

PRO TRAINER

NRHA



THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONAL REINING TRAINERS FALL 2022

WHEN TO PIVOT
REINVENTION CAN BRING
NEW LIFE TO YOUR CAREER

PLUS

- New NRHA Medications Policy
- Set Boundaries in Your Social Media Marketing
- Understand 'Quiet Quitting'



Fall/22

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ON THE COVER: Photo by Abigail Boatwright

PRO TRAINER

NRHA

FALL 2022

EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Jennifer Paulson

jenpaulsoncreative@gmail.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Sandy Cochran

NRHA COMMISSIONER

Gary Carpenter

NRHA ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

Christa Morris-Stone

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING; MANAGER OF YOUTH & AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

Sara Honegger

NRHA PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE CHAIR

Nick Valentine

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & JUDGES; NRHA PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE STAFF LIAISON

Patti Carter

NRHA PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Peter Defreitas, Hiram Resende,
Silva Filho, Shane Brown (Ex-Officio)
Ryan Rushing, Mirjam Stillo,
Matt Palmer, Kole Price,
Kaci O'Rourke, Tracer Gilson, Casey
Hinton, Dan Huss, Billy Williams

NRHA

3021 West Reno Ave.

Oklahoma City, OK 73107-6125

(405) 946-7400 / *nrha.com*

For NRHA Pro Trainer submissions
or story ideas, email

jenpaulsoncreative@gmail.com.

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PHOTO BY JENNIFER PAULSON

PRO TRAINER NEWS

PEOPLE, REPORTS, EVENTS

\$190K Raised for RHF

THE 2022 RAISE A MILLION AUCTIONS EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS.

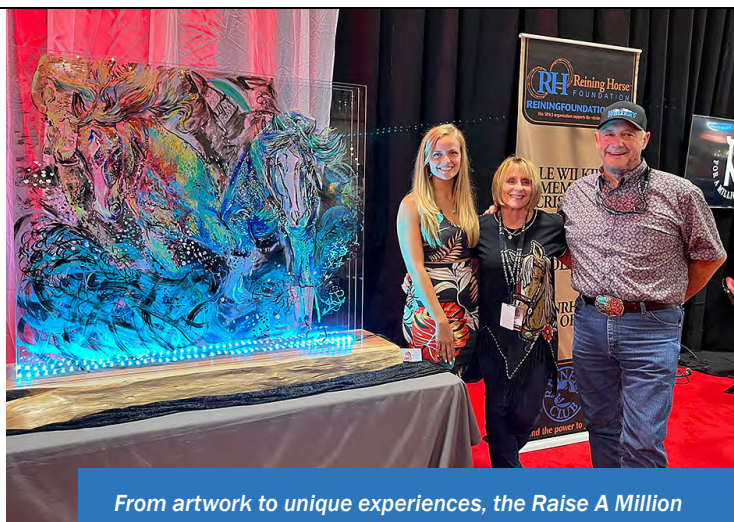
The 2022 Raise A Million Auctions, held during The Run For A Million, presented by Teton Ridge, brought in more than \$190,000 for the Reining Horse Foundation. It was the second year for the auctions, and the high expectations were well exceeded by generous philanthropists.

“It was an incredibly successful event, and between the two years that RHF has been invited to TRFAM, nearly a million dollars has been raised,” shared Tim Anderson, RHF President.

Anderson added that fundraisers of all sizes and scales contribute to RHF’s mission.

“Because of fundraising activities like this, we’ve been able to expand and increase our scholarship program, as well as increase the amount of the grants we distribute through the Dale Wilkinson Memorial Crisis Fund,” Anderson said. “The Foundation is not like a bank. We’re not trying to save this money; we’re going to give it out to the people who need it and use it in ways that best support the Foundation’s mission.”

That mission includes helping NRHA Professionals when they need it most—including after tragedies and medical emergencies, as well as caring for and honoring the reining community. Core programs include the Dale Wilkinson Memorial Crisis Fund to benefit reiners enduring hardships, youth leadership development and scholarships for members of the National Reining Horse Youth Association, and perpetuation of the sport’s history through the NRHA Hall of Fame.



From artwork to unique experiences, the Raise A Million Auctions held during the 2022 The Run For A Million stirred up great support for NRHA's charitable arm.

The Reining Horse Foundation received 37 lots for the silent auction, including art, décor, tack, apparel, jewelry, autographed memorabilia, equine products, services, breedings, and unique experiences such as events and travel. It brought in more than \$42,000.

Additionally, NRHA member Diana Duffey pledged to match the donation made from Elite Equine for their equine spa services. Elite Equine donated 10% of their service proceeds to the RHF during The Run For A Million.

The live auction raised \$147,000. There was a tie for the high-selling lots in the live auction. The first was a breeding package donated by Amber Gokey, Schmearsal/ThorSport Inc., and NRHA Corporate Partner Toyon Ranch, which included breedings to 2021 TRFAM Champion Gunna Stop, a breeding to 2019 TRFAM Co-Champion No Smoking Required, and an embryo from Icing Required. It was purchased by NRHA Corporate Partner Santa Hill Ranch. The other high seller was a NASCAR Truck Series Primary Partnership Package to Daytona International Speedway, which was donated by ThorSport and purchased by NRHA Corporate Partner Clark’s Pump-N-Shop.

For information on the RHF, visit reiningfoundation.com. ■

PHOTO BY LESLIE BAKER



Don't Miss: Sire & Dam Program

Getting its start in 1966, the NRHA Sire & Dam Program continues to provide significant benefits to participants while also helping to support NRHA. Both stallion and mare owners can take advantage of the bonuses offered by the program. The 2022/2023 program runs November 24, 2022, through January 10, 2023.

Why consider participating in this program and encouraging your customers to be part of it? The many benefits for everyone involved—from stallion owners to mare owners to offspring owners.

Stallions participating in the program are eligible for NRHA Futurity and Derby Sire awards, including cash, plus they receive promotion through program advertisement. Mare owners have the opportunity to purchase breedings that they may not otherwise have access to at reduced rates. Sire & Dam offspring owners have their horses automatically eligible to compete in the NRHA Futurity and NRHA Derby—no nomination required. Sire & Dam Offspring receive reduced entry fees (up to 50% off) for the NRHA Futurity and NRHA Derby and have later entry deadlines for both major events.

If you want to enroll a stallion you stand/own in the Sire & Dam program, donate a breeding [here](#).

Breeding contracts can be donated to the annual online auction or as a buyback or private sale.

You can find more information about the long-standing program at nrha.com/siredam. For questions, please contact Sire & Dam Program director Haley Carmen at (405)766-5862 or hcarmen@nrha.com. ■

2022 NRHA Hall of Fame Inductees & More

Talented and dedicated horsemen and women paired with gifted and prepotent horses have been mainstays in the reining industry since its beginning decades ago. That's why the National Reining Horse Association created the NRHA Hall of Fame in 1986. With the Reining Horse Foundation, these individuals, their achievements, and their contributions to the industry are celebrated and remembered.

