

How to Become a Local Consultant and Make MASSIVE Profits

Free Course by LoneAscent

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GETTING STARTED: What is a Local Consultant?

Generally, consultants provide a service, either on a long-term or short-term basis, which help to achieve a goal or complete a project. Companies often use consultants to become more effective in delivering their own product or service by improving a certain process flow or removing waste.

A local consultant provides expertise to local businesses with the goal of improving sales or reducing expenses, both of which increases the company's profit. Good local consultants are known to be the "go-to" people to get things done in their field and help maximize a small business owner's time and investment. There are dozens of sub-niches that a consultant can specialize in, depending on their level of experience, education, and expertise, but we are going to discuss online marketing for the purpose of this course.

To be successful, you need to separate yourself from the other competition in the market and stand out from the crowd. If you do a quick search for local web design companies, you will see that they are all very similar. They all develop and build some sort of fancy website that have varying levels of features and pages. This might sound great on the surface, but how effective is a website that doesn't get any visitors? What about a website that looks great but actually doesn't convert anyone into buying the product?

What businesses really need is the ability to get a great looking site that effectively funnels visitors into buying something. They need to be able to get targeted visitors to their website that are already warm leads and are more willing to make a purchase. They need to be able to retain and engage their current customers to encourage repeat sales.

This is where a local consultant can separate themselves from traditional product providers. Instead of just building a new website, take it one step farther and analyze how successful it is and what can be improved. Use heat mapping software to track where visitors are clicking and find out what they are most drawn to. Install analytics on the site to find out where the visitors are coming from and where you should focus your marketing efforts. Using that data, you can redesign the website to improve conversions and get more sales.

Why Become a Local Consultant?

At the end of the day, everyone is trying to earn money while being involved in a business that they can be proud of. Local consultants do exactly that, by being able to provide significant value to businesses that may otherwise be struggling and be able to charge high prices without feeling guilty.

A local consultant stands apart from traditional product providers because they can use their knowledge to make measurable improvements in the business. This may mean being able to get more visitors to the website, getting more leads, or making more sales. If you can show a local business owner that you can consistently improve their numbers, you will become indispensable and be able to charge ANY amounts of money. At the end of the day, companies do not care if they have a fancy new website, if it doesn't convert to sales. They care about making a profit, so that is what any local consultant should be focused on.

Consultants can be some of the highest paid people working from home because they are helping other people become successful. Business owners are more than willing to make an investment in a system that works and produces a sizeable profit. If you want to be able to charge \$1,000, \$2,000, even \$5,000+ per client PER MONTH, local consulting is an excellent field to get into.

The other difference is that selling a website is generally a one-time fee, unless you charge hosting and maintenance. Consultants can provide much more value and are able to charge a monthly ongoing fee, which is obviously much more attractive! Consulting builds your recurring income streams and they are usually very simple to maintain once implemented.

We should warn you that consulting is not for everyone and it does require some effort to be able to command high prices. If you aren't willing to put in some effort and stick with your clients, you will not last very long. It is also important to have a professional demeanor and always strive to put the customer first, otherwise you may find that clients don't fully trust your abilities. While it can be challenging at times, you will find that consulting can be a very profitable and rewarding career.

Now that you have a better idea about what a local consultant does, let's jump into the first steps towards creating your own consulting business. Don't worry, it is easy to get started and this course covers everything you need to know to be successful!

MODULE 1: Define Your Consulting Business

So, you want to become a consultant but where do you start? The first step of becoming a local consultant is to determine exactly what you can provide to businesses that is of value.

Do you have any technical skills such as programming, WordPress development, or video editing? Do you know how to use social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube? Do you know how to optimize web pages to rank higher in search engines? Are you Google Adwords certified or know how to run effective paid ad campaigns? Think about what skills you may have that would be beneficial to increasing sales and profits for a small business.

