



B O A R D F L O W

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BOARDFLOW is the lifeblood of your business.

It's what keeps you in the game.

Increase it, and you'll be busier, happier, richer and more successful. Lose it, and your career business and income will shrivel up and die.

Odd then, that it's so rarely talked about.

It's an area that many of my clients had never really considered before. Yet it quietly shapes the entire ecosystem of the TVC production industry.



A director's board flow is a vital sign for the success of their business. It's deal flow for executive producers and film directors. The secret to how to keep busy...

Now when I talk to directors, the concern around board flow is pretty straightforward:

- HOW DO I IMPROVE BOARD FLOW?
- IS MORE ALWAYS BETTER?
- WHAT CAN I DO TO GET BETTER QUALITY BOARD FLOW?

And that's generally where the conversation stops.

As a film maker, how can you run your business the same when the leads or potential clients come from multiple sources?

Consider:

- Is great board flow a director's edge?
- Is seeing boards early really better?
- Is 'good' board flow seeing all the 'hot' boards?

Getting lots of referral board flow takes up time. And can fill all the time and space for potential opportunities. Is it worth it?

Do the 'great' boards come from great referral sources?

Let me share some experience:

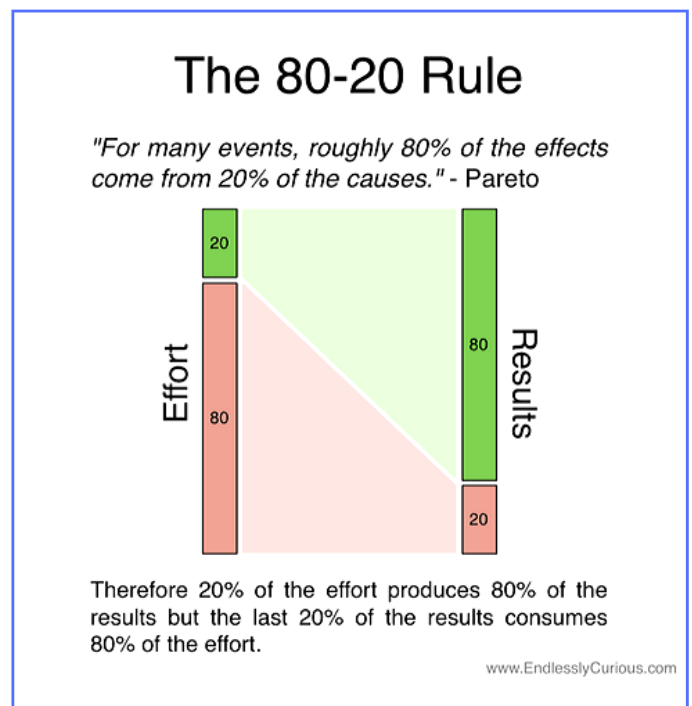
For me, 90% of my work comes from less than 5% of my clients. These are directors who are working all the time. Of course, they're fabulously creative... super talented with stunning reels but so are a lot of other of my clients. And they're not so busy.

It all comes down to a natural law that codified into the '[Pareto Principle](#)'. Named after Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto, who found that 80% of the land in Italy was owned by 20% of the population, the idea is that this 80/20 distribution occurs extremely frequently.

For example, like me, less than 20% of my clients represent 80% of my business. And 20% of my time produces 80% of my results. And so on. The Pareto Principle, or "80/20 Rule" as it is called today, is an incredible tool for growing your business... and boardflow.

For instance, figure out which 20% of your time produces 80% of your business' results. Then spend more time on those activities and less time on others. Likewise, by identifying the characteristics of the top 20% of your clients (who represent 80% of your shoots), you can find more clients like them and dramatically improve boardflow and profit.

It's the most important mathematical principle in business today. It's used by smart directors and executive producers to create strong boardflow. A recent and unique interpretation has taken its importance and power to a whole new level. I learned about this innovative interpretation in Perry Marshall's recent book, ["80/20 Sales and Marketing."](#)



Upping the ante on the Pareto Principle, Marshall found that the idea is exponential. It works like this... we already know that 20% of your customers represent 80% of your revenues. What Marshall found is that, within that initial 20%, the 80/20 rule also exists. Meaning that the top 20% of the top 20% of your customers (or the top 4% overall) represent 64% of your jobs (calculated as 80% times 80%).

Now you have a distribution in which the top 4% of your clients account for 64% of your sales. So look for more customers like them. And importantly, the Pareto Principle scales to the third power, and fourth power, and so on when the numbers are great enough.

This explains the exponential power of the Pareto Principle. The trick is then to focus on ways to apply it to your business to quickly grow sales and profits. For example, identify potential customers who match the 'top 20%-ers'. You can also use the 80/20 principle to hire the absolute best talent. And perhaps most importantly, it explains how to use the rule to generate the maximum value and profits from your customers.

This 80/20 rule is an powerful tool for growing any business. The key is knowing how and when to apply it and leveraging its exponential properties. Think about why you take a job in the first place?



Once you've decided where to put your focus, the next task is creating the time to do just that. One tool that helped me in this area is the Eisenhower Matrix – an approach towards better decisions.

