MartialArtsWorldNews.com

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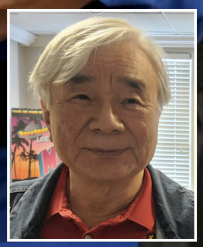
Martial Arts World News MAGAZINE

The #1 B e Martial Arts Industry

MARTIAL ARTS WEALTH GROUP:

The Ultimate Martial Arts Business Mastermind Group

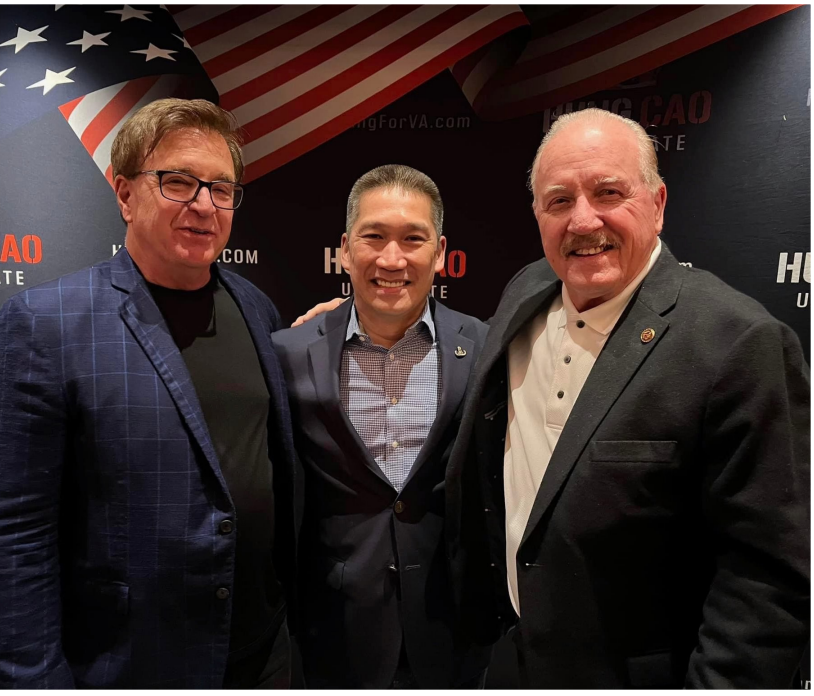
Grandmaster Hak Sun An Visits Headquarters in Orlando



ATLAS Martial Arts Software Supports Historic Industry Event

The Martial Arts

The Ultimate Martial Arts B



THE MARTIAL ARTS WEALTH

MASTERY TEAM

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The Martial Arts Wealth Group (MAWG), led by Grandmaster Stephen Oliver and Grandmaster Jeff Smith, helps martial arts school owners master business strategies for growth, retention, and profitability. Unlike traditional programs, MAWG focuses on marketing, student retention, and operational systems that can be successfully integrated into virtually any curriculum, art, or style, provided your goal is HIGH QUALITY student outcomes.

One key takeaway is that success isn't limited by martial arts style or location. The group has helped schools across various disciplines achieve over $1 million in annual revenue, disproving common excuses about demographics and competition. They emphasize high-value services, proper pricing, and student retention as fundamental business principles.

The group fosters a mastermind environment, where school owners collaborate, learn from each other's successes, and eliminate limiting beliefs. Schools have dramatically increased revenue by following proven systems, like Muay Thai instructor Ben Brown, who quadrupled his income within months.

Oliver and Smith stress that martial arts schools must be run as professional businesses, not hobbies. Their approach prioritizes structured marketing, student engagement, and scalable operations, allowing owners to achieve financial success while maintaining high-quality instruction.

For more insights, their free book, *Simple Steps to Add 100 Students to Your School,* offers a roadmap to sustainable growth.

MAWnews: Let's start at the beginning for everybody, what is the Martial Arts Wealth Group? What's it all about? Who is it for?

SO: Before my days with NAPMA, I was running a small coaching group for some of the top martial arts schools in the world. Since then it's just continued to evolve. Grandmaster Smith climbed aboard and is the Chief Instructor, head coach, and the chief whip. So what we do is work with some of the top schools in the world and teach them business, sales, marketing, and student support systems. We have folks from BJJ or MMA, Muay Thai, Taekwondo, Tang Soo Do, traditional Karate, Judo, anything in between and teach them all the support systems. We are really helping them get to very high grossing and net locations.