Here are some ideas of areas that you can consult local businesses on:

- ✓ Web design
- ✓ Sales funnels and lead conversion
- ✓ Customer retention and loyalty program
- ✓ Social media marketing
- ✓ Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- ✓ Newsletter and email marketing
- ✓ Press releases and media marketing
- ✓ Video creation and marketing
- ✓ Paid advertising optimization and management
- ✓ Reputation management
- ✓ New product launch marketing

Now, some of you may be saying “but I don’t have any special skills!” Don’t worry, you can still be successful without having to do the work yourself or being the expert. We have built special software that can do all the work for you and makes it easy to service multiple high-paying clients. If you don’t want to take the time to teach yourself to be an expert in one of the fields above, we can walk you through starting your own [loyalty and rewards program](#) with our software.

It is also possible to find qualified individuals that you can trust to outsource the actual work while you function as the face of your consulting business, doing the actual customer interaction. We will discuss outsourcing in more detail later on, but it is possible to be successful without being the expert yourself.

Some consultants like to be a one-stop-shop and provide every service imaginable to their clients. This can be effective BUT requires you to master many different topics and you can end up shooting yourself in the foot if you cannot deliver what you promised. When you are first starting out, it is better to specialize on one particular topic and provide exceptional service to grow your customer base and command higher prices.

Suggested Business Model

An excellent service to provide is customer retention and loyalty consulting. This means taking the company's existing clients and getting the most out of them to improve profits and brand awareness. It can be easier and more effective than generating new leads because they have already demonstrated their interest in the business and, most times, are happy with what they have received.

As a consultant, you can create a system to harness the power of existing clients to improve repeat business and get friend and family referrals. This means building a loyalty program, giving out coupons and special offers, and asking for reviews to get real feedback from customers. Even by only implementing a few simple changes, the business will see a big jump in interaction and profits.

We will go into more detail on how to create this type of consulting business in the next few modules.

MODULE 2: Limit the Scope of Your Business

By now, you should have a good idea about what services you want to provide to local businesses. The next step is to narrow down the scope of who you will initially target so that you have small, actionable pieces that you can begin marketing to. Basically, this means that you don't run out of the gate trying to market to every small business in the country.

Instead, select a geographic area that you will focus on first. Usually, your home state or region is a great place to start since you are familiar with those businesses. This will allow you to have face-to-face interactions, when needed, and will give your clients a sense of security knowing that you can relate to them and aren't calling from halfway around the world. As you grow, you can always expand your territory, but it is often too overwhelming when you first start out.

Another good idea is to determine a particular niche that you can provide your services to and tailor what you offer specifically to them. Social media marketing can be dramatically different for dentists as compared to plumbers and you'll be able to get better results if you know your niche closely. Take the time to learn the niche to find out what works best for them, since what works well for one company probably won't work the same for another.

Here are some ideas for niches you can focus on:

- ✓ Chiropractors
- ✓ HVAC or plumbers
- ✓ Lawn care
- ✓ Dentists
- ✓ Family physicians
- ✓ Attorneys
- ✓ Real estate agents
- ✓ Electricians
- ✓ Bars and restaurants
- ✓ Gyms, bike shops, running clubs
- ✓ Garage door opener installers
- ✓ Paving, concrete, and masonry
- ✓ General contractors
- ✓ Local stores

Once you pick a niche, start researching it to find out as much as possible that will give you an edge when you speak with businesses owners. Learn how they generally get clients, how much a customer may be worth, how often they make sales, what the competition is doing, and how successful the number one company is in that niche.

Once you have that background, you can start designing the “perfect” set of consulting services for any company in that niche.

For example, you could create a loyalty and rewards program for local chiropractors in your area. Start by researching to find out how many chiropractors are actually within driving distance of your location. If there are only one or two, it might be a good idea to not specialize in that niche unless you are certain that you can get their business.

Then, look at their online presence (website, business listings, social media pages) to see how well they present themselves and if people look to be interacting with them. If they don't have many reviews online or they all tend to be negative, they could be a good place to implement a loyalty program that helps to filter out poor feedback. By getting customers engaged and excited about the chiropractor, you could help get significantly more business.

If you feel confident in your marketing abilities, you can certainly open your consulting up to any type of local business. This will open up new possibilities for the amount of clients who might be interested, but it also poses other issues, such as not being as familiar with that type of company. In this case, do your research on the niche before you promise anything to your client, otherwise you might learn you've over promised on your services!

