

How to Get Phone Numbers that Makes Money!

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Introduction...

I told a couple people in the vanity number business that I was writing this book and they were really nervous. They thought I was crazy giving away the information that I've built my business on for the past 9 years, and I guess I am in a way. I just figured that there are a lot more prospects and potential than I could ever reach myself. I like being a small business and really I don't want to have a lot of employees. So I decided to share as much information and experience as possible in order to help as many people as possible.

Sharing this much information will definitely ruffle some feathers but I've always provided a lot more information on my website than anyone else. Now I'm just taking that a step further. I figure that as more people get vanity numbers, more people will realize that they need a vanity number too. So the more people I help, the more people will want my help.

All I ask is that if you get a good number you let me know and then that you advertise and promote it as much as possible.

Some of this is available on my website or in past issues of my newsletter but nobody has ever put anywhere near this much useful information together about toll free numbers. It's a lot of information but I really hope it can help you get a phone number that will make money for you and your business.

**THIS IS STILL BEING WRITTEN AND
NOT READY FOR DISTRIBUTION YET!**

Please email me any comments or suggestions

Chapter 1. Getting started with a few Questions.

You probably have a few questions getting started so lets start with those.

Who should read this?

This book is written for anyone in marketing, especially anyone that does a significant amount of advertising or anyone starting their own business. Whether you're starting a small home based business or launching a new TV or radio campaign the right phone number will increase the response rate to almost any advertising.

Why did I write this?

I quit my full time job to back in 1995 to start my own business helping companies find 800 numbers that spell things. Since then I've helped literally thousands of companies find toll free vanity numbers and I'm writing this to share some of the secrets I've learned over the past 9 years. I still enjoy personally working 1 on 1 with a wide range of clients, but I just feel like I can reach and help more people this way than I can one at a time.

Like my website, this E-Book is a little different than most in that it actually has a real person behind it. I put my direct phone number on my website and in this book because I really enjoy helping people. I do request that you respect my time enough to review the materials I've prepared. I don't think it's appropriate to ask me questions that are already answered there, but other than that I'll be happy to give you some helpful feedback or assistance. (Just don't call in the middle of the night - I'm on the east coast)

This book is a step-by-step How To guide to searching for the best possible vanity phone number for your business. It's the most thorough explanation on this topic you'll find anywhere. I'll explain the process, and give you my best tips, tricks and tools to search for and come up with a vanity number that'll make money for you. The right number will definitely make a lot of money for you. You may not have thought about it before or realized the importance of your number or how much impact it could make on your sales.

First of all, How could a phone number make any money?

Your phone number is your doorway to new business. An attractive doorway that connects in your customers minds with your service will simply increase their likelihood of calling. It'll actually increase the response rate to ALL your advertising. The main purpose of advertising is to get your prospects to remember you, and the most important things for them to remember are your name your value proposition and most importantly, your call to action. Your call to action is the action you want to get them to take and is usually focused on your phone number (or maybe your website). The goal of a really great vanity number is to combine all of that in one memorable phrase.

Really great numbers like great domain names have sold for as high as millions of dollars although that's quite rare. But even if you're not in a position to pay much money you should still look for the best phone number or domain name you can find. The ultimate goal is that golden combination of a phone number/domain name match that describes your business and it's value proposition and is good enough to name your company after or be a brand name. A powerful brand name 800 number can give you that magic combination to supercharge your business and turn it into a potential industry leader or even transform an entire industry. Most people obviously won't be able to get a number that can do all that, but just as it's still important to look for the best possible domain name for your business no matter what size it is, you should still look for the best possible phone number for your business. Unfortunately your phone company probably won't be much help. That's why I'm going to show you the inside secrets I've developed over the years in this book to make it a little more even fight.

What makes one phone number any better than another?

Memorability, Impact, and Connection with the customer's need and your desired Image! Every number and situation is different but those are the important traits. You might remember the song Jenny 867-5309. It proves that enough repetition can make any number memorable. However, a vanity number with a word or phrase connected with your business will take significantly less time and money in advertising to become memorable, or will be significantly more memorable after the same amount of advertising. The bottom line is that

getting more calls generally means more sales and more money and that is always better!

Some people like numeric numbers...

The question I usually ask callers that think nice numeric numbers are memorable, is "How many numeric numbers can they remember from advertising, along with the product or company they're for?" The answer is usually zero or one, because even the greatest numeric numbers really have no connection with any product or service. So they may be easier to dial, which is certainly not a bad thing, but they really aren't easier to remember the way a vanity number is.

When considering vanity numbers vs. numeric numbers some people say that they like numeric numbers better because they hate having to take the time to hunt for the letters. That's fine. We're all a little lazy, but that's only because you're not looking at it properly. The real question is would you rather go to a search engine or a phone book to try to look up a number or would you be rather be able to dial it from memory? We're all lazy but that's really the reason why you should use a vanity number, not a reason not to.

Better yet, why don't you look at it from the advertiser's point of view. Would you rather have more people calling you or make it a little bit faster for the ones that do have your phone number in front of them. There are four basic situations where a numeric number is appropriate or even better.

1. Foreign language speaking audiences
2. Elderly or visually impaired audiences
3. Call centers that reuse numbers for multiple different products
4. And repetitive dialing situations like calling cards etc.

Other than that a memorable vanity number with a connection to your product or business will always out perform an easy to dial numeric number.

Some people list the numbers next to the vanity word. That may seem like a good idea on the surface, but that extra effort and thought required is a huge benefit to the advertiser! It reinforces your contact number in a way almost nothing else can. If you put digits next to the vanity word, people are lazy so they will use the numbers and won't remember your vanity number or the digits.

Remember, many sales aren't made on the first call, so if you want them to call you back, listing the digits will decrease their likelihood of remembering your number. Just look at the biggest companies and advertisers and you'll never see 1-800 FLOWERS or 1-800 COLLECT list the digits, because they understand the branding value. That's why their brands are so valuable.

Who should use a vanity number?

I just ask two questions to determine the importance of a vanity number.

