email, and spend more time with my family I was a much happier person.”
- Samantha Pointer-Foxx



**Samantha Pointer-Foxx is a
Professional Organizer and Technology Coach.**

**Email: smpointer@gmail.com
Website: www.organizingguru.com**

A glowing, textured lampshade hangs from a brick wall. The lampshade is illuminated from within, casting a warm, yellow light. The brick wall is dark and textured, providing a rustic background for the lamp. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the lamp being the primary light source.

ideas aren't
income

- NICOLE DEAN

#BEACHPRENEURS

“The year 2014 has been a fun, memorable year. Besides exploring NYC and the Santa Monica Pier, it has also been a blockbuster year online. I started my biggest two projects yet. For both I have partners. The difference is that for one it is a new friend and the other is my sister.

When you come up with an idea you always have to choose whether it'll be a solitary endeavor, or if you want to take someone for the crazy, possibly magical ride. After finding the partner you believe to be perfect, it's time to share expectations, roles, etc. For project number one I was upfront with my partner. I believe honesty is more important than anything and I definitely wasn't changing my moral standards for her. As for project number two, JoJo and I hardly had to say a word. The difference between strangers (or new friends) and family is that there's a transparent set of rules already there.

I believe roadblocks are set in front of all people so they can jump over them. Often times my so-called friends disagree with me. They are too afraid to jump over the rock and instead stay behind, letting me go. Then I notice who is there with me: my family. So partnership number one didn't work. A little misunderstanding grew into a big one and as always when something human related goes awry, I blame myself that I should have listened to my gut instincts. My old partner was replaced by my other sister GiGi. My sisters and I are desperately trying to jump onboard to project number two. As family, everything seems to be love-hate but somehow, even when it's hate it always stems from our never ending love. That's how it should be.

For countless years my grandfather preached to my sisters and I in his strong, angry Thai accent, “You have team. You're sisters, you're blood - blood is stronger than everything. Blood is stronger than steel.” Though I always believed him, I don't think I ever felt as positive in his words as I do today.

I learned that running a business with family is the best option for me. I'm proud to share that my top business partnerships I have planned for 2015 are with my best friends who just happen to be my cousins, and a few aunts and uncles as well. I can't wait for the new year!” - JuJu Sabra

JuJu Sabra is #redefiningYOLO at www.teensuccessproject.com

Email: juju@teensuccessproject.com

Website: www.teensuccessproject.com



“One of the best things I discovered this year was creating a 25 year plan. Most of us get caught up in the daily minutes of life. Those of us who don’t may create a 5 year plan or even a 10 year plan if you are really ambitious.

However, a 25 year plan is where you can really see the kind of impact you can make in your business, personal life, community, and the world.

Taking a long view of things challenges you to rise above the minor setbacks and can motivate you to create an incredible legacy.” - Suzette Mariel

Suzette Mariel is an award winning media expert that will help you inspire and educate humanity.

Email: suzette@suzettemariel.com

Website: www.suzettemariel.com

Solopreneurs,

Everything
you Do Will:

- A. Bring you closer to your goal.
- B. Take you farther away from it.
- C. Leave you right where you're at.

You Choose :)

solo 
smarts.com

“At the end of 2014, I dove back into working online after a few years away. The final push I needed after taking a few years away, was Kelly’s 10 year celebration of Solo Masterminds.

While I have accomplished a lot offline over the past few years, being a part of Solo Masterminds is the thing that gives someone a leg up to working online. The encouragement is there, the recommendation of products that will help on my creative journey, and the knowledge of what works now is within my friends and peers.

The biggest takeaway of 2014 has been that I need to find the most efficient way to share the knowledge that I have in this time period of what feels like short attention spans and massive amounts of information being shared with each other.

I have also found that the world of being a creative entrepreneur is full of amazing people. Maybe they were around several years ago as well but just not on my radar. I have really enjoyed getting to know more people who are interested in the same topics as me and seeing how much they have grown in just a short period of time.

**My story is not going to be, “I remember when.” It is going to be, “I’m here now and here is what I want to share with you,” as I continue on my journey of being a quilter, designer, and podcaster”
- Tsoniki Crazy Bull**



Tsoniki Crazy Bull lives overseas, creating beadwork, quilts, and a creative podcast.

Email: tsoniki@gmail.com

Website: www.mebeingcrafty.com

“2014 has been a year of learning about myself, my limits (and how to push past them), and where I want to take my business in the next year.

My Takeaways:

- Focus on one or two services and become the go-to person in that area*
- Learn, but take action on what you are learning. This has been a huge problem area for me. I've read books, taken courses, and purchased products with the assumption that they were going to help boost my business to the next level. Note to Self: it only works if you DO what is being TAUGHT*
- A business coach is important (and necessary in my opinion) for success, but a life coach is equally important. You need both sides of the coin in order to balance you out both personally and professionally.*
- Community is everything. Becoming actively involved in the Solo Masterminds forum was one of the best things I've done for my business. The feedback, encouragement, and boost of confidence is priceless. I would so encourage anyone to join and become a part of this amazing community.*
- I can (and will) push past any limits that have been holding me back - now and in the future. During Kelly's October Stretch Yourself Challenge I decided to take a huge leap and do a “starter” video for my blog. This was mainly to get feedback and see if I could really do it. I can't express enough how amazing it made me feel to complete a video and post it for everyone to see. Just the act of finishing something that has terrified me gave me the feeling that I could really accomplish anything I set my mind to.*

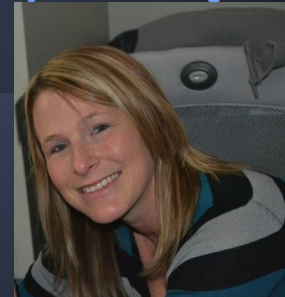
My BIG advice for anyone in the new year who wants to dig deeper and make the biggest impact on their business: Take action on the one thing that scares you the most. It will be one of the most freeing things you will ever do. The confidence you get by knowing you've overcome something that once terrified you will take you and your business to places you never imagined. No limits!

Make it Happen in 2015!!” - Kristin Kemner

Kristin Kemner is a stay at home mom and virtual assistant specializing in Transcription and WordPress Design and Maintenance.

Email: kristin@breezylifesolutions.com

Website: www.breezylifesolutions.com



TODAY

I say

**You Have What It Takes
To Rock Your Business
To The Next Level!**

SO...

Make It Happen!

What do you say?

(YES!)

solosmarts.com