In the morning, multiple tasks compete for my attention. Before I learned how to plan effectively, prioritisation was difficult. Now I use a [planner](#) in the morning. I can set my priorities accordingly. Then all my activities can be done on time without any clash.

Sometimes I have to choose between the priorities occurring in the same time frame. This can create stress. I wonder about where to go and where to not go. That's where the Eisenhower Matrix gives me a simple and effective solution to my time management issues.

The Eisenhower matrix helps us to understand us in the following ways:

- IMPORTANT & URGENT.
- IMPORTANT & NOT-URGENT.
- URGENT & NOT-IMPORTANT.
- NOT-URGENT & NOT-IMPORTANT.



The above figure depicts the true essence of the Eisenhower Matrix by showing the activities in their order according to their importance. It's a time saving and smart work tool which not only resolves ambiguity but also help me to know what should be done first and which should be re-scheduled, delayed or delegated. It helps me prioritise and execute.

Knowing what who your best clients are (or what they look like) plus what you should do first are two important principles in establishing boardflow.

It's a generally accepted industry norm that the reasons why you take a job comes down to three things: revenue, reel and relationship. It will either look good on the showreel, strengthen your relationship with the agency or you just plain need the cold hard cash.

BOARD FLOW HAS ITS THREE 'R'S TOO:
radar, reputation and relationships.

Let's start with RELATIONSHIPS.

Maintaining good relations means staying in touch with your network on a regular basis. I've tried doing that by myself and it got way too confusing. I started to use a customer relationship management tool, called Contactually, to segment and systematically email my network. It's a CRM suite designed for consultants. It has enabled me to stay in contact with clients, partners and industry players. Once you set it up and put your various contacts into various buckets (that's what they call them - they gamify the process) it's very simple to use. It's kind of fun, actually very relaxing. Then you can stay in contact with all the people that you need to. I've moved on to Kajabi as that's the platform where my PITCHCRAFT, my director treatment masterclass is hosted.

And that feels good! I can relax knowing that across my email contacts and social, my network exceeds 20,000 but thanks to my CRM, I know I can stay in touch with everyone. Then I can focus on my top 2% who give me the bulk of my work.



Next is RADAR.

Live in the current idiom and soon you will create it. Stay current. Have your nose on the ground... your snout in the advertising trough ;) Get to industry events. I put out 100 plus vids and trainings a year, as video is critical for online brand amplification but nothing beats face to face for quality engagement. Every year my calendar's marked by SXSW in March, D&AD in May and Cannes Lions in June plus regular trips to LA, NY, London, Berlin and other international film production hubs.

Quality industry intel is hard to come by. So here's a pro tip for the two best sources out there: [SHOTS](#) and [SOURCE CREATIVE](#).

[SHOTS](#) grants you VIP access to the stories, trends and news behind the planet's most creative advertising along with world class editorial.

[SOURCE CREATIVE](#) allows you to explore over 500,000 spots and research the people, agencies and production houses in the world's most comprehensive advertising and TV production database.

AND... as an added bonus for you pitch-hungry board warriors... sign up to [Source](#) and get access to [SLATE](#), the next-generation platform for reel-building and file-sharing. Custom built for the advertising industry, [Slate](#) uses the latest technology and the power of the AWS Cloud to deliver an incredible experience from back-end users to front-end clients.

Read the industry rags. I can't pretend I enjoy this, I make time in my planner to do it. It's vital to see who's who and who's new in the zoo and keep up to date with all the trends, news and low brow gossip. To win it you gotta be in it! If you're not in the mix, you won't get invited to the party. A lot of directors are very introverted. They don't want to go out and hustle. Guess what? Hustle beats talent if talent doesn't hustle. Develop that hustle muscle!



And the third 'R' is REPUTATION.

Obviously you get picked because of your work. Right? But do you though? Is that really the case? Maybe in the agency world. Do you think clients pore over showreels like creatives do? Clients like brand name directors. Directors with cred... accolades... reputations. It makes them feel safe, important and secure.

Also... think about how much time people spends looking at your reel? Screens are shrinking. So is view time. Chances are someone skimmed through your showreel on their iPhone under the table during a dull meeting with the sound off. As an ECD at JWT and BBDO, I've certainly been guilty of that.

Sadly these days work is becoming like less important than reputation. The clients that I have that are consistently busy are the ones that really have big, bold, vibrant personal brands.



And that doesn't just mean a flashy website. Rather it's a digital presence that's rich in content. It's got a story about you. It demonstrates what sets you apart has a creative. The directors that I know that get the most work are active and busy on social media. They curate. They create content. A couple of them have got blogs, and they're out there with personality as well as work. They're building their brands. And that's why they're busy.

To recap...

Boardflow finally comes down to these, three things, reputation, radar and relationships. I get into more detail along with other business building pro tips and techniques in [PITCHCRAFT - THE DIRECTOR'S TREATMENT MASTERCLASS](#).

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AND GET YOUR NEXT TREATMENT PITCH PERFECT.

[Ghosttreatments.com](https://ghosttreatments.com)