You don't have to spend a lot of time choosing what you will specialize in. It is more important to do a bit of research to find out what looks promising and then start to take action. You can always change your specific focus later on once you have a stable base and you will naturally expand as you gain traction and new clients.

Next, we will discuss how to set the best price point for the services you are offering.

MODULE 3: Determine Your Price Point

When you first select how much you will charge for the services you provide, it is important to think about what VALUE you can give to your clients. Everyone wants to make \$X,XXX per month but that doesn't mean you can just create a simple website and charge whatever you want for it. Instead, design your services to be able to make significant improvements for your client's business and show that those services are worth charging higher prices.

Let's say you have a system that will increase the bottom line of company by \$5,000 per month. Business owners will gladly pay \$2,000+ per month if they can add several thousand dollars in profit without any extra work. By being able to quantify your results, you'll be able to charge higher prices and justify the cost... making it easier to prove your worth to businesses.

Don't just pick an arbitrary price to charge without knowing your actual benefit. No one will pay \$5,000 to earn \$5,000. Never make a claim that you can't keep, either, since it will always hurt you in the long run. If you can't increase profit by \$5,000, don't promise that to a client. Be realistic and work within your means... it is always better to over-deliver than to over-promise.

Picking your price point can often make or break your business since that is one variable that most people will judge you one. If you offer your high-end consulting services for \$99 and promise thousands of dollars in return, they won't take you as seriously because it seems too cheap. However, if you charge several thousand dollars or higher for the same service (provided they are high quality), there is a perception that you are an expert and would deliver better results. You should always test different price points, but starting higher and giving discounts, when necessary, is usually a better plan.

Another factor to consider when selling high value services is your client's sense of security with paying a relative stranger a large amount of money. People have a much harder time handing over a large check if they aren't 100% sure it is a smart investment. You can help ease this by offering some sort of guarantee or refund for the services offered.

Of course, this does not mean that the guarantee would allow someone to take advantage of your services and then give a sob story to get them for free. Develop strict guidelines for your guarantee and make them public so that everyone is on the same page.

A poor money-back guarantee would be:

"If you aren't satisfied for any reason, I will refund your money."

This can work in some situations, but it gives the customer too much room to wiggle out of the deal. Instead, try to narrow down the scope with something like:

“If you don’t get at least 1 extra lead per month, I will refund your deposit.”

Another way of making your client feel better is to charge 50% up front and 50% on completion. Or, if you are confident in your services, charge \$0 upfront and then your monthly fee AFTER they start seeing results. This is an excellent way of attracting new clients and getting your foot in the door since it is a no-risk offer.

As you can see, there are many ways to structure the deal and they all have their benefits and draw backs. Like anything else, start with one payment structure and see how your leads react to it. If they scoff at the price, try lowering it or changing the terms. Always try to look at it from their point of view to see if the money you are charging is worth what you are offering.

Now that you have a better idea of what price point you will charge and what niche you will be serving, we can begin building an automated system to run the majority of your consulting business.

MODULE 4: Develop an Automated System

At this point, you might be tempted to jump right in and start contacting local businesses to try to make a sale. This is where many consultants fail because they don't have a clear plan of what they will actually offer to the clients. It is extremely important to write down exactly what you can (and cannot) offer. Then, figure out HOW you will deliver those results.

Automation is the key to your success and quick scaling. This means developing a system that will allow you to maximize your time, minimize wasted expenses, and allow you to quickly scale upwards to earn more profit for yourself.

There are many ways you can automate the consulting business, and it can range from using a simple spreadsheet to developing special software. Consultants will get the most out of their business by using a variety of tools that can be inexpensive yet effective.

When you contact local businesses to offer your services, you can use a checklist to gather all the information required and make sure you don't forget something. This is a simple tool that will allow you to standardize what you ask and even allow for outsourcing, in the future.

You should also create an automated sales funnel that works day and night to build a list of leads interested in your services. This should include a landing page to gather contact information, basic information on what you offer, and a thank you page to help warm up your leads. Once this funnel has been set up and gets traffic, you should start to see an increase in interest for your services.

