

**TOP PRODUCER COACHING & TRAINING**

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## TOP PRODUCER® e-mail newsletter for March 2010 from Dwight Kitchens

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As I get ready to celebrate St. Patrick's Day (no, you don't have to be Irish), I realize that two months have passed by rather quickly. In retrospect, there are many things I could have done differently. If you have a similar feeling, I suggest you jot those items down, prioritize them, and put them either into your calendar or within a TOP PRODUCER 8i plan. With constant reminders, you are more likely to work your plan.

I'm considering offering training in May-June in the mid-Atlantic, with New England areas this Summer, the Southeast this Fall. If you are interested in having me come by your locations, let's start talking now.

Dwight

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Check [www.DwightKitchens.com](http://www.DwightKitchens.com) for the latest details.

Please forward a copy of this newsletter to friends using TOP PRODUCER 8i.

Table of Contents:

1. Mapping Addresses
2. Marketing Snapshot statistics

3. Great news for Canadians
4. Embroidered logo items
5. Recent Equipment Upgrades
6. Should I Upgrade to Windows 7?
7. Upcoming Training

## **1. Mapping Addresses**

Sometimes, when looking at an address, I want to have it mapped. I just need that reference to other locations with which I am familiar. While I can certainly copy the address to [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com) and see the results, I have found an easier way. While using Internet Explorer 8, I highlight the address, right-click, and choose Google Maps with a left-click. I get an instantaneous map of that address. Quick and simple.

## **2. Marketing Snapshot**

If you are currently using Market Snapshot, or plan on subscribing, I encourage you to get a keyword domain name which can link to the Market Snapshot widget. Examples might be [www.LakelandHomeValues.com](http://www.LakelandHomeValues.com), [www.PolkCountyHomes.com](http://www.PolkCountyHomes.com), [www.Lakelandhomes.com](http://www.Lakelandhomes.com), etc. This makes it easy for people to search on a term and easily find your link.

Of course, insure that your Market Snapshot feeds your TOP PRODUCER 8i the lead, and that your system automatically starts that potential client on a follow-up campaign.

## **3. Great News for Canadians**

PostNexus has reached an agreement with a Canadian PSP (print service provider) for the printing and delivery of postcards to Canadian recipients. Any postcard to be delivered in Canada will be electronically routed to, printed, and mailed in Canada with Canadian postage.

We have entered into this agreement because a vast majority of our Canadian customers have expressed a desire to have their printed materials delivered to their customers using Canadian postage. In addition, we believe postal delivery times will be faster. This change is now in place and our first Canadian cards were delivered last week.

Of course, this will mean a change in pricing to the postcards being delivered. The following is our new pricing including print, postage and taxes to Canadian recipients:

- 4 x 6 Postcard \$ 1.01 USD
- 5.5 x 8.5 Postcard \$ 1.85 USD

The larger postcard is considered a flat, thus the postage alone is \$ 1.22 CDN.

The PostNexus System (i.e., the funding of your account and charges against your account) are denominated in US Dollars and at this time, will not change. The above prices are subject to change pending significant changes in the currency exchange rate.

Consistent with the current service offered, no minimum order quantity is required. If quantities are low for any given card size on any given day, CJ Digital, may use a Canadian postage stamp instead of their mailing indicia.

The proof process will still show a US bar code and US Indicia for the next month or so. We are currently working on an update to the PostNexus and LivePost websites, which includes an updated proof process. This new proof process will reflect the Canadian postal permit.

#### **4. Embroidered Logo Items**

For over ten years I've been purchasing embroidered items (shirts, hats, etc.) from Queensboro in North Carolina.



Their major restriction is a four piece minimum purchase

(could be applied across multiple product lines), and they digitize the logos without charge. Quick and easy.

Queensboro offers great value, low prices, and exceptional customer service. In addition to items for work, I purchase logo products for my community in Florida. If you want to see what a digitized logo would look like, send them your graphic and let them work with it. Like printers, they send you a draft for approval prior to embroidering your apparel.

Make this a browser favorite: <http://www.queensboro.com/ref/NBNCCSENBSR>

#### **5. Recent Equipment Upgrades**

If your office provides access to a good tabloid size (11" by 17") or larger printer, consider your self lucky. For posters and folding pieces, these larger printers do some amazing work. But, many of us can get by with a good letter size (8.5" by 11") printer, so long as it offers us the features we desire and does not cost a fortune to operate. For certain jobs, I have a color laser which works well, but the consumable cost is high. If I don't need color, I've previously used an inexpensive black ink laser printer.

