I’ve Helped 124,393 Entrepreneurs With Their Advertising — Here Are My Top 3 Secrets Proven to Generate Results

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It’s the end of a typical work day, and you’re excited to come home. On the way in, you grab the mail stack and set it aside as you walk in. After getting comfy and settling in for the evening, you lounge on the couch and check social media, then your inbox. While dinner is simmering, you peruse your mail, then go back to your phone.

How many ads did you just see? And more importantly — how many do you remember?

This daily process is so routine to all of us that we rarely think twice about why we trash some mail and keep others, why we scroll past some social ads more than others, and which emails we save. However, there’s a reason behind why some advertisements stick and some don’t.

I’ve been in marketing since 1995 and have built my $119 million business on reliably turning neutral and unaware prospects into leads — nearly 4,000 a week — and then into buyers.

Take a look at these road-tested marketing strategies I’ve used over the years that have worked for my clients thousands of times over.

Related: The 3 Greatest Lessons I've Learned After 25 Years in Business and $100 Million in Revenue

Always include an offer, since 92% of U.S. consumers actively search for them

There is one way to ensure people take a good look at your ad, and it's by including an offer. You love free stuff or a good discount, right? Your audience does, too.

Case in point: Our most successful offers are all freebies. Free samples or free add-ons when you purchase something.

We mail over 232,000 postcards a week for our own marketing, and over four million a week on behalf of our clients. Response is always higher on the mailers with a great offer. Physical advertisements are easier to store and keep in sight around the home. A person may click on a digital ad in the moment, but if they don't save the link for later, it's going to get lost in the World Wide Web void.

Consider this: The average person doesn't quickly throw away mail when there's a coupon or free gift included. In fact, they probably stick it on the fridge for later.

Overall, studies show that coupons in mailings can increase response rates up to 13%.

The offer you place on your mailer doesn't have to be massive, but ideally, it will stop prospects in their tracks. Buy-one-get-one (BOGO) or offering something for free is a great way to grab attention.

If you're in ecommerce or retail, consider mailing special promo codes to people who abandoned their shopping cart. You can do this automatically by connecting your online shop to a

direct mail automation platform. It’s something you can program in a short period of time that will continuously follow up in order to bring people back to finish their purchase.

Related: 3 Marketing Trends You Need to Capitalize on Now Before Your Competition Beats You to It

Focus on the marketing channels that grab attention for the longest periods of time

I spend over $100,000 every week on marketing across every channel, but there’s still one that feels like a cheat code or hack for generating high-quality leads reliably every week, and sometimes its performance still surprises even me — and that’s postcards.

Direct mail has a higher return on investment than digital ads. We analyzed 115,393 leads that converted to sales last year and found that direct mail leads generated 6x more revenue than digital leads.

Here’s my theory on why: When that moment comes and people are going through their mail, you have an opportunity to make a deep, long-lasting impression that you can’t replicate through online ads or an email inbox.

Studies have confirmed this — people are 70% better at recalling a brand when they’ve seen a direct mail piece compared to an online ad. Research also shows that nearly two out of three people (63%) give mail their undivided attention.

This all means that you aren’t competing with a big screen or a little one. So, if you want to try your hand at direct mail, make sure you use these precious few seconds of undiluted attention to be direct with your message — ensure your

headline plainly states the benefits of your product or service, and choose an image that immediately communicates what you're selling.

In my decades of experience, too many marketers try to get clever and use messaging that has nothing to do with their products or services. Yes, pictures of puppies will always turn heads, but if you're selling lawn mowers, you're going to confuse your audience first and foremost.

Even if you aren't sold on direct mail, I encourage you to test a clear and direct ad (with an offer!) against a more clever one to see if this advice holds true with your business as well. Just make sure you're tracking closely, and let me know if the clever ad ever works better.

Related: This Powerful Marketing Strategy Will Help You Outshine Your Competitors and Make Your Brand More Memorable

Personalize your advertisements for a 40% increase in revenue compared to those who don't

There are two ways you can personalize an ad online or in print: Provide some personal information about you and your business, or create a buying journey for prospects that is personalized to them.

I recommend doing both to maximize response. Approximately 97% of direct mail users see higher response rates with personalized/customized direct mail, and 56% said that response rates were *significantly* higher with personalized/customized direct mail.

Adding personal details to an online ad will also increase your responses — about 72% of consumers report engaging only with personalized messaging. You can accomplish this by

utilizing targeting tools. For example, Google Ads allows you to set specific targeting parameters based on demographics, location, interests and behaviors.

The more unique details you can place on your postcard or digital ad, the better. If you must use stock photos, that's better than no photos at all. However, it's most ideal to show off what your business looks like or real images of your products and/or services.

I suggest you take it a step further and even include photos of yourself or key members of your staff. Prospects love seeing a real person's face. It builds trust and evokes a positive emotional response.

When it comes to direct mail, you can customize each design to feature the recipient's first name in the headline, and even some of their previous actions, like filling up a shopping cart and not checking out.