Apart from automating the process of getting your own leads and sales, it is a good idea to have a system for delivering the services you promise to your clients.

Let's go back to the customer retention and loyalty consultant example.

The service you offer to clients would be increased repeat sales from existing customers and increased referrals from existing customers. To do this, there are two main focuses that can be effective.

Special offers and coupons: To get someone to come back through the door to make a non-essential purchase can be challenging but is much easier when you give a coupon or discount. Create a system that automatically sends a coupon to customers after they make a purchase offering a certain percent off their next visit.

Ask for referrals: One of the most powerful ways of getting new customers is by getting an endorsement from an existing customer. Would you be more likely to try a new restaurant if a family member came back raving about it? You'd be more likely to try it than if you just happened to see a billboard. You can harness this power by giving out cards to customers that specifically ask to refer a friend or leave a review on the website.

The best of both worlds is to use a loyalty program app that creates a list of customers in one database and gives away rewards in exchange for simple tasks like sharing on social media, referring friends, or taking a survey. The idea is that you can incentivize simple tasks, such as sending out a quick Tweet or giving feedback on the company, that will engage the customers and ultimately help to increase sales.

If you do not have the technical knowledge to support your clients directly, or simply don't have the time to do it all yourself, you can choose to outsource all or some of the work. This is a business model that can be successfully run using outsourcers or contractors, but you must have tight control of their work and be able to find the best people. There is nothing worse than to deliver content to your client, after they have paid a considerable amount of money, and find out that they are not satisfied with the quality.

Before you get your first client, you must find and vet whoever you plan on using as a contractor. Make sure they are available readily by either email, phone, or skype, and are able to work on the timelines that you require. If you promise to deliver something to your client in 7 days, you need to know the contractor can do the work in 5 days or less, so you have time to review and make necessary changes.

Another point to consider is what happens if the client is not satisfied with the work or needs something revised. Will the contractor make changes for free or is that an added expense? What is the turnaround time on make changes or adding scope to the project? As long as you are aware of these answers, you should be able to do well using an outsourcer.

There are many sites like Freelancer.com and oDesk.com that make it easy to find outsourcers for any type of online marketing or design work. Take your time to get as many responses as possible before selecting the freelancer that is most qualified and is reasonably priced. Feel free to test their skills to verify their credentials and make sure their language skills are up to par, which is especially important if you are looking for a writer.

Another option is to find local contractors in your particular area that you can work face-to-face with. They may be more expensive than outsourcing overseas, but you will have more control by being able to have meetings and discuss exactly what you need. Many times, you can find qualified college grads (or even high school students) that

have excellent technical skills and are looking for some extra money. Place some ads in the local newspaper, use Craigslist, and post some flyers at a local college to get some interest in the position.

Once you have a contractor or outsourcer ready to perform the work, set up strict guidelines for what you require (turn-around time, pay, quality of work, etc) and how you will contact them. You can use email or a file sharing site, but be clear in what you require so that they can effectively support you, so that you, in turn, can support your client.

Next, we will discuss how to launch your consulting business and start making money!

MODULE 5: Marketing Your Consulting Business

Once you have your backend system set up and ready to go, you can finally start marketing your local consulting business and getting clients. This is the exciting part but can be difficult to get started if you don't have a plan.

Be aware, that in order to become a high-value consultant that can charge \$5,000+ per month per client, you have to provide something of extreme value. This generally does not mean creating a sales funnel or slapping together a marketing video and walking away. It means do something that actually gets results, which usually is getting more leads or sales.

At the end of the day, a business owner doesn't care about the technical mumbo-jumbo behind the scenes and just wants to see an increase in their profit and decrease in their costs. This means not selling a product like a new website or video or Facebook page, but leads or sales instead. You may use a video to get those new leads, but you are presenting them with the opportunity to get more leads, not buy a video that may or may not work.

Remember, if you are confident in your services and can show that they work, your clients won't hesitate to pay whatever fee you ask.

