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Even the Boss Needs Time off

FOXBusiness

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"Entrepreneur Diary" by **Damon Schechter**, *founder and CEO of* [Shipwire Product Fulfillment](#).

I love my life as an entrepreneur. In this column, I write about my experiences growing a business, as well as those of my customers, most of whom are also entrepreneurs.

As I write this, the sun is out in Palo Alto and there are bike riders everywhere. The Shipwire offices are pretty close to an elementary school, and there are always kids walking back and forth in front of the window, or launching their skateboards off our front steps or bunny hopping the shrubs in front of the office. This week has been so amazingly quiet that it must be spring break.

As entrepreneurs, we sometimes lose sight of the importance of time away. In our early years after startup, I didn't even think about a day off – let alone schedule a fun get-away. It seemed so natural then; but, I can see now that it was slightly warped.

In truth, there is such a thing as an entrepreneur on vacation. It is not an oxymoron. As we approach summer on the West Coast and the days get gorgeous, I'm reminded of a request from one of my customers that talks to the importance of building a business around processes and automation.

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About a year and a half ago, we launched automated connections for retailers that sell on Amazon and eBay. A few months later, we received an e-mail from a gentleman named John Ellen, from UK online electronics retailer [NetDirectDeals.com](#). To paraphrase, he said, "I saw your marketplace connections, please build a connection to Channel Advisor that does the same thing because I absolutely need a vacation and I can't leave for two weeks until you do. P.S. I haven't taken any time off in over two years."

One of our team reached out to John over Skype and learned that he had booked some time at a really nice beach; but, given the economic recession he couldn't walk away from sales and survive. That said, canceling a vacation (again) was mentally repulsive and a lapse of sanity was highly likely if he couldn't get the heck out his office and warehouse for a bit. He needed to be able to automate his orders and see them while he was sitting on the beach having a Daiquiri.

So, we got it done. A few months later we got a thank you e-mail from the beach by a noticeably more relaxed John, who was thrilled to have gotten away for a bit. Now he was hooked on automation and was trying to get other pieces of his business on "full-auto" so he could save himself even more time and hassles.

Measuring your daily successes can be done by looking at revenue or customer satisfaction; but, finding ways to measure the time (and money) you save by automating can be tough. Perhaps use as a gauge the following questions: can you take a week off from work; or relocate your office to a different spot and work ¼ or ½ day for two weeks? If you can't, you may want to reallocate some time to figuring out how. Tim Ferris and the [Four Hour Work Week blog](#) offers a lot of ideas. If you are a small business, you can also check out [www.thesmallbusinessweb.com](#) for hosted software that integrates and automates.

By the way, I recently took a few days off with my fiancé. So, I'm improving.