"This year's class represents different aspects of the industry and as a whole are very diverse in the reasons they will be recognized," noted Mike Hancock, Chairman of the Hall of Fame Committee.

2022 inductees are:

- Jim and Pat Warren
- Spooks Gotta Whiz
- Albert "Dutch" Chapman

Additionally, legendary farrier Dwight Sanders will receive the Dale Wilkinson Lifetime Achievement Award.

All will be recognized at Sliders' Night Out, Presented by Toyon Ranch, on November 30, 2022, at State Fair Park in Oklahoma City during the NRHA Futurity. The public is invited to attend the banquet and awards ceremony. The event celebrates the sport's history and also benefits the Reining Horse Foundation, the charitable arm of NRHA. For details on how to become a Hall of Fame table host, an event donor, or to reserve individual seats, contact RHF Executive Director Leslie Baker at rhf@nrha.com or (405) 946-7400, ext. 106.

NRHA Event Calendar

Please visit nrha.com and ReinerSuite™ for the most updated information.

October 1

Final NRHA Futurity payment due

Final Sire & Dam Futurity payment due

NRHA Futurity rider designations due

Riders and divisions may be changed through close of business November 1 with no penalty.

October 25–30

Oceania Affiliate Championships
Queensland, Australia

For more information, visit facebook.com/oceanianrha.

October 26–30

NRHA European Derby
Lyon, France

For more information, visit nrhaeuropeanderby.com.

October 30–November 1

Judges' School
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Pre-registration is required. For more information, contact Patti Carter at pcarter@nrha.com.

November 4

NRHA Futurity stall reservations due

November 24–December 3

NRHA Futurity & Adequan® North American
Affiliate Championships
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

For more information, visit nrhafuturity.com.

November 24–January 10, 2022

Sire & Dam Auction

Visit nrha.com/siredam or contact Haley Carmen at hcarmen@nrha.com for more information.

November 30

Sliders' Night Out,
Presented by Toyon Ranch
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Donor opportunities are available. Email Leslie Baker at lbaker@nrha.com.

December 1

NRHA Markel Futurity Sales
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

For more information, visit nrha.com/sales or email sales@nrha.com.

December 10–12

Judges' School
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Pre-registration is required. For more information, contact Patti Carter at pcarter@nrha.com.

December 31

Rule Change Proposals Due

Rule Change Proposals are due in office. For more information, contact Liz Kelsey at lkelsey@nrha.com.

Affiliate Regional Championships

Tentative and subject to change.

Northwest

October 1–8
Nampa, Idaho

Southwest

October 4–9
Scottsdale, Arizona

North Central

October 13–18
Lincoln, Nebraska

East Central

October 26–30
Cloverdale, Indiana

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- Corporate Partner Discounts
- RHF Crisis Fund
- Voting Privileges
- Services Listed on NRHA.com

DOLLARS & SENSE

Teton Ridge Launches Innovative Event to Debut During the 2023 American Rodeo

Expanding upon its commitment to elevate and positively impact the Western industry, Teton Ridge unveiled an unprecedented new event—The American Performance Horseman—that'll make its debut on Friday, March 10, 2023, in Arlington, Texas, during The American Rodeo.

For the first time ever, the top five year-end money-earning professionals in cutting, reined cow horse, and reining will come together to compete for \$1,000,000 in prize money in a competitive exhibition format. The American Rodeo will provide a global stage for the athletes of each Western equine sports discipline to compete not only for individual prize payouts, but also a first-of-its-kind team format as well. The American Performance Horseman is a prestigious competitive exhibition that's supported by AQHA, APHA, NRHA, NCHA, and NRCHA, with all associations excited for their respective communities to be celebrated and showcased to the world in this unparalleled and innovative format.

The American Performance Horseman will consist of the top five riders from each discipline with the highest show earnings from the 2022 show season as tracked by each association. Standings will be finalized and announced following each discipline's 2022 futurity event.

"The American Rodeo is an unrivaled celebration of the American West and represents the richest weekend in all of Western sports," said Joe Loverro, President of Teton Ridge Sports. "As Teton Ridge continues to make



Reining once again hits the big stage in a 2023 event presented by Teton Ridge.

great strides to bring the iconic events in the Western industry to a broader audience on an elevated platform, it was only natural to create an event to pay homage to the most prestigious competitors in Western performance sports and their incredible equine athletes.

The American Performance Horseman is the creation and vision of Teton Ridge. It exists to elevate Western equine sports through multiple platforms, with innovative and interactive technology.

The American Performance Horseman will offer fans a groundbreaking new way to embrace and support the legacy of the American West on the eve of The American Rodeo as a celebration the 10th anniversary of the world's richest rodeo.

For more information on The American Performance Horseman and to sign up for the 2023 ticket wait list, please visit americanrodeo.com. ■



Stick to the schedule when it comes to billing.

Timeliness Matters

In all things, being punctual can make or break your operation. This is especially true when it comes to billing. Here's why.

1 SLOWING YOUR FINANCIAL SUCCESS.

Anytime you don't send an invoice on time, you hamper your bottom line. You might not have the income you need to pay your own bills on time, let alone paying yourself and your help.

2 SETTING BAD HABITS FOR CUSTOMERS.

If you can't be bothered to send your invoice by the designated date in your contract, you set the stage for your clients to think it's OK to be casual about paying you. This can lead to friction in your client relationships.

3 FORGETTING TO SEND INVOICES ENTIRELY.

When you don't stick to a schedule, it can cause you to forget to send an invoice, which means lost income for yourself.

4 SACRIFICING YOUR REPUTATION.

Lack of attention to invoicing can cause clients to question your business acumen, which can influence your reputation with current and future clients.

Get yourself on a solid invoicing schedule, and stick to it. It'll streamline your accounting processes, ensure that cash keeps flowing into your business, and establish confidence in your customers that you know what you're doing as a business owner. ■

Google Reviews

When acquiring new customers, we've established that most people complete a Google search to find what they want. According to [allbusiness.com](https://www.allbusiness.com), more than 60% of people use Google reviews to help inform their decision about trying out a business. This means simple Google reviews could be huge assets to gaining new customers at your barn.

How do you start raking in reviews? Follow these steps.

CLAIM YOUR GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE.

Visit google.com/business, and enter your business name. It will either be present on a list, or you'll create a new business. Choose your business type (most likely, service). Then choose your business type (horse trainer and horse breeder are options). You'll complete this portion by adding some contact information.

REQUEST REVIEWS FROM CURRENT CUSTOMERS.

Your client roster is your biggest asset for getting reviews rolling. Ask them to leave reviews for your service, the care of their horses, your coaching, etc. The more detailed each review, the better. Be sure to thank each reviewer for their effort!

HANDLE NEGATIVE REVIEWS. If you see a review you feel is inaccurate or unfair, you can flag it as inappropriate and Google can remove it. However, it might be best to respond to the review—calmly and professionally—to resolve the matter directly.