"What a lot of people don't realize is that it's not just about getting new students, but it's also about figuring out how to keep them."

JS: One of the interesting things is we have so many different styles. We really have every style represented in our group. We don't have one style who has not made it to a million dollars of gross income annually. So style doesn't even matter. Sometimes industry people like to say one style is all doing the high grossing income. They say, "You have to do that style." But we found that's not it at all. It's just overlaying the business plan and systems that can make any school successful. That's the real key that we found and it's why we have so many $1,000,000 schools. Now we have schools that are doing 100, 200, and even 500 thousand a month which was never heard of ten years ago.

MAWnews: Wow, that sounds great. So it sounds like you can overlay your systems and strategies on top of any curriculum as long as it's appropriate for the student, good for retention and things like that. It's about how you manage things and how you teach it, right?

JS: Exactly. What a lot of people don't realize is that it's not just about getting new students, but it's also about figuring out how to keep them. That's just as important. You can bump up your marketing, have a lot of people coming in, and still not grow. So you really have to make sure every month you have a high positive net enrollment. That means if you got 25 new students in a given month, but you lost 15, then you only netted 10 new students. At that pace, if you did that for a year, beginning with 200 students in January and December, you're going to have 320. That's what we figured out for everybody. It's how to get them and how to keep them because those are the two biggest mysteries for most of the martial arts schools.

MAWnews: That sounds about right and none of that is about style. Another excuse that's pretty common is something like, In Silicon Valley you can charge 250 a month and have a 1000 students, but I'm in Paducah, KY. So what would you say about the demographic?

SO: Let's start with pricing, because we get that excuse. In every demographic in North America, and in fact, internationally, it worked. We've seen it in Dubai, Israel, Germany, all over Australia, and New Zealand. Yet people will still say, "You don't understand my school in Malibu or Orange County, California. My students are too smart to pay that much for lessons. You don't understand my students in Mankato, MN. You don't understand my students in Dodge City, KS, where it's a rural community. They won't pay." My favorite is a story I keep telling years later. I was running a meeting with Tony Thompson and Ernie Reyes of the West Coast Group. They're in Silicon Valley. At one end is Stanford University and at the other end they're right across from Apple, HP, Google, and all the headquarters. At the meeting I looked up at their stats board and turned to Tony and said, "Why is it in Silicon Valley, you're charging half of what I'm charging in Denver, Co. That doesn't make any sense to me." He said to me, "The cost of living is so high here. That's all they can afford." I said to him, "My handicap is I have a degree in economics. It's a supply and demand function. The reason why housing prices are high is mostly because they're getting paid a lot of money. The income ranges in Silicon Valley are higher than anywhere else in the country." But it really doesn't seem to matter, that's always the excuse, right?

The other demographic is size, of course. It is how many people you can put in the school. I also often hear, "You don't understand my area. There's a martial art school on every street corner." Or some say, "I'm in X town, and there are three other martial schools." Well, that assumes that it's a 0 sum game and that they're fighting each other for market share. But the reality is, the vast majority of people who would

love to do martial arts and would benefit from martial arts, are NOT doing martial arts. It doesn't matter whether it's a traditional karate program for kids or an MMA program for 32 year old adult men. We're barely scratching the surface of the market potential, anywhere in the world, but certainly anywhere in North America. There's so much opportunity that people just have blinders on what they think they can do.

MAWnews: It's like the Starbucks effect. The more the more Starbucks signs that go up, the more people decide that they need a Starbucks on the way to work, right?

SO: Well I concluded in 1983 that the more I help the other schools professionalize the better off it was for me. My only concern was the level of professionalism among a lot of the schools was pretty low. So my fear was somebody would have interacted with one of them and that would blemish and tar me. They all thought I was competing against them. But in fact, I knew when I was on TV that I was helping everybody. When I was in major daily newspapers, it was helping everybody. When we were in elementary schools, we were helping everybody. Anybody who reached out for help, I gave it to them because I knew it was a benefit for me. There was no reason in the world I was worried about the guy down the street. It didn't matter if he was teaching the same style I was teaching or something completely different. There was plenty for everybody.

