

## **Praise For Woodworking Business: Start Quickly and Operate Successfully**

*Woodworking Business: Start Quickly and Operate Successfully is a must read with practical tips on every aspect of the woodworking trade. I would recommend this book to anyone in the woodworking profession. The insight within this book will do wonders for your business. It is one of the few books I have read more than once. This book is a remarkable tool that not only helped me in the beginning; it serves as a reference that I can look back on when I have questions about my business.*

*Chris Looney  
Hardwood Technology  
<http://hardwoodtechnology.com>*

*I would like to thank you for your latest book Woodworking Business: Start Quickly and Operate Successfully. It has been of immense value to me while I start up my own woodworking business. I soon discovered that it is an entire business plan and that alone has saved me hundreds of hours of writing and research. I particularly liked your simplified woodworking chapter which I intend to adopt to improve my profitability. Thank you again.*

*Neil Rogers  
Neil Rogers Woodcraft  
Beaconsfield, Tasmania, Australia*

*This book's purpose is to help the reader make money from woodworking skills. The advice and information are true to that purpose. The writer's voice is clear, trustworthy, and human, and the italicized personal stories are great. All told, a wealth of relevant and useful guidance.*

*Sandy M.  
Austin, TX*

# **Woodworking Business: Start Quickly And Operate Successfully**

**An Expert Woodworker Reveals  
The Keys To Succeeding  
In The Woodworking Business**

**A. William Benitez**

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**A. William Benitez**

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# Dedication

To my wife Barbara Frances, the love of my life, for her creative spirit, invaluable advice, and steadfast support with every project I undertake. As the years pass she is always there to help me continue growing.

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# Introduction

Woodworking is a truly enjoyable hobby for thousands of men and women around the world. It provides a unique opportunity to hand craft wood projects for family members, friends, and yourself. For many men and women it's also a lucrative full or part-time business. They use their skills to make a living or enhance the income from a job. Your investment in this book reflects a strong interest in following their example. With woodworking you can make extra money or even a good living doing work you love.

Whether you're an experienced woodworker who has built many projects over the years, or an advanced amateur honing your skills, this book can help you make money with woodworking. You may already be using those skills to make money on a part-time basis. Some of you may even have your own small woodworking business and simply want to increase your profits. If you have woodworking skills, this book could help you to profit from them.

The information contained here can guide you in building a successful one-person woodworking business. It's not intended as information for developing a corporation to market wood products on a large-scale. There may be other books that address that subject, but the emphasis of this book is the one-person business.

As an avid woodworker, it may seem odd to you that the first step is to ask if you are absolutely certain that operating a woodworking business is really what you want to do. This is an important

question because woodworking as a hobby, just for the enjoyment, is not the same as running a woodworking business.

Actually, the considerations are the same for any small business because it involves a lot of work. It's definitely not the same as a job where you work for someone else. Take the time to think about it carefully before transitioning from hobbyist to professional woodworker. This is the first step because it's critically important and the first chapter will help you make those determinations so you can avoid beginning something that isn't right for you.

Once you are certain it's the right choice, the next step is an in-depth inventory of all your skills. During this inventory you want to determine the skills you believe have the most value to others.

Remember that different people have varying skills and various levels of those skills. To do the best possible work and ensure profit for yourself and the satisfaction of your customers, you need to recognize the things you do best and the weaker areas where improvement is necessary. Chapter two will help you to discover your best skills and show you how to make the best possible use of them while helping you develop others.

## **Tools**

Woodworking requires a significant collection of highly functional tools. However, it's not necessary that all of them be commercial-duty when getting started. If you have already been building projects, your present collection of tools may be adequate for most work. Chapters three, four, and five will describe the tools you need, help you make the best use of the tools you already have, explain ways to improve the effectiveness of the less costly consumer-level tools, and offer some guidance for buying new tools.

## **Shop Space**

It is definitely best to have a shop space to build woodworking projects. Even so, there are some woodworkers who build various projects on site and take advantage of the space that customers have available by setting up their tools on site. Most often they set up in a garage or storage building. Chapter six describes what kind of space works well for the woodworking business and how best to organize your shop. It also discusses conducting a woodworking business without significant shop space and the difficulties this may cause for your business.

