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**Business, Balance, & Beach Blankets: Six Summer Suggestions for  
Entrepreneurs Who Want to Pursue Profits and Still Have a Life**

*You'd love to spend a week lounging on the beach with your family. Problem is, you're an entrepreneur with no time for such frivolities. Right? Wrong! Ty Freyvogel says you can balance your work and your personal lives this summer—and here's how.*

**Pittsburgh, PA** (May 2007)—Picture this: ocean waves are crashing, the sun is beaming, and your children are attempting to construct a sandcastle of grand proportions. Now look more closely at the beach blanket in this mental image . . . are you on it? For many busy entrepreneurs, this idealistic scenario sounds great, but it just isn't in the cards. There always seems to be something going on with the business—a problem to handle or a new customer to please—and you just don't feel you can take a summer vacation, or for that matter, spend *any* time away from your company.

If you've fallen into the “all work and no play” trap and are neglecting your friends and family, entrepreneurial expert Ty Freyvogel says that not only is your personal life suffering, your business may be at risk.

“No one can immerse himself in work nonstop, without a break, and maintain a healthy sense of perspective,” says Freyvogel, former entrepreneur, current angel investor, and founder of [www.makingsenseofyourbusiness.com](http://www.makingsenseofyourbusiness.com), a new site with a plethora of great business advice for any entrepreneur. “Try it and you'll surely start to exhibit bad judgment in your business decisions. You'll start feeling the effects of constant stress. You may even eventually burn out, or worse, start experiencing health problems. At that point, your company will certainly feel the effects of your lack of balance.

“Factor in the inevitable relationship problems you'll experience in your personal life, and you may end up unhappy and unfulfilled—at which point it won't matter if you have the most successful new company in the world,” he adds.

The good news is, entrepreneurs *can* balance their “work” and “personal” calendars so that the pursuit of success doesn't overshadow other important aspects of life. It just takes a little

strategy and forethought. And summer, when the natural tendency is to get out and enjoy the beautiful weather, is a great time to start. Here's how:

**Factor your family into your life.** Hopefully, your family is already one of the main reasons you work as hard as you do, but they still need your attention and affection and you need theirs in return. True, your business supports your livelihood, but without the things that really matter, your professional life will be empty and unfulfilling.

“The summer is the perfect time to make a new commitment to spending time with your family,” says Freyvogel. “You don't necessarily have to work less. All you need to do is integrate your family into your world. Maybe you can coordinate this year's family vacation with one of your business trips, or while the kids are out of school, they could come to your business every now and then to interact and see how you run things. Let them see how much fun you are having. Even small children respond to a parent's genuine excitement about his or her work. As a bonus, you're teaching kids—by example—the importance of pursuing their passion in life.”

**Make a plan and stick to it.** You know that business plan you've been following in order to build a profitable company? Well, now is a great time to create a plan for your personal life. Grab a calendar for the summer months and get to work! If you've got kids who will be playing on sports teams this summer, go ahead and decide now on the number of games you think you will be able to attend. Figure out which games on their schedules work the best with yours, then mark these dates on the calendar. Doing so ensures you'll give these family events the same weight you would a critical client meeting.

“Keep the calendar in front of you and when the dates are nearing, organize your schedule in a way that will allow you to meet the commitment you made to your child,” says Freyvogel. “If you don't have kids, the calendar should still come into play. Mark some dates to take in a couple of sporting events and/or movies with friends or set aside at least one night each week that you can spend some one-on-one time with your spouse. At the end of the summer, you'll be glad you did.”

**Don't overestimate how well your business is doing.** If you have recently started a business and the money is flowing in faster than you ever imagined, spend with caution . . . whether the “currency” is time or money or both! Just because it seems like the money is there doesn't mean it will always be, so don't book an expensive or too lengthy vacation.

“I have seen it too many times,” says Freyvogel. “A person reaches the million-dollar mark and suddenly becomes ‘invincible.’ This mistake can have a disastrous effect on a young business. You just can't run a fledgling company from a cruise ship. A start-up usually isn't mature enough to withstand the protracted absences of its founder, and cash flow may be too shaky to justify big, unnecessary purchases. So take the family on a weekend getaway to a local spot this summer or figure out some fun things to do in your hometown. You can enjoy time with them in a way that won't endanger your business.”

**If you *do* go on a vacation, make it a real one.** What's the definition of a real vacation, you ask? A real vacation doesn't involve having a cell phone attached to your ear, a laptop that is constantly alerting you about new email, or a BlackBerry that can be carried every place you go so that you don't lose touch with the business for even a second. If you're going to do any of these things while you're on vacation, you might as well not even go, because you won't be able to really relax or give your family the attention they deserve.