MAWnews: Yes, the biggest detriment to any marketplace is to have some number of 'bad actors' tainting the market's perception of the entire product category. A bad product, marketed well will 'turn off' the market pretty quickly.

I know you've just concluded one of your live martial arts wealth mastermind experiences, what is the mission with these high level training sessions?

So you had your group in Virginia Beach. What was that like? What was the mission there? How did it turn out?

SO: We do live meetings for our members. We work with different tiers of schools, whether they're new, like people just coming in and we're trying to give them a jump start or the more senior people every week. We have multiple live zoom meetings a week that are a private interactive type of thing. What I mean by live is that everybody had to get on a plane, drive in a car, stay at a hotel, and meet us in a place.

Going back for years now, what we've tried to do is create an expansive 'experience' that will help our clients raise their thinking and epectations of high quality service, management and leadership excellence, and abundance.

Whether it's been here in Evergreen or Golden, Co., behind the scenes at West Point, Ananapolis, Disney World, or Disneyland, behind the scenes at Navy Diving and Demolition School in Panama City, and a bunch of other places like that. But we're always trying to find a place where a high level of leadership comes together.

A recent event was in Virginia Beach at the US naval station in Norfolk. It just so happens that one of Grandmaster Smith's students from many, many years ago, who earned his Black Belt, and now has been promoted to 5th degree black belt is Captain (ret.) Hung Cao. His last two posts were being in charge of the naval budget at the Pentagon and then he was in charge of all counter insurgent activities in Afghanistan just before the pull out. Just a couple of days ago he was appointed by President Trump to be the new Deputy Director of the Navy.So he helped facilitate several high level leadership experiences on the base and aboard the USS Gerald Ford. It is so big it can carry 76 fully operational jets. It has two nuclear plants. It has the electronic rail guns and rail launch. It can also launch four planes at a time. So we did a behind the scenes tour with the staff about the operations and how that works. It was impressive and just incredible because it's basically a floating city with 4000 servicemen serving on it.

Before that, we spent half a day at the US Navy Air Wing where the helicopter guys that service the carrier talked us through how the pilots go about their certifications and how the mechanics go through their certifications. The pilots have to do a cycle of simulator classroom training. Live training on a helicopter and then rotate through how they assimilate onto the carrier, and what their role is on the carrier. I didn't realize it, but the poor helicopter guys are the first off and the last on. So anytime they're launching jets, the guys are up in the air for however long until he's bingo on fuel sitting there.

JS: What was interesting is, you would think, "What does this have to do with martial arts?" What our members got out of it is to realize that even somebody who does their job as often as they do it because they have to fly every day. They still do daily training. So this is what we're trying to tell the martial art schools that you have done with your staff. You don't just train them one time and then throw them out there and expect them to do it. We have to do daily and weekly training to keep them on cycle to make sure your schools grow.

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MAWnews: It's a fair lesson. Sometimes we might think we've already trained the staff. Let them go and do what they're supposed to be doing? But it's like the laws of thermodynamics, right? All systems left left unattended trend toward entropy. So the staff training was impressive, but what else do you think was impressive for the members or useful for them to bring back for operations?

SO: Back in the day we had a course that was run by Jeff Smith where we got a 13 week training cycle. So we got trained on everything, then on week 14, we were back to "Ring ring, Jhoon Rhee Institute may I help you." Repeating how to handle the phones and then just cycling through how to teach, do a confirmation call, first intro, second intro enrollment, conference renewal prep, renewal conference, attendance, and so forth. The idea was we were being fully trained on everything every 13 weeks. So every three months just cycling back through and cycling back through again. You know the helicopter pilots there were the guys who had been flying for five years and were back to the simulator. Then back to class and then back to being checked out again. Just following the checklist and then starting over. If you just don't keep drilling and practicing, all the systems tend to fall apart.

We had Capt. Cao him as a speaker talking about leadership and team development and so forth. Then we had another one of his guys, a demolition instructor, Bob Hazzini, who did about a 1/2 day on the highest level team leadership and so forth. We also had millionaire smarts coach, Lee Milteer work with our $1,000,000 schools and she did a very high level conversation. It was intimate with a small group of people. The whole event was very productive with a special focus on staff development. It included concepts like how people lead, developing leadership, and how to tie that into all levels. They came away with at least three pages of strong implementation ideas for their students.