An automated direct mail marketing campaign makes this easy. Just connect your CRM (customer relationship manager) to your direct mail automation platform and program these mailings based on triggers. For example, if your prospect goes two weeks without answering a call – boom, that triggers a postcard saying, "We've been trying to reach you about a special discount, give me a call."

There are so many ways to utilize this technology to personalize the customer journey. Your CRM already has this information, so make the best use of it.

Whether you are creating an online ad or postcard, personalize it! You'll get more responses and more opportunities for fast revenue.

Join top CEOs, founders and operators at the Level Up conference to unlock strategies for scaling your business, boosting revenue and building sustainable success.

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Got a Startup Idea? Here’s What It Really Takes to Make It Work

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In the startup world, great ideas are everywhere. But turning

an idea into something real? That’s rare. And sticking with it long enough to make a real dent? That’s where most people give up.

When I started my latest venture, I believed I had a solid idea. Maybe I did. But I quickly learned the truth: the idea is only 5% of the journey. The other 95% is execution — showing up every day, fixing what’s broken, listening to feedback and grinding through the not-so-glamorous parts of building something from nothing.

Here’s what I’ve learned the hard way:

1. You didn’t create the problem, but you still have to solve it

Spotting a problem in the world isn’t hard. Many founders are motivated by something they’ve experienced or seen firsthand. We chose to take on a broken job marketplace. That was the easy part — seeing the gap.

The real challenge is building a solution that works and scales. It takes time, patience and iteration. The “how” behind your idea is your true differentiator — and it’s the part that requires the most effort, testing, pivoting and perseverance.

Related: Got an Awesome New Business Idea? Here’s What to Do Next.

2. ‘I had that idea too; doesn’t matter

You’ll hear it: “Oh yeah, I thought of that years ago.” Maybe they did. But ideas are cheap — execution is where value is built.

There’s a graveyard full of great ideas that never got off the ground. Execution, even when it’s messy and unpredictable, is what gives your idea a heartbeat.

3. Startup life is less glamorous than it looks

People imagine startups as pitch meetings, product launches and buzz. In reality, it’s writing support docs at midnight, testing referral flows that don’t work, replying to user complaints, tweaking landing pages, managing customer feedback – all while building operational systems in the background.

It’s not flashy. It’s a consistent, often invisible effort.

As a self-funded founder, I feel every dollar spent. I juggle a day job and burn early mornings and late nights trying to move the needle. The sacrifice is real – emotionally, financially and mentally. But the progress, however small, is what keeps you going.

4. How long is the long game?

Here’s a truth most founders underestimate: meaningful traction takes time. Sometimes a lot of it. Most startups don’t see real growth for 12–24 months. Sometimes more.

You need to ask yourself: Can I stay committed, aligned and focused for the next 1,000 days? Even when it feels like nothing is working? Even when others stop believing?

As a founder, your belief has to carry the weight for your team, your customers, your family and yourself.

Startups don’t fail only because of bad ideas. They fail because people misjudge how long and hard the road really is, and give up too early.

Related: Have a Business Idea? Here's How To Put It into Action.

The real test isn't the idea — it's the grind

If you're thinking about launching something, ask yourself this:

"Am I ready to go into full execution mode for the next 1,000 days — through all the friction, feedback and potential failure?"

Only you can answer that. But answering it honestly may be the most important part of your startup journey.

Ready to break through your revenue ceiling? Join us at Level Up, a conference for ambitious business leaders to unlock new growth opportunities.

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-idea-heres-what-it-really-takes-to-make-it/492937

We Have More Productivity Tools Than Ever — So Why Are We Getting Less Done?

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Let me start by saying, I'm not anti-tech. I love it. I use it every day, for everything from audio and video production, to video conferencing and streaming, to time management tools. I would venture to say, and I'm sure most would agree, that technology is essential today. Technology drives efficiency, scalability and speed. It's the backbone of logistics, data management, internal communications, marketing automation and so much more. You'd be hard-pressed to find a company that isn't leaning on tech to gain a competitive edge.

But here's the other side of this coin: technology is also killing productivity, crippling communication and slowly eroding the human side of business. Not because the tech itself is bad, but because the way we use it is bad. We're not in control. It is.

We're so "connected" that we've become fragmented. We're so efficient we've forgotten how to think critically. We rely so much on technology that our cognitive skills are in decline.

We are so focused on tools that we've stopped building culture. And that's the dilemma leaders across all industries

need to wake up to.

Related: Technology Might Be Killing Us, But It Doesn't Have to Be That Way

The productivity illusion

Ask most leaders if technology makes their people more productive, and you'll get a quick "absolutely." That's the promise, right? Automate more. Communicate faster. Get more done. But dig a little deeper, and it's not that simple.

A study by Bain & Company found that the average mid-level leader now processes over 30,000 communications a year. That's up from just 1,000 in the early '90s. Email, chat, Slack, Zoom, Asana, Teams, the list goes on. All of it is designed to "make work better."

