

## [INTRODUCTION]

**[0:00:04] DC:** It takes the right skills and the right innovation to design and manage meaningful print marketing solutions. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse, where we explore all facets of print and marketing that create stellar communications and sales opportunities for business success. I'm your host Deborah Corn, the intergalactic ambassador to the Printerverse. Thanks for tuning in. Listen long and prosper.

## [EPISODE]

**[0:00:34] DC:** Hey, everybody. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your intergalactic ambassador. Today, we are talking with Sarah Ohanesian from SO Productive. Time Management Tips in 20. It is busy season. Last podcast, we talked about time season, and we are in the busy season. Part of it is preparing for the end of this year and everything that's going to come that you people know about in print shops, and in their businesses, and holiday rushes, and things they might be able to count on from looking back at their history.

Then, of course, we have the setting ourselves up for success in 2024. I say that because I have to start doing proposals pretty much in early November if I want to work with my partners next year because they start budgeting, they start meeting, and all that stuff. So we're in 2023, but in a lot of ways, people's heads are in 2024 already. To illustrate that, I'm actually going to do a little cross-pollination on this podcast.

Just recorded a podcast with Jamie the printer, and Will the printer on the PrinterChat Podcast. We discussed advice from Bill Farquharson, who's a sales coach. And he said that now is the time to find the time and make the time to secure up your relationships for this year, to see if there's any additional work that can be done, to make some additional calls. As you ride out the busy season to the little bit of a low, and maybe towards the end of November, and through December, to start looking at what you're going to do next year regarding those prospects that you've always wanted to get in touch with those big clients. How can you prepare to come out of

the gate and 2024. We're going to dedicate this podcast to three tips to setting priorities as we head into the new year. Sarah?

**[0:02:43] SO:** I love that so much. I think your call out there is really strong because it feels like we have all this time before the end of the year. But then in reality, the holidays come and go, we're busy. Coworkers might be off a few days, you're covering for them, they're covering for you, and it's January before we know it. So I think that's a really important reminder of, even when it feels busy, and then even when it feels like it's a little bit slower, both are great opportunities, consider our priorities. Because that next season, which we talked about seasons in our last podcast, that next season is just right around the corner. So being prepared I think is a first really good takeaway here for people.

Deborah, I've got three tips today that I wanted to share. So the first tip is just about doing a brain dump. One of the things that I see that people get a little bit confused on what is actually on their plate in that moment. Again, this is a really great exercise to do in a busy season, but also in a slower season, is thinking about what are all those things swirling around in your head? What are those things you're thinking about doing, or you want to be doing, or you wish you could be doing personally, professionally?

My first tip is to just take a couple minutes and get every single thing out of your head. So what clients are you interested in? What prospects do you have on your list? What sales calls do you wish you could make? Maybe you have to remember to call your mother on a weekly basis. Getting those reports finished, cleaning up processes and systems that maybe you don't have time to work on when it is so busy. What are all those hopes, dreams, wishes, and things that you wish you could do? So giving yourself one, two minutes, just brain dump and get every single thing out of your head.

So first, that's going to feel a little bit overwhelming, because now you're going to have this long list of things that you feel like you have to do. But that act of getting it out of your head, it's actually really tremendous because it helps to free up our brain space. We can stop trying to remember things in our head, get that stuff out onto paper, and then that's really a first step in helping us to see what priorities are really going to be important for us for that next season. So that's my first tip, is do a big, big brain dump.

**[0:04:53] DC:** Love that, except that I'm going to go back to the rules that we have set for ourselves here. Looking at my Todoist list, you have trained me to keep those hopes and dreams on a creative list, on a post inspiration. I mean, that's how I have it divided up. So I don't have to make that list now. I just have to go to my Todoist and see what's already on it, and what I can accomplish. So I just want to point that out that you have been doing it that way.

**[0:05:25] SO:** Absolutely. Well, you're a very good student, Deborah, and we've been working on this together for what? About, two years now, I think we've been working on some of these best practices together. So this is a great exercise to do. If you are a Deborah, if you're a great student of productivity, and you've been maintaining your list for a little while, still recommend cleaning out that clutter that might be swirling around in your head once a week, because it's a really good practice to keep up with. But this tip is also great for people who are brand new to this productivity practice. The first time you do this, that's really where you're kind of cleansing everything out of your brain.