JS: You stack on top of that real martial arts training. We also visited one of our high level members school, where we taught a couple of classes to explain to everybody what black belt verbiage is and how you have to motivate your students to want to be a black belt. He also explained how to help them set their goals and how to motivate and inspire them. So I was teaching some classes and they were around taking notes while I was working with the students. So they saw how you correct the students, how you spotlight them, how you put them on a pedestal. In addition, how you ask questions to find out if they know the answers and if they don't then you explain it more. It was a real hands-on type of training. So even though that was a Taekwondo style school, the same thing applied for those schools in teaching principles of your goal to get your students motivated to be a black belt because that's how you keep them.

SO: You know the training on the Disney Way applies directly to the traditional martial arts school. The same thing is true whether it's West Point or Annapolis or the naval station with Captain Cao and Bob Hazzini. There's so many takeaways on what it takes to rise to the occasion on leadership, What it takes to teach leadership, all the way down to the six year old white belt and their parents. There are so many takeaways, but oftentimes school owners are sort of myopic and can only see things through their given style. You really have to go from technician to master teacher of the thing to master school operator knowing all of the pieces for developing the staff the second year, the third year, the bench strength, the the quality of the people underneath you. Without this you never really get to excellence or rise above mediocrity.

MAWnews: Yeah, and all these examples of excellence have the same challenges and principles. Maybe it's just at a larger scale, Disney has to train 17,000 employees a year, but if you look at the systems that they're using to do it, and learn the lessons, and principles they are teahcing, you'll see how important the 'systems' are. Many schools struggle with mediocrity because they've never created the systems, right?

SO: Well, that's a great example. We had Bernie Kerik and he's a black belt from Peter Urban's system back in New York City in the 60s. He was talking about how he turned around the jail system in New York, which was the biggest disaster jail system in the United States. It became a Harvard case study on excellence in government under his leadership. He explained how went about that responsibility and then how he managed the new NYPD. That system, basically is what we call monitoring your stats every week. For them it was the first time they ever did it. Monitoring their stats down to the block in a neighborhood level through the different precincts in the Police Department to manage the operation. It was all about systemization.

Unfortunately, in our industry it's so easy to make this a personality trait where the question is whether or not you're a good or bad instructor. This may cause people to gravitate or to you where they don't gravitate to you, but until you have systems in place and are able to replicate yourself down to multiple tiers, you don't have anything sustainable. With that in place, if you're sick, if you go on vacation, or want to semi-retire, you can't do it. Our guys are all at the top echelon and are all at that point.

When Tim Harrison went on a motorcycle trip and rode Route 66 for a month, he could do it. When Jan Lapin wanted to take the summer off and tour Europe with her kids, she could do it. The schools still do 100,000 a month consistently without them having to be there. So that's our model. Replicate those systems. Then the marketing still happens. Enrollment still happens. Retention still happens. You'll have excited, happy, and productive students over and over again.

It's a proven system. Master Smith didn't teach a whole lot of white belt classes at the Jhoon Rhee Institute across 13 locations. At Mile High Karate, for years I ran three classes a week which were two staff classes and a black belt class in order to replicate myself. So if I'd been gone for a month, I would have had people who could teach and run the business as well as me, if not better than I did.

MAWnews: Yeah, for too many school owners, if they are distracted for a month, it's a problem. Now with your program it seems that you're creating a mastermind effect, and some posi-

tive social pressure to 'push' the members to keep progressing. Can you describe how that works?

SO: If I go back to when I was doing coaching about 15 years ago, I used to schedule people one-on-one and talk to them on the phone. What I started to realize behind the scenes is, I would say, "You can charge this much. You could be grossing X amount. You could have this kind of ratio. It's possible to have this many students." Yet what they were thinking was, "Maybe you can do that because you're a cross between Zig Ziglar and Tony Robbins. Maybe he can do it because he's the world champion." That was really what was manifesting in their mind. On a more skeptical basis, they were saying, "That's BS. That just sounds good. I don't believe you."

But when you put them in a room with 20 people. Most who are further ahead of where they're at, as far as revenue, students, school development, and so forth. Then they see 5, 10 or 15 other people who have already done it, who have similar circumstances, who can call them out on it. Whether it's a marketing activity, a community outreach activity, an after school program, or seasonal promotion, they have examples before them of what can be done. From many different locations, styles, and demographics proving that the systems worked over and over again in spite of varied circumstances.