Yet most professionals only get about seven hours of true focus time in a 47-hour work week. Seven hours. That's one good day of deep, uninterrupted work buried in a week full of buzzing phones, message alerts, pointless meetings and endless scrolling. This is the cost of what is known as "context switching."

Every time we jump from a spreadsheet to a meeting invite, from writing a proposal to answering a text, we lose momentum. Our brains burn energy every time they shift gears, and it takes time to get back into flow. Multiply that by ten, twenty or fifty interruptions a day, and you've got a productivity drain hiding in plain sight.

It's not just bad time management. It's bad tech discipline.

Related: Why Employee Productivity in the Tech Industry Is Down

Using technology with intention

Every organization has its own operational pace, but across industries — manufacturing, healthcare, banking, retail, construction, etc., the story is the same: busy people, lots of activity, not enough output. The real question isn't "how can we do more?" It's "how can we be smarter with our time and technology?"

If you're blocking out time for high-impact work, protect it. Close your email. Silence your phone. Turn off Teams notifications. Let your team know you're in focus mode. And encourage them to do the same. This isn't about rejecting communication. It's about owning it. Creating structure. Setting boundaries. And making tech serve you, not the other way around.

This isn't revolutionary advice. But it's something that's rarely practiced. And it's costing companies millions in wasted effort, delayed decisions and half-baked results.

The distraction spiral

We all know this one. You're working on something important. You're exhausted. You hit a snag. Your brain wants a break. What do you do? You grab your phone.

"Just checking the weather."

"Just one scroll through Instagram."

"Just a quick look at the stock market."

Except it's never just one scroll. Five minutes becomes fifteen. And when you finally return to your task, you're mentally foggy. The flow is gone. That break didn't help you; it hurt you.

If you really want to clear your head and reset, step outside.

Walk. Stretch. Talk to someone. Give your brain oxygen and space, not more stimulation. Phones are great tools, but terrible distractions. Know the difference.

Related: The Most Successful Founders Take Retreats — Here's Why You Should, Too

Communication isn't just volume

This is very important to remember. More communication doesn't equal better communication. In fact, the quality of communication is dropping fast. We're hiding behind emails and texts. Avoiding real conversations. Cutting out nuance. And then wondering why teams are misaligned, messages are misinterpreted, tensions are up, and collaboration feels like a chore.

Technology-based communication has its place. But if a conversation is important, complex or emotional, don't text it. Don't email it. Talk it. Pick up the phone. Walk to someone's desk. Get on a quick video call. Real-time, real-tone, real presence.

And leaders? Don't hide behind system messages or company-wide memos. Talk to your people. Listen to your people. Culture doesn't live in your technology arsenal, it lives in your connections and interactions.

Remote work isn't the culprit. Disconnection is.

To be clear, remote work isn't killing productivity. In fact, for many companies, output is up. People are focused, efficient, and getting more done without the distractions of a traditional office. But there's a flip side. While productivity has gone up, collaboration and innovation have taken a hit. That's because what remote work gives in

efficiency, it often takes away in human connection.

You can’t build a strong culture through a webcam. You can’t spark big ideas when every conversation has to be scheduled. And collaboration doesn’t just happen during Zoom calls, it happens between them. In the hallways. At the coffee machine. In that five-minute conversation before a meeting starts. Those spontaneous moments are where trust is built and ideas take shape.

The answer isn’t mandating a return to the office. It’s being more deliberate about connection. Unscheduled check-ins. Culture-building moments that aren’t tied to deadlines. Occasional in-person meetups that serve a real purpose. And leaders who make themselves visible and available, even if it’s virtually. Because what drives a great company isn’t just systems and tools. It’s trust. It’s energy. It’s people who feel seen, heard, and valued. You don’t get that by chance. You get it by design.

So what can you do?

Here’s the quick hit list:

If you’re on a team:

- Protect your deep work time like it’s gold, because it is.
- Schedule response windows instead of reacting to every ping.
- When you feel distracted, take a real break, not a digital one.
- Know when a conversation needs to be live, not typed.

If you’re leading:

- Model the behavior. Don’t say “focus matters” while flooding your team with noise.
- Be clear on what tools are for and what they’re not for.

- Use tech to enhance relationships, not replace them.
- Keep communication personal, especially in critical moments.

We can automate tasks. We can digitize processes. But we can't digitize relationships, and we can't digitize trust. And we shouldn't try.

Technology should enhance your culture, not compete with it. It should accelerate your results, not dilute your focus. And it should support your people, not sideline them. The smartest companies in the world aren't the ones with the most software. They're the ones who know how to use it and when to use it.

If you want to build a brand that lasts, a team that performs, and a culture people fight to be part of, don't just invest in better technology. Invest in better habits. Because at the end of the day, it's not your technology that sets you apart, it's your people.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/leadership/when-tech-helps-it-hurts-heres-how-to-take-back/494364

This Is the Newest Real Estate Trend You Can't Miss — and It's Worth $438 Billion

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"It's all about location, location, location" is the old but

humorous business adage about the importance of where property is located and how that affects its valuation. This is a phrase that is ubiquitous among real estate vendors and agents worldwide.