To launch your business, do whatever you plan to do for your clients. For example, if you are a social media consultant, use social media to drive traffic to your website. When potential clients find you but are hesitant to sign up, you can prove that the methods work since you got them into your sales funnel.

If you don't mind talking to people, a great way to find clients is to get out and network with local business owners and managers. Go door to door with a stack of flyers and talk to as many people as you can or attend local networking events for businesses. Check your Chamber of Commerce for meeting times or search online for local meetup groups and then go mingle. You don't have to forcefully sell at these types of meetings because they will naturally ask what you do and you can easily capture their interest once you start explaining. Always bring some business cards with your contact information and a link to your website so that they have something to refer to later when they go home.

As you are starting to meet business owners, it is a good idea to set up some sort of demo beforehand and bring a laptop to help illustrate what services you can provide. You can then go over your plan in real time and show them exactly what you offer. Sometimes, you can set up part of the system right as they sit there and give it to them for free, which will amaze them and help get them hooked. Of course, later on you can start to charge a monthly fee or upsell them on your bigger services.

Besides going out and talking to people, there are dozens of other ways to get traffic to your local consulting business without needing that face-to-face interaction. Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube are all great ways to interact with potential clients and send them to your sales funnel. LinkedIn has become an excellent resource for networking and finding companies without needing to hard sell them. On all of these sites, you should join related local business groups and actively participate in the discussion. You can include a link to your website in your signature and profile, but don't make every comment about how you are offering services to help them. Give away information for free to be helpful and you'll naturally attract people that trust you.

Buying paid advertising on Facebook and Google Adwords can be an effective way of generating traffic quickly. The benefits are that you can guarantee a steady stream of targeted visitors, but you have to know what you are doing and be aware that you could potentially lose money if you don't test correctly. Using cheap, low quality ad buys rarely convert to paying customers, so stay away at all costs.

As you get started, look for affiliates who might be able to help market for you. Maybe you know a neighbor or friend who has some local business contacts and would be willing to talk to them for you. If they help to close a sale, offer to give them a percentage as a commission. You can find affiliates online who will sell you leads or sales for a certain amount or you can simply network with local people and offer a reward. Both methods work well because it reduces your time needing to cold-talk to people and can improve conversion rates.

Finally, use the power of your own clients as you start to get them. Make your first client happy and get them to leave a positive review online and refer a friend. If every client you get refers you one more sale, you wouldn't have to spend any time or money on marketing!

The next module goes over how to leave a positive impression on your new clients so that they keep coming back and refer you new business.

MODULE 6: Supporting Your Clients

As you are getting ready to close your first sale, don't forget to have them sign a contract stating exactly the terms of your services and conditions. This will protect both of you and will help to set expectations so there are no disagreements later on. Write up a simple contract with the pricing structure, length of the contract, what services or products will be provided, and any refund policy. Make it very clear exactly what you can do and always strive to be as transparent as possible so that there is no confusion that could lead to a poor experience for your client.

After the client signs and agrees to your contract, the next step is to take either payment or deposit to make sure you don't end up doing a whole lot of work for nothing. This can be a sensitive topic to some, but make it clear in the contract what the terms of payment are so there is no confusion.

If you are working face-to-face with a local client, you can certainly ask for payment via check or cash. Otherwise, pick a standard payment processor and have them send you the money electronically. PayPal is an excellent platform and many people will already have an account, making it easy to set up. Even if the client does not have a PayPal account, they can pay via credit or debit through the PayPal interface without needing to sign up.

There are several methods of initiating the payment, including asking them to send it to your PayPal email, sending an invoice to their email, or by creating a button on your website to allow them to pay. Adding a button to your site is simple and easy, and can be adjusted based on what your client is paying for, so that is what we recommend.

One option that PayPal buttons give is to set up recurring or subscription payments and trials. This is great because you don't have to keep bothering the client to pay every month since it is automatically deducted from their account until they cancel the subscription. To get them hooked, you can also set up a trial for the first month or week at a lower cost and then it will automatically adjust to the higher normal rate after that.