I'm putting together a new little book, Simple Steps To Add 100 Students To Your School. The thing I tried to do with it is use screenshots of our private discussion forums. It includes all the different things I'm talking about, but in those screenshots it shows the varied successes of our members. Like he got 52 leads and 49 appointments or he got 22 enrollments from it. These all have the description of what happened in their words. In all honesty I think the key to a lot of it is just creating a 'no excuses' environment. You end up having people who have already pushed through the same problems that others may think they have with success that can easily be reproduced by anyone.

JS: I think the real benefit of our group is that we've come to realize that the way we're training our members is no different than we train the students to become a black belts. In the schools, we're trained to become a black belt in technique and mentality, but in our group they're becoming a black belt in business which is what we found is the biggest weakness in most of the martial arts schools. When I say most, I mean 90% because they are spending all their time training their physical martial arts and not their martial arts business savvy. This is because there are very few places you can go that will show you how to run your business successfully.

In the group at our events, you already have so many schools in the organization earning over $1,000,000 to prove positive that the system works. When they get in our group, we run it just like our schools where we have a beginner group, intermediate group, an advanced group. Because when you put them all in a one room schoolhouse, you either have to slow it down for the new ones, or you speed it up for the more advanced ones and somebody's going to get left out. Like in our schools, the white belts don't need to be learning the more advanced stuff because they have to get their basics down first. So the real benefit Grandmaster Oliver was touching upon is when we take them through the system, they're in a room with a success driven atmosphere. They will learn from the people that are doing better than them. They will also learn from the ones that aren't doing as good as them what not to do. That way they're constantly learning and it's interesting to see some new members jump on board.

For example, we have a Muay Thai school with Ben Brown. He was doing about $15,000 a month, but within the very first month in the group, he jumped up $35,000. He had never done $35,000 in his life and he'd been in business for over 20 years. Fast forward to five months and he jumped up to $60,000. He had one of the most heartfelt stories which almost brought a tear to everybody's eye. He started in November, but then in December he had a record month in which he made enough money to take his family on a Christmas vacation. He gave them a real Christmas that he hadn't ever been able to provide for them because December, historically, had always been the worst month of the year and he could never afford. He was always trying to make up for the losses from December and January, so he really couldn't take off. He's just one success story.

We had a Korean lady that just joined us who is really big in the Taekwondo community. She was actually on the Olympic team. She wanted to start a school and began with us a couple months before she opened up. When she opened in December, she made $35,000 and had 102 students in just four months. So those are the kind of examples that people learn from each other because when they see Ben Brown, who'd only been with his five months, quadruple his gross income, then these other schools quit making their excuses. When he was asked, "What did you do to go from 100 to 250 students in six months? He said, "To be honest, I don't know what I'm doing. I'm just listening to everything you say and trying to do it. I'm still learning and I still don't know what I'm doing, but I'm just trying to apply everything you guys are teaching me. And I'm sure I'll get it down better later, but it seems to be working." Everybody kind of

laughed about it.

But those are our typical school owner's success stories. They learn from each other. It's a synergy that develops with those schools and it's like the expression "the rising tide lifts all boats". When you're in a group where you have so many schools doing over $1,000,000, if you just ride their coattails and just do what they're doing you're going to have success. They have these weekly conversations where they hear exactly what's working this month or this week. Someone might say, "I just did a live event and I got 80 appointments and 100 leads." So they're giving immediate feedback with what they've been doing. Even the schools that are having trouble share their frustrations. And before Grandmaster Oliver or I can even jump in. Some of our advanced guys will say I had that same problem and here's what I did. So this is how the rising tide is going to lift all those boats because they learn from each other.

MAWnews: It's obvious that the environment in these meetings get's school owners to trash their excuses and follow the successful systems that ignites their own success, right?

SO: Yes! We had a school in the Netherlands and everybody over there was charging like $40 a month. Half of it was government funded and everybody assumed that you couldn't do it. There was some kind of issue where you could only charge X amount or the government wouldn't pay for it. I said just forget that and don't take the government money. Just do it the right way and they ended doing $1,000,000 within 12 months which was just an amazing transformation.