MONITOR REVIEWS REGULARLY. Your Google reviews influence your placement in Google search results and your SEO popularity. Keep an eye on them to thank positive reviewers and manage any problems that arise from negative reviews. ■

Quiet Quitting

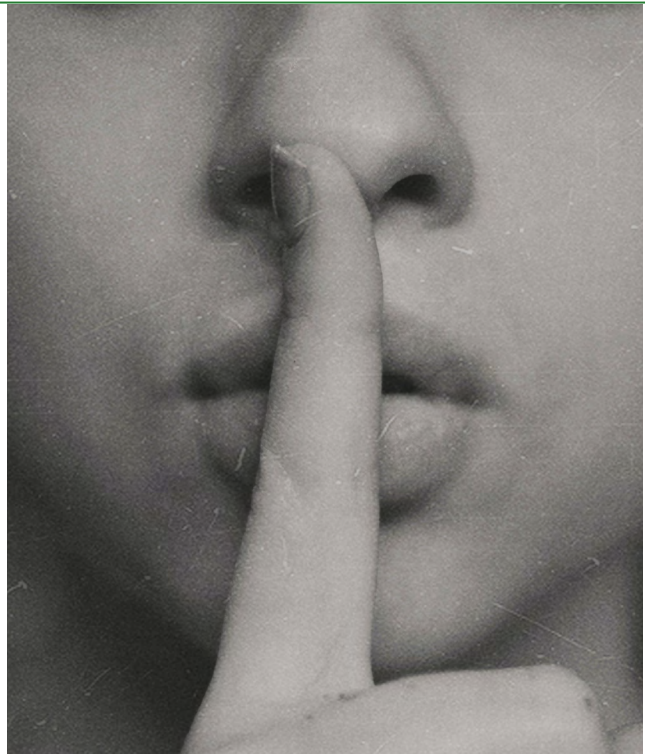
You’ve probably seen the buzz about a concept called “quiet quitting”—when employees reduce productivity and only do the bare minimum of their workload to keep their paychecks. You might’ve dismissed it as a woe of corporate America, but the truth is, it could happen in your own barn.

“Quiet quitting” is more a generational concept than one having to do with the type of work people do. The idea of workplace happiness is a fairly new concept, unique to younger generations’ mindsets. These people are newer to the workforce and have the added perceived pressure by being constantly accessible, whether by text message, instant message, or a call on their mobile phone.

How do you prevent this culture and quiet quitting from becoming a problem in your barn? Consider these tips

Respect boundaries. When your employee is on a vacation, is taking a day off, or even is just a short break during the regular work day, mind their personal time. Unless it’s urgent, wait until he or she is “back on the clock” to make requests and cover work topics.

Encourage work/life balance. Your barn’s culture might include a lot of group activities—lunches, dinners, outings, and going to horse shows. This is a lot of time with your employer and working team. Remember that your employees have lives away from the barn and might prefer to spend time with connections they don’t work with day in and day out. Group activities can be advantageous, but don’t let them eat into your employee’s free time.



Avoid the “quiet quit” phenomenon by engaging with your employees and making them feel valued.

Set goals together, based on milestones and achievements. When both you and your employee know what you’re working toward, it’s easier to keep all eyes on the desired outcome. Goals that are less concrete and have unclear outcomes and rewards can lead to dissatisfaction among employees.

Offer praise and encouragement. It’s easy to move from one task to the next in a busy day, especially at a high-pressure competitive barn. But offering even a small gesture of praise or gratitude to employees is free and goes a long way for employee satisfaction, which keeps your staff motivated and engaged.

Pay fairly. It’s certainly not free, unlike the other tips here, but an employee who feels fairly compensated is much more willing to do the work and put in a little extra when needed. Keep your rates competitive with the industry, and you won’t find yourself needing to hire. ■



There are three easy ways you can stay in communication with your association and your professionals' group.

Stay Connected

Are you connected with your NRHA Professionals peers and the association? Be sure you stay in touch with the following communication outlets so you don't miss any news, discussions, requests for input, and opportunities to volunteer.

JOIN THE FACEBOOK GROUP. It's super-easy to join. Get on Facebook, and search "NRHA Professionals" or click this [link](#). Request to join the group, and Sara Honegger will approve your entry if you have a current Professional membership. This group can be a terrific resource for many things. Post when you're looking to find shared lodging for help at a show, hiring new help, have questions for the group, and even to get access to the digital *NRHA Pro Trainer* each quarter.

JOIN THE TEXT LINE. Join the NRHA Professionals text line by clicking this [link](#). Here you'll get notifications of important meetings, information from the association, and receive a link to the digital *NRHA Pro Trainer* each quarter.

UPDATE YOUR PROFILE. Log into the NRHA website, and go to ReinerSuite™ to update your phone number, address, focus of your business, logo, accolades, and more to help new customers find you when they use the Find A Pro button to locate a professional. ■

PHOTO BY MIKE MEYERS ON UNSPLOASH

Fall 2022 Marketing Calendar & Tips

This might be the busiest time of the year for NRHA Professionals, as you gear up for championship events and make the final push for annual titles. Plan your marketing strategy early, enlist help where you need it, and remember that this busy season shall pass, just as it does every year.

Enlist help. If you usually handle your own social media, now might be the time to enlist the help of an expert. That can look like a lot of different scenarios, from hiring someone to handle all content creation and posting (there are many qualified individuals in the business) to asking an assistant or client rider who has social media savvy to help with the effort.

Create a gratitude theme. November very well might be your busiest month, but you can plan your social media ahead of time—even scheduling posts as far into the future as possible. One simple theme for these posts could be gratitude—for your help, your sponsors, your family, your clients, and even your horses. Create a simple image template, drop in the photo of the recipient of your thanks, and write a couple sentences about what they do to make your life better. By creating these posts ahead of time, you keep up with your social media goals but don't get bogged down in it daily. Bonus points for helping those around you feel appreciated during such a hectic time of year.

Use recaps. As you head into the big shows of the fall, post recaps of the successes of your horses and riders to show their journeys since the beginning of the year. You could ask each owner/rider to write their own, saving you time on content creation.

Update everything. This time of year can mean high-profile wins that put all eyes on your business. Be sure that you present the right digital presence by updating every part of your digital footprint, from your website to each of your social media platforms.

Find the freestyle videos and photos. Celebrate Halloween on social media and on your website by sharing past freestyle videos and photos that feature the centerpiece of the holiday—costumes! Consider posting one a day the week of Halloween, if you have that much content, or create a group of posts to go up on October 31. ■

LEGAL ACTION

INSIGHTS TO KEEP YOUR BUSINESS SAFE



Partnerships with clients or your peers can be a great way to build your income with a shared star horse. But they require mutual understanding and legal documents to ensure that they work for all parties.