## **Licensing, Accounting, And Taxes**

Once your inventories are complete and you have a functional shop space, it's almost time to really get started with the business of woodworking. Before contacting your first potential customer, take care of your licensing, accounting, and income taxes. These areas, especially income taxes, have consistently created problems for small business owners and chapter seven will help you deal with all three.

First, it encourages you to determine and adhere to the small business requirements of your community. Then it helps you to handle all the accounting necessary for a successful business. Finally, it guides you in meeting those all important IRS requirements.

## **Getting Started**

Then it's time to start that most important step of making your business visible to as many people as possible. To succeed, businesses need customers and chapter eight helps you with marketing and advertising methods that will bring in customers while keeping costs down.

Another much overlooked aspect of business covered in this chapter is the critically important topic of keeping customers. This can never be overemphasized because it costs much more to get new customers than to keep the ones you have.

## **Setting Prices**

To succeed you must know how much to charge for every job. This is a seemingly complex topic in the woodworking business as it is in other businesses. There is good reason to get it right because charging too much will almost certainly cause you to lose jobs to lower bidders. On the other hand, charging too little could cause you to lose money. Neither of these is an attractive option because either way your business will suffer.

In chapter nine you will find a concise method for calculating how much to charge for every job. To check your figures and make certain you will make money, there is also a solid secondary method for carefully checking the accuracy of your pricing before you commit to an under-priced job.

In time, your experience, reputation, and level of expertise will increase and your prices need to rise accordingly. This chapter will help you determine the best time to raise your prices so you can always get the highest possible amount for your work.

## **Contracting Jobs**

You may be thinking that how much you get paid is the most important thing but it's even more critical to get paid in full for every job. Don't take for granted that customers will pay you. Ensure full payment by using the solid and consistent contracting and collection methods described clearly in chapter ten.

In addition to the clear and concise instructions, you will find copies of useful forms and direct links to forms that you can easily download and edit to use for your business so you won't have to spend a lot of time creating forms.

## **Getting Help**

This book is based entirely on first-hand experience operating a one-person woodworking business. Most woodworkers prefer doing things on their own and aren't interested in adding the complexities and problems of dealing with employees and payroll to their small business. Nevertheless, there may be times when you need help to deliver and install jobs or to complete certain jobs to meet deadlines.

Chapter eleven covers how to deal with these issues by using subcontractors or other individuals to assist you without violating IRS regulations and running into payroll deduction or Social Security issues.

## **Simplifying While Maintaining Quality**

Many woodworkers enjoy using traditional woodworking methods to ensure quality work. This is certainly one way to build projects but not the only way. There are simpler methods and in chapter twelve you are asked to consider such methods to help you work faster and increase profits. None of these methods reduce the quality of the work but they do facilitate faster completion and often increase profits. Read this with an open mind and then make your own decisions about how best to make use of the information.

The main goal of this book is to help you profit from your existing skills, not to teach you woodworking. Nevertheless, no matter your skill level, there is always much more to learn. With that in mind, the simplified methods included were gleaned over many years in

business. Applying these methods could help you deliver quality work quickly and will definitely contribute to a higher profit margin.

Chapter twelve has information on all these simplified methods in hopes that you also will find them of value. This information is not a criticism of traditional methods or any methods you already use. Simplified methods are presented solely in the interest of increasing your income from woodworking activities.

This book was written for woodworkers who have sufficient skills to build projects or at least the capacity to learn how to build them. It is assumed that you already have a sufficiently high level of woodworking skills to complete some projects in return for fair payment.

## **Safety**

Chapter thirteen is the most critical in this entire book because it is about safety. Woodworking can be dangerous because it involves the use of power tools that can cause serious injury if used carelessly or without full attention. This chapter includes information to help you avoid injuries throughout your woodworking career. Please take the time to read this information carefully and take it to heart. If you carefully adhere to these basic rules they will help you avoid injuries that can ruin your business and perhaps your entire life.

## **The Order Of Things**

The basic message of chapter fourteen is “Think!” Keep your mind on your work and open to new ways. Always think about what you are doing. Take the time to do things in the best possible order to make certain you are measuring correctly, carrying out your own plans, and remaining safe.

Woodworking requires assembly of projects and while it may seem trivial to some, the order of assembly often makes a significant

difference in quality. This chapter will help you to stay fully attentive to your work to ensure quality and safety.