"To avoid these activities, leave detailed instructions about what constitutes an emergency with whoever will be looking after the business while you are gone, and tell them to contact you only if such an emergency happens," says Freyvogel. "You'll be surprised at how much you will benefit from the time away. When you return from vacation, you'll be able to look at the business from a rejuvenated perspective."

**Don't make every lunch a business lunch.** Entrepreneurs tend to "do lunch," not *have* lunch. That's understandable. The mid-day meal is the perfect time to woo new clients, shore up relationships with existing ones, or just sit alone in a pub with a legal pad scribbling down new ideas. (And that's assuming you even take a lunch at all; many entrepreneurs wolf down a bag of chips at their desk.) But do this every day of the week and you'll start wondering if there is life outside the business sphere.

"Make at least one lunch a week this summer one that you spend with your family or friends," advises Freyvogel. "Take the kids to the park for a bag lunch or meet a friend at his or her favorite restaurant. Spending time with the kids, your spouse, or a friend will be a nice break from all of the mid-day business talk that fills your lunch break the rest of the week."

**You don't have to have a family to take a little break this summer.** If you've started a business but haven't yet started a family, you may think none of these rules apply to you. Well, you're wrong. Entrepreneurs are known for their inclination to work at breakneck speeds without ever coming up for air. The summer is a great time to take a break from the business even if it is just for one day to do something you enjoy, spend time with friends, or just sleep in.

"Even a little time away will help you gain a new perspective on where the business is in your plan and which goals you think it's time to tackle," remarks Freyvogel. "Don't underestimate the power of a 'mental health day'!"

Finally, says Freyvogel, don't assume it's okay to scrap your newfound sense of balance when the mercury begins to drop a few short months from now. These "summer suggestions" are actually meant to be followed all year long.

"Common sense is really the best barometer for balancing your life with your work, no matter what the season," says Freyvogel. "Always ask yourself with each decision you make, 'How will this affect my business?' and 'Can I personally live with this decision?' There is a healthy balance for you, and you can find it. In the end, wise business and life choices will make your profits higher, your blood pressure lower, your family closer, and *everyone* happier . . . and maybe even a bit more tan!"

## About the Author:

Ty Freyvogel is a visionary entrepreneur who has launched and grown numerous successful small businesses over the course of a 35-year career. He started his first venture in 1975 following graduation from college and a stint as an officer in the United States Army. Before the breakup of the AT&T monopoly in the mid-1970s, Ty saw the potential for growth in the telecommunications market and launched a consulting firm to provide client businesses with communication services. Today, 33 years later, Ty's consulting firm (now called Freyvogel Communications) is still serving the telecommunications needs of Fortune 500 and mid-sized businesses.

Ty's most dramatic entrepreneurial success came when he bought into a new franchise weight loss concept in the late 1970s and achieved spectacular results. He began with a single location in a small market that the parent company had few hopes for and turned it into a profit center within a year. Within the following year, Ty launched another struggling location and made it profitable, too. By his third year of operation, Ty was operating five locations in two states. He and his team received special recognition from the parent company when one of their centers posted one of the first \$1 million performances in the history of the franchise. Over the next few years, Ty and his management team continued to expand, eventually operating 23 profitable weight loss centers in three states before selling the franchise.

Always intrigued by innovative technologies and new business models, Ty has continued investing in various enterprises over the last three decades. His ventures have included a chain of automotive service centers, a manufacturer of fire extinguishers for racing cars, a process for fabricating limestone, a builder of inflatable boats, voicemail and desktop teleconference services, and telephone devices for the deaf.

Altogether, Ty has founded or transformed more than a dozen small and million-dollar enterprises over the course of his career. Today, in addition to operating Freyvogel Communications, Ty is an active "Angel Investor," working with local groups to locate and invest in burgeoning small businesses and funding highly leveraged transactions.

Ty Freyvogel is also the author of *It's Not Your Smarts, It's Your Schmooze* and *Seize the Century!*, as well as an advice guru on his new website, [www.makingsenseofyourbusiness.com](http://www.makingsenseofyourbusiness.com). Ty is a dynamic public speaker, who is renowned for his lively and informative speeches that never fail to leave audiences inspired, as well as entertained.

Ty is an avid reader who also enjoys golf, skiing, and off-road bicycling. He and his wife, Katherine, reside in Pennsylvania, where they are active in numerous charities. Together they have raised seven children (which Ty likens to running a small business) and they enjoy spending time with their three grandchildren.