[BREAK]

**[0:06:00] SO:** I'm Sarah Ohanesian, founder of SO Productive, a productivity training and consulting company. Teams I work with get more done. They experience improved processes, greater productivity, and increased efficiency, all without stress and burnout. If you want to improve your performance, or the performance of your team, visit [so-productive.com](https://so-productive.com) and get started today. I offer conference keynotes, one-on-one coaching, and hands-on corporate workshops, all focused on increasing productivity and time management. Let's discuss how SO Productive can supercharge your organization. Links are in the show notes.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUES]

**[0:06:43] DC:** I'm very lucky that I have a personal coach and you're helping me, but I just want to say, I'm not a great productivity student. I am somebody who has to organize my ideas. Otherwise, what we found is that how I have them divided for example on my Todoist list is my to-do list. That's what I have to do today, prioritized, as we have spoken on numerous podcasts on how to prioritize that. Then I have creative, these are just things that are, I don't know if they'll ever manifest. But when I have an idea now, I don't send myself an email, I put it on my

Todoist. Then I have ongoing, things that I don't have a hard stop and hard beginning, but kind of go.

Then post ideas, I might hear something or think of a phrase, and I'll just throw it in my post ideas. Then when I'm writing for my newsletter, I'll go back in there and see if I wrote anything. And now, I'm keeping a list for AI, because there's a lot of cool stuff out there, and I just want to have it in a place. So that is why I think it's so important to remember if you are doing this, then now's the time to go back to all of those things to your point, and tap into them, and see what you can manifest in any way, shape, or form.

**[0:07:59] SO:** Deborah, I think this is really funny. We did not coordinate on this ahead of time, but you just did tip number two.

**[0:08:06] DC:** Oh, I did?

**[0:08:06] SO:** You did. So the tip number two, for those of you that might be wanting to summarize what Deborah just said. Tip number two is to separate your idea lists from your action list. And Deborah said it really, really well. Literally, we could not have planned this.

**[0:08:21] DC:** Well, you taught this to me. That was one of the first things you helped me do, was get those things that I was just moving from to-do list, to to-do list, to to-do list, because they weren't actionable items. They were concepts, they were things I needed other people involved in, there was nothing that I can feed the elephant. It was like, here's the big idea, Print Across America. Okay. Now what? Let's put that on the big idea list and come back to it.

**[0:08:47] SO:** Exactly. Again, if you're in a low this season, this is a really good opportunity to go back to those idea lists. So again, to be clear, idea lists are things that you can't, or shouldn't, or don't have the resources, tools, or skillset to actually accomplish right now. It's an idea. However, you want to keep it in a safe place, because you might come back to that in a year. You might come back to that in six months. You might be knowing that you're going to work on that in March, but you're not ready just yet.

So the idea lists are a place to store things that you can do in the future or ideas you might want to consider in the future, but you cannot take action on them right now. So this is really critical. Separating all of those ideas because they're going to overcrowd the to-do list as Deborah does well, from your action list. So your to-do list becomes a much shorter action list. Those are things you have the tools, the skillset, and the resources to actually accomplish yourself. I think that's a really important nuance too.

It's so easy for us to think of ideas. Hey, Deborah, I've got a great idea for you. That is an idea. It is not something that is actionable. So we want to make sure that our actionable things are very specific, and there's things that we ourselves can actually take care of, and accomplish those things.

**[0:10:06] DC:** I just clicked into my creative list, and I'm like, oh, there's still some great ideas in there that I totally forgot about that are still so viable. So I'm going to be whipping that out in December. So we've done two tips already. We're flying through this. What is your third tip?

**[0:10:23] SO:** Well, I wanted to tie back to tip number one really quickly, because again, when those ideas are swirling around in your head, it's actually taking up some valuable brain space. It could be stressing you out, you might be wasting time waking up in the middle of the night thinking about all of these ideas, because they're probably really decent ideas. But you don't have the ability to take care of them right now. So again, it's a way to tie in everything that's swirling around your head, everything that's on these lists, and really get them organized in your system between ideas and actions.