### **Everyday Lessons**

In chapter fifteen there is a collection of valuable lessons about real jobs that were done over the years. In addition to many details about the jobs, there are drawings and photographs that will help you to understand exactly what was done and how it was handled. This chapter is filled with examples of jobs that could well be similar to those you will be doing.

### **Final Notes**

The last chapter includes a valuable collection of notes compiled over many years while dealing with customers and working on projects. Some of these will help you do a better job or make jobs easier. In chapter sixteen many of these ideas are explored in detail. They are called final notes because they were added to the book to share valuable details that have continued to be gleaned over the years. These ideas may be helpful to you while starting and operating your woodworking business.

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Please email me at [bill@woodworking-business.com](mailto:bill@woodworking-business.com) with any questions or comments. Thanks.

A. William Benitez

# Two

## Inventory Of Your Skills

### Exploring All The Possibilities

Woodworking may involve many different kinds of work in addition to building furniture and cabinets. It can also include the repair of cabinets and furniture, the installation of doors and various kinds of moldings, and wood repairs, just to name a few. What are your specific skills? What kind of work have you done regularly over the years? Make a list of the jobs you consider your forte. These are the skills to market immediately. This will probably involve work that you have already done for yourself, family members, or friends. You already have the practice necessary for these jobs so you will do them well for your new customers.

Next, create a list of the kind of work you want to do; work that you would love to be doing. It could be building entertainment centers or perhaps kitchen cabinets. There is probably a specific kind of project that you really enjoy and other people appreciate. Add this kind of project to your list. Once you have created that list, determine your level of competence in each of those jobs. For some you may feel competent so add them to the list of forte items. For others you may need some improvement and you can practice that kind of work before doing it for customers. It is important to handle the work competently before you begin selling it to customers. Unless you are fully confident that you can deliver a good job, avoid that kind of work when you are starting your business.

## Learning and Training

Once you decide the areas where you need training, start by reading all you can about that kind of work. Search the web or look through woodworking books you already own. Purchase books with helpful related information. Check out the work of others and see what they do and how they do it. You may not follow their methods exactly but it will give you ideas for developing your own methods.

Once you have a handle on how to do it, practice by creating something for your home, for a friend, or for a family member. Or, design something and build it and if it turns out great, sell it to someone to make up the cost of materials. If you do it for yourself there is a double benefit. Not only do you improve your skills for the future but you also gain furniture or repairs for your home or office. You can also photograph the pieces for use in an album or web site to advertise your work.

## Handyman Skills

Don't overlook handyman skills. If you regularly repair things around your home, you could do the same for customers. You could even develop part of your business doing repairs on rental properties. This kind of work can be quite lucrative because it involves mostly small jobs that can be finished and collected for quickly.

*Even though ninety percent of my work involved furniture and cabinets, I still accepted lucrative repair jobs. For several years I did repair work on rental properties owned by one person. Originally, he had called me from a small ad I placed in one of the weekly newspapers in my area. After a few jobs he began to call me regularly. Sometimes it took me away from the cabinet work that I preferred but it was quite lucrative. During one year his jobs totaled over \$13,000.00. Not bad from only one customer.*

## **Door Work**

Doors are a consistent problem in homes. Foundations settle and doors begin to stick at the top or the bottom. Or, the space between the door and the jamb might tighten up and cause the door to get stuck or open up and allow heat or cold to pass. If you have skills in this area, it can be lucrative. This can also include replacing doors. It's important to know what you are doing when replacing doors. This is especially true when installing an expensive exterior door. You don't want to ruin an expensive door because of inadequate skills.

*My father was a general contractor and I was born into construction. By the time I graduated from high school I could build a house from the ground up but door work was my forte. I could hang doors from scratch faster than most of my contemporaries and could diagnose and correct door problems easily. When I started my woodworking business I advertised for door work even before I had my shop ready to go. I got many small jobs that kept the money flowing while I finished setting up my shop.*

## **Your Strongest Skills**

What is your strongest skill and how can you use it to full advantage? Answer that question and start profiting from your woodworking business almost immediately. Here are a few other examples of how to take advantage of your best skills.

You may have already built some furniture for friends and family. If they liked the furniture, it should be obvious that you have skills in this area. Why not advertise for furniture projects right away. You know that you can do the work and you have completed projects that you can photograph to prove your abilities.

If you built furniture, you can certainly repair furniture. These skills also lend themselves to building and repairing kitchen cabinets. Your furniture skills will extend to many areas. Have your furniture projects included some woodcarving? If so, you can advertise to antique shops for carving repair work. They sometimes need small parts carved for expensive pieces.