- ✓ **Do you make money from incoming calls?**
- ✓ **Do you spend money to generate those incoming calls?**

The extent to which those two questions are true show's the level of importance in getting a vanity number. One of my favorite analogies is getting a vanity if you don't do much advertising is like getting a snow blower if you don't get much snow. The converse is also true though, not having a vanity number when you do a lot of advertising is kind of like not having a snow blower when you get a lot of snow.

Although it might be nice to have one even if you don't do a lot of snow removal/advertising the value or return you get is based on how much you can put it to work for you. That's why anyone that spends a lot of money on advertising and makes money from the incoming calls. There are a lot of other reasons to get a vanity number, but in general the more you advertise the more benefit you'll get from it.

Bill's Top 10

Here are my TOP 10 reasons to use a vanity phone number (taken from the 1800MARKETER newsletter)

10. INCREASED RESPONSE RATES

The most tangible and measurable benefit of a great vanity number is an increased response rate to all advertising. If you don't do much advertising it won't make much difference, but if you do any significant amount of advertising a good number can easily increase your response rate by

typically 12 to 42 percent and sometimes more. And one third of your advertising can certainly be a lot of money.

9. CREDIBILITY & PRESTIGE

A good toll free number gives even the smallest start up, an air of credibility and authority. Consumers also trust companies more when they are more accessible. They feel more comfortable knowing they can pick up the phone and talk to someone any time.

8. INSTANT BRAND NAME

Just like a good domain name, a good vanity number creates an almost instantly prestigious brand name.

7. CUSTOMER FOCUSED IMAGE

Toll free numbers create a professional customer focused image. They show a companies desire to hear from consumers and make it easy for consumers to call and make the company seem more local no matter where they're based.

6. STRONGER PRESENCE

A good toll free number makes you look larger and more established and creates an image of a good more significant brick and mortar business, which has proven to be a real advantage in online marketing.

5. BETTER DOMAIN NAME AVAILABILITY

YourName.com is usually not available. But 1800YourName.com usually IS! This also has an added benefit of putting you ahead of even the A's in the alphabetic directory listings.

4. REPEAT AND SECOND HAND MARKETING

A good toll free number is one of the few things you can do to increase word-of-mouth and customer referral marketing as well as repeat customers by making it easier for customers to remember how to reach you or to tell someone else how to reach you.

3. BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE

Toll free numbers not only improve customer service but create a strong customer service image and focus and allow for hand holding when unsure customers can talk to a live person.

2. IMPROVING CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

One of the most important and often over looked aspects of building a successful business is getting feedback and staying in touch with your clients, prospects, visitors etc. Knowing where visitors or prospects have questions, needs or problems is crucial to keep your business on the right track and growing.

1. ADDITIONAL SALES AVENUE

One of the most important benefits of a good toll free vanity number is that it gives you an additional channel to reach more customers and close more sales.

Unfortunately good vanity numbers like .COM domain names have always been hard to find, and like domain names, once they're gone, they may never be available again. The bottom line is that anyone that does business or deals with customer over the phone can reap huge benefits from a great vanity number.

Finding a good vanity number is definitely not easy. I will show you "how" it works and explain some of the process but it'll take some work just like finding a good domain for your business. And just like a good domain name, a good vanity number increases in importance the more advertising you do.

Before we get into all the information about "vanity" numbers here's a quick guide for people who don't need a vanity number

If you are familiar with toll free numbers you can skip the next couple pages. It may seem overly basic to some people but in case you're not familiar with toll free numbers I will start with the basics here.

Toll Free Number basics

A toll free number is free to the caller. The party receiving the call pays for the call as if they had placed it instead of charging the caller. There may be a small monthly fee but the main cost is the per minute fee which is often something like 6¢ to 8¢ per minute for a major carrier or 4¢ to 5¢ per minute for the cheapest resellers. It may be more for calls coming from within your state or with some

more expensive "personal" plans. The overall cheapest one right now is 2.85¢ per minute at 800Numbers.com although they can't go to cell phone or some local phone companies and can't get vanity numbers.

You don't need to have a separate line or any extra equipment for a toll free number. It just rings to or points to any regular local line. You won't be able to tell whether the calls are toll free or not because it rings exactly the same. In fact with regular toll free service all of the features or options work exactly the same as if the caller had dialed the local number directly. All of your features such as Caller ID, Call Forwarding, or Rollovers, voicemail or anything else you use on the local number.

A quick history of Toll Free Numbers

1-800 numbers were developed in the late 60s by AT&T as a convenient way for businesses to pay the tolls for their customers who contacted them. (Remember when everyone thought long distance was so expensive?) As the service became more popular, toll free subscribers began finding new and innovative uses for the service. As usages and popularity began to grow companies began to realize that consumers preferred to do business with companies with 800 numbers.



By 1984, when the Bell System was dismantled by the Justice Department, there were over 3 million 800 numbers in service by AT&T, and new long distance carriers were clamoring to provide 800 service. These carriers were assigned blocks of 800 numbers with common NXX (prefixes), so the phone numbers available depended on the carrier you spoke to and if you left your carrier, you would have to change your 800 number. The numbers weren't portable.

One of the steps in creating a more competitive toll free market, was to implement the current SMS/800 system which allowed true portability of 800 numbers so you could change phone companies without having to change your number. This gave toll free number subscribers much more ownership rights and made the popularity and value of good 800 numbers sky rocket, so much so that within 18 months of the introduction of number portability, very few of the 7 million 800 numbers were left for new subscribers.

Then after rationing 800 numbers, the telecommunications industry chose 888 as

the next toll free area code, introducing another 8 million new numbers to the toll free pool (less a couple hundred 888 numbers that were held out of the pool at the request of the 800 owner). 888 numbers have been in use now for several years and are fairly well accepted and understood by a large part of the country as equivalent to 800 numbers. But as 888 numbers began to dwindle, 877 and later 866 area codes were introduced as well. 855, 844, 833 and 822 are also reserved for toll free use as they are required. 877 was introduced in 1998, and 866 numbers were later added in 1999. 855 numbers were scheduled at one point but have been left on an indefinite hold at this point.

