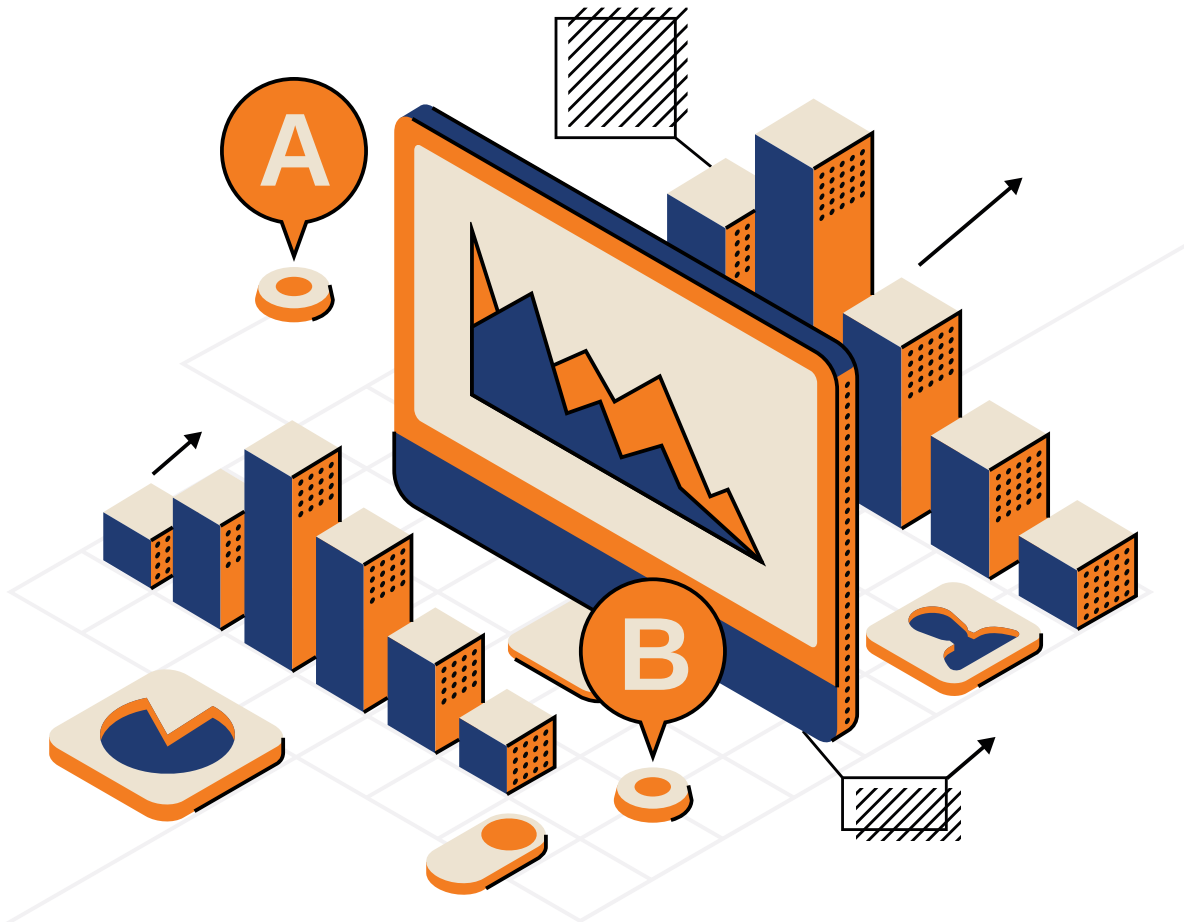




CASE STUDY

**How a New Valuation
Process Helped Transform
an Office Products Business—
and Gave the Business Owner Back His Life**



Starting, growing and running a small business is really challenging—hitting revenue targets, staying profitable, managing employees and stiff competition are just a few of the day-to-day pressures that business owners deal with.

Along with business challenges, owning a business can be stressful and many owners find the stress impossible to escape. So, what can you do about it?

In working with many small business owners over many years, we've found that most of, if not all of these issues (and the resulting pressure and stress), can be resolved by first identifying and then fixing the underlying problems in the business.

Read on to learn how Tom, a small business owner client of ours, followed this new process to fix his business... and in the process also got his life back!



THE CLIENT

Dealing with Problems



Tom, the 56 year old owner of an independently run copier and printer business had 25 years experience operating his small business.

He was feeling increasing stress from the challenges of running his company. Recently, he had been feeling trapped by the business that he had started knowing that it would initially be very hard work along with long hours, but one that he believed would lead to both a comfortable lifestyle, and eventually, a life of financial and personal freedom.