Even if you start by specializing in a certain kind of work, that doesn't stop you from accepting other jobs. Always remain open to considering other work even as you try to stick with your strongest skills during the first year. This helps you maintain a good comfort level while still making a good profit and learning new things. This strikes a good balance that will help you succeed quickly if you just remember to avoid accepting jobs that make you feel uncomfortable because of limited skills.

*On more than one occasion I have been called to help a woodworker finish a project that was beyond his skills. Sometimes I could help finish it but other times the design was so poor that it was necessary to start from scratch. You don't want that to happen anytime, much less during your first year. Not only will it cost you one or more customers, but it will also be a blow to your confidence.*

## **Study To Keep Learning**

Study the woodworking craft to improve your skills. Read everything you can find about building the kinds of projects that interest you most. Don't just use the project plans, study them carefully to learn from them. Go to furniture stores and study the various methods they use to assemble cabinets. They use simpler methods and you want to learn to work as simply as possible. Once you have learned enough from both sources use the information to create your own methods that are simpler yet allow you to use the tools you have available and work faster.

## **Be Creative**

No matter what methods you use, work at being creative. Make changes to the ideas you develop. Be original and your work will have its own identity and higher value. There are many woodworkers who build projects using the instructions and drawings directly from magazines or some other source. There is nothing wrong with that but it's best to change and improve the designs. There are many good designs that can be changed to make them your own. Most clients appreciate originality and, more importantly, they are usually willing to pay more for it.

## **What Size Jobs Should You Take?**

Beyond just your skill level, it's also important to decide the size of jobs you will accept. Running a one person business requires that you be able to do jobs alone. If a job seems too big, chances are it will be a problem for you at that particular time. Perhaps later, when you have acquired more experience, you might consider those bigger jobs.

*I would always figure what I could do alone and that would be all that I would accept. I did consider larger jobs but only if I felt confident that I could finish them in a reasonable time and without hiring help. During the first year stick to what you know you can do and then grow slowly as your skills increase.*

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Please email me at [bill@woodworking-business.com](mailto:bill@woodworking-business.com) with any questions or comments. Thanks.

A. William Benitez

# Eight

## Getting Started

There are definite steps to take when getting started. After you have all the licensing and tax issues worked out and have organized your shop in preparation for woodworking jobs, it's time to get people interested in your woodworking business so you can convert them into paying customers.

### **Look Professional**

The first critical step in finding customers is to look like a real business. You may be a one-person business but that is no reason to look unprofessional. Create or purchase business cards and some nice stationery. These need not be expensive but they shouldn't look cheap either. There are several ways to create business cards for yourself. You can print them in small quantities by purchasing the necessary business card paper at an office supply place and then use a simple business card software to create them.

Simpler yet, you can contact the VistaPrint company and they will make all your business cards, stationary, postcards, small signs, etc. at good prices. They even have quite a few products that are free except for shipping costs. As long as you don't try to have them shipped quickly those costs are reasonable. They have excellent templates so you can quickly create a good business card or other related stationery. You can get to their web site at: <http://vistaprint.com>.

You also need to have all the necessary contract documents printed and ready for your first customer. It is unprofessional to scribble out agreements on the spot when you are dealing with a job for which you expect payment. Contracts should be neat and serious documents that make it clear that you will do the described work but also expect prompt and full payment for your efforts. A contract and related forms appears in chapter ten.

## **Photo Album and Web Site**

Create a photo album with pictures of all the projects you have built for yourself, family members, or friends. This album shows your prospects the quality of work that you are capable of doing for them. The photographs used for this album can serve a dual purpose if you use them to create a web site that will be available twenty-four hours a day to all interested prospects. For information on how to create your own small business web site using free software and hosting it at the lowest available cost contact me at: [bill@positive-imaging.com](mailto:bill@positive-imaging.com) .

## **Contact Everyone!**

Now that you have everything in place for contacting everyone you know, start with your family and friends. Contact them by phone, email, mail, text message, whatever method you believe is best for the person you are contacting. It may be best to contact some people with more than one method. You may get the best results from some people by contacting them in person. Tell them exactly what you are doing and ask them to tell everyone they know about your new business. Give them extra business cards and make certain it lists your web site.

