

# Reading is Fun (and Profitable)

How to grow a bigger brain in 10 easy steps, Part 2

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“How can I make time to read?” many professionals ask. How can you NOT make the time to read? is my response. You need not have business tomes in your briefcase or constantly feeding your Kindle in order to be an avid reader. The fact that you’re reading this blog is a good sign. Any written words (regardless of the media) can be part of the brain-expanding process behind marketing innovation. What should be on every professional’s reading list?

1. The media that your customers are reading! If you’re in a consumer business, you should be engrossed in the media that your target audience looks to - newspapers, magazines, blogs, websites. B-to-B businesses should be familiar with the trade media in their industry. [These blogs](#) were considered the best of 2009.
2. A handful of inspirational newspapers, magazines, e-zines, e-newsletters, and blogs.
3. Something that has no business connection! Reading a novel, pop culture magazine, or nonfiction that appeals to a personal interest can be tremendously relaxing and provide a great “escape” from daily stresses. Plus, it will give you something to talk about when you’re out socially or when you are tired of talking about business at professional events.

How do you make the time?

- Be selective in what you need to read on an ongoing basis. Ask other business people what they are reading and trust the recommendations of people you respect.
- Lisa Jacobson of [Inspirica](#), a tutoring and test-prep company based in New York, saves up articles that she’s been meaning to read and keeps them in her bag. When she’s waiting for a train, commuting, or even on a personal appointment, she simply pulls one of them out and reads it. If you’re an ebook fan, you can simply follow the same routine with downloads.
- Set aside a few hours each week as “reading time.” It does not need to be in a single block. For example, I scan newspapers (yes, the old fashioned kind) over breakfast, save my e-zines for the end of the day, and peruse magazines on the treadmill (which is great for both my brain and my butt).
- If you manage a team, divide and conquer. Assign regular reading to the people in your company and have them report on highlights to the rest of the group
- Consider taking a speed-reading class. Learning how to read quickly without sacrificing comprehension can be especially helpful.
- Most important, become an active reader! Comment regularly on blogs (which will help your own Googleability), flag or scan articles that have the most relevance to your business, organize them in a system that makes sense to you and remember to consult them when you are looking for inspiration. And, you can even join a “virtual book group.” By consulting your Facebook or LinkedIn friends for recommendations and joining in conversations about publications, you’ll get new perspectives on your reading - and perhaps even make some new business connections in the process.

Now that you’ve read this, please try out the active reader recommendation! Comment on this blog with what’s on your bookshelf or in your briefcase or inbox. What reading do YOU recommend? How do YOU make the time to read?

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