So let's get into tip number three. This is a bit of a fun one. I call this Tinder Your Tasks. So if you aren't familiar with Tinder, Tinder is a dating app, and they've made it super simple to use. But you swipe right if you like someone and you swipe left if you don't. So I want you to think about all of those things that you put on your brain dump list, you've separated your ideas from your actions. Now, you've got your action list. This is when it's go time, it's time to prioritize. So we literally have to Tinder our tasks, swipe right on the things that you want to prioritize, you want to say yes to, you want to take action on those things.

I would say that you can use the exact same criteria that you might use on a dating app. Are you ready, Deborah? These tasks, they look good, you want to do them. They're worth your time, and they make money. Those are really the criteria that you can be using to Tinder your tasks. So that's how you pick your priorities from your action list to focus on.

[BREAK]

**[0:11:56] DC:** Like what you hear? Leave us a comment, click a few stars, share this episode, and please subscribe to the show. Are you interested in being the guest and sharing your information with our active and growing global audience? Podcasts are trending as a potent direct marketing and educational channel for brands and businesses who want to provide portable content for customers and consumers. Visit [printmediacentr.com](http://printmediacentr.com), click on podcasts, and request a partner package today. Share long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUES]

**[0:12:30] DC:** I don't want no scrubs on my Todoist list. That's what I was thinking.

**[0:12:35] SO:** Exactly. Yes.

**[0:12:36] DC:** I would go to TLC for my scrub list. Amazing. Okay. So I want to throw just a bonus little conversation in here because I do strongly believe that when you have the time this year, and the right people are in your office, or honestly, people maybe you don't usually brainstorm with, it's great to get just an out random person's opinion. For example, if you're the salesperson, grab some of the people on the shop floor, and just say, "Come up with some crazy ideas for how we can get in touch with these new clients, these new companies that we want to work with." How can everybody make a strategic plan and stick with it to first identify, strategize, reach out, and then a plan for following up through the next year, and put it on one of these lists and keep it there until all the tasks are completed?

**[0:13:39] SO:** Yes. So Deborah just outlined a really great plan for how to strategize it. I can offer some additional details on how to do it. Because one of the things that I see is we have these wonderful brainstorming sessions. Everybody's excited, we had coffee and doughnuts,

we're sugared up or caffeinated, and we thought of all these great ideas. Then, January 15<sup>th</sup>, February 15<sup>th</sup>, those dates start to roll around, and we're going, "Oh, we never got to do those things."

One of the really critical things that I think is important is to limit the work in progress. So what I mean by that is when we brainstorm these wonderful ideas, and we've thrown out 50 great thoughts, the challenge is executing on all of those. So I would go back to *Tinder Your Tasks*, prioritize everything that we thought about in the brainstorming meeting, and do them in short sprints. Because where I see people get quite frustrated is, they start the 50 tasks and they aren't completing them, and then we kind of fizzle out. and we're losing some of that momentum.

Get one of the tasks finished, complete, then get the second one finished, complete. And when you do that, you're going to get this snowball effect of what I call compounding productivity. One right thing leads to the next. You're getting some momentum and you're actually accomplishing those tasks. So don't try to tackle all 50 at one time. Just really strategize as a team. Let's put these in priority order. Let's *Tinder* our tasks, pick our priorities, and do them in short little sprints. So this could be one to two weeks, we're really going to focus on task one and get it done before we move on to task two.

**[0:15:09] DC:** Another great tip from Sarah Ohanesian, *SO Productive*. Check out *Command the Chaos* on [so-productive.com](http://so-productive.com). But you don't have to write it down, the links in the show notes. Prepare yourself for 2024 with the time Sherpa herself. Until next time, print long, time manage long, and prosper.

[END OF EPISODE]

**[0:15:31] DC:** Thanks for listening to Podcasts from the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through [printmediacentr.com](http://printmediacentr.com). We'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

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**Mentioned in This Episode:**

**PrinterChat Episode:**

Bill Farquharson: <https://billfarquharson.com>

Todoist: <https://todoist.com/>

Sarah Ohanesian on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarahohanesian/>

SO Productive: <https://www.so-productive.com/>

Asana: <https://asana.grsm.io/sarahohanesian308>

Command the Chaos Course: <https://www.so-productive.com/productivity-course/>

Deborah Corn on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborahcorn/>

Print Media Centr: <https://printmediacentr.com>

Project Peacock: <https://ProjectPeacock.TV>

Print Across America: <https://printacrossamerica.com>

Girls Who Print: <https://girlswhoprint.net>