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## Give Your Marketing Strategy Time to Work

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### **Question: How much time should I give my actual strategy to get more work before I make some changes?**

You thought you had been doing all the right things. You have a website, a marketing plan with both email and printed promotions, and yet, you're in a rut and the phone isn't ringing. How long do you wait before making some changes to the existing marketing plan or is there a point when it might be "too late?"

It's never too late to put out great new work, so perhaps you don't need to change your entire marketing plan, just some of it, or maybe add other elements to it.

#### **Be Patient!**

Have you given your current strategy enough time or are you being impatient? I once had a client who complained that nothing had resulted from his email campaign, and when I asked him how many email blasts had he sent out – the answer was only one! So give the plan at least a year before you start making hasty judgments. When you grow a garden, you have to sow the seeds and then be patient and let nature take its course. Yes, there are certain things you must do to nurture the process, such as updating your website on a regular basis, but some of it, ultimately is out of your hands.

#### **Are you Consistent?**

When I teach marketing to photography students, I give them the dictionary definition: "Marketing is the process or technique of promoting, selling and distributing a product or service." A key word here is "process," which essentially means it is an ongoing activity - did Nike stop promoting once it became an iconic brand? No, of course not – Nike consistently updates its brand and promotes everywhere. The other key word is "technique," which refers to the different parts that make up the complete marketing strategy. Never judge your results by one single component.

## Make it Fun!

Usually when we think of marketing, we may not get too excited and instead moan and groan and dread the entire process. You are in business, like it or not, so if we don't find a way to enjoy all of what it is we do, not just the creating of our images, but every aspect of our business, then our results are not going to reflect the essential joy of our daily work and creative purpose.

[Keith Barraclough](#) is a New York-based photographer and client of mine who was living in Washington, D.C. when we first met. He started sending out his e-postcards about 3 years ago to a select group of clients and friends and after some feedback, he began making them more "personal" so that they looked like real postcards and not simply an image in an email. Using a simple template, he was able to place not only the image in the card, but also a date, a postage stamp and a hand-written note, so it looks really authentic. His mailing list is small and very targeted, and is comprised of the people he has met and would really like to work with. They are sent out usually every four to six weeks and show either client-driven or personal work that is "new." "It's just a fun way to keep my name on their minds and to show them I am still shooting," says Keith.

Here are some examples from his e-postcards from the past couple of years:



Keith Barraclough's Dog Breeds September 2011



Keith Barraclough's Banff National Park July 2011



Keith Barraclough's Dancers and Musicians April 2011



Keith Barraclough's Vermont November 2011



Keith Barraclough's Blackboard Confessions April 2010



Keith Barraclough's Bubby's Feb. 2010

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