

## How Can Your Astrology Practice Boom When The Economy is Bust?

Written by Benjamin Bernstein

Monday, February 21, 2011 - Last Updated Monday, February 21, 2011

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How can an astrologer maintain a prosperous practice in the face of the current economic crisis? That may seem like a daunting question! I'll try to answer it by sharing some strategies that have been successful for me.

### How Astrologers are Faring

First, it's worth mentioning that some astrologers are doing just fine, or even better, these days. Most of those that I'm aware of in this enviable situation have been professional astrologers for decades, however, and have a stable and devoted client base. I know of another who specializes in horary and electional astrology. With so much uncertainty in the air, her business is booming with clients who want answers to their burning questions about the future!

Many of us who focus more on a more psychological style of astrology, however, seem to be facing more challenges. One trusted source, who is extremely well-connected with the astrological community, has told me that many astrologers who were practicing full-time are now taking other jobs to make ends meet.

### The Law of Attraction

So what can those of us who are seeing a downturn in our business do to attract more clients?

I was among those whose phone grew disconcertingly quiet after the stock market first lurched downward. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise, however, since it forced me to get much more serious about using a prosperity technique that I had long been aware of: the Law of Attraction.

As you are probably aware, this technique is described in *The Secret*, *The Moses Code*, your local Science of Mind Church, and many other sources. (I first read about it decades ago in Napoleon Hill's classic book *Think and Grow Rich*.) The basic idea is that your thoughts help to create your reality. The more you focus on a specific desired outcome, especially if you do so with strong passion, desire and persistence, the more likely it is to manifest in physical reality.

### The Law of Attraction —On Steroids!

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Since I was already engaged in a spiritual practice that lent itself to using the Law of Attraction, I began doing my prosperity affirmations in that context. I follow a path based on a type of shamanism practiced in northern Peru. It is based on ceremony done around the Pachakuti Mesa, a cloth on which sacred objects are placed and ritually activated.

You can learn more about this by googling “Pachakuti Mesa,” but the specifics of my particular path are less important than the general concept. By the time I get to the point near the end of my daily ceremony where I’m affirming my prosperity, I have called in numerous divine beings and sacred powers. (I’ve even started calling in all of the planets – except Eris, of course. No one wants her at their party!) I have found that the effectiveness of my affirmations is significantly enhanced by the power of my numerous allies.

The proof of this is in the results. A few days after I began daily prosperity affirmations in this ritual context, my phone started ringing again. In fact, I am now seeing a substantial and consistent increase in my client flow.

Of course, you can try to use the Law of Attraction simply based on the power of your own human will. You might even get some results. But in my experience, the more power you’re able to invoke from the invisible realms, the better your results will be. Call upon whatever divine powers of light you’re comfortable with. The old adage, “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know” was never more true than in this context!

### Bad Karma?

I know some people who shy away from this sort of thing because they’re afraid of creating bad karma. This is a legitimate concern, but is also easily addressed. First, make sure that there is no malicious intent in your affirmation. Then make sure to include something along the lines of this “karma free safety clause” at the end: “This, or something better, now manifests for the highest need of all concerned.” This is your way of telling Spirit that, if your request would create bad karma, you’re asking that it be appropriately modified or canceled.

### More Down-to-Earth Marketing Methods

Of course, with four Sixth House planets in Capricorn and a Virgo Moon in the Second House, I also believe in hard work on the physical plane. It makes sense to me that the gods help those who help themselves. So I continue with the core marketing strategies that have historically helped me build my practice: my monthly e-mail newsletter, my websites, my weekly podcast, my local print advertising, and so on.

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I am also now reactivating certain marketing strategies that I had used in the past, but have neglected of late. These include public lectures, press releases detailing noteworthy achievements and an expanded menu of services and online classes. It's worth noting that the vast majority of the marketing tools available to you cost nothing except your time and energy!

### **Advertising: Expense or Investment?**

The primary marketing tool that does cost money — advertising — can be a tricky issue when business slows down and money gets tight. On the one hand, it can be tempting to cut down on your advertising expenses by canceling ads or running them less frequently. On the other hand, when used properly, advertising is an investment that covers its costs and then some!

In my home market of Asheville, North Carolina, I run a small 1/16-page ad in the Mountain Xpress, our local weekly paper. Each ad costs me about \$50, and I spend roughly \$200 to \$250 per month on the ads. However, I gross around \$150 per consultation, so I'm ahead if the ads only bring in two clients per month. (And they do much better than that!) The longer and more consistently an effective ad runs, the more business it will bring you.

So think long and hard before you respond to a slowdown in business by cutting cut back on your advertising. Too often, this turns out to be the first step in a downward spiral.

### **Diversify Your Astrological Services**

Several months ago, I learned how to do electional astrology and added it to my menu of services. Electional is a relatively small part of my overall business, but the fact that I make \$125 for each date I select definitely helps pay the bills! Most of my electional questions come from my existing client base, and gives me another way in which I can serve them.

Sometimes a client wants a yes or no answer to a question, which I'm currently unable to give them. To fill that void, I am now learning horary astrology. This will give me the ability to help these clients astrologically instead of referring them to psychics, and will also open up an additional revenue stream.

If you're not already doing electional or horary astrology, consider whether this type of work is supported in your chart, and if it would be a good way for you to bring in additional money as

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an astrologer.