Picking a Partnership

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN CO-OWNING A HORSE, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE RIGHT PARTNERSHIP IN PLACE BEFORE MONEY EXCHANGES HANDS.

BY KRISTIN PITZER

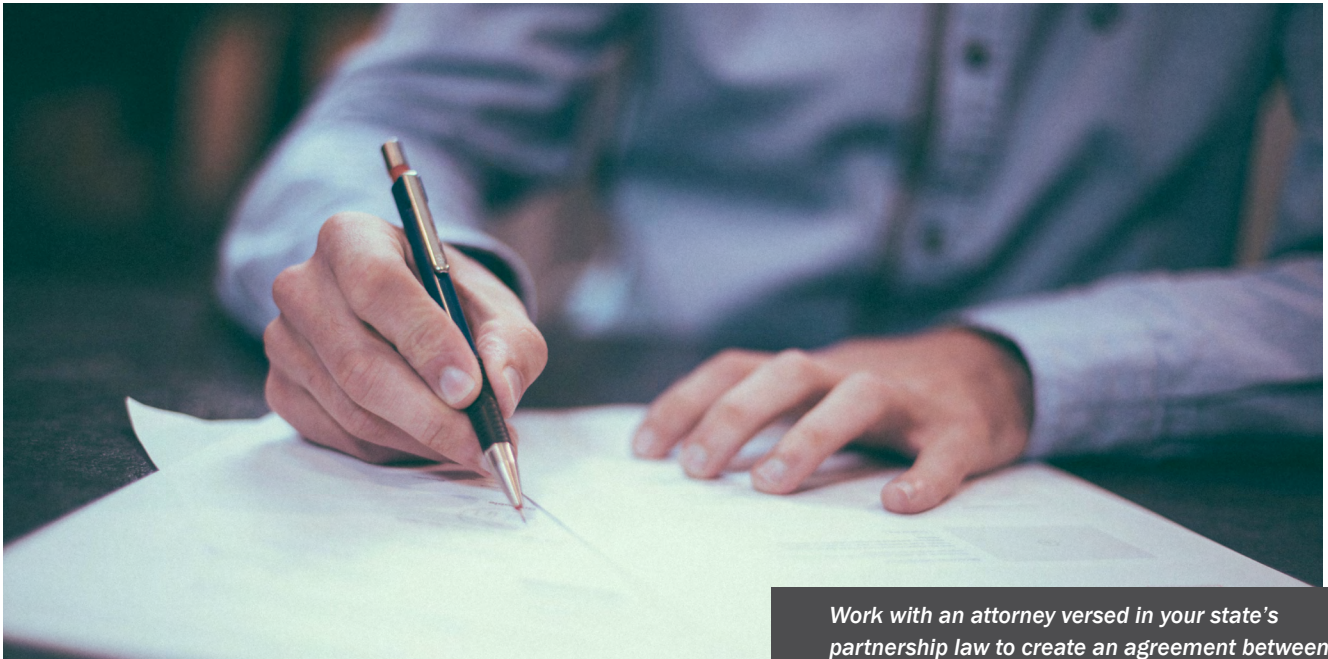
Not everyone can afford a high-dollar horse on their own dime, and that's where partnerships come into play. Owning a horse in a partnership allows a trainer, individual, or business to up their game and compete on a higher level, while sharing expenses and costs. Depending on the type of partnership, it can also be used to mitigate some of the risks that come with horse ownership.

There are many different types of partnerships to choose from, and each can affect its members in different ways, so it's best to go into one with some knowledge on the subject. Here, Phoenix- and San Francisco-based attorney Jordan

Willette, who's also a reiner, shares several types of partnerships and recommends consultation with an equine attorney before entering into one, whether it's a written agreement or an informal purchase with a client.

General Partnerships

Any time you co-own a horse with another person but don't have an official agreement, the law in most states still considers that a legal entity known as a general partnership, Willette says— even if you haven't technically formed one. A general partnership is formed when at least two people agree to establish a business and



Work with an attorney versed in your state's partnership law to create an agreement between all parties to settle any potential disputes.

share its assets and liabilities. For example, if five people split ownership amongst themselves, each person owns 20% of the partnership by default.

Individuals can enter into a general partnership without signing any type of contract, although it's not advisable, Willette cautions. Instead, writing out an operating agreement for the partnership allows the partners to define their relationships among themselves and their responsibilities concerning the horse. This can be immensely helpful should problems arise in the future.

"Sometimes things happen—for example, what if the horse gets hurt?" Willette considers. "Who's responsible for those vet fees or for taking care of the horse? That is something you want to establish ahead of time."

For trainers partnering with owners by investing their expertise, time, and skills into the horse in lieu of a hefty monetary contribution, an operating agreement can be essential for your protection should things go south with the other partners in the future. Having a contract in place that clearly states each individual's

role and financial responsibilities for the horse will be crucial for establishing the terms of the horse's ownership in court.

A general partnership that doesn't have a written contract will be subject to the opinion of a judge should the partners have a falling out. In most states, without a contract, general partners have equal share of the partnership's assets and liabilities. In cases where partners have agreed to different terms without a contract, a judge will be the one to determine if a valid agreement exists and whether the terms of the agreement change how the assets and liabilities should be allocated to the partners.

General partnerships are easy to create, and with an operating agreement in place, most people feel fairly secure. However, one downfall of a general partnership is it doesn't protect individuals in the event of litigation. That can spell disaster for partners that have more assets or higher cash flow than others in the relationship.

"General partnerships have unlimited liability, where each partner can be liable not only for their own acts and omissions, but those of the

partnership and other partners,” Willette says. “If the horse injures somebody, the injured person would name the partnership in a suit, but if the partnership didn’t have enough funds or insurance, they’ll name the individual partners, too.”

Limited Liability Partnerships

Conversely, those who don’t want to take on the risk associated with a general partnership have other options such as an LLC or a syndicate. These two entities take the risk off the individual and place it on the business instead.

An LLC, or limited liability company, is formed with the state, and its purpose is to protect its members from personal liability, offer management flexibility, and provide tax benefits. Though it’s similar to a corporation, an LLC is taxed as a partnership, where the individual pays for the profits or losses based on his or her own tax return.

“That’s why it’s my favorite—I’m generally risk adverse, so I don’t like anything with the potential for personal liability,” Willette shares. “An LLC offers a corporation limited liability, so someone can only sue the entity that owns the horse, and the member’s personal assets are protected.”

Likewise, a syndicate allows individuals to divide ownership and expenses. While LLCs must be filed with the state, though, syndicates don’t necessarily have to be. Syndicates can be filed with the state as either a partnership, LLC, or corporation for tax purposes.

“Syndicates allow for an alliance of businesses or owners to manage a single asset or a large transaction,” Willette said. “It’s easier for companies or individuals to pool their resources and share the financial risks.”

Unlike general partnerships, most states require LLCs partake in a dissolution process governing the next steps should the entity ever disband. This formal agreement describes how liabilities will be paid out, how assets get divided, and how profits are split up, depending on what the members agreed to at the formation of the LLC.