What I have been missing is a fast, letter size color printer with networking capabilities, which could also print CD-R/DVD labels directly on the plastic. I found a good solution in the Epson

## Artisan 810 printer.

- 7.8" touch panel, 3.5" LCD
- Wi-Fi® and Ethernet networking
- 4" x 6" photo in as fast as 10 sec
- 38 ppm max/9.1 ppm laser quality
- CD/DVD printing
- Automatic two-sided printing
- Two paper trays, 30-page ADF
- Easily charge portable devices thru USB port
- Restore faded color photos
- Two-year limited warranty

The capability to run Wi-Fi printing throughout the house makes this a joy to use. Two sided document printing can save paper, and the ability to scan, copy, fax, and read memory cards is certainly a nice bonus. But what puts 'the icing on the cake' for me is that this printer permits me to print directly to matte white faced CDs/DVDs for professional looking results. Although it lists for \$299, you should find it locally for between \$189 and \$199.

The major problem with ink-jet printers has been the cost of consumables. Thanks to the development of Continuous Ink Systems, it is now possible to cut the cost of replaceable ink cartridges significantly. I've installed a Continuous Ink System on my Epson Artisan 810, which both performs well and looks like it came with the printer. Yes, I did find that I had to shave off some plastic to permit the hoses carrying the ink to be installed (a ten minute job). But, I've cut the cost of ink to less than 10% of using standard cartridges, and I don't have to continually change cartridges out. Check out: <http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&item=160407166717> While there are less expensive units on the market, this particular one both looks like it should be part of the printer and works perfectly.

## 6. Should I Upgrade to Windows 7?

Microsoft's Windows 7 has been on the market since last October. Many people locally have asked me whether they should upgrade. Understand that TOP PRODUCER 8i will run equally well on either Windows XP, Windows Vista, or Windows 7. So, if you are thinking of either upgrading your operating system, or your computer, you should be doing it for other reasons.

Microsoft offers a site to help you determine whether your computer is a candidate for upgrading ( <http://www.microsoft.com/Windows/windows-7/get/upgrade-advisor.aspx> ). Even if it is, should you? Consider that an upgrade to Home Premium generally costs \$129 for a license. This money might be better spent on upgrading the entire computer.

Last Fall, in order to become more conversant in Windows 7, I purchased two new laptops with the Windows 7 Home Premium operating system. The laptops were on sale and ran approximately \$450 each after rebates. These HP G60-530US model laptops came with a 2.10

GHz Intel Pentium Dual-Core Processor (T4300), a 320GB hard disk drive, 3 GB of memory, a 15.4" widescreen display (9:16), Lightscribe DVD, and wireless N connectivity. These models are far superior in capabilities to my 17" screened laptops I had purchased two years before for approximately \$1,200 each ( single core Pentium 2.8 GHz processor, 2 GB memory, 80 GB hard disk drive). Rather than upgrade my older laptops, which work about as well as they can on Microsoft's Vista, I applied the upgrade cost to help offset brand new computers with increased capabilities.

Intel has recently come out with a new series of processors, the Core I3, I5, and I7 series. They are available in both desktop and mobile versions. You are now starting to see laptops coming out with Core I3, I5, and I7 Mobile processors. As the number increases, features increase, whether that be speed, processor cores, threads, etc. You can see details comparing various Intel processors at <http://ark.intel.com/> . These new processors will be phasing out the Pentium Dual-Core and Core 2 Duo processor based machines of last year.

If there is a significant difference between your current machine without Windows 7, and a machine which would provide some enhanced capability to your job, I would suggest that you look seriously at purchasing a new machine with Windows 7 preinstalled. Many (but certainly not all) of the new features of Windows 7 can be acquired as third-party updates to either your XP or Vista operating system. Just understand that Windows 7 looks and feels different outside of TOP PRODUCER 8i. Therefore, it will take a little time to become comfortable with the new operating system, as well as a new computer.

Should you make the plunge to a new machine, you might look at [Laplink's PCMover](#) software. It permits you to move your programs, as well as data, from an older operating system to a newer operating system. Lot's easier than reinstalling all your programs from the old to new computer.

## 7. Upcoming Training

Details to follow next month.

Agent.signature

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