Some Facts about Toll Free Numbers

- 90% of Americans say they use toll free numbers.
- More than one-third of Americans estimates that they make 60 or more toll free calls per year.
- Demand for new toll free 888 numbers for business and personal uses averaged above 238,00 requests per month, since introduction of the 888 code on March 1, 1996. That's in excess of 2,800,000 new 888 numbers per year. This led to the creation of 877 numbers.
- Toll free calling generates an estimated \$157 billion in annual sales of goods and services in 1997.

In addition, experts say that 84% of current Internet users rely on electronic media to search for product or service information in order to make a purchase (Source: InternetTrak). Being able to locate the 800 number on the Internet greatly improves the success rate of any Internet ad or Web site.

Sources: Individuals, Inc.; PR Newswire; Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions

- The average phone order from a catalog can be 30% to 70% higher than the average mail order.
- As telephone buyers generally use credit cards, they will order more merchandise and higher ticket items 95% of the time.
- A productive ad featuring an 800 number can generate approximately 30% more orders.
- In a study accomplished by Bellcore, paper ads that were almost identical were displayed and monitored. One group had an 800 toll-free number and the others didn't. The toll-free number ads received six times the

number of calls as did the regular long-distance listings. It also seems that this will hold true regardless of the socioeconomic level of the caller.

(Source:"Zip Feature Article")

- ❑ If you want to decrease returns by as much as 50%, use an 800/888 number on product literature. This encourages customers to call in and resolve difficulties with a trained expert.

(Source:"Telephone Marketing Report")

- ❑ Fund-raising organizations have increased their response approximately 25% by adding that 800/888 number in commercials, print ads or direct mail pieces which previously used only addresses.

(Source:"A.I.S.800 Report")

The difference between 800, 888, 877 and 866 numbers

800 numbers are the original area code and have been so wide spread and accepted that "800 numbers" is basically a generic term for toll free numbers. And 800, or 1-800 is more than just a toll free area code but it's a brand name. That's the real difference between 800 and 888 at this point.

888 numbers were introduced in 1996 after several months of rationing. 888 is intrinsically a good and memorable and has some uniqueness since there is no 777 or 999 area code. There has also been a fair amount of use, particularly with companies that couldn't get a good 800 number because of the way they were issued. So although the biggest companies still tend to use 800, 888s are extremely popular and recognized as toll free.

877 and 866 numbers functions exactly as other toll free numbers do, but they'll probably never catch up to 800 and 888 for a couple reasons. First of all, 877 and 866 look like any other new area codes and have no intrinsic numerical significance or memorability. Secondly, they don't have the same amount of public use. Both 877 and 866 had only a fraction of the promotion that 888's did at their introduction and they simply haven't had the volume of public use that 888 had, even at the same stage in it's life. Additional area codes such as 866 have also added to the confusion.

Before 888 numbers were introduced, 800 numbers were rationed for several months. There was also a lot of pent up demand for vanity numbers that weren't available in 800. All of these factors helped 888 numbers but were not true of

877 or 866 numbers. And in fact, many of the reasons for wanting a vanity number in the first place, prestige, credibility, memorability, and it's recognition as toll free are reasons against 877 and 866. So essentially that cares enough about their program to read this for should never use an 877 for any consumer or marketing application.

866 and 877 have their place, but it's more for personal non-business uses because they get fewer wrong numbers. If your calls are revenue generating and you are spending money in advertising to generate the calls, 866 or 877 numbers will cost you money. Just as it is harder to build a brand name around a .cc domain name. They may technically function the same as .com, but they don't generate the same results in marketing.

800 is the .com. It's the default and the one that the big money and fortune 500 companies have used and will continue to use. 888 is the equivalent of .net. It has some uniqueness and is somewhat memorable. It's seen and understood by most as an alternative. The main difference between .com and .net is the brand name, and the same is true for 800 and 888. You'll still lose some calls to the 800 version, especially for applications which involve spontaneous recall or require the caller to dial from memory but at least it gives you an alternative. That doesn't mean though, that if you can't get the first 800 you wanted, that your second choice should automatically be the 888 version of this number.

If you're a small start up and you're not spending a lot of money in your advertising, you have to be realistic and may have to make do. It would be silly to insist that someone in Florida or Georgia needs a powerful snow blower if they hardly ever get much snow. But if you lived in Buffalo or Vermont, and you were getting a lot of snow (meaning you're doing a lot of advertising) it would be stupid not to get a good snow blower. If you're doing serious advertising, you need a serious "800" number that will help increase the response rates to all your advertising.

Most other people will tell you that is just impossible, but I'm going to show you how to do exactly that, if you're willing to work at it.

Where to go for a Toll Free Number

If you don't do much advertising and just want the simplest answer for the overall cheapest

A blue, rounded rectangular button with a gradient and a drop shadow, containing the text "800Numbers.com" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

basic non-vanity toll free service, take a look at one of my websites, www.800Numbers.com. Most people can get non-vanity toll free service for just 2.85 cents per minute with no set up fee, no monthly fee and no minimum or strings at all. That's the rock bottom cheapest toll free service anywhere.

There are a couple simple questions that I usually ask people to understand their situation and their needs. If you do much advertising skip over the next two pages and if you don't do much advertising all you need is the next page or two because the majority of the rest of this book is about vanity numbers. I'll explain the other options briefly though so you can, not only understand your options but why that may be the best option for your situation.

Do most of your calls come from within your state or nationwide?

Everyone always compares the State-to-State or Out-of-State toll free rates for a couple reasons, because it's generally cheaper and because it is less confusing and doesn't vary from state to state the way In-State rates do. That's fine, but for many businesses who's calls come mainly from within the state, the State-to-State rate really doesn't matter nearly as much as the In-State rates.