But location aside, there is another consideration for entrepreneurs in this market that could also change the game. A new trend sheds light on a brand new factor that is driving rapid market growth: Does your property have a wellness concept?

And by this, we are not only talking about whether enough natural light comes in through your French doors. Today, there are wellness-oriented buildings that boast everything from hydroponic herb gardens on private terraces to vitamin drips, vibrational healing and acupuncture and yoga classes being offered in situ. These are projected to sell extremely well, too.

The concept of wellness is not at all new to the real estate world, since we have seen hotels and spas emerge since time immemorial. In fact, according to the *Financial Times*, the wellness trend used to be regarded as "woo woo" in the past. Today, it is no laughing matter, as more and more high end private residences are built with hotel-style concierge services and amenities in major cities and even countryside spots across the world.

Since my entry into entrepreneurship in 2003, I have been following this trend closely, when it was just at its infancy. This is why I want to share the top five things real estate entrepreneurs need to know about this trend to stay well ahead of the curve.

Related: The Wellness Industry Is Now Richer Than Big Pharma and Sports

1. A growth trajectory with “uninterrupted momentum”

The numbers speak for themselves. The Global Wellness Institute recently released a report that projected that wellness real estate as a global sector could be worth $913 billion by the end of 2028, and that’s close enough to a trillion-dollar valuation. This projection was extrapolated from its most recent growth spurt, doubling from $225 billion in 2019 to $438 billion in 2024.

According to the Global Wellness Institute, the wellness real estate sector has seen “uninterrupted momentum before, during and after the pandemic,” boasting an 18% annual growth rate since 2019.

2. Wellness real estate parallels longevity trends

What’s more interesting is when we see that the wellness real estate boom seems to run in parallel with the wider human longevity revolution, a phenomenon where an ageing global consumer population is more focused on living a longer, healthier life, where wellness becomes a priority in making major life decisions and purchases, instead of it being an afterthought.

This longevity trend is opening up market opportunities valued at roughly $8 trillion by 2030, according to a report by UBS. I encourage entrepreneurs to monitor both wellness real estate trends and longevity trends and see how they correlate with one another.

3. The U.S. dominates the market, with Asia Pacific and Europe performing as strong competitors

According to the Global Wellness Institute, the market is heavily concentrated in North America, which holds 44% of the total market share. Together with Asia-Pacific and Europe, these three regions represent 99% of the global wellness real estate sector. Asia-Pacific in particular is really interesting for entrepreneurs, since wellness real estate growth has overtaken growth in their respective construction sectors in countries such as Australia, China, Japan and India. This trend has been continuing since 2019 across all these regions, by "a factor of 3-4 times or more" according to the report.

4. Wellness is offered for a healthy premium

The wellness real estate sector is lucrative, with some wellness-focused developers in the U.S. charging properties from 25% to 40% higher prices compared to other homes within a locality, according to a representative of Tavistock Development Company, who recently talked to the *Financial Times* about this rising trend. The Global Wellness Institute stated in its report that in the middle and upper ends of the market, the premium earned is between 10-25% compared to properties without a substantive wellness offering.

5. The AI and tech accompaniment

Since wellness real estate is connected to the $2 trillion global wellness market which is led by Gen Z and millennial consumers' insights and preferences, it will come as no surprise that a higher demand for wellness-focused buildings

will be accompanied by an array of technological innovations.

This can include anything from AI-powered wearables, Oura Rings to WHOOP health monitors which consumers rely on since they have readily become “lifestyle staples” for many, according to a partner at Knight Frank’s buying arm. For entrepreneurs, paying attention to this detail could make a huge difference between success and failure in the wellness real estate market.

Buildings that accommodate and collaborate with the range of wearables buyers already possess will prove to be more desirable. This also brings with it another question around trust and security, since property will now be increasingly privy to data exchange.

Related: Everyone’s Burned Out, So ‘Burnout’ Means Nothing — Here’s How Leaders Can Support Wellness Outside the Office

Conclusion

This trend illustrates that there are a host of opportunities and challenges that await the real estate entrepreneur hungry for exploring a rapidly emerging market. As it is also my personal motto, I would advise entrepreneurs to make sure they do their due diligence and research before they embark on a brave, more wellness-focused new world.

Ready to break through your revenue ceiling? Join us at Level Up, a conference for ambitious business leaders to unlock new growth opportunities.

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‘We Got So Many DMs’: This 27-Year-Old Revamped Her Parents’ Decades-Old Business and Grew Direct-to-Consumer Sales From From $60,000 to Over $500,000

Ruth Sack, 27, grew up with Streets Ahead, the luxury leather accessories brand her father, David Sack, founded in 1982. She and her siblings painted belts with nail polish in the Los

Angeles factory and attended trade shows across the country with their parents.

Image Credit: Courtesy of Streets Ahead. Ruth Sack.

But it wasn’t until 2020 that Sack considered dedicating significant time to the brand. “I went to UCLA and studied gender studies, and then Covid hit,” Sack says. “I didn’t really know what I wanted to do. I started helping out with the family business because things were pretty tough, and I actually sort of loved it.”