After you have received payment or feel comfortable starting to work on their business, it's time to get started! Since you should be charging a high price for your services, the key is to blow them away with what you offer right away and then continue to perform exceptionally on a monthly basis. As you take on new clients, be sure you have the time and resources to properly support your client so they feel like you are doing everything possible for them. This will pay you back in spades later on.

Hopefully, you have developed a plan for delivering the products and services you promised to your client. Contact your outsourcers or get started running down the checklists you created previously. You will be much more efficient if you follow a set

plan and record your progress so that it is easy to see exactly where you stand and what work has to be completed. As you grow and take on multiple clients at once, a good idea would be to use some sort of project management software that make it easy to track every deliverable for each client.

To look as professional as possible, it is also a good idea to give regular status updates to your client to show that you are working on their project and that you haven't forgotten them. Determine the best frequency, which may be daily, weekly, or monthly, for reports to be sent to the client. If you are building a new website, maybe you could send them a few screenshots as work progresses to keep them happy and make sure they like how it is turning out. If you are tracking visitor interaction on their website, give them a dashboard with access to see the stats themselves. Keeping them involved is a great way of building your relationship and making sure you are providing the highest level of service to them.

Depending on what the client is looking for, you could also hold monthly meetings or phone calls to go over the account and answer any questions. This is a great time to give a report on your status, brag about your results, and get feedback on what is working for your client and what needs to be tweaked. After you have established a relationship with them, this could also be a good time to introduce other, complimentary services that would not only help their business but increase your bottom line.

As you get rolling with providing your services, your success will come from continuing to provide high quality products, fast and courteous support, and by providing exactly what the business is looking for.

You are now a successful local consultant with you first client! Congratulations! There is still a bit more work to be done, which we will discuss in the next module.

MODULE 7: Following up with Your Clients

Getting your client onboard and happy initially is only half the battle. The next step is to continue to provide enough attention and value to satisfy their ongoing monthly fee. If you stop responding to their emails or stop delivering results, you will be sure to have some unhappy clients that will quickly cancel their payments and leave poor reviews for you.

In order to avoid this, you will need to proactively address their issue and continue to monitor their situation. In most cases, this simply means checking in on the status of their account to see if they are still growing or if there are any problems. Make sure websites are still functioning, that notifications are still working, and that there aren't disgruntled customers smearing the company.

If you are managing the local company's loyalty program, you can periodically see if they are continuing to add new members to the program. If they are, send the business owner a happy status update with the results. If they aren't, you may need to send out a new round of advertising or start engaging with the customers by using SMS or social media.

There is also the ongoing maintenance that should be done regularly for this type of program, such as updating coupons and special offers to keep them fresh. Social media and email newsletters should be updated periodically and paid ads may need to be rotated.

We suggest tracking every client you have using any available tool so that you have hard data to analyze. You can use analytics on websites, search engine mention trackers, and reports from any apps you are using. This data will all help to validate your monthly costs and can be extremely valuable for evaluating what may need to be changed for better results.

Once everything has settled and a business has seen good results for several months, it may be time to upsell them on other services that you can offer. Do not attempt this if the client is not completely satisfied or has not been happy with the results, since this could only make it worse. If they are happy, however, you could increase your monthly income by adding a few other services.

For example, you could add video creation and marketing to your current loyalty program. By creating a new and engaging video at periodic intervals, it is possible to increase engagement on social media and on the loyalty platform. This is a relatively simple service to outsource but you can charge several hundred dollars per month per video if they work well at converting traffic into leads or sales.

As you approach your client with additional services, try to tailor your add-ons to work well with your existing services so that they can work in tandem. This will allow for a smoother transition and can be a natural gateway into the upsell if the new service can be viewed as just another add-on that will increase the company's profit by \$X amount.

Remember, offering new services or products is not always a good idea, so it is important to read your client and get to know what they are thinking. The best bet is to always keep them happy and satisfied with your results, and you will keep a lifetime customer.

We wish you the best of luck building your local consulting business and please let us know if you need any help getting started. Good luck!

Want to start a local consulting business but don't have the time to do it yourself?
LoneAscent can build everything for you and help you launch it.

Done-for-You Consulting Business

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