In-State rates vary because of the tariffs (aka. taxes) which are set by the state. So if most of your calls come from within your state, always check and compare the In-State rates. State rates vary a little from service to service, but here is a list of the states which generally have higher In-State Rates:

Arizona	Massachusetts	New York	Vermont
Arkansas	Minnesota	North Carolina	Virginia
Colorado	Missouri	North Dakota	Washington
Florida	Montana	Oregon	West Virginia
Idaho	Nebraska	Rhode Island	Wyoming
Iowa	New Hampshire	South Dakota	
Kansas	New Mexico	Texas	

I have a site that has cheaper instate rates of 5.9¢/min in any state at www.InState800.com



InState800.com

Cellular 800 service or Stand Alone 800 service

Do you need to point your toll free number to your cell phone or do you want a regular toll free number that doesn't effect your long distance service? Most toll

free services won't go to cell phones and require you to change your outbound long distance too but I've built a special site for each of these options.
www.Cellular800.com or www.TollFreeOnly.com

A blue, rounded rectangular button with a gradient and a drop shadow, containing the text "Cellular800.com" in white, bold, sans-serif font.A blue, rounded rectangular button with a gradient and a drop shadow, containing the text "TollFreeOnly.com" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

I also have sites geared toward forwarding US toll free calls overseas (www.International800.com) and a site for service in Canada (www.Canadian800.com or www.800Numbers.ca). It offers toll free service and long distance to or from anywhere in the US or Canada for only 5 ¢ per minute Canadian.

A blue, rounded rectangular button with a gradient and a drop shadow, containing the text "Canadian800.com" in white, bold, sans-serif font.A blue, rounded rectangular button with a gradient and a drop shadow, containing the text "International 800" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Regular Toll Free Service vs. Enhanced Toll Free Service Providers:

Do you need a separate voicemail for your toll free number, need to screen your calls, need your callers to have options for different departments or people, or do you need your toll free service to try you at multiple different numbers? If you need any of this, you may want to consider an enhanced toll free service.

Enhanced Voicemail Services

There is a different kind of toll free service, that I call enhanced toll free. Regular toll free service simply forwards directly to the local number you specify, sort of like a remote call forwarded number. But "enhanced voicemail" services receive the call in a computer/switch, they process it before trying to forward the calls to your local number. They generally play a recorded greeting, may give options and then forward the call to the user, often trying multiple different numbers. It may then give you the option of accepting the call or sending it to voicemail. This type of enhanced voicemail type service is a little more expensive, but has a lot of additional features and benefits.

I'm working on a Voicemail Comparison Guide which I may attach as a chapter or addendum and will be located at TollFreeVoicemail.com but it's not ready yet.

Here are a few of the best enhanced voicemail services which you can compare.

If you want to be able to differentiate your existing local calls from your toll free calls, you can either get a service from your local carrier that will give you a second number which points to the same line but rings different (sometimes called differential ringing) or you can get a full second line, or use one of the Enhanced services.

Several of the best enhanced toll free services:

FreedomVoiceSystems.com
SmartVoicemail.com
1800RingCentral.com
TeleCenterVoicemail.com



How to get some of the features of an Enhanced Voicemail program

(This section is from an article in my 1800MARKETER newsletter)

I guess it's only human nature to want to get more for less. That's why I want to show you a clever combination of services that I use in my own home office to get some of the better more advanced features of the more expensive toll free services for a lot less.

The Enhanced services listed above each provide what I call "virtual office" services. There are several other services but these are some of the best and most popular (many of which are also offered under several different names too).

It's a good enhanced toll free service available on the net under a variety of different names but you'll recognize them all because of their "lite" and "pro" versions for \$9.95/month and \$19.95/month respectively. It's an excellent combination, but they charge more per minute to connect the call to a live person. But if you do it right, you can get some of the follow me type of capabilities of these enhanced services without the extra expense.

My special 2.85¢/min toll free and long distance service (at 800Numbers.com) is a fantastic deal but it can't point to a cell phone. But you CAN forward your calls with the local phone to your cell phone. And if you use Forward- No-Answer and Forward-Busy, it'll automatically forward to your cell phone if you're on the office phone or don't answer it. That way you can use your cell phone as a roll over extension when you're on the phone or you can just walk out the door and if your local phone's not answered, it'll always "follow you" to your cell phone. This combination not only goes to your cell phone at 2.85¢/min instead of the 4.9 cent www.Cellular800.com service, but it gives you the follow me features of Freedom Voice Systems service which costs 11.9¢/min all for only 2.85¢/min with no set up fee or monthly minimum at all!

You can also use Ztel's unlimited plan (see www.PhoneConsultants.com/ztel) and that will give you a very professional unlimited forwarding system that even announces the calls like the enhanced services. I use this and have had several people tell me that it sounds professional. This gives you the best combination of enhanced features and capabilities along with the lowest possible cost per minute. I've used this for my home office for a while now.

Why doesn't the phone company tell you any of this?

Phone company representatives that answer the phones definitely aren't the highest paid people. Some companies even use representatives overseas today because the labor is cheaper in India or the Philippines. They may be nice people but they just don't get any of this in their training. It's also not in their best interest to go to this much trouble. They don't understand the marketer's perspective and they just look for the easiest way out. That's why they always say for example that 866 is exactly the same as 800 or that a number isn't available if it's not available in the SMS/800 database. From their perspective it is all the same and they just don't have any incentive to do any more than what's necessary or what everyone else does. There are some nice phone representatives but this really is hard and they are usually not very helpful.

Phone company representatives also don't ever see the results of advertising. They just connect the calls, they don't have to worry about generating them. Generating the prospect calls is always MUCH more expensive and more complicated than just completing the calls. The next time they tell you it's all the same thing, ask them if they think 866 COLLECT would be the same value and

generate the same amount of calls as 1-800 COLLECT, or ask them what the main number is for their company. They may use some 866 or 877 numbers but most of their advertising probably uses "800" and all of their major ad campaigns always feature vanity numbers prominently. That's because, no matter what that customer service representative says, their advertising department knows what works. So do what they do, not what they say.

What should you look for in a good Vanity Number?

When you're considering a good vanity number, it's important to know what to look for. We can't always get everything we want, but you should look for something that says:

- Who you are
- What you do
- How to reach you (on the phone and the internet)
- AND your strongest selling point or WHY they should use you.