Get It in Writing

No matter what type of business entity you decide to form, having some type of operating agreement or contract is crucial, Willette asserts. Most states will recognize it as a formal legal document and abide by what’s written there, but be aware that, depending on which business entity you choose, some states have more extensive requirements. Speaking with a lawyer familiar with your state’s laws will ensure that your contract is enforceable and protects you and the other partners should any adverse circumstances arise during the horse’s ownership.

“That’s the fun thing about partnerships and LLCs is that the people who are forming them can decide to the terms they want, and as long as it’s in writing, it’s likely going to be enforceable,” Willette concludes. “Contracts and operating agreements provide that the LLC and the partners can operate in such a way that it meets their goals.” ■

This article is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute individualized legal advice. When questions arise based on specific situations, please seek a knowledgeable attorney for advice.

Meet the Expert

Jordan Willette, an attorney at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP, focuses her practice in civil litigation, including equine law, products liability, and business disputes. She graduated in 2017 from the Sandra Day O’Connor School of Law at

Arizona State University, where she was named a Trial Advocacy Fellow and served as a judicial extern at the Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One. When she’s not in the court room, Willette enjoys riding and is the fundraising chairman for Horses Help, a therapeutic riding organization for children with disabilities. A reiner for 16 years, Willette still owns her youth horse, Whizin In The Dirt, and rides with NRHA Professional Arno Honstetter.



SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINER

BECOME THE SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERT YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS

Healthy Boundaries

MANAGING YOUR OWN SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BECOME A SECOND FULL-TIME JOB—BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY.

BY JENNIFER PAULSON

Many NRHA Professionals manage their own social media presence. This can be true for a variety of situations, from just starting out so paying a pro isn't in the budget, or maybe you just enjoy doing it so keep it on your plate. Or perhaps you prefer to keep tight tabs on your branding, so you handle it yourself. In any case, social media can feel like it's taking over your life and becoming an unhealthy part of your business.

It's true: It takes a lot of creative energy, time, and commitment to consistently create content, post it, and monitor it for results. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Here are five tips for time management, streamlining, and setting boundaries to keep your social media marketing manageable with the many other tasks that need attention.

Tip 1: Set a Time

If you make a set time to work on social media each week, and for the most part leave it at that, you protect the rest of your time for the core of your business, from training horses to giving lessons. The key is to protect this time slot in your schedule and keep it only for working on social media.

"Setting time boundaries for social media is



Doing your own social media marketing isn't easy, but it doesn't have to cause you angst if you can set boundaries on your time and effort.

one of the most challenging aspects of having your job revolve around social," shares Kate Bradley of Kate B Creative. "I can't tell you how often work bleeds into after 7 p.m. and through the weekend!"

Easy tip: Limit your own scrolling time, too. The less time you spend scrolling, the less you'll resent it when it's time to create and post your own content.

Tip 2: Know Your Limits

"You don't have to be on all the social media

PHOTO BY BEN KOLDE ON UNSPLASH

channels,” advises Megan Arszman, marketing and media consultant. “Pick a couple you enjoy or understand more, become deeply familiar with them, and focus there. Then you can consider adding another channel. Feeling like you need to do all the things on all the channels will only leave you feeling overwhelmed and cause burnout.”

Tip 3: Try a Scheduler

If you find that the Meta Business Suite doesn't really meet your needs, a post scheduler such as Hootsuite or Sproutsocial can help you streamline your workload. These programs also offer great reporting tools if you're interested in analytics and really diving into what's working in your account.

Tip 4: Stay Up on New Tech

Social media platforms constantly evolve, many times with the intent to try to make your job easier.

“There are so many great resources online that can help you keep up with the everchanging social-media landscape,” Arszman shares.

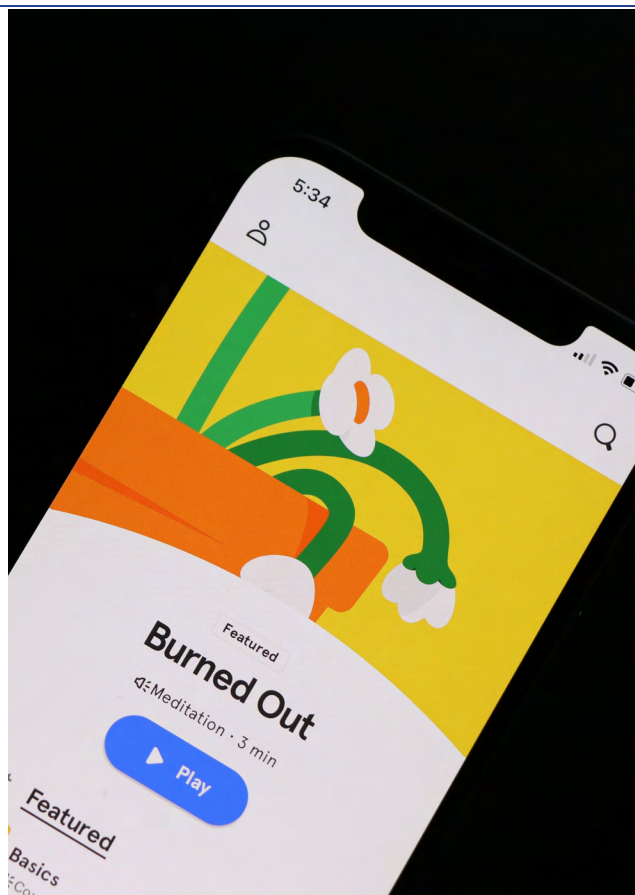
“I like to follow Social Media Examiner and Hootsuite's blog.”

If you prefer podcasts, later.com has compiled a list of 11 informative social media marketing podcasts you can listen to for insight into each platform to improve your marketing.

Tip 5: Get Off the Hamster Wheel

Your social media strategy, as well as your creative energy and time spent on social, are uniquely yours. Don't let yourself get on a hamster wheel of endlessly trying to keep up with someone else. Chasing likes and trying to mimic what someone else is doing isn't true to who you are and will lead to burnout.

By setting manageable goals (e.g., posting



Avoid hitting the point of burnout by sticking to your own schedule and practices that work for you instead of chasing someone else's posting style.


three times a week or creating one video a week) you have an attainable milestone to reach that won't cause your energy and time to fizzle. ■

Resources

“I'm a Social Media Marketer—Here's How I Avoid Burnout,” khoros.com

“4 Tips for Setting Boundaries With Social Media,” socialcurator.com

“How 5 Social Media Managers & Creators Protect Their Mental Health,” later.com



As your career as an NRHA Professional evolves, you might find new opportunities to change your business' path but stay in the reining industry. Here, three pros share their stories and provide advice for when that time comes.

The Art of REINVENTION

SOMETIMES LIFE REQUIRES YOU TO PIVOT YOUR CAREER. HERE ARE THREE NRHA PROFESSIONALS WHO'VE DONE IT WITH GREAT SUCCESS.