You might also consider telling everyone that you are starting out with bargain pricing to generate interest and introduce yourself to more customers who can then refer you to others. This may work

especially well because word of mouth advertising is always the best way to find customers.

## **Advertise Carefully To Avoid Waste**

Advertise your business carefully. It is easy to over spend on advertising and get little, if any, benefit. Try to identify your best prospects and how to reach them. A good place to start is with local weekly newspapers. The ads cost much less than the daily papers and they are kept around for a whole week instead of just a day.

*Don't hesitate to use your vehicle for advertising your services. I had a hand-made wooden sign on the tailgate of my pickup truck and it often got me jobs.*

*On more than one occasion someone followed me for a while and then approached me about a job once I stopped. A picture of that wooden sign appears below.*



## **Use The Internet**

Don't overlook the Internet for advertising. Get your web site noticed by mentioning it in every ad. Place it as a signature on every email, blog, facebook, twitter, or any other Internet connection you make. Let people see the link so they will visit the site and see what you can do for them. Your web site address is one long word that can put prospects in touch with your photo album and information about your business.

Remember that the emphasis of any advertising you do for your woodworking business should be on the prospect, not on you. Potential customers want to know what is in it for them. Tell them why it is in their best interest to deal with you.

## **Give Everyone A Business Card**

Remember to have your business cards with you at all times because you never know when you will be sharing information about your business with someone. Even though this has been covered before, it bears repeating. With your business card you should have some brief information about the work you do so you can share it with anyone in just a few seconds. Be ready when you get the chance to make an impression. You never know when someone will be interested in the kind of work you do.

## **Keeping Customers**

Getting customers is critical but keeping customers after you acquire them is even more important. It can cost eight to ten times as much to get a new customer as to hold on to one you already have. How do you go about making certain that you keep every customer for whom you do a job?

Step one is to always let your customers know that you value their business. Treat them as if they were the most important part of your business because they are. Without them, there is no business. This has two-fold benefits because in addition to the continued business from the customer, he or she will recommend your products and services to others.

Step two is handling mistakes promptly and properly. While it is certainly important to establish and maintain a firm reputation for quality work and reliability, you will make mistakes. The customer service you provide when these mistakes occur will determine whether you keep or lose a customer.

### **Admit Your Mistakes**

Many people seem to find it difficult to admit mistakes but this is where you must start and follow up immediately taking steps to correct the mistakes without being pressured by the customer. With the present lack of good customer service in many industries, you have a unique opportunity to impress your customers and keep them coming back.

If you believe, as some people do, that being right is the most important thing, your business is certain to suffer financially. When things go wrong in any business transaction, the most important thing is how your customer feels when the incident is over. That will determine whether they return and if they will recommend you to others.

Good customer service is the key. It is more important now than ever because it is becoming very difficult to get good service. Think about the last time you got really good customer service at any business. It was memorable because of the poor service you normally get. That level of service is what you must give your customers every day. Make it impossible to forget the great experience of doing business with you.

*Here are a couple of examples from my personal experience. One is about how to lose a good customer and the other is how to keep a customer even when a problem arises. The first happened to a competitor of mine. He had contracted to build a custom desk for a customer. He completed the desk and the customer told him that the desk should have had a lock on one of the drawers. My competitor insisted that it was not part of the price. He finally installed the lock and billed the customer for an extra \$16.00. The customer paid it but was disturbed by being billed. My competitor refused to give the customer any satisfaction on the issue.*

*About a month later I received a call from this same company to quote them for some office furniture. They were opening a second office and wanted several pieces of custom furniture including custom desks and a file cabinet. I submitted a quote and got the job. I later found out that my price was higher than my competitor's price for the same pieces but I got the job because the manager was still upset about the \$16.00. So, for this small amount my competitor gave up a contract of several thousand dollars. Of course, I was glad that he had to be right since it got me a very good contract. More importantly, it got me a good customer who ordered products from me many more times after that first experience.*

*On another job, I built a conference table for a law office and they didn't like the appearance of the top. I told the customer to use the existing top for a couple of weeks and I would build a new one for them just the way they wanted it. Two weeks later I arrived with a new top and switched it out. They were well satisfied with the new top and gave me a contract to install crown molding throughout their entire office. The original top was acceptable but it just wasn't the way they pictured it and it was obvious that I didn't understand exactly what they wanted. In addition to the new work, I got recommended to other law offices. As to the top that I took*

*back, it served me for many years as an assembly table. I just placed it on a couple of specially built, low profile, saw horses in my shop.*

Good customer service pays off and it's the right thing to do. I suggest that you put yourself in your customer's shoes before making a decision on any customer service issue. Determine how you would like to be treated if you were facing the same situation and treat your customer at least as well.