That's a tall order to put all of that in one memorable package. Especially something that grabs you with an "edge." You may not be able to get all of that but at least you know what to look for and what makes the best number. Many people also forget about their including their selling point or their message. If you're in sales, you need to always have an answer for the question, "Why should they buy from you" woven into almost everything you do. The very best numbers tie that right into your name and phone number and even your very identity. If you can tie your benefit or selling point into your name it becomes an assumption even more than if you had shown a commercial full of comparisons. You don't have to name your business after the phone number, to make a great number an asset to your business but you should at least reserve the domain name and use it as a brand name in your advertising.

Generic vs. Creative?...

Some people think that a good vanity number has to be a generic term. I admit that simple can be good, and simple generic terms are often what people think of first. They may also have the most credibility but they are not necessarily the best because they don't usually cover the fourth and perhaps the hardest but most valuable point to cover in a great vanity number, your USP.

People in the Mortgage or Refinance industry often come to me and say that need a number like 1-800 MORTGAGE thinking that a generic term would make the best possible number. First of all, generic terms are much harder to get and less likely to be available. They're basically out of reach for just about every industry. You can think about them, but don't focus on them or you'll have a very difficult and disappointing search.

I've actually gotten numbers for several clients in that industry that were better than 1-800 MORTGAGE. 1-800 GREAT RATE, 1-800 FAST CLOSER, 1-800 QUICK LOAN, and 1-800 EZ APPROVAL are all better than 1-800 MORTGAGE because they not only said who you are, what you do and how to reach you, but they also included the strongest selling point. They build the reason why a prospect would want to call you right into the name and number and are actually better than a more generic number.

1-800 GREAT RATE, 1-800 FAST CLOSER, 1-800 QUICK LOAN, and 1-800 EZ APPROVAL are all examples of brand name numbers that I actually got for clients too, and 1-800 GREAT RATE is also available regionally in some areas. Dial the number and ask for Mark to request more information.

Generic non industry specific terms are also not as appealing as you might think at first. Some people assume that 1-800 CALL NOW, 1-800 ONE CALL or 1-800 AMERICA are the best options because they have a broad appeal. But again if they don't clearly describe your business, they aren't going to be as valuable as something more specific to you and your business. If you're in real estate, don't pursue 1-800 REALTOR or 1-800 BUY A HOME. Be more specific because you're not only more likely to be able to get 1-800 NV HOMES, if you're in Nevada that really would be just as good if not better because it really says more specifically what you do. The extreme example, 1-800 CALL NOW might sound like a good number but like 1-888 222-2222 it just doesn't have any connection to your business. If your prospects remember your number but not your product or service you still won't get the calls.

Instant Impact!

So put this all together and put your company to what I call, the Instant Impact Test. If you only had one fender on a race car, could you get the essence of your message across in a split second? If you can do that, you have a powerful marketing weapon that nobody else can beat.

By the way, if you don't think a memorable phone number is valuable, do you think memorable domain names are? They are valuable for the exact same reasons. They require less advertising to create impact, memorability and a powerful brand name.

If you make money from your incoming calls and you spend money to generate those calls, then you need a memorable vanity number. And the more money you spend the more important it is to have a better number.

Extra digits?

Don't limit yourself to 7 digits. A lot of great vanity numbers are more than 7 digits. The phone company doesn't use anything after the first 7 but you can use them in your advertising. My main number is 1-800 MARKETER which is 8 digits but that's a lot easier to remember than 1-800 MARKET 3. The extra digits are just ignored by the phone company (although some cell phones and pbx's may not like them). The rule is usually to not start a word after the first seven digits because it would be lost. 1-800 COMPUTER HELP is really just 1-800 COMPUTER. But you also have to know when to break the rule. In some ways longer numbers can have a better edge. 1-800 SWIM WITH THE SHARKS, for example, is way too long but it has a great edge. You don't need to type in the extra digits in the lookup tool. Just enter the first seven and you can assume the rest as anything you need for your marketing.

If the vanity word you need is less than 7 digits you can add some extra digits or another word in front of or after your word. Even if your vanity word is 7 digits or larger, if you can't get the pure term you wanted you can still try adding a few digits before the vanity word. It'll create more possibilities and increase the chance of getting a number. Just remember that phone numbers can't start with a 0 or a 1 in North America. You can also use an astrich "*" as a wildcard in the lookup tool to try multiple different options at one time.

Making more options with prefixes...

I've created a list of two and three digit words and sorted them roughly in the order of popularity and value. Try adding these in front of your word or phrase to come up with more possibilities.

Word List:

Qs, Zs, and Os

Telephones designed less than 8-10 years ago have the Q on the 7 key and the Z on 9 key, but phone designed more than 8-10 years ago (even if they were built more recently) often don't have a Q or Z at all and some even have them on the wrong key. When I first started in the vanity number business you had to avoid Zs and Qs all together. The first number I got with the Z was 1-800 PUZZLES and we put in small print underneath (hint: Z = 9) to tie the deficiency into the theme of the number. But now it's much more widely used and it's basically just a footnote to consider. I admit that I'm a little surprised at how quickly they are now understood and can be used in most situations.

By the way, a woman with the number 1-800 QUALITY was interested in finding a good home for her number which she'd had for several years for her business but wasn't going to be needing as much any more. If you're interested call the number or drop me a note.

There is also a less common misdial possibility on the O key, as in MNO which would usually be the 6 key. Some people occasionally mistake the Zero key either because of the large 0 or because of the O in operator which is usually abbreviated OPER. Those are really the only misdials that I've ever seen become a consideration. I wouldn't discount a good number simply because of potential misdials, but you should at least be aware of the potential.

Misdials can make you money

I should probably take a step back and define "misdial" for you. A misdial is just a wrong number. A "misdial number" is a phone number that gets a lot of wrong numbers. There are actually several kinds of misdial numbers. There are also a lot more wrong numbers on average for toll free number than on the average local number. That's because there are only slightly fewer toll free calls than local calls yet there are roughly 50 times as many local area codes as toll free area codes. There are roughly 200 local area codes and only 4 toll free area codes. They may not seem like that big of a deal, but misdials are actually one way to make money from a phone number.