BY JENNIFER PAULSON

Every NRHA Professional chose training horses as a career for a reason: a love for the horse. While there are many horse-related careers to pursue that include reining, becoming an NRHA Professional allows you to immerse yourself in the community and culture of the sport. As much as you love the reining horse and the sport of reining, you might reach a point in your career when it's time to pivot away from full-time training to a different focus. One that still includes reining horses and the community you've come to love, but allows you to thrive in different situations, professionally and personally.

This crossroads can come at any point in your career. A young trainer might incur an injury that can limit his or her ability to continue training horses. A mid-career professional might not be climbing the ladder as rapidly as

planned and want to find a way to achieve success somewhere else in the business. A seasoned pro might want to reduce saddle time—and body aches—but still desire to contribute to the industry and continue to gain a lucrative income. These are just three situations in which you might face the “crossroads conundrum.” Take comfort in knowing you're not alone, and your options are not limited.

We spoke with three NRHA Professionals who've successfully pivoted their reining expertise into other areas of the sport. They continue to contribute to reining in many ways, but they might not spend their days riding colts, hauling to major events, or coaching non pros. We hope you're inspired by the successes these pros have achieved in their own right, even if not from the winner's circle. →

PHOTO BY JENNIFER PAULSON

Meet Your Pros

Shane Brown built a lucrative, successful business in Elbert, Colorado, training aged-event horses, coaching youth and nonpros, and facilitating horse sales. As a native Coloradoan, he built on his local reputation to take a position at Pine Run Ranch, where NRHA Professional Troy Heikes later came on board as head trainer. Brown then purchased his own facility with his wife, Stacey, where they served the Colorado reining community for too many years and victories to count. Brown regularly gave of his time to various NRHA committees and now serves on the Executive Committee as a director-at-large. Just this year, Brown decided to take on a new venture with his wife and move to Aubrey, Texas, where they'll become the breeding managers at Tom McCutcheon



Shane Brown built his business training horses and coaching riders in Colorado. This fall, he'll relocate to Texas to pivot to a career in the breeding business.



Brent Loseke made his first professional pivot from cutting horses to reining horses. Now, he and his wife, Paula, have pivoted again to focus on managing successful breeding stallions, such as Colonels Shining Gun, shown here with the couple.

Reining Horses in Denton, one of the biggest breeders of horses for the sport. Additionally, he'll keep a handful of horses in training so he can remain in the thick of the major events and the competitive reining community.

Brent Loseke grew up in Nebraska on a cattle ranch, but always had his eyes on horses. He got his first horse at age 11 and did some gymkhana and gaming events, and he was hooked. He worked his way into the all-around and Western pleasure industries and roped some, and his passion for horses led him to Texas, where he worked for many notable Western performance trainers, including world champion cutter Mark Chestnut and Carol Rose, even becoming part of Shining Spark's rising star as a 2-year-old. He spent a few years focusing on aged-event reining horses, but found his niche in 2-year-olds, starting some of the most influential reiners of today. From that pivot, Loseke found himself with another opportunity in his path—managing and promoting stallions Colonels Shining Gun and Patriot. →

Steve Ross' voice is one of the most recognizable in our sport, but this Eastern Tennessee-raised horseman didn't always command the microphone as he does today. Ross has trained horses since he was 13 years old. In the mid-80s, when reining was on its trajectory to world recognition, Ross went to work for NRHA Hall of Famer Doug Milholland for three years. He calls it a formative experience and carried on training horses from that time on. Ross now focuses on pairing riders with their perfect horse match by selling reining and ranch riding horses of all levels. Additionally, his history as a radio personality in Stephenville, Texas, led him to be tapped by NRHA to commentate their major events, and other show managers enlist his signature educational and personalized commentary for their shows.



"I always loved starting and training horses, but I didn't want to do that tough hauling schedule required to be a successful trainer," says Steve Ross. "I wanted to find a way to make a living in the business without the traditional business model."

When to Make a Change

First things first: How do you know when it's time—the right time—to make a major change to your career? You've spent years nurturing this business, and you're passionate about reining, but something just isn't clicking in the daily grind of training horses and coaching riders. The decision is very personal, but it can come down to a few cues.

"I never wanted to show a lot," Ross shares. "I always loved starting and training horses, but I didn't want to do that tough hauling schedule required to be a successful trainer. I wanted to find a way to make a living in the business without the traditional business model. The challenge for me was finding a way to make that work. For a long time, it was buying yearlings, starting them, and selling them as 2-year-olds."

After a while, that model built Ross a solid reputation and gave him clout with his fellow professionals. It opened the door for his current business focus: selling horses.

"We have a 32-stall barn," Brown shares. "When I have the right help, it works. For 15 years, I had an assistant who helped me make it all feasible. Now, I'm 51 years old. I figure I can train and show horses another 15 years, but not with the 32 horses in our barn that pay our mortgage. We lived on our place almost 17 years, paying the bills with 100% showing, training, and sales. These days, when we take 26 or 28 horses to a show, I'm physically beat at the end of each day. I physically can't do this the rest of my life."

That recognition was key to Brown and his wife's deciding to relocate and refocus. He and Stacey were already considering some kind of change when Mandy and Tom McCutcheon approached them with the opportunity in Texas. The prime chance to pivot came up right when the couple needed it. →

“After riding 16 horses a day, five days a week, I started to get burned out,” Loseke relates. “You heal a lot faster when you’re young. I got bucked off a few years ago and had a concussion and some broken ribs, which also contributed to my decision to move into the breeding industry.”

Loseke’s new endeavor started with helping promote NRHA Two Million Dollar Sire Lil Joe Cash. Loseke says he’d always been involved in breeding on the mares’ side and never really considered standing stallions, but after speaking with his veterinarian for advice, it seemed like a smart move that he could learn a few lessons and be successful.

How to Use Your Network

Working in the reining business as a trainer means you’re connected to individuals from all corners of the horse industry, from those who provide health care to your mounts to gear and tack makers to show producers and breeding managers—and more. When you think about your network, it’s quite extensive and full of opportunities for new ideas.

“In our industry, we’re all pretty close,” Brown says. “We’ve built some great friendships and working relationships over the years. A relationship like that is how we got hooked up with the opportunity with the McCutcheons.”

On top of regular industry interactions at competitions, through horse sales, and other business transactions, Brown and the McCutcheons have served on numerous committees and boards to benefit NRHA.

“My network definitely helped [build my new career],” Loseke concurs. “I consider myself a pretty good horseman, and your connections notice that.”

For Ross, knowing a large network of professionals immensely helps his commentating endeavors, not to mention selling horses.



‘We lived on our place almost 17 years, paying the bills with 100% showing, training, and sales,’ shares Shane Brown. ‘These days, when we take 26 or 28 horses to a show, I’m physically beat at the end of each day. I can’t do this the rest of my life.’