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Please email me at [bill@woodworking-business.com](mailto:bill@woodworking-business.com) with any questions or comments. Thanks.

A. William Benitez

# Thirteen

## Safety

Safety is the most important topic in this book and it is definitely in your best interest to read and adhere to these safety rules. If you are a long time woodworker and still have all your fingers and body parts, it probably isn't by accident. Most likely it is because you have a healthy respect for the rules of safety and you realize the importance of giving every power tool your full and undivided attention before turning it on.

**POWER TOOLS ARE INHERENTLY DANGEROUS!** Any tool that can cut wood can also cut skin and bone. Please keep this in mind every time you use a power tool. Here are a few more simple suggestions that will help you avoid injuries:

- Plan every cut carefully before starting the tool. This is a common oversight by many woodworkers. Instead of just jumping in and starting the cut, decide exactly what you are going to do and what problems might pose themselves during the procedure.
- Clamp work pieces securely before cutting, routing, or sanding. It is much quicker and easier to just hold the piece down with your hands while making the cut or routing the edge but you are definitely increasing the risk of injury.
- Read and adhere to the safety guidelines that came with the power tool. These guidelines are written to help you avoid serious injuries. It only takes a few minutes to read through the small booklets that come with power tools today. You might learn a little something that will help you stay safe.

- If you are using a power tool with one hand, always check the location of the other hand before starting the tool. This may sound silly but it is a good way to keep all your fingers. If you are cutting with a tool in one hand, a moment could ensure that your other hand is in a safe place where it will be clear even from kickbacks.
- Another part of planning is to visualize the complete procedure before you start. This will help you avoid potential kickback or other injury causing incidents.
- Never use power tools if you are tired, taking medications or using alcohol or drugs. This is a sure way to get hurt.
- Never use a power tool while someone is talking to you or distracting you in some way. It only takes a split second for a serious injury to change your life. If someone interrupts your cut, stop cutting and tell them not to speak to you while you are using a power tool.
- Always use ear and eye protection and dust masks when using power tools.

Woodworking is an enjoyable hobby and it can be profitable as a business. Don't let a moment of carelessness ruin it for you. Think before turning on any power tool and take good care of yourself and others around you.

**SPECIAL NOTE ON TABLE SAWS:** The table saw is probably the most commonly used stationary power tool for woodworking. It's a tool that has many diverse uses. With the right kind of jigs and fixtures it can perform amazingly well and produce an almost infinite variety of cuts. It is also involved in more than ninety percent of shop injuries. These machines can injure you seriously.

Using a table saw requires your total attention. In addition to the potential for cutting you, when improperly used, a table saw is capable of throwing pieces of materials back at astounding speed. These pieces can cause serious injuries by striking you in various locations.

This information is not meant to frighten you but to make certain that you fully understand the power of a table saw. Always give your work on the table saw your full attention.

Take the time to learn the safety rules for your machine and adhere to them. It only takes one mistake to cause a serious injury that can affect your life for many years to come. Please be careful.

**Note:** *If your budget allows, consider the SawStop Table Saws. These units are specially designed so the blade stops instantly and retracts below the table when it contacts skin to avoid serious injuries. It also has a riving knife to protect against kickbacks. Get more information and view a video at the SawStop web site at: <http://www.sawstop.com>.*

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A. William Benitez

# Disclaimer

Everything described in this book is based on my personal experience. Over the years I have gained much experience in the woodworking business and am a competent, though not extraordinary, businessperson. Anyone with good woodworking skills and a sincere desire to learn may be able to attain similar results if he or she puts in the effort. Nevertheless, no guarantees are expressed or implied regarding your own results using the information in this book.

Some individuals are more apt to profit from woodworking than others due to the level of their skills, business acumen, and communication abilities. Regardless of my experience over the years, I can't guarantee that you will succeed in this or any business.

Business of any kind involves the risk of loss, including, but not necessarily limited to, money, time, and energy. In addition to the financial and time considerations, woodworking involves the use of an extensive collection of tools that are capable of inflicting serious injuries.