How would you like to get calls from people looking to order your product or

service without any advertising at all. There may be hundreds or even thousands of people calling for your product or service, or a product or service similar to yours that you could sell to without any advertising costs at all. And when people are already calling for your service they may be ready to buy and may even be less price sensitive since they were already calling.

You should look for misdials of your own number as well as misdials of your competition. I mentioned that there are several types of misdials. Let me explain them a little about each of them and you'll probably realize yourself what opportunities may exist for your business.

Roll up Misdials

Every time you see a competitor using an 888 or especially an 877 or 866 number, you should always jot down and pursue the 800 version of their number. People think of "800 Numbers" as the generic term and default name for the industry and will often remember the number but will wind up dialing 800 instead of 866 or 877 and even 888. I call this type of misdial "Roll Up" because they roll UP from the other area codes to the 800 version, but they don't roll down from the 800 to any other area codes.

The number of misdials will probably depending on the amount of and type of advertising they do, as well as the number itself, but it's always worth checking. Roll ups can be one of the most common type of misdials. They are also a very subtle almost invisible marketing tool. The competition probably won't realize for quite a while, that you are getting their calls until they mistakenly dial your number themselves. But just think about the devastating feeling you'll give your competitor when they realize that you have a number similar to theirs and are probably getting customers from them. They won't be able to prove how many calls or customers you're getting and as long as you don't mislead anyone you are always allowed to answer your phone and accept any orders which people want to place with you on it. So always look for the 800 version of your competitor's number!

Fat Finger Misdials

This is probably the type of misdials people usually think of when they think of wrong numbers. They are often called "Fat Finger" because they are simple human error, caused by accidentally pressing a wrong key with your fat fingers.

Make a list of all the numbers that are one digit away from yours. Add to it all of the numbers that have an extra stutter digit, that repeats one of the digits. If it's a vanity number look for misspellings. Then check them all.

You can check the misdials pretty much the same way you search for vanity numbers. First use the lookup tool at TollFreeNumbers.com and then try dialing them. The biggest difference is that you don't actually have to get the numbers to get the benefit from them. If they go to an active customer, say hello and introduce yourself. Find out how many people there answer the phones and how big they are. Ask them if they get many wrong numbers for the product or service you sell. It's harder if the misdial goes to a really large company, but if you can make a friend and let them know your correct number they will often be happy to give out the "correct" number for you.

I said, "make a friend" because they have to like you a little. They are going to get the wrong numbers anyway. It may actually take less time to give out the correct number than it would if they hang up and just call back again not mention that many people want to help you and the customer looking for you. So get the name or names of the people who answer the phones and send them pizza on a Friday and Christmas cards with several business cards that they can put up by the phone(s). Depending on the volume of misdials, this type of Gorilla Marketing could get you a steady stream of prospects at almost no cost.

Out of business Misdials

Businesses come and go every day. You've probably seen some of your competitors go out of business. Well they are almost certainly still getting calls that someone should get. So why not you.

Every business advertises and many types of advertising such as yellow pages for example, last for an average of two years. So if a company spends just an average of \$500 a month on advertising you could easily pick up \$10,000 worth of advertising by just paying attention and grabbing the right number at the right time. It is probably easier for toll free numbers than local numbers since toll free numbers are portable and can be directed anywhere. Toll free numbers are also usually used by the larger companies but local numbers can be remotely forwarded too. Every business has repeat business and if they don't want that business why let it go to waste. Make a list of all your competitor's numbers and call them every couple months or so. You can also sign up for them on my

Watch List which will let you know when a number goes to an intercept message which is often a prelude to the number becoming available. The Watch List is still under development but it's an excellent tool to help keep track of numbers that you might like to get in the future if they become available.

Watch List

Directory Assistance Misdials

I've talked with businesses that generate several customers every day simply for the cost of listing their business with Toll Free Directory Assistance (which generally costs \$10-15/month). It's most effective for unusual company names. For hard to pronounce names register under multiple different names, some spelled phonetically as whatever you think a customer might ask for or an operator might hear. You may even be able to register for competitive names. You should also think about what city you are listed in.

If there are multiple distributors for an organization listed, the operator will usually ask them either what department they want (if there are different departments listed) or they will ask them "in what city?" If the customer knows where the company is based they will often select the number located in that city. So you should try to get the city listed with directory assistance to be the city your organization is based in.

TIP: The main Toll Free Directory Assistance is run by AT&T. Other companies will always charge you a monthly fee to be added, but AT&T won't (although their toll free numbers generally have a fee of some kind). Smaller companies will sometimes list your name or address with directory assistance as something else though which can be an advantage which AT&T generally won't.

Assumptive Misdials

People often assume that a company will have their company name in an '800'. I helped a distributor for Trivita get the number 1-800 TRIVITA and a distributor for Sea Silver get the number 1-800 SEA SILVER. They both got thousands of dollars worth of calls from customers looking for the company as soon as they activated the number. Even if it was never advertised or promoted, people looking for the company, hopefully to reorder, will often "Assume" that the

company has that number. 1-800 CONTACTS received tens of thousands of dollars a month even without any advertising.

My number 1-800 MARKETER also spells MARKET DAY and I get a number of calls for Market Day all the time, even though they never had or used that number. So even though it may be hard to get your exact company or product name it can be very valuable!

The Black Hole

No discussion of making money with misdials would be complete without mentioning what I call the Black Hole. The Black Hole is a phone sex business that gets basically all of their advertising from wrong numbers. They play a short message telling callers to call the "Talk Line" and giving out another number. It costs them next to nothing at their level with hundreds of thousands of toll free numbers, to play that message.

I call them the Black Hole because they are sucking up around 10,000 "800" numbers. And with over 500,000 "800" numbers as of January 2004, they passed Sprint and are now the third largest phone company in terms of the number of "800" numbers they control. The worst part is that because of the regulations against hoarding and brokering numbers, they can't give up any numbers either. That's why I call them the Black Hole, because they suck up everything in the world and nothing ever comes back out. You should also check the misdials of your own numbers. The 800 version of your toll free number might be going to a phone sex and you don't even realize it.