He was the first to admit that his home life suffered because of how much he worked and the stress he brought home every day. He did not spend enough time with his children or wife and sometimes missed their important events. His wife had given up trying to figure out how to solve the chronic issue of his business cannibalizing his home life. She was also concerned about his long hours, lack of sleep and high blood pressure.

▶ THE CLIENT

Dealing with Problems

Retirement, which Tom and his wife had once considered an attainable goal, drifted further and further away. Meanwhile, they were running out of time, and the copier and printer sales industry was facing historic headwinds that only made the situation worse. The money they should have been saving disappeared into the business. But the road ahead looked even more challenging, especially at a stage in life when they wanted to provide a college education for their kids.

Although Tom was constantly feeling tired and stressed, he wondered if these problems were just inherent in running any business, especially in a competitive market.



OnlineBusiness Valuation

Tom heard about a new valuation process (using Online Business Valuation) through our firm—an **independent financial advisory**, which specializes in helping business owners. As his advisor, we explained that not only would this valuation provide him with a ballpark value of his business, but **more importantly**, it would enable him to learn how *effective* his business was in comparison to other businesses in his industry. We explained that if other competing businesses (with similar revenue and cash flow) are worth more—it means they are also more *effective*.

We further explained that “business effectiveness” is a powerful concept: it’s not the measurement of any one specific area, like finance (revenue and profit), sales, marketing, HR, etc., but is instead a **high level and overall indicator** of how effective the business is **in general**. Highly effective businesses generate more revenue, more profit, are worth more and their owners work less and experience less stress.

Tom’s first step was to get a business valuation and effectiveness rating (using our tool: Online Business Valuation). He discovered his rating was below average and not even close to being near the top for his industry. It was a wake-up call. Other competing businesses were doing things more effectively than he was, which was impacting his revenues, profits, value, the number of hours he had to work, and his stress levels.

▶ THE SOLUTION

A New Valuation Process

With this information in hand, we were able to show Tom how he could drill down further to see what he was missing that could make his business perform much better—and simultaneously reduce his stress.

With our firm's help, Tom was able to identify several key areas that were causing his business to be less effective: sales and marketing, recurring revenue, and operations. Within the next few months, Tom was able to make huge improvements in these three major areas:



1 Sales and Marketing

He documented his sales process, streamlined and re-trained his team so that the new approach was consistent and repeatable. He set up sales contests and spiffs to increase motivation, and even promoted one of his team members to manage the new process—so he could concentrate on other areas.

2 Recurring Revenue

Tom set up auto-renewing contracts, along with marketing automation to better re-sell into his existing base (rather than relying so much on new sales).

3 Improved Operations

He started to cross-train several of his team members so he could delegate more—and not be the bottleneck in his company, which allowed much more time for Tom to be strategic and concentrate on new projects.

▶ THE RESULTS

Take Control

Within three months, Tom was free to focus on things he was really good at, he was able to manage more strategically (rather than stay in constant firefighting mode) and spend time coaching his team, which enhanced both customer and employee satisfaction. He not only took control of his business but transformed his life (and stress levels) in the process.



After six months, Tom took a 10-day vacation with his entire family for the first time in more than five years! Over 12 months, the company's profit margins increased 28% over the same time period a year earlier.

On a personal level, Tom said that he felt that he had gotten his life back and actually started smiling at work again. His wife got her husband back, and the children got their dad back.

Recently we re-ran the same valuation test on Tom's business. This time his firm was in the top 7% of all similar businesses (versus the lower third where it was when we ran the first valuation)!

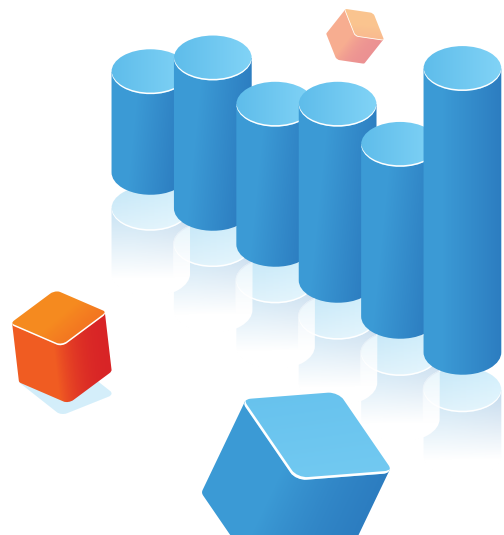
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FREE Business Valuation



Offering you a FREE no-cost, no-obligation business valuation is our way of introducing our firm, our services and our expertise to successful business owners like you . We hope that we can earn your trust and, ideally, that you'll become a client—but even if not now, our hope is that you'll keep us in mind for your future. Regardless, the report is yours to keep—and it is a great resource.

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(CONTACT INFORMATION)

P.S. You can also watch a short video that explains more at www.yourcompany.com/valuation.