Sack went on to attend the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) and step in as Streets Ahead’s head of marketing and design.

Related: This 29-Year-Old's Side Hustle Brought People 'to the Dark Green Side.' It Made $10,000 Within 2 Days and Sees 6 Figures a Month.

Streets Ahead's products are made locally in California with leather and hardware sourced from Italy, and the brand is known for its novelty pieces — "bestselling belts [with] crazy heart hardware with chains and snakes and things like that" — that have been spotted on numerous celebrities, including Beyoncé during her *Cowboy Carter* tour.

Image Credit: Courtesy of Streets Ahead

The brand built on its success as a legacy wholesale business over the decades, but when Sack joined the team, she wanted to

explore its potential in the direct-to-consumer (DTC) space.

As it turns out, there was a lot: In just a few years, Sack grew DTC revenue from $60,000 to more than $500,000. Streets Ahead is projected to hit $3.2 million to $3.5 million in total revenue in 2025, with $2.7 million to $3 million from wholesale and $500,000 to $600,000 from DTC.

Related: ‘Absolute Freedom’: Siblings Behind a Self-Funded 8-Figure Brand Reveal 3 Secrets Aspiring Entrepreneurs Should Know About Growth and Success

> *“I came in and changed the platform to Shopify, kind of just revamped the whole thing.”*

Streets Ahead’s foray into DTC sales started with a website refresh.

“We always had a website, but [no one ran it],” Sack says. “It didn’t really make any money. It was never up to date. So I came in and changed the platform to Shopify, kind of just revamped the whole thing, and started adding products and keeping it up to date. And immediately we saw a difference.”

Once her parents saw the results, they were even more willing to invest in the brand’s DTC strategy. Streets Ahead leaned into professional content creation and advertising and continued to see its DTC sales grow.

Related: 6 Questions You Need to Ask Yourself Before Launching a Direct to Consumer Brand

Part of the brand’s digital transformation also included a logo overhaul, Sack says.

The company featured the new design across its social media platforms and started to generate interest from major influencers like Rocky Barnes, who boasts more than three million followers on Instagram and 200,000 followers on

TikTok.

“ She found us through an ad that we were running, and she wanted the exact belts from the ad,” Sack recalls. “So we started doing some gifting, and we could see that it worked. As we built our social presence, especially Instagram and ads, we got so many DMs, and now they keep coming.”

Image Credit: Courtesy of Streets Ahead

“99% of the time we’re making it from scratch.”

Sack would love to sell more on TikTok, but the platform’s quick-ship requirements prove challenging for the made-to-order brand, as “everything is essentially custom” and takes

time to manufacture.

Whereas other companies might have thousands of units sitting in a warehouse ready to ship, every time Streets Ahead receives an order, that request is sent down to the factory, which starts the production process.

“We don’t have anything made here unless there was a return and we have [that returned product],” Sack says. “99% of the time we’re making it from scratch.”

Related: I Revamped a Men’s Product for Women. The Bootstrapped Business Was a Hit — and Pledged $20 Million to Support Women Entrepreneurs.

Because of Streets Ahead’s branding and social media presence, it can get “a little bit lost” on people that each item really is custom-made for them, Sack notes. The company follows up on particularly large orders to confirm them before moving forward with fulfillment.

What’s more, despite the business’s made-to-order model, Streets Ahead does accept returns.

“ I buy things that I want to try and might return — we all do it,” Sack says. “If we want to have this type of direct-to-consumer [platform], there has to be some kind of return. People need to try things on. They don’t know their size. So we do allow returns, [but] we’ve now started to put a little tag on [products] that says, *If this tag is removed, we can’t accept the return*, to prevent people from wearing it and then sending it back.”

> *“You have to be okay doing the grunt work.”*

As Sack considers Street Ahead’s future and her own role within it, she’s excited to expand the brand’s offerings beyond belts. The brand dropped its first handbag collection last month, and Sack says she’d love to branch into shoes,

particularly leather boots and sandals with hardware, down the line.

Image Credit: Courtesy of Streets Ahead

Related: ‘Rules Are Suggestions’: This Fashion Founder Is Using AI to Eliminate the Industry’s Massive Sizing and Waste Problems

For young professionals or aspiring entrepreneurs who hope to make their mark on the fashion industry, Sack says it’s important to “learn a little bit of everything” — and be prepared to do your part.

“You have to be okay doing the grunt work,” Sack says. “There are some days I’m down shipping, some days I’m cleaning

buckles, things that someone as a designer or creative director doesn’t necessarily want to do. But you need to be a team player and be willing to know every single role.”

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JPMorgan Is Now Valued More Than Its 3 Largest Competitors Combined: ‘We’re Quite Cautious to Just Declare Victory’

JPMorgan Chase is far ahead of its rivals — but the bank is still running the race with an eye on its competition.

In the first half of the year, JPMorgan’s market value reached nearly $800 billion, more than the market values of its competitors Citigroup ($168 billion), Bank of America ($344 billion), and Wells Fargo ($260 billion) combined. In the same period, the bank raked in $30 billion in profit.