Toll Free versus Local numbers

But I didn't call this How to get Toll Free Numbers that Make Money, because there are other types of numbers that can make you money. Most vanity numbers are toll free numbers because of several unique capabilities of toll free numbers. Toll free numbers are portable such they can be activated anywhere. They're also better for marketing nationwide. But not all businesses market nationwide. Many are much more localized, especially service related services.

My brother had a small Pizzeria a few years ago and I got him the number 201-EXTRA CHEESE. It was an awesome number that was perfect for his local pizzeria. Your local area code is actually MORE memorable in your local area, it

reinforces his local-ness, and you don't have to pay a penny more for it. Since then I actually built a site specifically to help people find great local numbers.

You wouldn't want to use a local number for national advertising. But a lot of services businesses are local. You may be able to get an even better, more valuable or memorable term in a local number than you can in a toll free number because almost nobody else looks for or considers them. Even if you want a toll free number too, you have to have a local number so why not look for one that's memorable too.

I built a whole website around Local Vanity Numbers at VanityNumbers.com The main best feature is the local vanity number locator. Look at the website for more information but you can also get it by sending an email to localvanitynumbers@localvanitynumbers.com with your 10 digit telephone number or your 5 digit zip code as the subject line. It'll send you a list of all of the exchanges available in your local area along with all of the words that can be created from those numbers sorted in order of popularity. It still takes a little legwork but will be a huge help to find a good local vanity number. You never know what might be available if you knew what to ask for unless you try it.

Cellular Vanity Numbers?

Another type of local vanity number is a cell phone vanity number. They're especially valuable now that you can keep your cell phone numbers if you change carriers. That means they can be used in advertising now which is a huge asset, because before they couldn't really be used in any permanent advertising since if you changed cell carriers, you would lose your number.

I had a cell phone number 914-OPEN-HOUSE but when I changed carriers from AT&T to Nextel, I had to change my number. I wasn't in real estate and only had it for the fun of it so it didn't really hurt that much to let it go. But now you won't have to do that again. A vanity cell phone number may be even more valuable than a vanity number on a regular land line now because no matter where you move or what carrier you change to, you can keep a cell phone number for life now.

There is more information at VanityNumbers.com but here's a quick overview of the process to get a vanity cell phone number.

1. First you need to find all the area codes available with the exchange you want at <http://www.jcsm.com/ac4exc.asp> Enter the three digits of the exchange you need and it will create a list of all the area codes with this exchange.
2. Call every Cell number (and possibly the "normal" numbers if you have to) and highlight the ones that don't go through to and detectable customer.
3. Lookup the ones that don't go through at <http://fonefinder.net> which will give you the company responsible for that exchange.
4. Then just beg and plead with them to get that number. Also please let me know if you find a someone that will help you as I'd like put together a list of people to call in various companies because it is hard to find anyone to help you in most phone companies.

Most of the rest of the book is geared toward Toll Free vanity numbers because those are the most common and more valuable numbers. The rest of this book will be focused on toll free numbers. There's already a lot of information on my website but I'll go over it here again.

How much does it cost?

I mentioned earlier the toll free cost for some services and from a telecom company perspective it doesn't cost any more to get or use a fabulous brand name vanity number than it does to use a random non-vanity number. The real cost either in terms of time or money is usually in acquiring the number.

But it's a different kind of cost. You have to understand the difference between marketing costs and operational costs. The cost of receiving the calls is your phone bill and is an operational expense. The cost of generating the calls is an advertising expense, so the acquisition costs for a good brand name number should always be considered a marketing expense like your advertising, not an operational expense like your telecom costs of receiving the calls.

If you understand the difference it will make it much easier to measure the value and importance of the right name and number. And when I talk about a phone

number making money for you, you have to realize that it's making money for you from a marketing perspective, as in generating additional sales. It's not sending you a check every month, but if you put it to work properly it can send you new customers every month which is certainly good too.

I've personally gotten hundreds of great brand name numbers for clients and charged them several thousands of dollars each. I've gotten numbers for as little as \$20 by tracking down the right people and asking the right way and negotiated transactions that went into seven figures. It's hard to predict ahead of time what the costs will be like since it's based more on the present owner's situation and their use for the number than the acquiring party.

How to measure the value of a good vanity number

The simple way to calculate the value of a number is to multiply the percent of additional response received by the amount of money spent on advertising. For example, if you spend \$10,000 a month on advertising and you receive a 18% increase in response, then the number is generating an additional \$1,800 per month in value or \$21,600 per year. That's why it's so much more important for large companies that do a lot of advertising to get a better number and why it will be worth more, the more advertising you do. There are other factors and more complex equations. I've got a more thorough formula later in the last chapter, but this is the simplest way to calculate a number's value without going too crazy.

Napolean Barrigan, the founder of 1-800 MATTRESS, told me a long time ago, that the value of his number was that it stuck with people even if he stopped advertising for a week or a month or more. It keeps on getting calls. If he had been using a random number the calls would stop as soon as the commercials stopped. That's a phone number that makes a lot of money.

You probably can't get a number quite that good (good enough to change your entire industry and make you tens of millions of dollars) but anyone that advertises should look for something memorable for your business because it definitely works.

Some types of advertising are more effective for vanity numbers than others

Have you ever seen a vanity number on the side of a truck or noticed the stickers on trucks that say "How's my driving?" They **always** use vanity numbers because it makes the biggest difference for the type of situation where you're not looking at the number when you dial (dialing from memory). So any type of outdoor display advertising or in broadcast TV or Radio it's critical and has the most impact. It helps in other things but generally to a lesser extent, down to the least critical situation where people always call with a catalog for instance, in front of them.

Other area codes?

People often ask if 866 or 877 numbers are as good as 800 numbers in marketing. The answer is almost always no. But the reality is for smaller home based businesses you often have to take what you can get. Larger businesses are generally doing enough advertising that they really need to have a decent number. It's always smart to pursue the best possible name and number for any company, but you also have to be realistic. If you're not doing that much advertising, you probably shouldn't spend that much time or effort pursuing a really huge number.