“I’m around all the trainers all the time,” he says. “It’s easy—I pick up the phone and call trainers to talk about their horses and how they’re doing. For the commentating, the people listening really like a little back story that they can’t get everywhere else.”

Make the Change

Some opportunities allow you to jump right in, but most require a slower transition, especially when selling your place or moving training horses into new programs. Brown and his wife spent months getting pieces in place to sell their facility and move their client horses to other barns. Loseke’s move was a little quicker, as he merged his two businesses first, then ceased taking outside horses completely.

“As of this year, I don’t have any outside horses,” Loseke shares. “I’m only riding five of my own 2-year-olds and one 3-year-old. I like that arrangement a lot, because I ride half the day then go about the rest of my business.”



A side hustle in radio led Steve Ross to a career as commentator and interviewer for numerous major events. His connections from starting and training horses make it a natural fit while capitalizing on his unique talents.

We foaled out 34 babies in 2022, and many are still here for weaning, halter-breaking, and registering.”

Have the Right Support in Place

As in all things, it can take a village—or at least a supportive spouse or partner—to pivot your business in a new direction.

Brown relates that he had his wife spend a week at the McCutcheon place before making his decision. The climate and lifestyles are very different between Eastern Colorado and Northcentral Texas, so he wanted to ensure she was completely on board. The pair now looks forward to working together.

Loseke and his wife, Paula, set out on this adventure together as he began to refocus his business. She handles much of the paperwork and provides promotional support when marketing the stallions, along with being a ranch realtor. Loseke also relies on the advice of Rick and Jade Ford, who own and manage Cinder Lakes Ranch and provide Loseke with great breeding insight, from trouble-shooting to emergency situations.

Ross relies on his wife, who manages all the many fine details of their business, and

Jordan Sweetin who is part of their training operation. Ross also leans on a strong team that supports his business, including his bookkeeper, accountant, and attorney.

“It’s too much for us to navigate the intricacies of business law and tax law,” Ross says. “We want to be sure we’re compliant and profitable.”

Closing Sage Advice

Each of these professionals has overlapping-yet-different experiences in their reining careers, and they have sound advice for pros looking to make a change.

“I want to find the way I can make the best contribution to this industry,” Ross says. “I truly believe the secret to success is to add value. I try to do that in everything I do—I want to bring something to the table that other people might not be able to and that might be lacking. That’s how you find happiness and success.”

Brown has spent his entire adult life in the business and has seen it change immensely in many ways.

“Our sport has evolved so much,” he says. “You have to have the horseflesh to be able to make it, and sometimes those opportunities are dictated by where you live. Sometimes you have to be an entrepreneur and make an opportunity happen instead of whining and complaining and waiting for it to come to you. Maybe you need to buy yourself that nice horse that can launch you into another level of your career. Think about your future; plan past your next futurity horse.”

Ross concludes that being keenly aware will keep you headed in a positive direction.

“You really have to keep your eyes open for opportunities,” he advises. “Every horse trainer has a second skillset. A lot of guys make bits and spurs and do other things. Stick with things you’re passionate about; then you know you’ll do your best work and it doesn’t seem like work.” ■

Updated Animal Welfare & Medications Policy

FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE NEW GUIDELINES.

PROVIDED BY NRHA

In the spring of 2021, the NRHA Executive Committee began discussions on updating the current Animal Welfare & Medications policy. Since then, the executive committee,



Fairness of competition is at the core of the new NRHA Welfare & Medications Policy.

board of directors, and staff have consulted with experts in the field, committee members, and current competitors. There have been countless conversations aimed toward developing a revised policy to ensure fairness of competition by leveling penalties to those who knowingly violate NRHA rules, regulations, and policies.

At the August 21, 2022, NRHA Board of Directors meeting held in Las Vegas, a revised Animal Welfare & Medications Policy was voted on and approved.

“The NRHA Medications Policy has been reformatted to make it easier to understand and contains amended definitions and examples to fall in line with our industry peers. It is important to have a policy that will allow our horses to be shown safely without creating an unfair advantage,” said NRHA President Rick Clark. →



NRHA competitors will notice increased testing at major events.

PHOTO BY JENNIFER PAULSON

UPDATED ANIMAL WELFARE & MEDICATIONS POLICY

OLD PENALTY CHART

DRUG/SUBSTANCE	FIRST OFFENSE	SECOND OFFENSE	THIRD OFFENSE
Controlled Substance (365-day period)	Warning	\$250 fine Possible probation pending Hearing Panel review.	\$500 fine Possible suspension pending Hearing Panel review.
Forbidden Substances that are FDA-approved for use in the horse (365-day period)	Warning	\$500 fine Possible probation pending Hearing Panel review.	\$1,000 fine Possible suspension and/or disqualification pending Hearing Panel review.
Forbidden Substances that are NOT FDA-approved for use in the horse (3-year period)	\$2,500 fine Possible probation pending Hearing Panel review.	\$5,000 fine Possible suspension pending Hearing Panel review.	\$10,000 fine Possible suspension and/or disqualification pending Hearing Panel review.

NEW PENALTY CHART

DRUG/SUBSTANCE	FIRST OFFENSE	SECOND OFFENSE	THIRD OFFENSE
Overage of a Permitted Substance (2-year medications probation period)	\$500 fine \$1,000 fine for NSAID Stacking	\$1,000 fine \$2,000 fine for NSAID Stacking	\$2,000 fine \$4,000 fine for NSAID Stacking; disqualification and publication; 6-month suspension
Conditionally Permitted Substance Violation (2-year medications probation period)	\$5,000 fine, disqualification, and publication	\$10,000 fine, disqualification and publication; 90-day suspension	\$20,000 fine, disqualification and publication; 12-month suspension
Prohibited ("Banned") Substances (Permanent probation period)	\$10,000 fine, disqualification, and publication	\$15,000 fine, disqualification and publication, one-year suspension	\$30,000 fine, disqualification and publication, 3-year suspension

According to Clark, it was a goal of all who contributed to the recommended policy changes that the policies and penalties should align with other Western performance industries. Another goal was simplification.

The penalty chart and classification system have been restructured to include increased penalties such as publication of offenses, suspension, and disqualification. The updated policy is easier to understand and more transparent to the NRHA membership—even to those who are just getting started in reining.

Exhibitors will notice increased testing at leading events and NRHA-owned events, as well. An official change in the Welfare & Medications Policy that has already been implemented is plasma-only testing, which has a quicker turnaround time.

“The NRHA Executive Committee and staff have worked to learn new and better practices to keep our horses healthy. We invested both time and research to better understand medications that can help our horses in a safe manner, and also to find what is best for the industry and horses using today’s knowledge and technology,” noted Clark.

“I am proud of the NRHA Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and staff for their work and leadership in taking this step toward presenting reining at its best on the world stage,” Clark added. ■



'I am proud of the NRHA Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and staff for their work and leadership in taking this step toward presenting reining at its best on the world stage,' said NRHA President Rick Clark.