According to a Wednesday *Bloomberg* report, JPMorgan was able to reach market value highs because it benefited from acquiring First Republic Bank in May 2023. The acquisition made the bank even larger and more powerful, allowing it to be the biggest bank in the U.S. with $3.9 trillion in assets at the time of writing.

Related: JPMorgan Will Fire Junior Bankers Over a Common Practice That CEO Jamie Dimon Calls ‘Unethical’

Meanwhile, JPMorgan’s competitors have been facing unique difficulties. For example, Wells Fargo’s growth in recent years has been limited by an asset cap, or a growth restriction imposed on the bank by the Federal Reserve in 2018, which limits the bank’s total assets to $1.95 trillion. The action was in response to a scandal involving the bank’s creation of fake customer accounts to meet sales targets. The Federal Reserve finally lifted the asset cap last month.

Citigroup, meanwhile, has been in the middle of a significant, multi-billion-dollar tech overhaul aimed at improving legacy software systems, and Bank of America has faced losses that could top $100 billion on its bond portfolio.

Still, JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon isn’t ready to “just declare victory,” pointing out that the bank’s rivals are gaining ground.

“All of our major bank competitors are back growing and expanding,” Dimon said on an earnings call on Tuesday. “We’re quite cautious to just declare victory, like somehow we’re entitled to these returns forever.”

JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon. Photographer: Patrick Bolger/Bloomberg via Getty Images

JPMorgan reported its second-quarter results on Tuesday, marking the sixth consecutive quarter of stronger-than-expected earnings. Reported revenue for the quarter was $44.9 billion, higher than the revenue of $43.8 billion that analysts expected. The bank's net interest income, or the income it makes from loans and other products after interest payments, was $23.3 billion, up 2% year-over-year, while net income as a whole was $15 billion.

Related: JPMorgan Chase Says AI Could Cut Headcount By 10% in Some Divisions: 'We Will Deliver More'

JPMorgan's competitors are also reporting better-than-expected earnings. On Tuesday, Citi reported a net income of $4.02

billion, up 25% from the same period last year. The same day, Wells Fargo surpassed profit estimates with a net income of $5.49 billion, up from $4.91 billion a year prior.

On Wednesday, Bank of America beat estimates on earnings, with a net income of $7.1 billion compared to $6.9 billion a year prior, but was the only major U.S. bank to miss the mark on revenue.

JPMorgan shares were up over 19% year-to-date.

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JPMorgan Chase is far ahead of its rivals — but the bank is still running the race with an eye on its competition.

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Here Are the ‘Rules’ If You Want to Be Rich, According to Barbara Corcoran

Barbara Corcoran famously sold the real estate company she founded for $66 million in 2001. Since then, she became an original investor on ABC’s “Shark Tank,” which is now filming its 17th season, and now makes about $4.5 million a year from her investments.

On Tuesday, Corcoran posted on Instagram that, despite accumulating millions, there are some “rules to being rich” that she wishes she had known sooner.

Related: Barbara Corcoran Did ‘Crazy Things’ to Retain Employees, From Hot Air Balloon Rides to a Free Bentley: ‘We Had No Turnover’

“If you want to be rich, follow these rules,” the post begins. Then she lists 11 “rules” that she lives by when building her businesses.

Some rules, Corcoran has talked about before, such as not hiring “fancy degrees” and opting for hustle and attitude, instead. Corcoran famously “doesn’t look at resumes.” Others are new, like what Corcoran says is the “most important part of your budget,” what she calls “mad money,” or the money “you spend on yourself to feel like a million bucks.” Corcoran recommends setting money aside to look the part – in 2023, she told viewers that she spent her first-ever commission check on

a $320 peacoat at luxury retailer Bergdorf Goodman, despite not being able to afford it. She said it was the best purchase she ever made.

Here are some other rules to being rich, according to Corcoran.

- **Spend less than you make.**

"You can't grow wealth if you're always playing catch-up."

- **Learn to love rejection.**

"The most successful people I know all have one thing in common: They spend little time feeling sorry for themselves, and they get right back up. Keep swinging!"

Related: Barbara Corcoran Needed to Make Job Cuts. Here's Why She Fired Her Mom First.

- **Start before you're ready.**

"The best time to move on an idea is the moment you think of it. You don't have to get it right, just get it going."

- **Have a vision of where you want to go.**

"I saw myself as the queen of New York real estate, clear as day, and that's what I became. If you can imagine it, you can build it."

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What Most Employers Overlook That’s Costing Them Great Hires

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Professional skills and experience are essential in hiring, but they’re only *part* of the equation. When screening candidates, it’s equally important to consider how well someone aligns with your company’s culture. This alignment influences employee satisfaction, team collaboration and long term retention. In short, it’s the difference between simply filling a role and building a resilient, values-driven organization.