I have made every effort to accurately describe my experiences in detail, including safety considerations with various power tools, but cannot be held liable for any damages or injuries that may result from the use of this information – even if the user informs me prior to or after these damages or injuries occur.

This book includes the names of and information about several brand name products. Many of these are products I have personally used and others have been highly recommended to me. I own no interest in any of the manufacturers or distributors of these products nor have I received any payment for listing them in this book.

The user of this information agrees that he or she is solely responsible for the consequences of using any tools or products described in this book. It is also the user's responsibility to conduct a reasonable level of due diligence before making any business or legal decisions. The information contained and distributed in this book is not intended as nor should it be considered professional, business, or legal advice.

For any questions please contact [bill@positive-imaging.com](mailto:bill@positive-imaging.com)

# About A. William Benitez

Beginning at age twelve, I spent my summers and weekends working with my dad, a general contractor, building homes and commercial buildings. By the time I graduated from high school I was an excellent carpenter. I became a licensed contractor and contracted my first home at age nineteen and followed that by building my own home by age twenty. For more than 40 years I have operated one-person businesses.

## **Twelve Years with government programs**

Twelve years of my life were spent working for local government running federally-assisted housing programs. I started as an inspector with a three-month assignment and was Director of Community Improvement with seventy-eight employees when I resigned twelve years later to do writing and consulting full-time. Because of my extensive experience in housing rehabilitation, I was invited to testify before the Housing Subcommittee of the United States Congress on housing issues.

## **Writing, Publishing and Consulting**

Rehab Notes Library was my publishing company and we published a monthly newsletter (Rehab Notes) with subscribers in all 50 states, Canada and England. I also did consulting and public speaking for agencies and organizations in cities across the country.

Because of my efforts, several community housing programs developed valuable partnerships with local banks to multiply their federal funding.

It was during this period that the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials published my first book about housing rehabilitation. After that I wrote and published eight more guide-books on various aspects of that subject. I continued writing and consulting until 1980 when the housing assistance programs were cut. After that, I took advantage of my construction experience and started a woodworking business.

## **Over Twenty Years of Woodworking**

For over twenty years, first in Tampa, Florida and then in Austin, Texas, I built hundreds of small and large projects for individuals, companies, churches, and government agencies. During these years I began writing about my experiences and sharing them with other woodworkers.

I published a book and project newsletters on woodworking. My first woodworking book was “SIMPLIFIED WOODWORKING I: A Business Guide For Woodworkers.” The monthly project newsletter was called “SIMPLIFIED WOODWORKING” and I wrote and published it for two years.

For a year I performed power tool demonstrations for the Skil Power Tool Company in home improvement stores around Texas. After many years of self employment, I encapsulated my experiences in “THE SELF EMPLOYMENT SURVIVAL MANUAL: How to Start and Operate a One-Person Business Successfully.”

I wrote and published several books and ebooks including, “Starting and Operating A Woodworking Business,” “Simplified Woodworking Methods and Projects,” and, “The Handyman’s Guide To Profit: Using Your Skills To Make Money In Any Economy.”

## **Computer Experience**

My computer experience dates back more ten years. After a couple of bad experiences with on-site technical support, I began working on my own computers. Since then I have taken many courses on computer repairing, upgrading, troubleshooting and building. I have also taken courses on networking and compiled an extensive library on these subjects. I upgraded and built many computers and acquired A+ Certification and my MCSE (Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer) Certification.

I was born and raised in Tampa, Florida and moved to Austin, Texas in 1986, where I now live with my wife, Barbara Frances. We have three adult children and eight grandchildren.

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A. William Benitez

# Other Books

**Published By Positive Imaging, LLC**

**Starting and Operating A Woodworking Business  
How To Make Money With Your Skills**

by A. William Benitez

<http://startingawoodworkingbusiness.com>

**The Handyman's Guide To Profit:  
Using Your Skills To Make Money In Any Economy**

By A. William Benitez

<http://handyman-business-guide.com>

**Lottie's Adventure:  
A Kidnapping Unraveled**

by Barbara Frances

<http://lottiesadventure.com>

**Peace And Healing For The World Using Altars**

by Lucretia Jones and Gaila Slaughter

<http://peaceandhealingfortheworld.com>

**The End Of All Worries: We Are All One**

by Irie Glajar

<http://the-end-of-all-worries.com>