If you understand marketing and you're building something bigger than yourself you should definitely focus on 800 and dig deep to come up with a great number. But if you're starting up a small business and not going to be doing that much advertising, a better number won't be as valuable. I always tell people I don't want to sell them a snow blower if they don't get much snow, because the value of the toll free number is usually determined by how much advertising you do. That's why sometimes smaller businesses need to be realistic and take what you can get sometimes. You can always upgrade it later on, since you can add a second number without having to give up the original number. With a toll free number, you basically just pay for the volume of calls or traffic so it doesn't cost much more to have the calls split over more than one line.

Your phone number is your doorway to new business. If you have to have one any way, why not get one that will attract more people and help them to find you and make you look more attractive. The whole purpose of advertising is to make them remember you (in a good way). Your call to action should be the

most memorable part of the advertising and that is usually a domain name or phone number.

Now you're ready to get to the Meat of getting Money Making phone numbers

I've actually written this book mainly with slightly smaller start up businesses in mind. That's why it's basically about How to get phone numbers that make money, not just Why you need a good phone number to make more money. The larger businesses already know that the right number will increase their sales and they can afford to hire someone (like myself) to go and get them the best possible number. It's the smaller startups where money is tight yet they really need some direction to get the right number because they wind up having to do a lot of the searching themselves. Even the in between businesses should still at least understand the process and do or oversee the search themselves. But without some help the best numbers will definitely seem like they are totally out of reach. They still don't want to pay someone thousands of dollars to do something they may have been able to do themselves.

So if you're not made of money but you understand the importance of the right phone number to all your marketing you're in luck. You've probably got enough background understanding now. I'm about to share with you the exact step by step process you'll need to finding the best possible number for your business. A phone number that will definitely make you MONEY!

II. Using the Lookup

The best place to start is by using the lookup tool at my website TollFreeNumbers.com. It will check

What the lookup tool does

Just try the TF Lookup at TollFreeNumbers.com for a while, brainstorming possible names.

Keep track of all the numbers and results or just email them to yourself.

The tool is safe and is not monitored. But beware of Mytfn and companies that take the number you want and rent it to you.

Use the brainstorm section tools to come up with ALL the possibilities

If you're going to dig deeper and you're working on something important, make sure you have a backup. You may already have one but if not, one of the first things you should do is to get a backup!

Don't just focus on generic obvious names. Being more creative doesn't mean less valuable.

How many possibilities are there?

Don't limit yourself to 7 digits.

Try my Core Word System

III. Try calling the best numbers.

Before you dig deeper, you should have a backup if you don't have one already.

Should you call 800 only, 888s, or 877s and 866s or just 800?

Consider approaching residential sounding customers (see how to approach someone)

What do the different messages mean?

- Tell tale messages

 - "No further information is available"

 - "Dash four"

- Tones are generally local

- local numbers and odd messages

 - These are working but point to non-working local numbers

 - If you have the local number use FoneFinder.net to find the local carrier for that local number.

Look for Disconnected, not in service, or unable to be completed as dialed

- Why are these better possibilities?

 - Numbers in use always cost more and are much more unpredictable.

Not available from your calling area

- This isn't as likely because it's working somewhere.

- RBOC's do this a lot

- In combination with other messages, assume it's the other message.

- Again, numbers that are actually "active" are harder to get

Tips on approaching someone

- How much does it cost

 - varies totally depending on the situation so no averages are really relevant.

- Residential customers

 - Keep your company and real need out of it.

 - Make it a small easy decision.

 - Be a friend!

- SOHO

 - same as small biz, but will cost a little more.

The cost is based on their expenses
In negotiating always try to keep the price focused on their cost to give it up.

(But if someone is approaching you always focus on the value to them - which is always higher)

For businesses, always ask for their website first.

You get a lot more information from that then you will from anything else.

Look for and use an alternative vanity use in case they don't realize what it actually spells, as that may keep them from seeing big bucks.

General costs

Residential \$20 to \$100 or \$500 to 1000

Small business is a little more based on their cost to give it up and how much it takes to make it worth it to change something.

Use the negative approach very litely...

We are starting a major advertising campaign on a similar number and don't want you to get hundreds of wrong number calls at all hours of the day and night.

Don't assume it's a lot because it's a larger business. The harder part is reaching the right person and getting them to make a decision.

For larger businesses always look for their Wish List and see if you can get them to trade up, because cash means less to a larger company and a good number means more!

IV. Go through the phone company carrying the traffic on the number.

What is a "resporg"

Email me for the resporg and contact number.

Some small companies may be associated with the owner and may not be helpful, but most normal phone companies are helpful to some extent.

Why don't they give out customer information

They're protecting the customer

the correct name and address is part of the security and transfer process

Always verify any information from phone company representatives from multiple sources

They often repeat with they've heard or whatever makes sense to them or just makes things easier for them.

You should always have a good story (aka Pretext) ready too.

V. Digging Deeper to get the Customer Information.

It's often easier for an end user to go through another end user than the phone company. But it's always easier for a phone company to go through other phone companies...

Other databases you can check

Anywho, GoTollFree, Whois lookups and search engines.

Our PI Search for \$195

Takes a couple days

Guarantees the correct name and address.

How to check the information.

Some numbers are in transition and may not actually have any information left connected to the number, but at least 90% do, even for old disconnected numbers.

VI. My Consulting to dig deeper

First of all, the cost and how to make it affordable.

Understanding the difference between cost and value.

The cost of generating the calls is always MUCH higher than the cost of completing the calls.

No snow blowers in FL

The two kinds of startups

Startups with big dreams, vision, funding and know it's harder and more expensive to change it than to start it right up front.

The seat of the pants entrepreneur that's still testing the business concept and will have to take the money out of something else critical to afford a better number.

Every business and name/number is different. That's why I do all the consulting personally.

If you've read this far, you probably know more about getting vanity numbers than most people, maybe even many phone company representatives.

My research from a good list or core word
No generic terms in the Legal or Financial industry.

Consulting vs. Selling (from my_services.htm)

The Timing (from my_services.htm)

How I do it (from my_services.htm)

You'll own the number directly with the phone company of your choice.