In my own hiring process, I look beyond resumes and technical credentials. I pay close attention to how candidates show adaptability, a growth mindset and genuine interest in our mission. I want to know how they work with others, how they respond to change and whether they value integrity and transparency — two of our organization’s core principles. One of my go-to questions is how they’ve handled an ethical dilemma. Their response often reveals far more than a skills test ever could.

Your priorities may differ depending on your team’s culture, but the approach to identifying fit should follow a similar framework. Here’s how to build a hiring process that balances competency with cultural alignment.

Related: I've Worked with Hundreds of Entrepreneurs to Scale Their Teams. Here's How to Get the Right People Onboard

Understand and define your company culture

Before you can screen for culture fit, you need a clear understanding of what your culture actually is. That includes your mission, values, communication norms, leadership style and even how people collaborate day to day. Culture isn't a poster on the wall — it's how work actually gets done.

Gallup research shows that just four in 10 U.S. employees strongly agree their company's mission makes them feel their job is important. In other words, candidates are looking for meaning, not just a paycheck. They're researching your company before applying, and if your values aren't visible or clearly defined, they won't know whether to self-select in — or out.

During interviews, one question I often ask is: "Can you tell me about a time you had to adapt to a major change at work?" This helps gauge flexibility, resilience and values in action — key indicators of whether a candidate will thrive in our fast-moving environment.

Embed culture into your hiring materials

Introducing your culture early sets the tone for the entire candidate experience. By weaving your values and workplace norms into job descriptions, career pages and interviews, you attract applicants who resonate with your environment — and deter those who don't.

For example, I always outline our mission, values and expectations upfront. We design interview questions around

real scenarios our teams face, which allows candidates to demonstrate not only how they think, but how they'd show up day-to-day.

Some practical ways to showcase culture in your hiring process include:

- Sharing employee testimonials on your website or LinkedIn.
- Describing communication preferences, workplace flexibility and performance expectations clearly in job posts.
- Using real-life examples in interviews to reflect your values in action.

Use open-ended, insightful questions

Open-ended questions spark conversation – and surface the deeper qualities that make or break team dynamics. Instead of asking yes or no questions or relying solely on hypothetical situations, let candidates tell real stories about their experiences.

This approach helps reveal how they solve problems, navigate conflict, take initiative and collaborate – all things that influence team chemistry and performance. It also allows you to assess communication style and thought process, both critical for a healthy, effective work culture.

Related: Your Team Will Succeed Only if They Trust Each Other

Be transparent from the start

Hiring is a two-way decision. The more transparent you are about the role, the team, and the challenges involved, the more likely you'll find candidates who are genuinely prepared

and excited to contribute. If there are tough aspects of the role — unusual hours, evolving responsibilities or shifting team structures — say so upfront.

Transparency filters out misaligned candidates early and sets the tone for an honest, trust-based relationship.

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Professional skills and experience are essential in hiring, but they're only *part* of the equation. When screening candidates, it's equally important to consider how well someone aligns with your company's culture. This alignment influences employee satisfaction, team collaboration and long term retention. In short, it's the difference between simply filling a role and building a resilient, values-driven organization.

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She Was CEO of OpenAI for 2 Days. Now Her Secretive AI Startup Has Raised $12 Billion.

Mira Murati spent six and a half years at OpenAI as its chief technology officer (CTO) before stepping down in September 2024. Now, her AI startup Thinking Machines Lab (TML), which was founded in February, closed a $2 billion seed round this week that values the startup at $12 billion, a spokesperson told TechCrunch.

TML has yet to launch any products, at least publicly. But on Tuesday, Murati said on X that the company would be sharing its first product "in the next couple of months."

Related: This New AI Startup Led By a Former OpenAI Exec Is Offering $500,000 Salaries

"We're building multimodal AI that works with how you naturally interact with the world — through conversation, through sight, through the messy way we collaborate," Murati wrote. "We're excited that in the next couple months we'll be able to share our first product, which will include a significant open source component and be useful for

researchers and startups developing custom models."

The deal was led by Andreessen Horowitz with participation from Nvidia, Accel, ServiceNow, CISCO, AMD, and Jane Street, Murati wrote. She also noted that TML is hiring.

"We're always looking for extraordinary talent that learns by doing, turning research into useful things," she wrote. "We believe AI should serve as an extension of individual agency and, in the spirit of freedom, be distributed as widely and equitably as possible. We hope this vision resonates with those who share our commitment to advancing the field. If so, join us. https://thinkingmachines.paperform.co."

Related: Here's How Much a Typical Salesforce Employee Makes in a Year

According to federal filings obtained by Business Insider, several TML employees are earning around $500,000 in compensation.

> *Thinking Machines Lab exists to empower humanity through advancing collaborative general intelligence.*
>
> *We're building multimodal AI that works with how you naturally interact with the world — through conversation, through sight, through the messy way we collaborate. We're…*
>
> *— Mira Murati (@miramurati)* ***July 15, 2025***

Although she was CTO of OpenAI, Murati spent two days as the interim CEO after the current chief executive and co-founder, Sam Altman, was forced out by the board in November 2023.