Sometimes a school owner becomes satisfied with 20 to 25 thousand a month. The problem with that is oftentimes something sideswipes you. All kinds of things happen, right? We saw what happened with government shutdowns during the pandemic not that long ago. We've seen people who had an old back injury, went to the hospital, and they couldn't be back in the school for three months. On the other end, you want to take a vacation for the first time. If you don't have the systems in place and have your business be a business rather than just being a personality driven operation that thrives when you're there and when you're healthy, but doesn't thrive when you're not there. Any one of those things can kill you and they can kill you overnight and can put you upside down very quickly.

In the first book I wrote years ago, Everything I Knew When I Was 22, has a chapter in it entitled Don't Confuse Your Hobby With Your Business. I think so many martial artists, into this because we love it and it was our hobby. We would do it for free anyway, and that's great. But we have to ask, "How do I run this as a professional school and professional educational institution rather than just being someplace where I'm developing people who work out with me?" Until you make that transition and put together the marketing systems, the sales systems, the student development systems, and a curriculum that's independent of you being there and supporting you, you really don't have a business. Just have a way of creating income when you're capable of it and when you're allowed to.

MAWnews: Yeah. Another excuse that sometimes comes up is, if the cost of success is diminishing my quality standards and to sacrifice the integrity of my style, art, federation or association, I don't want it, right? How do you guys coach schools to have a different paradigm?

JS: That's the good thing about our program is that. We don't tell them how to run their schools, but we do give them advice on being sure that they are focusing on the quality of their instruction. By giving them the personal attention that they need since it's not just what you teach, but also how you teach. These are the things that we emphasize to the school that they're able to comprehend. You must not just teach the techniques and expect them to learn it, but also make sure that you put together a testing procedure, a progress check to be sure that they're learning the material. Also we give ideas on how to have your belt system structured properly, your testing structure properly, conducting a graduation, and how you conduct that testing. These things have a lot to do with the success and the quality of your school. So we do give them suggestions on that and how to make better black belts.

The hardest part with some of these martial arts schools is when they're teaching, they have the idea that they don't have a problem with the dropouts because the classes are all full. Then we look at how many enrollments they've been getting and their active count because they weren't ever tracking their retention before. The way that I judge the quality of an instructor is based on his retention. How many black belts is he developing? How many active students are there and is the school growing? We tell our schools, "you're either green and growing, or you're ripe and rotting."

If your active count is going up, then your gross is going to be going up. If your active count is going down. Then your gross is going to start going down and it might not go down immediately because when most people

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drop out, they'll keep paying for a month or two, then they realize they're not coming back. So getting the schools to take control of making sure that their students are coming to class. When they come to class they highlight students, especially when they catch them doing something good and giving them some positive feedback. If you're checking their progress, have structured progress checks, structured testing and graduation ceremonies where you get to celebrate their success, you develop a stronger classroom. We recommend the simple process of teaching them how to teach their students to really set a goal, say that they want to be a black belt, and make them put it in writing. The students learn how to fill out a vision sheet which gives a vision of when they're going to become a black belt and what they're going to be like when they become a black belt. These are the kinds of things that you have to do to improve the quality of your classroom and retention, which are the next most important things besides getting more students. Then it's important not to lose them, once you get them. So you have to have a system for how you track them on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

SO: Back to the Jhoon Rhee Institute of the 70s, we had Jeff Smith as a world light heavyweight kickboxing champion. We had Dan Magnus, who was top five ranked international PKA kickboxing. We had Charlie Lee and George Chung who were World Champions rotating with each other in forms. The local martial arts schools called us a belt factory. The belt factory from then has been replaced with the term McDojo now. In my mind, what the reality is, is that the McDojo or Belt factory or any iteration of that is the broke guys' excuse to keep them broke rather than looking at the successful schools and saying what is it they're doing that I could do? We not only don't water down the curriculum, we make it stronger.

I made a lot of the masters upset at an event in Chicago because I said, "You guys think you're so rough and tough and have great curriculums, but reality is your students are not good."