### Sliding Scale

One of the things I elected was the date on which I most recently raised my rates. After holding at \$95/hour for two and a half years, I had finally taken what seemed like a reasonable increase to \$125/hour. At first my business percolated along as steady as ever, then nose-dived when the global financial crisis hit.

At first I thought of reverting back to \$95/hour, but my Leo rising pride couldn't bear the thought! Then I came up with an intriguing solution: maintain \$125/hour as my standard rate, but offer a sliding scale back down to my original \$95/hour rate. This way, I figured, those who could afford the higher rate would pay it, while those who could not -- and would not otherwise use my services -- might be able to afford the lower rate.

Happily, this is just how it turned out. Partly this is due to how I present the choice (phrasing is so important)! I say something like, "My usual rate is \$125/hour, and I'm absolutely worth every penny. However, if that's more than your budget can accommodate, I will accept a sliding scale fee as low as \$95/hour."

I also discovered that it was better to let clients make the decision about how much to pay at the end of the session, not before. They tend to be more generous when they're basking in the rosy afterglow of the consultation!

### Birthday Month Discounts

Another marketing tool I recently implemented is a 15% discount when a client books a consultation during their birthday month. (This is only available as a discount off my normal rate; clients cannot combine discounts.) Time-limited discounts such as this are effective because they force the client to act by a deadline to get the savings.

I know what you're thinking: a client could actually save more than 15% by using the sliding scale! However, I promote the birthday discount prominently in each monthly newsletter, whereas the sliding scale is only mentioned on the website.

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Plus, there's an interesting psychology at work. Some clients feel as if they're somehow taking advantage of me by using the sliding scale. Or perhaps the sliding scale feels too much like a handout that they're unwilling to take. But they feel fine about taking the 15% birthday discount, which is offered to everyone without regard to financial need.

### Help the Client Choose a Longer Consultation

Until recently, I made no effort to guide a client toward a particular session length. I let them choose whether they wanted a session of one hour, 90 minutes or two hours.

They still have that choice, but more of them are now choosing 90 minutes instead of an hour. Why? It's all in the labeling on my website, as you can see:

One hour (Basic). Enough time to cover the most important information.

90 minutes (Standard). Thorough coverage. Recommended for most clients.

Two hours (Deluxe). Extremely detailed analysis.

Maybe one day I'll get up the courage to make two hours my standard session, and label 90 minutes as basic. But then what would I call one hour: "The Scrooge"?

### Other Business-Building Resources

I could go on, and have: I have done several presentations of my two-day workshop called "Smart Marketing for Lightworkers, Bodyworkers and Holistic Practitioners," and lectured on guerrilla marketing for astrologers as a free speech presenter at the 2007 NCGR conference. (To view that presentation for free, go to the Audio/Video page of [ItsAllGoodAstrology.com](http://ItsAllGoodAstrology.com) and click on the video link. You'll also find helpful marketing tips contained in the free audio of my appearance on the "Growing Your Business" Internet radio show, also on the Audio/Video page.)

I also lectured on guerrilla marketing for astrologers as a faculty member at OPA member Moses Siregar's first "The Blast" astrology conference. In fact, it was at The Blast that our president Bob Mulligan first saw me lecture, after which he asked me to become OPA's Director of Marketing!

### Boosting Your Success at the OPA Retreat

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This brings to mind another opportunity to make your astrology practice more prosperous: the “Building Your Successful Astrology Practice” track that Bob and I will be leading at OPA’s Sixth Annual Retreat April 15-19. Here’s the track description from OPA’s retreat web page:

This highly interactive experience will give you and a small group of your peers the specific information – and personal attention – that can take your practice to the next level!

Want more clients? We’ll show you how to attract them based on your chart, professional skills and current situation. Need to boost your confidence? We’ll help you build faith in yourself and your mission. Have questions? We’re here to answer them. Whatever’s missing from your practice, we’ll help you put it into place!

You’ll receive valuable input on your mission, business ideas, and chart. Your experience will also include prosperity-building information on accounting, marketing strategies, websites and much more!

The experience is supportive, intense and transformative. Most importantly, it will empower your career as a professional astrologer!

We hope you’ll join us in the “Building Your Successful Astrology Practice” track. Where the surf’s up – for your prosperity!

So if you can afford the initial investment of attending the “Building Your Successful Astrology Practice” track at the retreat, the personally customized information and insights you’ll receive should more than pay for themselves as you incorporate them into your practice!

### Summary

There’s no question about it: times are tough. And with Pluto in Capricorn, Uranus opposing Saturn through mid-2010, and the orb of the Uranus-Pluto square extending for many years to come, boom times for the general economy may be far down the road.

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All the same, a calling is a calling. If you're like most of us, you didn't get into astrology because of some shrewd calculation about how lucrative it could be. You became an astrologer because your soul called you to it.

I take the following statement as an article of faith, and have risked my livelihood on it for the last seven years: no matter how challenging the times, if you are following your calling, you will be supported. Deep in your heart, do you know that your calling is to be an astrologer? Are you unable to imagine any livelihood that would make you happier than helping others with this extraordinary system? If you answered yes, then don't you owe it to yourself to give yourself every chance to succeed as a professional astrologer?

If only one idea in this article caught your attention, then milk it for everything it's worth. If your own marketing skills are not enough to make you successful, or if you have the skills but lack the time to implement them, then invest in a few hours of a marketing expert's time to help you cover those bases. Whatever it takes, if astrology is your calling, don't give up on your professional practice as long as there's a way to keep it going.

Because for those who are called, there's always a way.