After a drama-filled couple of days, Altman returned to his role. Murati, meanwhile, left OpenAI about a year later. Altman has said Murati was instrumental in the creation of ChatGPT.

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The $16 Trillion Revolution That’s Unlocking the Next Generation of Finance

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My investment journey started over 10 years ago. Having invested in over 200 companies since then, I couldn’t help but realize the need for a better infrastructure to close my deals. I’d set up a lot of SPVs and tools, and I invested in other providers building tools for investors and fund managers, but I needed fast, efficient and customized platforms.

However, the platforms I was looking for did not yet exist, so I adapted by creating my own tools to facilitate a smoother investment experience. This was when I realized that the tools I had developed presented an opportunity that met a significant market demand, specifically in the area of tokenization.

With a forecast to reach US$16 trillion by 2030, tokenized assets are tapping into a new generation of finance that extends beyond trading to include accessibility, compliance and more. From there, I found myself leading a venture that had tokenized over US$2 billion worth of assets for 20,000 investors across more than 1,500 funds.

Related: The Tokenization Revolution: Reshaping How We Own and Trade Assets

More to assets than just trading

While the projected value of tokenized assets elicits much excitement, it’s crucial to examine what tokenization entails from a utility standpoint, so as not to lose potential in the excitement. Understanding why assets belong on the blockchain needs to go beyond the view of “digital wrappers” that are idle in wallets. Tokenization must be viewed as a key to doors that were once inaccessible, providing opportunities that were once unrealistic.

A good example of a door unlocked by tokenization is the tokenized stock exchange, a digital marketplace where

traditional shares are converted into blockchain-based tokens. What this unveils is a quicker, more accessible and streamlined trading experience that transcends geographical borders and financial limitations.

Tokenized stocks offer investors globally the opportunity to own a slice of U.S. technology leaders, including Apple, Amazon or even a private company like SpaceX, without the need for a U.S. brokerage account. Tokenization will also permit 24/7 trading of public stocks from anywhere in the world. For private stocks, it will unlock significant liquidity for pre-IPO companies, which until now were viewed as very illiquid investments.

With geographical borders being removed, financial ceilings are also being lifted as high-priced assets are broken down into smaller units, bringing liquidity to markets that are typically difficult to trade. Take, for example, properties with multi-million-dollar value, and how fractional ownership can enable liquidity from retail investors.

Related: Why Your Business Assets Belong on the Blockchain

What about compliance?

The promise of tokenization, valued at US$16 trillion, is achieved through steps that consider not only utility but also due diligence and precaution. The truth remains that this is a nascent technology with much regulatory ambiguity and global inconsistencies. While the U.S. views digital tokens as securities under the jurisdiction of the SEC, some countries in Asia have yet to develop detailed regulations governing these tokens.

Countries are rushing to regulate the space, which drives even more adoption and safety to the industry. As an example, the U.S. Senate is looking to pass the Broker-Dealer Tokenization Act, a bill that would allow broker-dealers to operate in the

tokenization space with a well-defined legal framework.

This is where one of the most potent elements of tokenized securities comes into play: the ability to directly encode compliance and regulatory requirements into the asset using smart contracts. This embeds compliance in a manner that reduces regulatory overhead, while ensuring market integrity is sustained, and delivers an efficient use of real-world assets among developers and end-users.

Exclusivity erodes through utility

The norm thus far has been one of exclusive access to primary investment instruments; however, this exclusivity will soon erode due to the advent of tokenization. While we recently saw news about the Circle IPO and other high-ticket crypto projects, the story was yet another case of institutional investors being the early birds that get the worm, as each share was priced at US$31 pre-IPO, opened at US$69, and closed its first day at US$83.23.

The arrival of tokenized equities, bonds and yield-bearing instruments is likely to cater to the appetite of both institutional and retail investors, with a lowered entry barrier, broadened access and a shift in opportunities for wealth creation. With tokenization gradually percolating the financial processes of today’s economy, it would be no surprise to see the next game changer be access to early-stage gains, such as that of Circle’s IPO.

Related: How This Finance Guru Created A Breakthrough Financial Service Platform

The next generation of finance

Moving forward in a world that is growing increasingly tokenized, we’re already noticing shifts in the likes of

tokenized private credit, with platforms having pushed the volume of on-chain loans beyond US$13 billion in assets under management.

This creates an inversion of the old mortgage model, where the token is liquid collateral tracked in real time and the borrower is priced by the pool. Invoices, revenue-share agreements and more can now be cleared in minutes on platforms that are monitored in real-time.

The approach of constantly online collateral can also be seen in the corporate world, with tokenized U.S. treasures having reached US$7.2 billion. If this isn't enough, then JPMorgan's first public blockchain treasury trade most definitely provides clear proof of concept.

These are some examples that demonstrate how tokenization can unlock the next generation of finance, tapping into the massive potential of this nascent space. The unicorns of tomorrow are those who see in this technology the opportunity to not just tokenize, but to enable the productivity of the assets tokenized in a manner accessible to all with transparency, compliance and security baked into its core.

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