They looked at me like they wanted to kill me. I said, "If I look at your numbers, on average, your students drop out within six months. Within six months, they have not gotten very good at martial arts and six months after they have forgotten pretty much everything they learned other than it was a fond memory or a bad taste in their mouth. If you're enrolling 100 people a year, you're losing 100 people a year, most of which never got past six months." What happens is I think schools miss the point that what you do in the first year is radically different from what you do in the second year which is radically different from what you do in the third. Different. What we have done over the years, with the Jhoon Rhee Institute standard for Black Belt's, is maintain an extremely high quality, probably as high as anywhere in the world. I kept making it harder by adding more requirements; reading, sleep deprivation, and anything else to continue to elevate the standard of what a black belt is while at the same time improving retention in the first year. You can eliminate that excuse for doing poorly by not buying into that McDojo or bell factory crap.

In Denver, Co in the 80s and 90s, I probably had a 50 to 75% market share of students in the metro area. They all called me a Belt Factory or Mcdojo whenever the terms came in. But when I took a group of students to a tournament, they won all the first, second, and third place trophies. Then when we went to a tournament, they were mad at me because we would dominate the tournament. So I was asking, "Which is it? I'm a McDojo or I'm so much better than you guys that you can't stand it." The reality was, their excuse for failing to achieve was to point the finger at the internal locus of control. I can take complete responsibility for what happens. External locus of control, there must be some external reason that that person is doing better than I am. "Oh, they prostitute the art and water it down. They just are commercial. They're talking people into things they don't want to do." Those are the excuses, but the excuses are nonsense because it's not the reality.

Now we all know people whose martial arts backgrounds aren't great, who develop mediocre quality students every now and then catch fire for a short period of time. They get new marketing or hire the right from an ad agency or a Facebook marketer person and they just hit on something every now and then. You see a flash in the pan by somebody who's truly pathetic, but you don't see them ten, fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five years later. Because that's about student retention, student service, creating

excellence in students and most of that excellence in students is about their emotional and intellectual development as well as their physical development.

I think this industry has a real problem with broke people pointing the finger at people who are successful and looking for a reason to externalize their own blame for failure is really what most of that is. The reality is we focus more than anybody I've ever seen on student retention, quality interactions with the parents, high graduation rates to black belt, while elevating the quality of the standards. It doesn't matter whether it's MMA, BJJ, Muay Thai, Taekwondo, Shotokan or whatever, we are creating some of the highest quality black belts and really create a lifetime value for martial arts.

The the reality is we focus more than anybody I've ever seen on student retention, quality interactions with the parents, high graduation rates to black belt, while elevating the quality of the standards.

MAWnews: It is a fact that people who choose to be excellent at something want to be excellent at everything. If they're going to be an excellent martial arts school owner, you're going to want to be great at serving the student, elevating standards, and of course growing the business. Isn't it about taking responsibility for totally of being a school owner?

JS: You know, all my kids are fourth or fifth degree black belts. They've been doing martial arts for 20 to 25 years. It has been

pretty much all their life and we have found that our program develops such successful leadership type students that they become a product of the product. The real benefit of your program is when you have so many people that have graduated through your programs because success breeds success. They learn from their peers, which are the higher level people who are already leaders.

MAWnews: So if the Martial Arts Wealth Mastery Group is something that intrigues a school owner, where do they find more information? What's the best step for you?

SO: They could just go to **MartialArtsWealth.com**. I've got that third new book coming out and the other two and they can have them all for free under the resources tab. They can opt in and get them all digitally. If they're a good fit, then they can follow through and Bob Dunn can facilitate them and schedule a time with Grandmaster Smith and Myself to see if it's a good fit. We'd love to give them the free books and a bunch of other free resources. If it's a good fit, great. If not, they've got what I think will be pretty valuable to begin to give them some different ways to think about their school and different ways to think about the developmental process.

JS: They can call Bob Dunn directly. He's our director and he'll facilitate the books for them. His number is 720-256-0208. Give him a call and he'll send those books to you. Just having those books gives such valuable information that will really open your eyes to what your school is really capable of doing because that is the thing I think holds most schools back is their lack of education and how to run a successful martial arts school. I tell members all the time, how do you expect to have such a successful school when you haven't spent hardly any time in your business training? If you put a stack of your martial arts training up against a stack of your martial arts business training, it would be so unbalanced. You would barely be a white belt. So the same way you got your black belt in martial arts is the same way you get your black belt in business. You need an instructor or a mentor. You need to be in class on a weekly basis.