Helpful Links

The complete, revised Animal Welfare and Medications policy, which will go into effect at the 6666 NRHA Derby presented by Markel in June, can be found [here](#).

Answers to common questions about the Revised Animal Welfare and Medications policy can be found [here](#).

Read an open letter from NRHA President Rick Clark [here](#).

FINANCIAL TRAINER

TIPS AND INSIGHTS TO PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE

Budgeting by Buckets

DON'T BE INTIMIDATED BY BUDGETING. INSTEAD, FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS TO DETERMINE YOUR NEEDED INCOME FROM EACH HORSE.

BY CHAD HORKEY

Budgeting can be intimidating, but it's a necessary part of your successful business. To ease any budgeting angst you might have, think of it like training a horse: You have your program that you follow, but you adapt as you go along when conditions change, unexpected obstacles arise, and if a horse progresses faster than you might've expected. Your budget follows the same principles in that it's a guideline for your business, but you must regularly evaluate where you stand and adjust to ensure your success. Here, I'll discuss some essential budgeting tips.

Flat Rate or Itemized

Past issues of the *NRHA Pro Trainer* have discussed the pros and cons of billing by line item versus flat-rate billing. Your budget faces the same choice. Breaking down your expenses into buckets is absolutely the way to go to keep your budget in the black.

Why do I recommend this approach? Because it affords you a detailed manner to determine how much you need to charge to meet your financial goals. Additionally, it provides transparency when billing your customers for your services, as you'll be able to explain to them the costs that necessitate a fee increase, if that occurs.

Bring on the Budget Buckets

I recommend dividing your expenses into two buckets when building your budget: fixed costs and variable costs.



Following a system of buckets makes your budget easy to manage and your margins easy to identify.

Fixed costs are your constant expenses that you incur month after month no matter the quantity of goods or services provided. They can be predetermined, set costs such as your mortgage or rent, but also an average you calculate for other bills that arrive monthly, from electricity to water to the WiFi you run to the barn. No matter if you have zero horses in training or 50, these costs are the same. When you come up with this number, you can calculate the fixed costs you need to charge per stall to your customers.

FORMULA 1: Fixed Cost 1 + Fixed Cost 2 + Fixed Cost 3 = Total Fixed Costs Divided by the Number of Horses in Your Barn = Fixed Cost Per Horse
(Note: This does not include your variable costs! Just the basic fixed costs to keep the barn running.) →



Use the formulas provided here to quickly calculate necessary budget numbers for your business.

EXAMPLE: \$5,000 Fixed Costs ÷ 20 stalls = \$250 of Fixed Costs Per Stall

Variable costs change based on fluctuating circumstances and the quantity of goods and services provided, including the number of horses you have in training (think hay and feed bills) and the number of shows you're traveling to (think fuel and lodging bills).

FORMULA 2: Variable Cost 1 + Variable Cost 2 + Variable Cost 3 = Total Variable Costs Divided by the Total Number of Horses in Your Barn = Variable Cost Per Horse

FORMULA 3: Fixed Costs + Variable Costs = Total Revenue Needed Per Horse to Cover Costs

Managing Variable Costs

As we've all experienced in business, variable costs can jump exponentially overnight. Our hay, grain, fuel, and many other associated expenses have

increased more than anyone could've expected or budgeted. That's why being nimble is critical for your budget. Knowing your fixed costs keeps one variable relatively under control. Then you can reevaluate your variable costs as needed. The key with variable costs is to look ahead. Will you need to replace your truck's tires or provide other major maintenance to it in the near future—or maybe even replace it? Try to plan ahead when budgeting and include those anticipated expenses.

Budgeting Revenue

One of the least predictable revenues that can be a major part of your business is horse sales. You can set a goal of how many horses you need to sell and how much commission you need to make, but the bottom line is that can be out of your hands. Do the best you can to predict sales, estimate your commissions over a quarter, and hustle to meet those goals and keep your budget on track.

Lastly, when budgeting and setting your training fees, remember to pay yourself first. Think about your value and what you "bring to the table" that sets you apart. What are your time and expertise in the industry worth? Don't be afraid to ask around. What do other NRHA Professionals in your area charge for their time? What about other trainers from different disciplines? By paying yourself first, you make your long-term financial success a priority. ■

PHOTO BY KELLY SIKKEWA ON UNSPLASH

Meet the Expert

Chad Horkey is a senior director with RSM US LLP and is based out of their Rochester, Minnesota, office. He's a lifelong horseman and has partnered with the National Snaffle Bit Association to develop the Tomorrow's Horsemen program to help up-and-coming professional trainers set up their businesses for success.



NRHA Professional Code of Ethics

We, the members of the National Reining Horse Association Professionals, in carrying out our role of providing service to the reining horse industry, recognize the need to do so in a professional manner, and to represent the sport of reining in a professional manner with the highest degree of integrity.

Therefore, we have set forth the following code of ethics, which shall govern our endeavors in the industry. By signing this application, I agree to be bound by the rules of the NRHA Professional Code of Ethics. To participate in this program, I concede to maintaining a continuous individual membership with NRHA.

As a member of the NRHA Professionals, I will:

- Adhere to the professional standards of the NRHA and work to further its goals and objectives.
- Ensure that the welfare of the reining horse is paramount and that every horse shall always be treated humanely and with dignity, respect, and compassion, regardless if the horse does not reside under my direct supervision.
- Positively influence all members to refrain from any perceived misconduct or inappropriate actions towards either horses or other members.
- Conduct my affairs in the sport of reining with integrity, sincerity, and accuracy in an honest, transparent, and forthright manner.
- Act with integrity in my dealings with reining clients, other NRHA members, and the public when representing the sport of reining. In this regard, any horse shown by my spouse, client, or child will be economically owned as prescribed by applicable NRHA rules.
- Handle my reining horse business, operations, and communications (including those through social media) in a manner, which promotes a positive image of the reining horse industry.

- To fully disclose to customers the actual sales price and commissions involved in the sale or purchase of a horse.
- To not charge or receive a monetary commission, or other remuneration constituting a commission, from both buyer and seller of a horse.
- Model the proper ideals of positive sportsmanship and fair competition, and show cordial courtesy to fellow competitors, members, and Judges.

The Professional Code of Ethics is intended as a general guideline for reining professionals' behavior and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of conduct for NRHA Professionals. NRHA Professionals' conduct is also governed by NRHA Rules. This Code is intended, however, to state basic standards, which should govern the conduct of all professionals and to provide guidance to assist professionals in establishing and maintaining high standards of conduct within the reining horse industry.

This Code of Ethics generally identifies the ethical obligations of NRHA Professionals and does not substitute for, nor is it intended to substitute for, or in any way alter or modify the NRHA rules.

The members of the NRHA Professionals Committee created the NRHA Professional Code of Ethics to further promote the humane treatment of reining horses and ethical business practices. If you have questions regarding this code, please reach out to Sara Honegger at shonegger@nrha.com.