In our Zoom Meetings, you need to ask questions. Then you learn from the people that are better than you what to do and earn from the ones that aren't as good as you what not to do. That's how you get better.

SO: I might add just one other frame. We're not trying to turn martial artists into business people from the standpoint of how sometimes people envision that. You're not going to grab the briefcase and go sit behind a desk and do all that stuff. What you want to do is learn to master all elements of being a master teacher, attracting new students, developing people to their highest level, and all elements of promoting the benefits of martial arts and your particular systems throughout your community.

Oftentimes they say, "I didn't get in this to be a business guy. I got into it to be a martial arts guy." That's right, and when you put all the systems into place you become the highest quality martial arts master teacher and the highest quality development developer of people underneath you. That's really what we're talking about. You've got to spread the word through your community, get new students in the door, and develop them to the highest level of their potential.

JS: And that new book of Grandmaster Oliver is what everybody needs. It was one of the most important books and I'm so glad you did it. Think about it, if you can simply add 100 new students to your school we've found that no matter what problem a school has, there's nothing that 100 new students won't fix. This book really outlines everything for you. It's really what I consider

the best martial arts book in helping a school fix the problems that they have in getting more students and keeping them. So don't miss this free opportunity because these don't come along very often, especially in the martial arts on something this simple that costs you nothing. This is the kind of knowledge you're able to pick up on at your school and solve all your problems.

MAWnews: Let's underscore that it's pretty easy to find free information on the Internet about how to run a martial arts school, but it's really tough though to find free information about how to run your martial art school from someone who has actually done it over and over again in almost every demographic.

SO: Yeah, I'd point out the expanding phenomenon of, what I charitably refer to as, the bozo explosion going through the industry. You have so many different levels. The guy who just figured out how to run Facebook ads and the other end somebody who's run a very successful school, but has never evolved out of being personality based. Now they want to teach people what they did, but that's all about them, not about the systems and the operations needed for real school success.

Interestingly, the only thing that is constant about your business is that the world around it is changing all the time. When I wrote my book on Internet marketing, I addressed many things that have changed dramatically since then. We're on the cusp of an AI revolution. You know, in terms of search marketing, every time I turn around, Google has changed something. What worked a few months ago doesn't work today. I went from despising Facebook to loving Facebook to having a love hate relationship with giving Mark Zuckerberg money. So the only thing really constant is change and you've got to be on top of this stuff, looking at what's coming on the horizon and dealing with it. There are many examples of leaders in the industry who thrived 20 years ago, then stopped learning, and ended up in a slow decline. If you don't look over the horizon and bring the current state-of-the-art you end up falling by the wayside.

What I might summarize for every school owner is when you're running a martial arts school, you want to never stop learning. Always have mentors and always be in a learning mode. I know for myself I set the rule well over 30 years ago that I was always going to invest at least $100,000 a year in my own development. Whether it was academic and an MBA, or whether it's working with Jay Abraham and Dan Kennedy. It's a good rule of thumb to put 10% aside for your own education. Back to the old Ben Franklin quote, "if you empty your purse into your mind, their mind will fill your purse".

If there are three simple steps for martial arts schools:

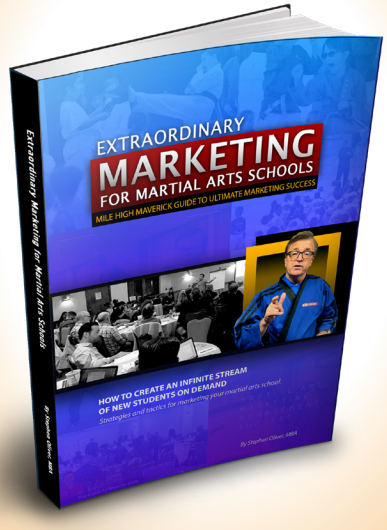
#1 is you've got to be more active in promoting your school and getting out in the community.

#2 is to create a tremendously high value for your student. You've got to create a high value and then be at the high end of the price market.

#3 your biggest, highest priority is to keep your students as long as possible and create the best outcome for them as possible. Our benchmarks are 2% or less dropout rate per month. $400.00 average revenue per student. The third benchmark is looking for 100 new leads a month to turn into at least 20 new enrollments a month from all sources.

MAWnews: Thanks so much for the time.

6 Simple Steps to Add 100 New Students to Your School Book for Free!



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